

CABINET	AGENDA ITEM No. 7
15th November 2021	PUBLIC REPORT

Report of:	Rob Hill – Assistant Director Community Safety	
Cabinet Member(s) responsible:	Councillor Steve Allen – Cabinet Member for Housing, Culture and Communities	
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DOMESTIC ABUSE – SAFE ACCOMMODATION STRATEGY

RECOMMENDATIONS	
FROM: Rob Hill – Assistant Director Community Safety	Deadline date: 5 January 2021
It is recommended that Cabinet approve the Peterborough Safe Accommodation Strategy	

1. ORIGIN OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report is submitted to Cabinet following Scrutiny Committee on 28 September 2021, where the Draft Safe Accommodation Strategy was endorsed.

2. PURPOSE AND REASON FOR REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is for Cabinet to endorse and agree the Safe Accommodation Strategy as required by the Domestic Abuse Act 2021
- 2.2 This report is for Cabinet to consider under its Terms of Reference No. 3.2.4, *'To promote the Council's corporate and key strategies and Peterborough's Community Strategy and approve strategies and cross-cutting programmes not included within the Council's major policy and budget framework.'*

3. TIMESCALES

Is this a Major Policy Item/Statutory Plan?	STATUTORY PLAY	If yes, date for Cabinet meeting	15 NOV 2021
Date for relevant Council meeting if applicable	N/A	Date for submission to Government Dept. <i>(Please specify which Government Dept.)</i>	DLUHC 5 Jan 2022

4. BACKGROUND AND KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 sets in statute that Tier One authorities must prepare and publish a local strategy based on a robust needs assessment, the first of which should be published by 5th January 2021 as set out in regulations. Thereafter, Strategies must be reviewed every three years.

Peterborough City Council have been allocated £477,374 for 2021/22 only at this stage to deliver the strategy. Both MHCLG and the Local Government Association have indicated there is likely to be funding for future years, however, the level of funding will not be confirmed until the Autumn Statement 2021.

4.2 To inform the development of the strategy, a full needs assessment was conducted, the key challenges from which are as follows:

- A spectrum of response is required to meet varied needs of clients, dependent on their risk, household structure, occupation, and tenure of property.
- Provision of easily accessible accommodation to those at risk of abuse and their children who are safe to stay within the area (Peterborough & Cambridgeshire) if provided with additional support.
- Provision of therapeutic support to victims and their children who have experienced domestic abuse.
- Ensuring greater support is provided to the housing sector to improve awareness and support to those experiencing domestic abuse.
- Ensuring a consistency of support across both urban and very rural areas, as this rurality provides challenges for this work.

A copy of the Needs Assessment is available at [Welcome to Cambridgeshire DASV Partnership \(cambsdasv.org.uk\)](http://cambsdasv.org.uk)

4.3 As a result of the needs assessment, and in response to the key challenges summarised above, the three key aims of this strategy are:

- Earlier identification and intervention for domestic abuse through access to domestic abuse support, local authority housing advice and social and private landlords
- A reduction in the number of victims of abuse who are made homeless as a result of domestic abuse
- Increased housing sustainment options so that people experiencing domestic abuse can remain safely in their home when it is their choice to do so, or do not lose their tenancy status if they relocate.

4.4 The Strategy will follow the Whole Housing Approach to Domestic Abuse. Alongside Cambridgeshire, Peterborough were one of the key delivery partners in developing and adopting the Whole Housing Approach, with funding from MHCLG from 2018 – 2021. This approach is endorsed by the Domestic Abuse Commissioner, Nicole Jacobs, as well as highlighted as good practice within the Domestic Abuse Act Guidance. This approach has enabled victims of domestic abuse to access safe accommodation regardless of the tenure of property and enables specialist domestic abuse staff to offer a range of flexible options with regards to increasing the safety of those suffering domestic abuse and their children. A whole system approach is needed to effectively address the key issues and barriers experienced by survivors and to ensure they have access to a safe place to call home. The WHA model offers a framework for the domestic abuse and housing sectors to work together to address the immediate and longer-term housing needs of survivors. The model incorporates the experiences of survivors, the expertise of system leaders and established, evidence-based practice

In adopting this approach, we can ensure access to a range of tailored housing options and initiatives to give people experiencing domestic abuse the choice to either relocate or remain in their existing accommodation. The full suite of housing options enables agencies and organisations to work together more collaboratively. Effective coordination efforts consider the long-term safety of the victim/survivor and their children, as well as managing crisis situations.

The elements within this approach are set out within the strategy document. The extent to which these can be delivered, will depend to some extent to the funding made available for 2022-2024.

5. CONSULTATION

- 5.1 A consultation event was held on 10th August 2021 as part of the development of the Safer Accommodation Strategy, attended by local authorities, housing providers, specialist domestic abuse services, police, the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner, and representatives from health. It was also circulated to the DASV Partnership Board and Operations Groups. Consultation was also undertaken with the Sub Regional Housing Board, and the Safer Peterborough Partnership. It was endorsed by the Domestic Abuse Strategic Board on 8th September 2021.

6. ANTICIPATED OUTCOMES OR IMPACT

- 6.1 This strategy and the associated funding will result in:
- Earlier identification and intervention for domestic abuse through access to domestic abuse support, local authority housing advice and social and private landlords
 - A reduction in the number of victims of abuse who are made homeless as a result of domestic abuse
 - Increased housing sustainment options so that people experiencing domestic abuse can remain safely in their home when it is their choice to do so, or do not lose their tenancy status if they relocate

An increase in the number of individuals and their children suffering from domestic abuse able to be advised, supported and able to cope with and recover from the abuse they have suffered

7. REASON FOR THE RECOMMENDATION

- 7.1 Having a Safe Accommodation Strategy is a Statutory requirement of the Domestic Abuse Act.

8. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

- 8.1 This is a Statutory Requirement, there are no alternative options.

9. IMPLICATIONS

Financial Implications

- 9.1 In 2021/22, Peterborough City Council were awarded £477,374 as part of a Section 31 Grant Agreement. The strategy is reliant on funding being available in future years and any services commissioned must go through all legal procurement procedures.

Legal Implications

- 9.2 This strategy is a Statutory requirement under Section 4 of the Domestic Abuse Act.

Equalities Implications

- 9.3 This strategy will ensure the needs of all victims with relevant protected characteristics are considered and met, including gender, race, language, religion, sexual orientation, age health and disabilities. The action plan will set out how the barriers faced by victims with relevant protected characteristics and / or multiple complex needs, will be addressed.

Rural Implications

- 9.4 Those living in rural areas may have increased difficulties in accessible suitable support. This strategy recognises the need to ensure all support services with the strategy are accessible to those who may live in rural areas.

Carbon Impact Assessment

- 9.5 Publication of this strategy will not impact on carbon emissions in Peterborough

10. BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Used to prepare this report, in accordance with the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985

- 10.1 *Safe Accommodation Needs Assessment*
https://www.cambsdasv.org.uk/storage/secure_download/SFdsdTVkSk1BNII5MXI3VDFmUkhPQT09
Domestic Abuse Act 2021 [Domestic Abuse Act 2021 \(legislation.gov.uk\)](https://www.legislation.gov.uk)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Appendix 1: Draft Safe Accommodation Strategy – Peterborough City Council