

Kirklees Domestic Abuse Strategy 2019-2021 DRAFT – V7

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Foreword from Cllr Mather

Domestic abuse has a major impact on children, young people, adults and communities in Kirklees and tackling it is an absolute priority for Kirklees Council and its partners. One of our shared outcomes, developed alongside our partners, is, for “people in Kirklees to live in cohesive communities, feel safe and are safe/protected from harm.” Our workforce, our politicians and our partners are absolutely committed to translating this outcome into reality and our determination to tackle domestic abuse is a key feature of how we will achieve this. This new, refreshed domestic abuse strategy represents a shift in emphasis as we move towards a “whole picture approach,” to tackling this issue. This style of approach is championed by the SafeLives¹ organisation.

This way of working is hallmarked by 4 key features

- **The Whole Person** – which means seeing and responding to the whole person, rather than addressing a series of issues.
- **The Whole Family** – which means looking at victims, survivors, those who harm, individuals connected to the victim/perpetrator including extended family.
- **The Whole Community** – which means all communities of geography, identity and online spaces have responsibility for preventing domestic abuse.
- **The Whole Society** – which means the general public and those who influence them – the media, politicians, employers, key opinion formers and commentators for example – understand their role in protecting the safety and well-being of those at risk.

The whole picture approach will mean increased awareness raising about domestic abuse in order to give people the courage and knowledge to challenge it wherever they may come across it, as the only way to truly tackle domestic abuse is for the solution to become everyone’s business.

We know that critical to the success of this strategy, is working in partnership. This is why this strategy has been developed by the Domestic Abuse Strategy Partnership, which consists of key partners from the Council, Police, Health Services, Community Rehabilitation Company and voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise sectors. It features heavily the information and intelligence gathered from a number of local data sets to ensure our work is properly targeted and focused. It also links closely to wider Kirklees strategies such as the Joint Health and Well-being Strategy and the work of local Safeguarding Children’s arrangements and the Safeguarding Adults Board.

I make no apology for the scale of our ambition demonstrated by this strategy – any domestic abuse is too much – and I am confident that, even within the context of increasing volume and financial pressure, this strategy will serve to make a real and positive difference to the lives of people in Kirklees.

Cllr Mather, Chair of the Kirklees Communities Board

¹ SafeLives are a national charity dedicated to transforming the UK’s response to domestic abuse and ending domestic abuse for good by combining insight from services, survivors and statistics to support people to become safe, well and rebuild their lives.

Definition

Kirklees adopts the Home Office definition of domestic abuse:

'any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality.' Partners in Kirklees have agreed that these areas of abuse will be addressed through this strategy. The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological and emotional including verbal abuse
- physical
- sexual²
- financial

This definition also acknowledges the coercive and controlling nature of abusers and reflects the demography of victims (16 - 19 year old girls who are most at risk).

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts which make a person subordinate or dependent, by isolating them from support, exploiting them for personal gain, depriving them of independence, resistance and escape and regulating everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour can be acts of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation, or other abuse used to harm, punish, or frighten the victim. The current definition includes so-called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage.

In addition to the Home Office definition, Kirklees accepts that domestic violence and abuse can take place in many forms and in a number of different intimate and familial settings which are outlined below (not an exhaustive list)

- **Situational Couple Violence**
 - Involves a relationship dynamic in which conflict can get out of hand to cause one or both partners lashing out. These acts can occur by men and women at fairly equal rates and are not generally committed in an attempt to control a partner³ However, they can contribute to increases in reporting.
- **Elder/Carer Abuse**
 - From a definition put forward by Action on Elder Abuse in the UK, the [World Health Organization](#) (WHO) defines Elder Abuse as "a single, or repeated act, or lack of appropriate action, occurring within any relationship where there is an expectation of trust, which causes harm or distress to an older person." It includes harms by people the older person knows, or has a relationship with, such as a spouse, partner, or family member; a friend or neighbor; or

² It should be noted that this strategy encompasses sexual violence & abuse where it occurs in a domestic setting but will not extend to the wider issues around sexual violence (such as 'stranger rape')

³ Johnson, M.P. (2008). *A Typology of Domestic Violence: Intimate Terrorism, Violent Resistance, and Situational Couple Violence*. Boston: Northeastern University Press.

people that the older person relies on for services. Many forms of elder abuse are recognised as types of domestic abuse since they are committed by family members. Paid caregivers have also been known to prey on their elderly patients.

- **Teen Violence and Abuse Against Parents**
 - Young people displaying violent and abusive behaviour towards their parents which could include but is not limited to coercive and controlling tactics. This is becoming increasingly recognised as a feature in families with complex needs and can often have a detrimental impact on other siblings within the family as well as the parents.
- **Peer on peer abuse**
 - Abuse within early relationships between younger people where there may be all the elements of intimate partner violence and abuse but with less understanding about boundaries, what constitutes healthy relationships and even identifying that the relationship is or is becoming abusive

The Scale and Challenge of Domestic Abuse

In January 2019, the Government unveiled their most comprehensive package ever to tackle domestic abuse, aimed at supporting victims and their families and pursuing offenders. This was supported by a Home Office report that revealed the economic and social cost of domestic abuse cost the country £66 billion in 2016 to 2017. According to the research, the vast majority of this cost (£47 billion) was a result of the physical and emotional harm of domestic abuse, however it also includes other factors such as cost to health services (£2.3 billion), police (£1.3 billion) and victim services (£724 million). While the £66 billion estimate of the costs of domestic abuse appear large, they are likely to be an under-estimate. In particular, the Crime Survey for England and Wales data at the heart of the estimate does not enable full consideration of the number of injuries incurred by victims during their abuse, so the physical harms are likely to be under-estimated.

The £66 billion estimate represents the most comprehensive estimate yet of the economic and social costs of domestic abuse. The report reinforces the need to tackle domestic abuse, ideally through preventative efforts that stop the abuse from happening in the first place. It also highlights how domestic abuse impacts on many sectors of society, suggesting that the response should be similarly wide-ranging.

As well as making a set of commitments to tackle domestic abuse, the Government will also be bringing in new legislation and one of these changes will be to introduce the first ever statutory government definition of domestic abuse to specifically include economic abuse and controlling and manipulative non-physical abuse which will enable everyone, including victims themselves, to understand what constitutes abuse and will encourage more victims to come forward. This move illustrates and strengthens the notion that domestic abuse now encompasses much broader types of abuse that can be less easy to identify, and that the relationships of those experiencing domestic abuse extend far more widely than the stereotypical heterosexual relationship. At the time of the Kirklees strategy being signed off, the draft Bill was still at parliamentary scrutiny stage so we will refer to the current definition of domestic abuse but will make changes to the strategy once new legislation is in statute.

In 2016, HM Government published their 'Ending Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy: 2016-2020'⁴, followed shortly afterwards by the West Yorkshire Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner publishing their Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy. It should be noted that HM Gov's Strategy is particularly focussed on women and, whilst it is widely accepted that domestic abuse is disproportionately gendered, both the West Yorkshire and Kirklees approaches are not limited to this as it was felt that local responses need to be considered across all demographics (many of whom could be considered 'hidden victims') Indeed, it is true to say that victims of domestic abuse are not confined to a particular gender, ethnic group or sexual orientation and abuse affects whole families, including children and the elderly.

It is accepted that the majority of those affected by domestic abuse do not report their experiences to the police and of those incidents reported to the police, only a minority are resolved through the criminal justice system. Whilst some victims will be supported where they meet safeguarding and risk thresholds, not everyone will receive support. Therefore partner agencies have a significant role to play in addressing domestic abuse, whether the violence is reported to the police or not, and in particular to intervene early and prevent further abuse. Partners across Kirklees work dynamically to deal with the changing landscape of domestic abuse but the scale of the issue does present challenges particularly as statutory services have faced unprecedented budget restraints in recent years. It is therefore more vital than ever that new approaches are implemented and that the progress of the Kirklees strategy and subsequent priorities can be measured through a range of partnership intelligence and data.

Domestic abuse rarely affects just one person and every case will include different family dynamics; types of abuse and levels of risk posed by the perpetrator. In this sense, the Safer Lives model seeks to encourage agencies to employ an effective, restorative and empathetic response that is tailored to the needs of the person and/or family's circumstances that helps them become safe in a way that is right for them. More and more research is emerging, including from the direct experiences of victims, that places control and coercion at the core of domestic abuse so it is imperative that staff across the partnership are able to recognise this and use their professional judgment appropriately to support people to best effect.

A great deal of progress has been made throughout the journey of the 2015-18 'Taking up the Challenge Towards Freedom' strategy, with a number of initiatives and specialist services available for those experiencing domestic abuse in Kirklees⁵. However, in order to truly tackle the issue, the approach needs to be holistic with more emphasis placed on preventing abuse and harm from happening in the first place. It is well documented that domestic abuse can have a devastating and long lasting impact on children and this can often be in conjunction with other adverse childhood experiences. The Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership are therefore committed to understanding these and the links to other safeguarding issues. To prevent the incidence of domestic abuse in the future, it is recognized locally that further targeted, preventative work must be undertaken to change the social norms and reduce the number of children and young people being exposed to domestic abuse at home through engagement with schools and further education providers; through community provision, and by using innovative approaches and social media.

⁴ Refreshed in March 2019 with the addition of a position statement relating to male victims

⁵ Summary at Appendix 1

Preventative work in this area will also address the increase in incidents of intergenerational violence involving adolescents and parents and help children understand the difference between unhealthy and healthy relationships.

Similarly, there is increasing evidence locally and nationally in adult cases of neglect and abuse of the impact of cumulative risk. This is where a combination of mental health, domestic abuse and drugs and alcohol are prevalent in the home and result in negative, long term outcomes for families. There are also emerging concerns across children's and adult services where certain health conditions can contribute to the abusive behavior (ie. Dementia or Autistic Spectrum Disorders). The Health sector specifically can often be the first point of call for many living with domestic abuse (including GPs, A&E, Mental Health Services) so their commitment and engagement with the agenda is crucial.

Domestic abuse is disproportionately gendered but it is imperative to recognise that domestic abuse can affect everyone at some point on their lives but some groups of people can have additional vulnerabilities and/or characteristics that may require a different response. Male victims; those in LGBT+ relationships; those with physical and learning disabilities; older people; those with insecure immigration status and/or of different cultural/ethnic backgrounds should be able to feel equally as supported in accessing services and confident about how to report any concerns.

Evidence shows that those experiencing domestic abuse are more likely to face housing and/or homelessness issues, so the role of Housing Providers is key to ensure that supported housing and adequate refuge accommodation is available and able to respond locally to these needs.

In summary, the challenge of tackling domestic abuse and encouraging a tolerant society cannot rest with any one agency and it is only by adopting a 'whole family' ethos and seeing domestic abuse as part of a bigger picture, affecting multiple families and communities that Kirklees will be able to start changing perceptions and contribute to preventing abuse from happening at the earliest stage.

The 2019-21 Kirklees Vision and Approach

Tackling domestic abuse has been a key priority for Kirklees for many years. We continue to adopt a zero tolerance approach and our ambition is that people treat one another with respect and compassion. The Kirklees vision for the next three years is:

'FOR EVERYONE TO UNDERSTAND THEIR RESPONSIBILITY AND CONTRIBUTE TO TACKLING DOMESTIC ABUSE IN KIRKLEES'

Kirklees supports SafeLives' 'The Whole Picture - our strategy to end domestic abuse, for good' and in particular, the pro-active approach to widen the response to domestic abuse. This includes challenging the whole of society to deconstruct stereotypes to encourage communities to have a low tolerance and high urgency about identifying abuse. This also extends to looking at geographical communities, online spaces and employers/businesses so that they understand the risks posed by those who abuse and their role in protecting those at risk of harm. SafeLives state that 'domestic abuse is never all of someone's experiences or

situation' and with this in mind, the Kirklees Strategy will aim to provide the best provision of services for those who have already experienced abuse and violence at all levels of risk by promoting a 'whole family' approach so that the needs of the individual are not considered and acted on in isolation. Furthermore, the early intervention and prevention focus (ie. acting before someone harms or is harmed) will provide an opportunity to work far more with our communities, elected members, schools, health providers, businesses and voluntary sector services to raise awareness of the issue and increase confidence for people to report and confidence to respond when a disclosure may be made. It is paramount that communities and society are strengthened to support people experiencing domestic abuse to be safe, well and resilient but this will also need a sustainable, strong infrastructure of statutory services and provision to be in place for those most vulnerable and at highest risk.

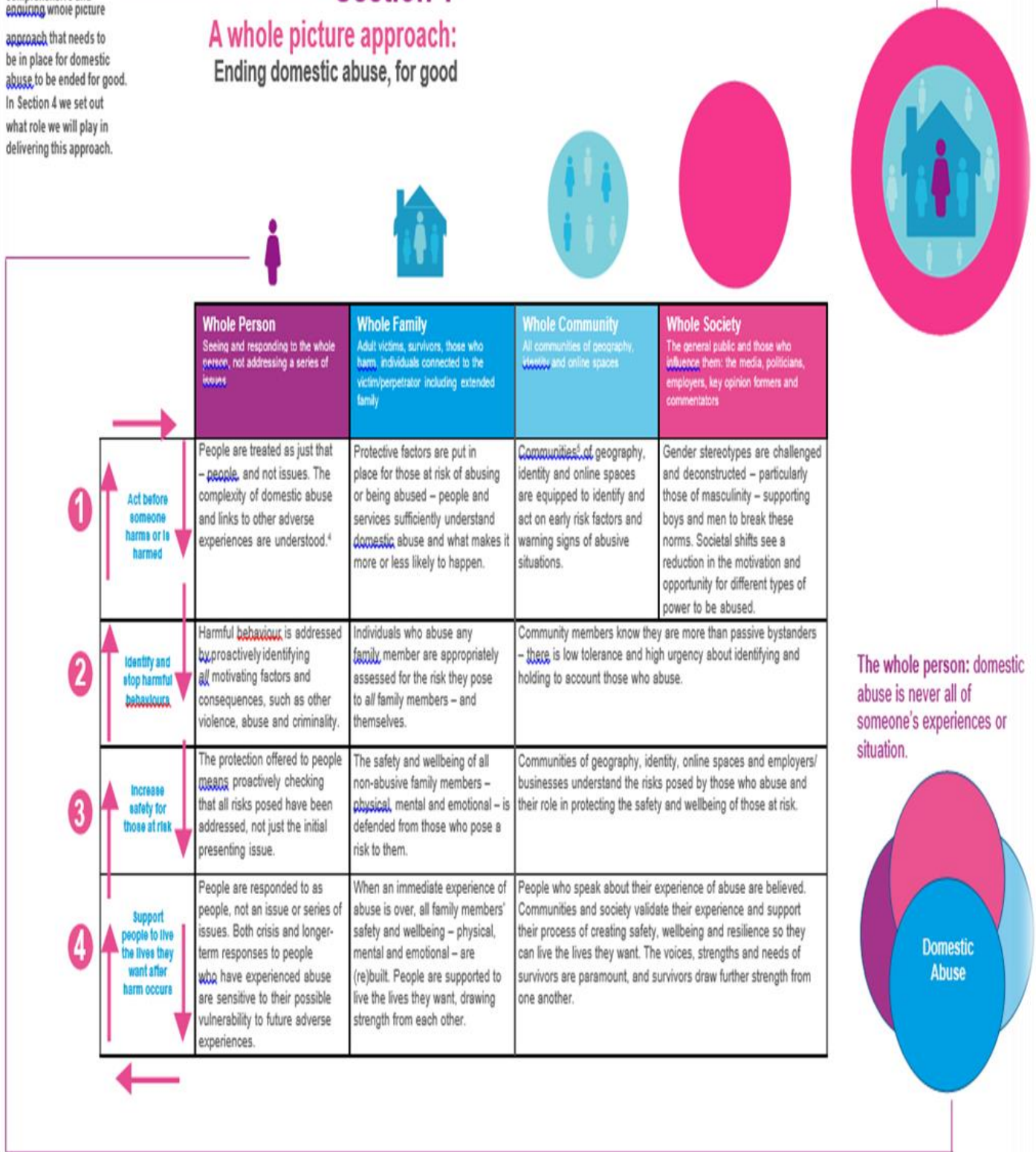
SafeLives outlines a framework to set out the comprehensive and enduring whole picture approach that needs to be in place to tackle domestic abuse in a bid to eradicate it. This model is equally as applicable in a partnership setting and in Kirklees, we believe this is an innovative way to enable all stakeholders and communities to better understand the role we all have in this crucial agenda. Following on from this there are a number of strategic priorities that have been agreed across the partnership which will be supported by a detailed action plan and a set of capabilities that all those within the sector will need to apply.

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We believe the following framework sets out the comprehensive and **ensuring** whole picture approach that needs to be in place for domestic abuse to be ended for good. In Section 4 we set out what role we will play in delivering this approach.

Section 1

A whole picture approach: Ending domestic abuse, for good



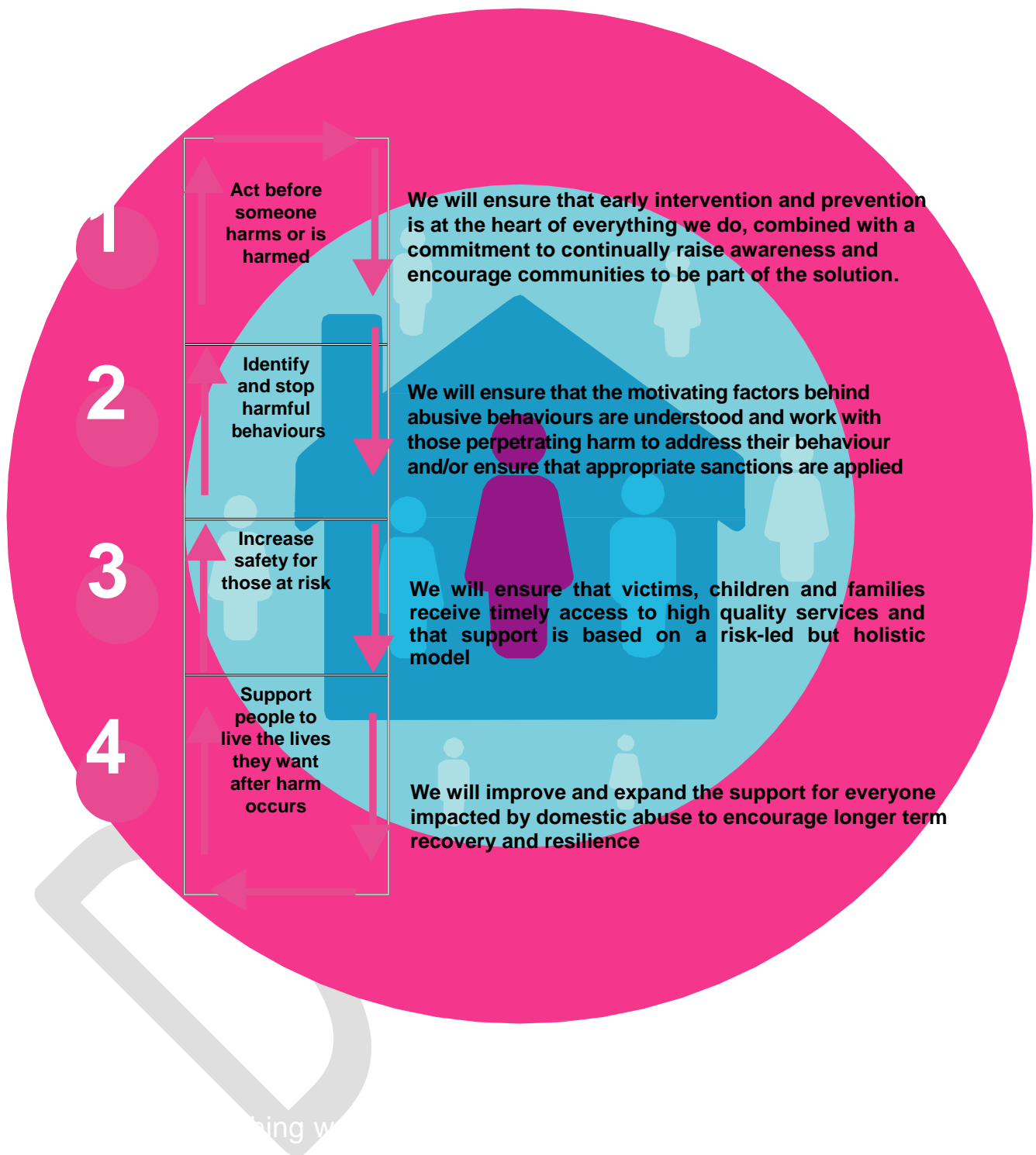
The whole person: domestic abuse is never all of someone's experiences or situation.



⁴Such as child abuse, child sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation, sexual violence, trauma, mental ill health, substance use, or economic disadvantage.

⁵Individuals might form an identifiable community; we work on the basis that within that community will also be a range of views, backgrounds and experiences.

During 2019/21 we will:



Strategic priority 1

Act before someone harms or is harmed

- Use evidence based, local and national research with a strong emphasis on survivor and 'lived' experiences to inform and implement change
- Raise awareness of domestic abuse through continued public information campaigns to influence and change attitudes and behaviours, with a focus on any emerging issues where targeted campaigns may be required
- Focus on working with schools and education to fully understand the offer within schools for both pupils and staff and build on the work of 'schools as Community Hubs'
- Increase the offer and confidence within communities to respond to domestic abuse that builds community capacity and encourages a thriving, high quality voluntary sector

Strategic priority 2

Identify and stop harmful behaviours

- Ensure that assessments and responses fully address the factors that can contribute to someone causing harm
- Place an emphasis on cases that may not necessarily require social care or formal safeguarding interventions in a bid to reduce the risk of harm and harm escalating at the earliest opportunity
- Focus on the connections between other adverse childhood experiences and domestic abuse so that children and families are supported to make the positive changes that they are involved in
- Support those perpetrating harm to address their behaviour to put the onus of responsibility on them and increase their understanding of the impact of their actions on others. Where this is not evidenced, appropriate sanctions should be applied

Strategic priority 3

Increase safety for those at risk

- Ensure that those experiencing domestic abuse are supported through effective pathways and timely access to services (both statutory and non-statutory) so that the needs of the individuals and families are considered in a holistic way (rather than simply focusing on the initial presenting issue)
- Ensure that where disclosures are made, the partnership can support those going through the criminal justice system to achieve positive outcomes
- Where gaps in service are identified, the partnership can employ smart commissioning arrangements to ensure that all victims are supported in a way that involves them in the solution
- Ensure that there is a focus on victims with protected characteristic or other vulnerabilities that may make them 'invisible' and therefore, more susceptible to harm

Strategic priority 4

Supporting people to live the lives they want after harm occurs

- People who are experiencing abuse can retain or access safe and suitable accommodation
- Build on existing support services for those affected by domestic abuse to aid longer term recovery through traditional methods (such as therapeutic services and counselling) as well as exploring new innovative ways (such as digital and web based opportunities)
- Support those who have experienced domestic abuse to become actively involved in the agenda at a time that is right for them
- Continue to work across the partnership and communities so that the longer term impact of abuse is understood and strive to provide longer term capacity where there may still be difficulties (such as financial hardship, issues over child contact, insecure immigration status).

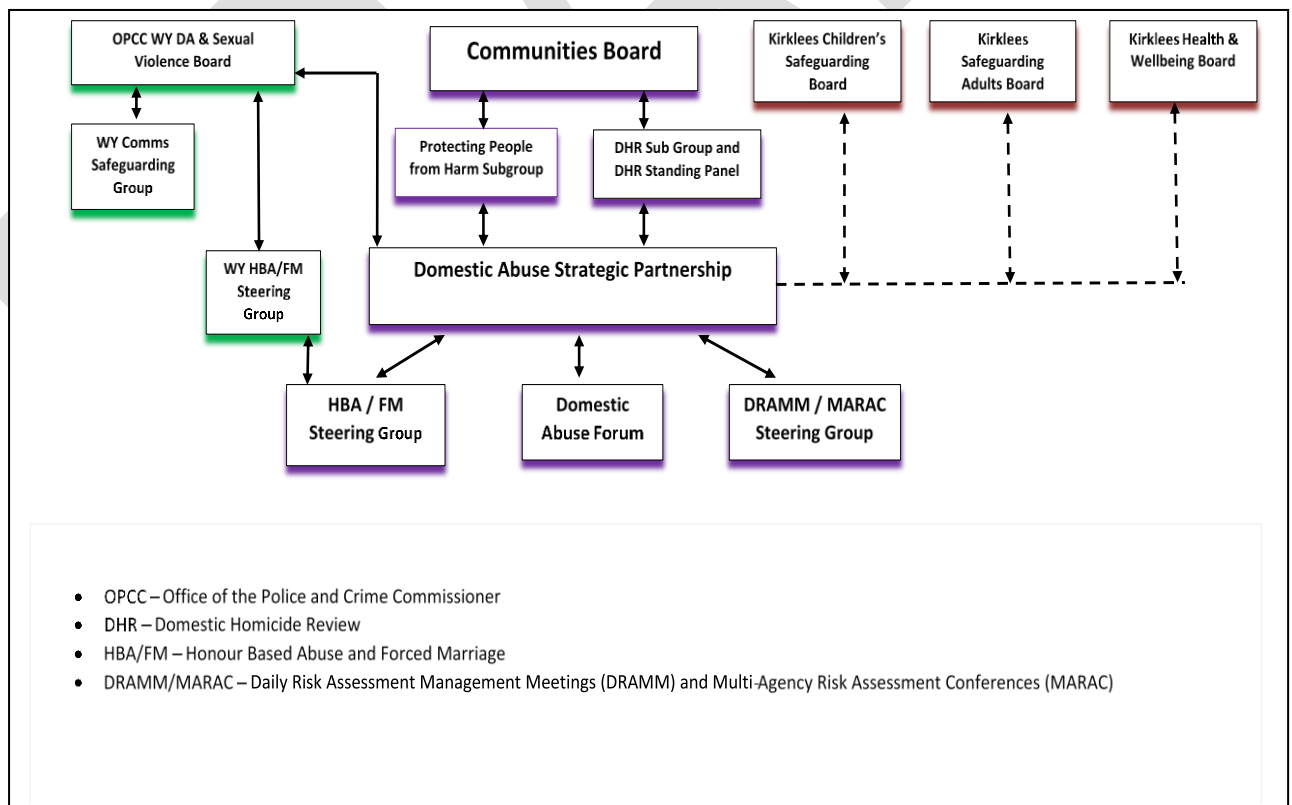
Governance

The area of Domestic Abuse is governed by the Kirklees Communities Board and is a priority in the Safer Kirklees Partnership Plan under the strand of 'Protecting People from Harm.' Given the cross cutting nature of Domestic Abuse and the impact this has on all communities and groups of people, it is also linked to the key objectives set out in the Safeguarding Adults Board Strategic Plan; the Children's Safeguarding Board's Business Plan as well as complementing wider Kirklees strategic groups such as the Health & Wellbeing Board and other connected agendas (sexual abuse, Child Sexual Exploitation, Prevent, Modern Day Slavery, Female Genital Mutilation and Gangs/Gang Violence).

Reducing the prevalence of Domestic Abuse is a key priority for Kirklees and the main group established to lead on implementing the Kirklees Domestic Abuse Strategy and associated action plans is the Domestic Abuse Strategic Partnership (DASP). The DASP is an effective, multi-agency group of senior representatives from all relevant agencies and is committed to addressing the impact of domestic abuse in Kirklees.

There are also a number of operational subgroups that feed into this group, namely the Domestic Abuse Forum; the Daily Risk Assessment Management Meetings (DRAMM) and Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARAC) Steering Group and the Honour Based Abuse and Forced Marriage Steering Group, In addition to this, Domestic Abuse is considered and tackled at a regional level through the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner's (OPCC) Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Board.

Partnership capabilities



Under to achieve the vision set out in this strategy, it is critical that the partnership collectively apply the following capabilities:

Leadership and strong partnerships, evidenced by:

- validation at all levels of all organisations
- engagement and buy in by elected members and strategic leads with an increased offer to help them in their roles as community leaders
- successful collaborations outside the partnership (ie. with businesses; other authorities and organisations) to create funding opportunities

Understanding and knowledge, evidenced by

- research, including using the learning from DHRs, SARS and SCRs
- using the voice of the victim and experiences of those who have lived with/witnessed domestic abuse (including children)

Skills, confidence and motivation, evidenced by

- the workforce stability and ability to attract and retain staff from a range of backgrounds and experiences
- quality of staff and client interventions
- continual learning to enhance existing skills
- reflective supervision

Continual learning, evidenced by

- dynamic and quality assured training delivery which responds continually to new and emerging issues (ie. legislative and/or following local research)
- practitioner events being established quarterly
- training records and evaluations

Quality assurance and accountability, evidenced by

- partnership inspections and case file audits
- good quality DHRs, SARs and SCRs
- critical friend and peer reviews
- acting and implementing national best practice in a range of settings