

## **Cabinet – 20 October 2021**

### **Violence and All Age Exploitation Strategy**

**Portfolio:** Councillor Perry, Deputy Leader, Resilient Communities

**Related portfolios:** Councillor Wilson, Children’s Services  
Councillor Martin, Adult Social Care

**Service:** Resilient Communities

**Wards:** All

**Key decision:** Yes

**Forward plan:** Yes

#### **1. Aim**

1.1 To put in place a strategy to tackle All Age Exploitation.

#### **2. Summary**

2.1 The impact of exploitation on the health and wellbeing of our residents is both damaging and costly. A strategy that reduces exploitation, especially one that has the full support of partner organisations and a commitment to a whole system multi agency approach is a prerequisite to delivering effective activity and achieving measurable outcomes.

2.2 A “public health approach” is a methodology that, in this case, treats violence and exploitation like an infectious disease. It suggests that policy makers should search for a ‘cure’ by using scientific evidence to identify what causes violence exploitation and find interventions that work to prevent it spreading.

2.3 Our Overall goal is to prevent violence and exploitation, reduce the harm caused and thus improve health and wellbeing across Walsall Borough.

2.4 If approved an action plan will be prepared and governance of the plan will sit with the Safer Walsall Partnership.

#### **3. Recommendations**

3.1 That Cabinet approves the All Age Exploitation Strategy (**Appendix B**).

## **4. Report detail – Know**

### **4.1 Violence and Exploitation across Walsall Borough**

4.1 Violence and exploitation are key issues across Walsall Borough influencing both the health and wellbeing of our population and lead to significant health inequalities. Violence and exploitation can have an impact right across all ages, with potentially devastating consequences. Whilst many people survive their experience of violence and/or exploitation, the impact that it has on their physical and mental health and wellbeing can be long lasting and severe. We believe that violence and exploitation are preventable and by working in partnership and engaging with our communities and a range of agencies across Walsall, we aim to reduce and ultimately bring an end to these behaviours and so improve the health and wellbeing of our population.

4.3 To achieve this aim we need to take a whole-system multi-agency approach. We need to continue to work together, across multiple agencies and organisational boundaries, to identify and address the root causes and drivers, and promote factors that protect individuals from becoming involved in violence and exploitation in the first place. We also need to be able to identify those people who are at risk of committing violent crimes, or being a victim of violence and/or exploitation, at an early stage and intervene early.

4.4 Such an approach is known as a “public health approach” approach. This does not mean that that it is the responsibility of Public Health alone to deal with, tackle and resolve the issues identified. Rather a methodology in this case, treats violence and exploitation like an infectious disease. It suggests that policy makers should search for a ‘cure’ by using scientific evidence to identify what causes violence and find interventions that work to prevent it spreading. A ‘public health’ approach involves multiple public services working together to implement early interventions to prevent people from becoming involved in violent crime.

4.5 The approach described above is an extension of the way that many agencies are currently moving.

### **4.6 Strategic Objectives**

Where do we want to be? Our Overall goal is to prevent violence and exploitation, reduce the harm caused and thus improve health and wellbeing across Walsall Borough.

To do this we will ensure closer working with partners to ensure strong and resilient infrastructure is in place to support this strategy.

We will work with our communities to ensure that the valuable role they can play in identifying and challenging exploitation.

## 4.7 **Public Health Approach**

The key steps in this methodology are:

### Step 1: Build Strong Foundations:

Understand the “who,” “what,” “when,” “where,” and “how” associated with it. This involves analysing data and intelligence, engaging with our communities, analysing the evidence and implementing a public health approach.

### Step 2: Primary Prevention:

Recognise when intervention is needed at an early stage and put appropriate in place, for example early years support.

### Step 3: Secondary Prevention:

Recognise those who are vulnerable to violence and exploitation and intervene (individuals and communities) to prevent further harm. Encourage a culture of professional curiosity, training staff about contextual safeguarding and trauma informed practice.

### Step 4: Tertiary Prevention:

Support those who have been harmed and intervene to support them to cope, recover & rebuild their lives.

### Step 5: Enforcement & Criminal Justice:

Work in cross cutting ways, developing innovative practice, delivering effective enforcement across the borough and maximise the safety of individuals vulnerable to exploitation.

Additionally, for all of the five strands, we will work with our partners to evaluate community projects/interventions to contribute and build upon the evidence base on the effectiveness of different interventions.

Long term, meaningful, sustainable change, may well require a shift in the way agencies and individuals work, how our communities perceives violence and exploitation and how well our interventions suit their needs. Therefore, our communities need to co-design our solutions with us, so we are tailoring the approach at “place level.” Co-production can build trust within our communities and we need to ensure that they feel empowered to make a difference. Additionally, we need to acknowledge the fact that this change will be complex and that it may take time to become embedded.

## 4.8 **Expected outcome measures**

A separate detailed evaluation plan will be developed to outline outcomes in more detail and monitor progress. However, the expected outcomes will include:

- ✓ Improved data sharing, analysis and problem solving.
- ✓ Develop a greater wealth and depth of data surrounding violence and exploitation outcomes and risk/protective factors across Walsall Borough.

- ✓ A reduction in the prevalence of risk factors and an increase in the prevalence of protective factors for violence and exploitation.
- ✓ Increased awareness of the links between Child Sexual Exploitation and other forms of exploitation and violent incidents.
- ✓ Reduction in hospital admissions and attendances for assaults with a knife or sharp object.
- ✓ Reduction in knife- enable serious violence.
- ✓ Reduction in all non-domestic homicides.
- ✓ Safer and stronger communities.
- ✓ Improved partnership and inter-agency working.

#### 4.9 **Governance of strategy**

The governance of this strategy sits with Safer Walsall Partnership, which is the Community Safety Partnership for Walsall.

An annual action plan and regular reporting on development & progress will support this strategy. The commitment of, and engagement from partners and stakeholders, will be supported and driven through wider partnership boards. This strategy will be reviewed annually to ensure that it reflects the current issues and emerging concerns.

#### ***Council Corporate Plan priorities***

#### 4.10 The Strategy will contribute to the following Council's priorities:

Economic growth for all people, communities and businesses – exploitation, in all its forms has a negative impact on confidence both at a personal and community level. A reduction in exploitation will see an improvement in confidence.

People have increased independence, improved health and can positively contribute to their communities – A reduction in exploitation will have a direct effect on an individual's victim's health, particularly mental health. As a member of a community, the support of a victim of exploitation will have positive impact.

#### ***Risk management***

#### 4.11 This strategy will help to reduce the human cost associated with all age exploitation and will assist in developing policies and approaches that more effectively deliver and support those impacted by all age exploitation.

#### ***Financial implications***

#### 4.12 There will be no direct financial implications from this report.

### ***Legal implications***

- 4.13 Section 6(1) Care Act (2014) and Section 10 Children Act (2004) requires the local authority to co-operate with “relevant partners” in exercise of their functions; Section 6(4) Care Act (2014) also requires the local authority to ensure co-operation between Adult Social Care, Children’s Services, Housing and Public Health in order to protect those in need. Chapter 15 of the Care and Support Statutory Guidance confirms that co-operation between partner agencies should be part of local authority strategic thinking. In this context, there are no legal concerns.

### ***Procurement Implications/Social Value***

- 4.14 There will be no direct procurement implications from this report. Any procurement required as a result of this strategy will follow the Council’s procurement regime.

### ***Property implications***

- 4.15 There will be no direct implications from this report. As partners work is more become more closely aligned requests for shared spaces could be supported.

### ***Health and wellbeing implications***

- 4.16 The Marmot objectives are key objectives in relation to this strategy. Reduction in All Age exploitation helps to ensure that individuals have the best environment to maximise their potential.

Providing children and adult victims with timely help and support will allow those individuals to get the best start in life or be helped to get other traumatic exploitation experiences.

Its welcomed that a Public Health approach emphasising a partnership approach was to be utilised promoting a scientific health methodology to define and understand the problem and the application of an explicit interventions to lessen the problem.

It is understood that there is an explicit intention to use evidenced based interventions, where available, or where not available emerging good practice to be adopted for use in the Walsall context.

### ***Staffing implications***

- 4.17 There will be no direct implications from this report. Different approaches and working methods may require HR support in its design and implementation.

### ***Reducing Inequalities***

- 4.18 An EQIA (**Appendix A**) has been completed alongside this Strategy and is attached as **Appendix B**. The Strategy aims to reduce the impact on all residents. However, it is recognising the importance to support victims of exploitation in all its forms.

### ***Consultation***

4.19 The Safer Walsall Partnership will carry out appropriate consultation as part of its approval process.

## 5. Decide

5.1 Cabinet is asked to approve the All Age Exploitation Strategy, which is attached as **Appendix B**.

## 6. Respond

6.1 If approved this strategy will be adopted by the Council and will go to the September meeting of the Safer Walsall Partnership for further agreement by partners.

## 7. Review

7.1 This strategy and resultant action plan will be monitored by the Safer Walsall Partnership on a six monthly basis. The Safeguarding board will be asked to review progress and provide comment as part of this monitoring.

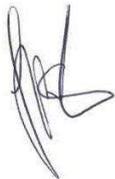
## Background papers

All Age Exploitation Strategy  
EQIA

## Author

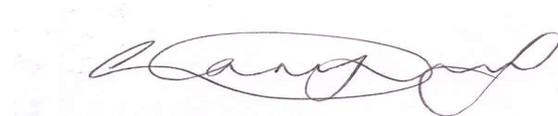
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Simon Neilson  
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6 October 2021



Councillor Perry  
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6 October 2021