

## **Manchester City Council Report for Information**

**Report to:** Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee – 26 June 2024

**Subject:** The impact of domestic abuse on children and the departmental response to this

**Report of:** Interim Strategic Director (Childrens and Education Services)

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### **Summary**

The purpose of this report is to inform Childrens Scrutiny Committee of the approach being taken to support Manchester’s children who have been impacted by domestic abuse.

Manchester has been refreshing its approach to Domestic Abuse (see appendix 1 presentation) and in collaboration with partners has taken an opportunity not only to develop our strategic direction but to implement changes to practice to domestic abuse in Manchester which best supports the “whole family” approach .

The priorities in the refreshed approach come from the combination of Children and Young People’s Plan and the Domestic Violence Strategy and have been informed by children and young people. We will achieve our priorities through a children’s rights-based approach that is: accountable, participatory, transparent, non-discriminatory and that puts the best interests of children at the heart of everything we do.

### **Aims and Approach**

Our aims are in line with the Corporate Domestic Abuse Strategy are:

- Understand the impact on children as victims
- Prevent abuse and promote healthy relationships
- Identify abuse and intervene as early as possible.
- Support victims/ survivors' recovery.

We will do this through:

- Taking a person-centered and trauma-informed approach to supporting victims and families, which recognises the complex nature of domestic abuse and appreciates that everyone's needs, and circumstances will be different.
- Putting the needs of victims and their families at the centre of our approach to the design, commissioning and delivery of support and services.
- Empowering frontline staff and their managers, through comprehensive training and resources, to recognise and respond effectively to domestic abuse, engage with victims and their families and steer them towards the support and services they need.

- Ensuring that all victims can access support with a clear, appropriate package of care that is tailored to their needs, at all levels of identified risk.
- Delivering interventions that are evidence-informed and insight-driven, promoting a culture of continual learning through the collection and use of data.
- Continuing to work closely with our specialist domestic abuse partners, to support them and learn from their knowledge and expertise
- Employ a range of measures, in conjunction with specialist partners, to robustly challenge and address the behaviour of perpetrators of abuse.

Manchester City Council is fundamentally guided by a commitment to children’s rights, which shapes the way we design and provide services for the children and families in our care. This commitment is exemplified in our pursuit of the UNICEF Child Friendly City recognition. Our Domestic Abuse strategy is built around this approach, ensuring that children’s voices, needs, priorities, and rights are at the heart of our public policies, programmes, and decisions.

In developing the strategy, we have worked collaboratively with our partners and are now connecting with families to help co-create training workshops, marking the next phase of our journey. Our approach to driving change is rooted in relationship-based practice, cluster and locality working, which keeps us connected to our children’s communities. We prioritise the voice and influence of children and young people. The child is the focal point of all our efforts, and we are unwavering in our dedication to improving their outcomes for the child and the whole family.

## Recommendations

The Children and Young People Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:

1. Consider the presentation and offer comment on the approach being taken.

## Wards Affected: All

<p><b>Environmental Impact Assessment</b> -the impact of the issues addressed in this report on achieving the zero-carbon target for the city</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p><b>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion</b> - the impact of the issues addressed in this report in meeting our Public Sector Equality Duty and broader equality commitments</p>	<p>Manchester’s approach to domestic abuse strategically engages a variety of communities. This continues to be a focal point. Our Domestic abuse approach works with inclusivity and delivering support that best meets the needs of the whole family. We will ensure the availability of professional interpreters and advocates as required, and some entities broaden their diversity and inclusion efforts to incorporate a wider range of perspectives. Certain services are</p>

	<p>specifically tailored to men and members of the LGBTQ+ forum as well as families from specific ethnic backgrounds. We understand the support from community services who share similar racial, religious, and linguistic attributes does build confidence for families.</p> <p>Our commitments strive to ensure that domestic abuse services are accessible, effective, and attuned to the diverse needs of all individuals.</p>
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<b>Manchester Strategy outcomes</b>	<b>Summary of how this report aligns to the Our Manchester Strategy/Contribution to the Strategy</b>
A thriving and sustainable city: supporting a diverse and distinctive economy that creates jobs and opportunities	Effective support for our families in the community they live. This support in the community enables them to connect, provide support, contribute and be part of Manchester. We want to work with partners and community support for families to remain safely in their family home in the area and community they live.
A highly skilled city: world class and home grown talent sustaining the city's economic success	Ensuring our families are given the opportunity to access immediate and ongoing support as their needs change and develop, so their potential is achieved.
A progressive and equitable city: making a positive contribution by unlocking the potential of our communities	<p>Building a trusted relationship with our families helps builds their resilience, recover from trauma which is needed to enable their potential to be achieved.</p> <p>Our thriving families work is built on a whole family approach and will support this way of working.</p>
A liveable and low carbon city: a destination of choice to live, visit, work	N/A
A connected city: world class infrastructure and connectivity to drive growth	As highlighted we want to support people to remain in their community and be supported to thrive, safely and without fear of risk. With support from services who are working together.

Full details are in the body of the report, along with any implications for:

- Equal Opportunities Policy
- Risk Management
- Legal Considerations

## **Financial Consequences – Revenue**

N/A

## **Financial Consequences – Capital**

N/A

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### **Background documents (available for public inspection):**

Domestic Abuse: Our Manchester Approach