

Report Title:	Task and Finish Group Update - Domestic Abuse
Contains Confidential or Exempt Information	No - Part I
Meeting and Date:	People Overview and Scrutiny Panel – 17 April 2023
Responsible Officer(s):	Mark Beeley – Principle Democratic Services Officer – Overview and Scrutiny

REPORT SUMMARY

A Task and Finish Group on domestic abuse was agreed by the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel at the meeting held in December 2022, following consideration of the scoping document.

This briefing note provides an update on the progress made by the Group so far, exact details and figures have been kept generic.

RECOMMENDATION: That the People Overview and Scrutiny Panel notes the work of the Domestic Abuse Task and Finish Group.

1.1 Membership:

- Councillor Catherine Del Campo – Chair of the Group
- Councillor Amy Tisi
- Councillor Carole Da Costa
- Lin Ferguson – Executive Director of Children’s Services and Education
- Sophie Wing-King – Domestic Abuse Strategic Lead for RBWM
- Mark Beeley – Principle Democratic Services Officer – Overview and Scrutiny

1.2 The Group met on 8th February 2023 via Microsoft Teams to review the scoping document and decide the best course of action.

1.3 Lin Ferguson and Sophie Wing-King provided some initial context to the strategy and background information on domestic abuse in RBWM.

1.4 The new RBWM Domestic Abuse Strategy had been recently launched and the two year strategy had been aligned with the safe accommodation strategy until 2024.

1.5 The Group heard information on the number of domestic abuse cases, repeat rates, data gathered by the police, information on the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme and the role of the Dash Charity.

- 1.6 Areas of consideration for the Group to explore included the EQIA for the strategy, this needed to justify groups that were disadvantaged and make relevant links with the strategy. Neurodiversity also needed to be considered, particularly the amount of time it took to be diagnosed, which was sometimes not picked up as part of domestic abuse cases.
- 1.7 The Group discussed which witnesses and individuals they would like to speak to as part of its work. The suggestions included:
 - Survivors of domestic abuse
 - Perpetrators of domestic abuse
 - Dash Charity
 - Thames Valley Police
 - Housing
 - Health
 - Adult and Children's social care - Principle Social Worker
- 1.8 The Group agreed to work on the questions to be asked of witnesses. A dedicated Microsoft Teams channel was set up to allow the Group to collaborate together on a list of questions.
- 1.9 A draft set of questions was planned to be confirmed before the next meeting of the Group.
- 1.10 Key documents to help aide the Group were also circulated, including datasets from the police and Dash Charity and other previous case reviews.
- 1.11 It was agreed that the Group would look to meet again following the election in May 2023.