

# Referral from Scrutiny Committee – Support for Victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment



<b>Report to:</b>	Cabinet
<b>Date:</b>	12 October 2023
<b>Portfolio Holder:</b>	Councillor Stacy Seales, Portfolio Holder for Community
<b>Lead Officer:</b>	Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services (01279) 446099
<b>Key Decision:</b>	No
<b>Forward Plan:</b>	Forward Plan number I016172
<b>Call In:</b>	This item is subject to call in procedures
<b>Corporate Priority:</b>	Restore pride in Harlow
<b>Wards Affected:</b>	None specifically

## Recommended that:

- A** The Council seeks to take proactive steps to tackle the 'hot spots' the Police identified for harassment, and consideration be given to putting these locations in the public domain.
- B** Additional 'softer' measures to chart progress in tackling domestic violence (i.e., in addition to conviction rates) be developed.
- C** Agreements between relevant local authorities in supporting those who have escaped domestic violence to return to their home authority are formalised, where this is considered appropriate.

## Reason for decision

- A** The Scrutiny Committee carried out a review on support for victims of Domestic Abuse and sexual harassment and made a series of recommendations.

## **Other Options**

**A** No other options were considered.

## **Background**

1. The Scrutiny Committee has conducted a review on support that can be provided to victims of Domestic Abuse and Sexual Harassment. On 11 July, it held question and answer session with Essex Police, the Safer Harlow Partnership, and other related organisations.

## **Issues/Proposals**

2. At its meeting on 12 September, the Committee agreed its recommendations to Cabinet which are included as recommendations A-C in this report.

## **Implications**

### **Equalities and Diversity**

If Cabinet agrees the recommendations then an EqIA will be required.

### **Climate Change**

None.

### **Communities and Environment**

The report dovetails with the agreed key priorities within the approved Community Safety Strategy. The Council, working with its partners and through the Safer Harlow Partnership supports the findings and the actions proposed.

Author: Simon Freeman, Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Finance

### **Finance**

There are no direct financial implications at this stage, targeted work will be dealt with using existing resources wherever possible.

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### **Governance and Corporate Services**

The recommendations from scrutiny will require further work to respond to should they be accepted by the Cabinet, it is suggested this is factored into any decision made at the meeting.

Author: Simon Hill, Director of Governance and Corporate Services

## **Appendices**

Appendix A – Report to Scrutiny Committee on 11 September 2023

Appendix B – Minutes of Scrutiny Committee meeting on 11 July 2023

## **Background Papers**

None.

## **Glossary of terms/abbreviations used**

None.