

## **Committee: Overview and Scrutiny Commission**

**Date: 06 July 2017**

Wards: All

### **Subject: Safer Merton – the challenges, successes and future work streams**

Lead officer: Neil Thurlow - Community Safety Manager, Amanda Woodhall and Jeanette Chacksfield – ASB officers, Zoe Gallen – DV co-ordinator

Guest attendees: Judith Banjoko – Manager of Merton Refuge

Lead member: Cllr Edith Macauley, Cabinet member for Community Safety, Engagement and Equalities, Cllr Katy Need, Cabinet member for CSF and VAWG lead

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### **Recommendations:**

- A. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the contents of the report in regard to anti social behaviour (ASB) the increased demand on service and changing legislation in autumn 2017 (Heading 2.0)
  - B. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the contents of the report and increased delivery in work on the violence against women and girls (VAWG) agenda and the broadening pressures the partnership is facing in regard to this agenda (Heading 2.27)
  - C. That the Overview and Scrutiny Commission discuss and comment on the challenges posed to addressing ASB and VAWG in the longer term by additional influencing factors such as the toxic trio and lack of available housing (heading 2.36)
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## **1 PURPOSE OF REPORT AND EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

- 1.1. This report and presentation will serve three functions:
  - 1.1.1 To provide a service update, and raise awareness of changing legislation, affecting Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) work within the borough
  - 1.1.2 To provide an update and offer reassurance over how Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) services are delivered within the London Borough of Merton
  - 1.1.3 To provide members the opportunity to hear from the manager of Merton's refuge to better understand what services clients in the refuge access and how they, and their children (where applicable), are supported throughout their stay
- 1.2. **ASB headlines**
  - 1.2.1 2016-17 has been a busy year within the field of ASB. Two officers have dealt with 781 cases, have worked with Police to roll out the use of Community Protection Notices, implement ASB closure orders and are commencing work to prepare for the transition away from the current Controlled Drinking Zone legislation and into the new Public Space Protection Orders.

- 1.2.2 ASB remains a key priority for our residents and is also a priority for the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, who has included this challenge within the MOPAC Police and Crime Plan 2017-21
- 1.2.3 We know that ASB remains a priority for members and that our community expects action to be taken against perpetrators wherever the evidence allows
- 1.3. **Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) headlines**
- 1.3.1 Over the last 12 months Merton has further established itself as a borough committed to tackling VAWG and being innovative in how we approach this work.
- 1.3.2 Merton benefits from having established and existing quality services in three major areas of work within the VAWG field and we are about to embark upon further work to develop delivery in an additional six.
- 1.3.3 In September 2016 Merton became only the second London borough to roll out the UK Says NO MORE campaign and in November was the first to adopt the Ask Angela programme too. Both of these campaigns were designed to raise awareness and condemnation around both domestic and sexual violence alongside raising awareness of the support services available to victims of these crimes
- 1.3.4 The adoption of both schemes is something which elected members have supported and are of importance to all parties. Merton's position as a lead authority in adopting and leading on these campaigns has benefited local residents and will continue to do so as we move forwards
- 1.4. **Refuge provision**
- 1.4.1 The Overview and Scrutiny Commission will be presented with a detailed, verbal presentation of Merton's commissioned refuge provision.
- 1.4.2 The refuge provides beds for 17 women and up to 25 children who are fleeing domestic violence and abuse
- 1.4.3 This provision serves victims of DV from across the county and this presentation will advise members on how refuge places are allocated, what support packages are offered to victims as they reside within the refuge, how clients move on to secondary housing stages and also how children are supported when living within the property
- 1.4.4 Judith Banjoko, DVA Services Manager at Housing for Women will be leading on the discussion for the refuge.
- 2** **DETAIL OF ASB DELIVERY:**
- 2.1. ASB is a key priority for residents within Merton. This is evidenced from previous year's residents' surveys, reports from elected members and through Safer Merton's, and the wider partnerships, community engagement work.
- 2.2. In advance of Safer Merton drafting the Community Safety Partnerships strategic assessment for 2017-19 we undertook a residents survey and, again, ASB was a key feature of concerns raised

- 2.3. During 2016 the ASB service undertook a business improvement review with the councils Business Improvement Team. This review was undertaken to ensure that Safer Merton could deliver the best outcomes for residents with the limited resources available and to identify where service improvement could be made
- 2.4. Undertaking this review the business improvement team reviewed case details, observed how officers utilise their time, observed where time pressures were placed on officers and by whom, investigated where and how demand was managed and driven as well as looking at the ASB case management system to ascertain where service efficiencies could be made.
- 2.5. The team reviewed three years' worth of ASB data (calendar years 2014-2016) to ensure that the recommendations made were evidenced based and to ensure that service demand management was understood.
- 2.6. The review presented some interesting facts and figures in regard to how our ASB service was accessed, what service outcomes were being requested and what residents perceived to constitute ASB. These headlines (drawn from three years data) stated that:
- 2.6.1 80% of all work demand for the ASB service comes via two categories
- (i) Neighbourhood Disputes
  - (ii) Environmental crime (including dog fouling)
- 2.6.2 Within neighbourhood dispute the biggest reason for referral was noise.
- (i) The nature of noise is such that, legally, they would be classified as living noise as opposed to statutory noise nuisance which would enable the environmental health team to take action.
  - (ii) The facts of this present Safer Merton and/or Environmental Health with little to no opportunity to enforce.
- 2.6.3 As a result of this finding, in regard to these two volume areas, the most tangible outcome for these clients is an offer to refer both parties for independent mediation services
- 2.6.4 Mediation, as a service, was decommissioned at the end of 2015-16 and is now spoc purchased based on need. The cost of spoc purchasing mediation is a significant financial pressure on the Safer Merton budget due to the difficulty in correctly forecasting demand each year. The average cost for a mediation case, from start to finish, is £400
- 2.6.5 For financial year 2016-17 the service invested £2,750 in mediation referral
- 2.6.6 The work and review of demand management identified that the main route(s) to contact the ASB team are primarily via email, followed by telephone. With the introduction and rollout of e5, we envisage that, over the coming months, email management will become easier.
- 2.6.7 However, the latter option, of direct telephone contact can be very resource intensive and with no current routes to "screen out" calls the ASB team can spend long time periods discussing matters which have no tangible outcome option

- 2.6.8 The nature of phone calls presents the service with challenges in ascertaining, at a swift pace, details of the ASB especially in regard to what is occurring, when and by whom.
- 2.6.9 Over a third of all initial telephone calls to Safer Merton’s ASB service result in LBM referring the complainant out of our service to either their social landlord or to another service area.
- 2.6.10 These referrals impact on service delivery due of “lost officer time”. These outcome light phone calls prevent officers from supporting other victims of ASB.
- 2.6.11 Last year’s O&S committee requested information around mental health as a primary demand driver for the ASB service. Looking at the three years data we know that less than one percent of all initial contact/referral can be identified as being in relation to mental health concerns
- 2.6.12 Two other key facts which O&S committee may be interested in noting is that reports of street drinking and/or drug use or dealing account for just 5% of call demand throughout 2016. This equates to 33 and 30 contacts respectively. Detailed figures were previously provided in a report to the Commission in 2016.
- 2.6.13 Work on mental health, alongside substance misuse and alcohol misuse is picked up and managed via another forum, which is discussed in section 2.19
- 2.6.14 Demand for the service shows an established pattern. Reviewing three years’ worth of data the service is placed under more stress between the spring and summer months of April to September with July and August being the absolute peak demand period.
- 2.6.15 Over 36 months January is consistently the month with least demand

**2.7. How are we going to address these headlines?**

2.7.1 There is a work programme being developed to look at how we better manage demand being placed on services. This includes looking at how we maximise efficiencies through CRM and exploring whether we can introduce a revised phone process to, sign post residents to the correct service at the point of entry and to, hopefully, reduce wasted officer time in fielding queries which Safer Merton have no control in solving

2.7.2 This pattern of increased demand goes back to 2013/14

Financial year	Number of cases (previous year variation)	Number of cases requiring referral outside of ASB (% of case volume)	Numbers of ASB officers
2013/14	547	293 (54%)	3
2014/15	609 (+62)	372 (61%)	3
2015/16	603 (-6)	308 (51%)	2.5 (half the year with 3, half with 2)
2016/17	781 (+178)	300 (38%)	2

- 2.7.3 The table above clearly shows the annual increase in service calls year on year and, in the case of financial year 2016/17 the significant drop in cases not being taken on by the ASB team
- 2.7.4 The facts of increased demand, reduced referral to third parties and, alongside areas of improvement identified in the review means that it is essential we develop processes to maximise outcomes within our very limited resource
- 2.7.5 It should be noted by the O&S committees that since the midpoint of 2015/16 the ASB service has been operating with a third less resource as three caseworkers were reduced and we now deliver our work with two ASB caseworkers.
- 2.7.6 The need to better manage demand at the “front end” is vital if we are to continue delivering a good service on the backdrop of increased demand and limited staffing.
- 2.8. The future of ASB nationally, as within Merton, is one of change.
- 2.9. As a service we need to undertake more process specific work, as previously mentioned, to better address demand management which will allow our residents and businesses to be clear around what matters the London Borough of Merton’s ASB service can, and cannot, address.
- 2.10. Work will also be undertaken to look at how best to engage residents with a move to promote more initial engagement via online referral pathways rather than direct entry.
- 2.11. New legislation comes into force from 21 October 2017 where the current Controlled Drinking Zone legislation will be replaced by Public Space Protection Orders (PSPOs).
- 2.12. The legislation which underpins the PSPO means that we can directly transfer the borough wide controlled drinking zone into a PSPO for a three year period taking us to October 2020 at which formal reviews must be undertaken to ascertain its future use.
- 2.13. It would be expected that consultation for future PSPOs will commence in the spring 2020 to allow us to evidence where a future PSPO may be required
- 2.14. The new PSPO legislation also absorbs dog control orders and ASB gating closure powers, both of which can be used to address key local concerns.
- 2.15. Work is underway to look at how these will be consulted on and embedded within the partnerships enforcement toolkit.
- 2.16. In the coming months the ASB team will work with the South London Legal Partnership to develop and embed ASB policy and practice enabling LBM, and/or its delegated partners, to issue enforcement notices.
- 2.17. These notices will come via Community Protection Warnings (CPWs) and/or Notices (CPNs) as well as FPNs for offences under the ASB Crime and Policing Act 2014. Breaches of the CPNs or non-payment of fines can result in custodial sentencing

- 2.18. In order to expand the remit and offer of the ASB service, alongside exploring the possibilities of commercial income generation, Safer Merton's ASB team have purchased three mobile CCTV cameras.
- 2.18.1 Running off the 4G network these cameras are deployed to areas where ASB and/or low level crime is occurring to allow us to provide reassurance to those affected, identify and capture the issues which are occurring as well as to maximise possibilities to take action against those perpetrating crimes.
- 2.18.2 The tasking of these cameras is held via the locations board which meets monthly and is via an associated request form. **The form is attached in the appendices of this report**
- 2.19. In order to better manage the vulnerable, exploited and lower level, consistent offenders, (which include those with drug, alcohol and/or mental health illnesses), the Community Safety Partnership have introduced a new risk management board- the Community Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (CMARAC).
- 2.20. CMARAC was introduced in July 2016 as a new board with a specific function, to manage risk of victims and offenders, whom are over 18 and who have complex needs but do not meet threshold for statutory intervention
- 2.20.1 The CMARAC meets monthly under a co-chairing agreement between the Head of Community Safety and Metropolitan Police Detective Chief Inspector.
- 2.20.2 The meeting has a breadth of statutory, non-statutory and voluntary sector representatives whom discuss cases, allocate actions and/or make referrals to more specialised intervention services to minimise future risks improving the quality of life for that person or the wider community affected by that individuals behaviour
- 2.20.3 In the nine months to financial year end, CMARAC heard 42 cases of varying levels of severity.
- 2.20.4 The meeting, and the CMARAC risk assessment process, has started to generate positive outcomes for many people through providing additional support, enforcing against those exploiting the vulnerable as well as accessing more acute services such as detox and rehabilitation services for personal with multiple and/or complex needs.
- 2.20.5 The meeting does face challenges with a core group of six whose behaviours and needs are so complex they are discussed constantly with their risk management plans reviewed
- 2.20.6 Our CMARAC has been recognised as one of best practice due to its breadth of membership, focus of discussion and clarity of action allocation of actions.
- 2.20.7 In April 2017 the Home Office attended the meeting to observe and capture key learning points in order to develop practice for the county. The outcomes of the observation will be shared following the conclusion of their work to review national practices
- 2.20.8 The CMARAC risk manages complex adult cases whose behaviour puts significant pressure on resources from across the partnership. By managing

these people in a more co-ordinated and holistic manner leads to real time and financial savings for all of those involved

2.21. **DETAIL OF VAWG DELIVERY**

2.22. The Home Office define VAWG as:

*‘Any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm of suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life’.*

2.23. VAWG covers nine strands of work:

- Domestic Violence and Abuse
- Sexual violence
- Abuse and exploitation
- Stalking (and Harassment)
- Trafficking
- Prostitution
- Forced Marriage
- Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)
- Crime committed in the name of ‘honour’
- Faith Based Abuse

2.24. It is worth noting at this juncture that, despite the title, Merton’s work on VAWG also acknowledges, and includes men and boys as victims as well as perpetrators.

2.25. The rationale for this is that, whilst VAWG crimes disproportionately affect females, we know that men and boys, especially those with vulnerabilities, can also be victims to some of these crimes.

2.26. The partnership has an established, and resilient, offer in Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA), Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Female Genital Mutilation

2.27. At this time, we, as a partnership, do not have such detailed and embedded practices in the remaining six strands of VAWG business. However, these strands will receive significant development over the next 12 months

2.28. During 2016-17 the VAWG board worked to develop and deliver a four year strategic work plan.

2.29. This plan, running from 2016-2020, and in line with the Home Office VAWG strategy and MOPAC VAWG strategy is based on four principles:

2.29.1 **1. Coordination**

Aim: Develop a coordination multi-agency approach

How: Ensuring that the response to VAWG is shared by all stakeholders, embedded into service plans and coordinated effectively.

2.22.2 **2. Prevention**

Aim: Changing attitudes and preventing violence.

How: Raising awareness through campaigns; safeguarding and educating children and young people; early identification, intervention and training

### 2.22.3 **3. Provision**

Aim: Improve provision and specialist support services which are essential in enabling people to end violence in their lives and recover from the damaging effects of abuse.

How: Provide a range of services to meet the needs of victims and survivors; practical and emotional support, emergency and acute services; access to legal advice and support, refuge and safe accommodation

### 2.22.4 **4. Protection**

Aim: To provide effective response to perpetrators outside of and within the criminal justice system.

How: Effective investigation; prosecution; victim support and protection; perpetrator interventions.

2.30. The plan breaks down outcomes to be achieved during each financial year. The headlines for year one (2016-17) with an update on their completion rate are as follows:

#### 2.30.1 Year 1 (2016-17):

(i) The London Borough of Merton to be a fully accredited partner in a national campaign to tackle Domestic and Sexual Violence.

Work completed with Merton becoming the second London borough to adopt the UK Says NO MORE campaign. Merton is the biggest supporter of this work and now has an employee as one of their faces for their national 2017-18 campaign

Merton was also the first London Borough to adopt the "Ask Angela" campaign which works to address sexual violence within the night time economy. Based on our work this campaign has now been adopted by the Metropolitan Police who are now rolling this out across the city

(ii) The Safer Merton Partnership to launch our revised VAWG mission statement

Work completed with the introduction of a four year strategy developed and signed off in conjunction with partners

(iii) The Safer Merton Partnership to work with victims of Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and encourage reporting of incidents to achieve our ambition of increasing victims' access to services year on year

Work undertaken through the campaigns resulted in some increases in reports for quarters 1-3 however reporting in quarter 4 reduced. The reduction may coincide with there being no sustained promotion during these months

(iv) To undertake a full DVA profile for the borough

Completed. The headlines of this report are attached as an appendix to this report

(v) Maintain and build upon our successful work in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)



Completed. The work around CSE continues at pace with widening of linkages between CSE and other areas of exploitation being developed.

2.23.2 The strategy sets out the aspirations for year two (2017-18) as:

(i) Conduct a review of our VAWG offer to ensure that our offer(s) are fit for purpose and meet current and predicted needs

(ii) Develop and enhance stronger links with our third sector providers to improve the offer for our victims

(iii) Develop and implement action plans to improve our understanding of success, challenge and areas of growth across the VAWG spectrum ensuring that we respond to these needs appropriately

(iv) To review our outcomes achieved during 2016/17 undertaking relevant reviews as well as setting new targets for the coming year

2.23.3 The VAWG strategy is attached as an appendix to this report

## 2.24 How do we deliver VAWG in Merton?

2.24.1 Violence against Women and Girls related services are commissioned through our VAWG Partnership including our Domestic Violence One Stop Shop, Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) and our Domestic Violence Refuge. We also utilise MOPAC funding to support gangs work including girls and gangs and the Redthread service amongst other

2.24.2 Alongside our voluntary sector commissioned services, and those not commissioned but accessed locally, we have enhanced our partnership offer through, for example, the Transforming (Troubled) Families service, 'Turning around' 100% (370) of high need 'troubled families' between 2011 and 2015, achieving some of the highest levels of success in London and as an early adopter/pilot for phase two already achieving 26% of our target which demonstrates excellent progress compared to other London Boroughs.

2.24.3 Aside from the strategy and the work which sites under that the borough maintains a strong delivery arm. To highlight each strand is not appropriate for such a report but members are asked to note some key pieces of information

## 2.25 Domestic Violence and Abuse (DVA) and MARAC

2.25.1 DVA within Merton underwent a significant analytical review in 2016.

2.25.2 Safer Merton analysed five years' worth of DVA data to ascertain seasonal patterns and trends and also undertook a "deep dive" of 12 months reported crime to capture a fuller, data rich picture of the challenges we face.

2.25.3 The headlines of this review are captured below. Please note these figures come from reported DVA and as such we know that, in reality, the figures will be higher as most victims are victimised numerous times before making that call for help:

2.25.3.1 1 in 20 people in Merton are directly affected by DVA

2.25.3.2 The majority of DVA occurs in the family home

- 2.25.3.3 Five wards within the borough account for 40% of all reported DVA
- 2.25.3.4 The peaks for DVA reporting come on Saturday. The peak time range is 13:00-20:00 and the peak months for reporting are August and December
- 2.25.3.5 There is no evidenced link within Merton that large sporting events have a direct impact on DVA
- 2.25.3.6 The estimated cost of DVA, to Merton's economy is £13.2m per year
- 2.25.4 A info graphic is contained within the appendices for future reference (this has been shared with members previously alongside the full DVA report)
- 2.25.5 As with all crimes there are differing "severities" of incident. Each DVA crime is assessed as a low, medium or high risk case based on an established assessment framework.
- 2.25.6 For those victims whom are assessed as being at "high risk" the borough reviews these cases in a multi-agency format.
- 2.25.7 It is important to note that, all victims, regardless of assessed level of risk, are offered support. This support is of varying levels of intervention but no one is left without an option to access help
- 2.25.8 For those victims whom are high risk, Merton continues to hold DVA Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (DVA MARAC) on three weekly cycles.
- 2.25.9 Chaired by the Community Safety Units Police Inspector, and with a regular, core membership, upwards of 15 partner agencies, present at all times we are able to run an effective meeting which allows us to consider how we manage risk to these victims and what actions should be allocated within their tailored safety plan
- 2.25.10 To ensure that our DV MARAC operates in the most efficient and effective manner we have now undertaken a DV MARAC review, via a self-assessment and subsequently established a MARAC steering group.
- 2.25.11 These additional layers of governance will enable us to ensure that as a partnership and as a commissioner of service, we are able to continually develop and improve our offer of support to victims.
- 2.25.12 These reviews also ensure that the partnership is able to offer the best safeguarding options to our high risk victims as we are able to and that Merton can "meet" its projected repeat MARAC representation rate (Safer Lives advise that every borough should expect to see a repeat victimisation rate of 30-40% annually).
- 2.25.13 Over the financial year 2016-17 the MARAC heard 299 cases of which 94 repeats. These figures represent a repeat rate of 31% which is within Safer Lives guidance.

## 2.26 **Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

- 2.26.1 For Merton, on average, 60 to 70 children/young people, with an identified CSE risk are presented at the CSE MASE panel. The majority of the children discussed at the MASE are aged 13 -16 years old.
- 2.26.2 During 2016/17 this group broke down to 96% female and 4% male. Of the female group 62% came from BAME communities

- 2.26.3 39% of those who had a MASE referral also had a Missing episode, however this is only a small proportion of all those who go missing from home or care. The majority of children known to the MASE live in our most deprived wards Pollards Hill, Figges March, Ravensbury and St Helier. As at 31<sup>st</sup> March 40 children were open to the MASE of these 25% were LAC (10YP) 20% were care leavers (8CYP) and 10% were CP (4CYP). The majority of CSE cases are open to the MASE panel for a year.
- 2.26.4 Merton's Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) strategy was re-launched in 2013 and refreshed in 2015 supported by intelligence from our Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and peer review on CSE. Our Strategy provides clear and practical guidance for social workers and other practitioners dealing with cases where there is suspected and confirmed child/young person sexual exploitation.
- 2.26.5 Merton's management oversight of children who are at risk/subject of sexual exploitation, children missing from home or care and children missing education is maintained at three multi agency panels where information is shared and triangulated. Officers join up the 'risk dots' between these panels.
- Multi Agency Sexual Exploitation Panel (MASE)
  - Missing from Home or Care Panel (Multi agency representation)
  - Children Missing Education Panel (Multi agency representation)
- 2.26.6 Strategic thematic issues are identified by officers and during audits. These are discussed and challenged at a senior management level and at the Promote and Protect Young People (PYPP), a thematic subgroup of the MSCB and at the Executive group of the MSCB in Merton referred to as the Business Implementation Group (BIG).

## 2.27 **VAWG – wider context and emerging pressures**

- 2.27.1 As a partnership we are working collectively to improve our work to address VAWG and to ensure that all agencies embed best practice within their organisation.
- 2.27.2 VAWG is a key priority for us all and is a stated priority for the Mayor of London within his Police and Crime Plan 2017-21.
- 2.27.3 As we develop and continue to seek innovation in our work it is important that the O&S committee are aware of, and acknowledge the need for Merton to respond to new and emerging risks.
- 2.27.4 Since late 2016 the borough has seen an increase in suspected brothels opening within each town centre area. Prior to this Merton did not have a prostitution issue whether that be on street or of street.
- 2.27.5 Currently the borough is witness to approximately three new premises opening each month. Processes are in place to assess the nature and accuracy of such claims, ascertain quickly who is involved within the premise and we look to understand who is using these services
- 2.27.6 What remains unclear, at this time, is the question "why Merton?" We will do all we can to answer this question, safeguard the women who are being exploited

- and forced to work within these properties and will tackle the pimps/madams who are run such businesses
- 2.27.7 We will also work with landlords to support them in tackling this issue and, where appropriate, seek to take action against those whom contribute to this criminal behaviour
- 2.27.8 It is worth noting that there remains no reported on street prostitution within the boroughs boundaries.
- 2.28 Entwined within brothels and the sex trade comes another risk –Human Trafficking.
- 2.29 The Human Trafficking Act 2015 places statutory duty on local authorities to notify the Home Office when it is considered that a trafficked person is “identified”.
- 2.30 Current Home Office figures show there is an approximate 50:50 split of male and females whom are trafficked, that forced labour and domestic servitude are becoming more recognised and that child trafficking is becoming more prevalent due to challenges such as county lines, gang activity and child sexual exploitation.
- 2.31 Following the launch of a cross party initiative, led by The Human Trafficking Foundation, we are now scoping our response to this issue. The partnership will soon have upwards of seven leads who will receive train the trainer training. We will be reviewing our working practices around responding to the safeguarding needs of these vulnerable people as well as participating in London wide mapping of resource and demand. A scoping document is attached for members in the appendices which sets out the needs analysis
- 2.31.1 The pathways for Merton’s response to trafficking are being developed. Any response which Merton does commit to will need to come via existing funding however as no additional funding for trafficked victims is provided by the government.
- 2.32 **VAWG next steps and plans for the coming 12 months**
- 2.32.1 Recruitment of a VAWG co-ordinator
- 2.32.2 The partnership to develop at speed, and with confidence that VAWG practice would be embedded across the partnership, the VAWG board identified the need to have a lead officer to develop the wider VAWG work offer.
- 2.32.3 Following a successful bidding process undertaken with the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) we have secured funding to recruit an officer to do this work. MOPAC will fund this role for 12 months during which time we will work to embed under developed strands of VAWG across the partnership.
- 2.31 Commissioning 2018-21
- 2.31.1 Merton currently commissions a variety of services for victims and, to a lesser extent, perpetrators of DVA. The contracts for our Independent Domestic Violence Advocates (IDVA) and Refuge provision come to an end on 31-03-2018 and as such work is underway to commission for a new service to start in April 2018
- 2.31.2 Our current IDVA provision is contracted to Victim Support. IDVAs work with our medium and high risk victims of DVA to support them and work with these victims to develop safety planning, coping mechanisms and explore

wider education, training or employment needs to help prepare and support victims in their choices around their life including for aspects such as whether to maintain residing with, maintain contact with and/or move away from the perpetrator

- 2.31.3 The second largest contract for victims of DVA comes via the Merton refuge provision Commissioned by adult social care our refuge is ran by Housing4Women who will be presenting at the meeting
- 2.31.6 The refuge houses up to 21 women as part of immediate care. The women staying in the refuge will, most likely, not come from Merton due to the need for victims to be safe from the perpetrator whom they are escaping from
- 2.31.7 The refuge offers support for children and young people too with many women living within the refuge whilst maintaining parental responsibility for their children
- 2.31.8 As both contracts expire simultaneously the council are taking this opportunity to look at how to best achieve value for money and are undertaking a joint commissioning process.
- 2.31.9 It is envisage that this will be a contract for three years with the option to extend for a further 12 or 24 months depending on the success of the first three years, future finance pressures, external implications on localised agendas and/or opportunities to undergo a further commissioning process alongside other boroughs and/or partner agencies
- 2.31.10 it is envisaged that Merton will award contract by the end of 2017 to allow for a period of three months to mobilise the new contract and to ensure the new service is fully operational from 01 April 2018. Members will be advised of the outcomes of this process in accordance with permitted schedules
- 2.32 Home Office innovation bids
  - 2.32.1 The partnership recognises the need to invest and develop wider pieces of work to positively impact on reducing VAWG crimes. Working with the surrounding boroughs of Kingston, Richmond and Wandsworth we await Home Office announcement on three funding bids to allow us to invest in new approaches to work.
  - 2.32.2 One of the bids, which we await announcement from, is the creation of a new DVA court. Working with Wimbledon magistrates we aim to bring in a formalised DVA court process where a minimum one magistrate is fully trained around DVA and the impact this has on the victims and communities. The bid, if successful, will allow us to bring in additional support for victims throughout the criminal justice pathway but, should we not receive the funds, we will work with the courts to look at where we may make system improvements for victims affected by this crime.
  - 2.32.3 We are also working with our third sector partners to develop further bids to bring funding into the borough as we know there are marginalised sections of the community whom are victims of VAWG but whom are reluctant to engage
- 2.33 MOPAC Police and Crime Plan (PCP)

2.33.1 The PCP, 2017-21, sets out the Mayors of London vision on crime reduction and community safety. The strategy has five key work streams which MOPAC expect local authorities to work to with the Police.

The PCPs five themes are:

- Neighbourhood policing
- Safeguarding children – including knife crime and gangs
- VAWG
- Developing the criminal justice system
- Working to address hate crime and extremism in all its forms

2.34 Cross boarder working re county lines and links to gangs

2.34.1 Linking to the safeguarding agenda from the MOPAC PCP we are developing our cross board work around county lines and gangs. These two elements also straddle challenges such as human trafficking and criminal justice work.

2.35 Embedding Think Family

2.35.1 The MSCB's number one priority for 2017-2019 is Think Family that is, to ensure that all partners support children and adults in our most vulnerable families to reduce risk and ensure improved outcomes. Signs of vulnerability include

- Experience poor mental health,
- Struggle with substance misuse,
- Are affected by domestic abuse,
- Parents with learning difficulties that may affect their ability to respond to the changing needs of their children

2.35.2 The evidence nationally and locally also shows that vulnerable families are best supported when there is effective joint working between adult and children facing services. When professionals understand the underlying causes of issues like neglect and other form of abuse and offer effective support early before these problems get worse.

2.35.3 The Social Care Institute for Excellence notes that an effective Think child, think parent, think family approach was based on the following principles

- No wrong door – contact with any service offers an open door into a system of joined-up support; based on more coordination between adult and children's services.
- Looking at the whole family – services working with both adults and children take into account family circumstances and responsibilities.
- Providing support tailored to need – working with families to agree a package of support best suited to their particular situation

2.35.4 Building on family strengths – practitioners work in partnerships with families recognising and promoting resilience and helping them to build their capabilities. Think Family is the Board's first priority and the focus is on children's and adult facing service working together to ensure that there is a seamless offer of help

and support to both parents and children; this includes joint assessments and joint interventions. A Think Family Coordinator has been appointed to help embed 'Think Family' across adults and children's services.

### **2.36 Thematic need for the Community Safety Partnership agenda**

- 2.37 ASB, VAWG and those involved in crime generally, rarely commit crimes without experiencing additional needs or challenges
- 2.38 Work on the 2016 DV profile and data analysis of MASH referrals shows significant numbers of cases where one, or more, of the toxic trio were present in that clients life
- 2.39 The trigger trio is made up of Alcohol, Drugs and Mental Health. All of these areas, if not managed at the onset, can have detrimental impacts on a person's life and for many of our clients they experience two or even all three of these factors.
- 2.40 To better manage these clients in the community we work with agencies such as Catch-22 and Engage Merton to help manage need
- 2.41 Alongside the toxic trio another key issue facing our victims and perpetrators (when motivated to leave a life of crime), is lack of accessible and affordable housing. Having properties available where we can safely move victims of DVA, human trafficking etc. quickly and effectively is essential to any long term housing strategy.
- 2.41.4 To aid this work we will explore the viability and benefits to Merton joining the Pan London Housing Reciprocal Service. Organised, ran and managed by Safer London, the reciprocal programme is designed to provide local authorities and social landlords with more options in regard to relocating victims of DVA within the city. We will work with the councils housing service and borough social landlords to ensure that we maximise opportunities to sign up to this programme.
- 2.42 The work on ASB and VAWG is moving at a fast pace. Merton remains in the bottom three in regard to crime figures but this does not negate the need to do more
- 2.43 As our partnership continues to develop and strengthen and as the work of the Community Safety Partnership becomes ever more entwined to that of MOPACs Police and Crime Plan we will seek to develop a more refined, focused service for the community.
- 2.44 Safer Merton remains a small team, carrying a large portfolio of need which presents challenge but also opportunity as innovation in how we deliver such portfolios is core to our future

### **2.45 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

- 2.45.4 There are no alternative options for this work
- 2.45.5 The ASB work needs to be undertaken due to legislative changes and due to service plans, the Safer Merton TOM and Community Safety Partnerships

strategic assessment, along with MOPACs Police and Crime Plan, making this agenda a priority

2.45.6 The VAWG work is also subject to service planning, Safer Merton TOM, VAWG four year strategy and the MOPAC Police and Crime plan. MOPAC are also funding the years VAWG co-ordinator post and expect that the London Borough of Merton achieves set outcomes based on the funding agreements

**2.46 CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN OR PROPOSED**

2.46.4 There are two areas of work where consultation will be required

2.46.5 In regard to the DVA commissioning, a market warming will be held in July to capture provider feedback on our proposals of need and to confirm whether our requests are feasible within the financial parameters stated

2.46.6 There will be some consultation taking place around the dog control orders within the Public Space Protection Order transition. This will be lead on by Parks and Greenspace management

2.46.7 There is no consultation planned for changing the ASB practice and for driving down frontend demand via instantaneous access to service

**2.47 TIMETABLE**

2.47.4 Commissioning timetable for our Domestic Violence and Abuse contract (indicative of desired timeframes and for information only)

Month	Area of work
June	Deliver specification
July	Complete specification Host market warming event etc.
August	Tender process opens
Late October	Tender process closes
Late November	Scoring and evaluation completed
Late December	Contract award announced
January – March	Mobilisation of new contract
April	New service provision goes live

2.47.5 Public Space Protection Orders (PSPO) timeframe

2.47.6 As mentioned within the document the new PSPOs come into force from 21 October 2017

2.47.7 It is envisaged that consultation with dog walkers will be undertaken during the months of July and August ready for implementation in October

2.47.8 Work on gating closure orders will be subject to local consultation at the time and will operate via an agreed procedure and process

**2.48 FINANCIAL, RESOURCE AND PROPERTY IMPLICATIONS**

2.48.4 DVA within Merton costs the community an estimated £13.2m per year.



2.48.5 As a partnership we invest in aftercare provision via the IDVAs and refuge. The funding for these resources are pooled from a range of areas and funding streams

2.48.6 Current and projected investment is below

	2017-18 pa	2018-2021 pa	Funding source
IDVAs	£129,500	£164,500	Combined funding from MOPAC, Safer Merton and, from 2018 CSF
Refuge inc detached work	£138,075	£138,075	Supported Housing via adult social care

2.48.7 Please note that the investment for 2018-21 may fluctuate prior to tender processes being implemented due to funding demands

## 2.49 LEGAL AND STATUTORY IMPLICATIONS

2.49.4 N/A

## 2.50 HUMAN RIGHTS, EQUALITIES AND COMMUNITY COHESION IMPLICATIONS

2.50.4 Domestic Violence and Abuse can have major implications on community cohesion. With 1 in 20 residents affected by this crime the partnerships work in supporting victims, taking action against perpetrators and ensuring that our communities understand the work we are doing on this subject is vital in achieving our ambitions for more victims to report and for more friends, family and/or neighbours to report matters of concern

## 2.51 CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

2.51.4 As Safer Merton oversee the work, as lead service, the team ensure that all crime and disorder concerns are considered within this work

## 2.52 RISK MANAGEMENT AND HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

2.52.4 N/A

## 2.53 APPENDICES – THE FOLLOWING DOCUMENTS ARE TO BE PUBLISHED WITH THIS REPORT AND FORM PART OF THE REPORT

11.2 Appendix 1 - CCTV tasking form

11.3 Appendix 2 - VAWG Strategy 2016-2020

11.4 Appendix 3 - DVA infographic

## 2.54 BACKGROUND PAPERS

2.54.4 None

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