

## Luton Domestic Abuse Partnership; Domestic Abuse Strategy 2020 – 2023

### INTRODUCTION:

Domestic Abuse can have a devastating impact on victims, their families, friends and the wider community. It is an issue which threatens the physical and mental wellbeing of those it affects, damaging relationships with others and limiting the ability of individuals and families to live happy and fulfilling lives. Domestic Abuse is defined as:

*“Any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive or 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. This can encompass, but is not limited to, the following types of abuse; psychological, physical, sexual, financial and emotional”.*

Domestic abuse is a gender biased crime; more women are victims and survivors of violence and abuse than men. However, more men are stepping forward seeking support. Our work will take into account the different needs and support for men and women.

This strategy also encompasses respective actions from the Pan Beds Harmful Practices strategy (Forced Marriage, Honour Based Abuse and Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)) because the tasks relate to an overlapping group of partner organisations and these issues are predominantly related to adults.

The purpose of this document is to set out what the Partnerships (Community Safety, Children’s Safeguarding and Adult Safeguarding Boards) intends to do over the next three years in order to “break the cycle” of Domestic Abuse within our families and communities. The detail of this work will be provided in a Domestic abuse Action Plan which will support this document; however, our key aims and ambitions are presented here.

### PRINCIPLES

The Partnership accepts that Domestic Abuse is a complex issue and one which no single organisation can tackle alone. Hence this is a strategy that will be owned by all partners & the three partnership boards (Community Safety Partnership, Local Safeguarding Children’s Board & Local Safeguarding Adult’s Board).

Underpinning this strategy is a principle of collaborative working across agencies in both the statutory and voluntary sector. Furthermore, central to the strategy is the voice of the victim. As a Partnership, we are committed to consulting with and being influenced by service users. Their experiences of Domestic Abuse and of the services in place to support them will be fundamental to shaping new services and our strategic approaches, as well as future involvement with service providers

### PRIORITIES:

There are four strategic priorities which are detailed further in this document: **Prevention and Early Help, Partnership, Provision and Protection.**

### GOVERNANCE:

This strategy and its activities will be accountable to the Community Safety Partnership and the two safeguarding boards.

**Our vision is for Luton to be a place where young people, women and men can live free of fear, violence and abuse**

#### PREVENTION & EARLY HELP:

Supporting communities to prevent and build resilience to domestic abuse and intervene at the earliest stage to prevent escalation and behaviours which foster it and intervening early to prevent it

#### PARTNERSHIP:

All practitioners (voluntary sector, children’s services, health, housing, adults’ social care, community safety, education, police, probation etc) work together to achieve the best possible outcomes for the person / family.

#### PROVISION:

Ensure the services provided in Luton for victims, perpetrators and children are timely, consistent and deliver the appropriate outcomes.

#### PROTECTION:

Respond to risk, protecting vulnerable victims and families affected by domestic abuse

### What we will do to achieve our strategic priorities:

- Collate and use data from all partners to develop a better understanding of needs and provision within Luton
- In partnership, scope current and develop any new appropriate learning material to support the promotion of healthy relationships and understanding of domestic abuse & Harmful Practice to young people in Schools / Colleges / universities.
- Strengthen and develop early intervention work including the provision of programmes which model respectful relationships to provide families with the skills and confidence to recognise harmful relationships and behaviour.
- Working with all communities in Luton to promote a culture of zero tolerance to Harmful Practices and Domestic Abuse. The provision of a rolling programme of awareness raising for adults and communities on the impact of DA on individuals, children and families
- Ensuring the new requirements under the Domestic Abuse Bill are appropriately implemented across the Council and its partners.
- Ensure all frontline practitioners are trained to recognise and offer appropriate support/signposting to victims including (where appropriate) use of safeguarding processes including risk assessments.
- Develop co-ordinated service provision and pathways to provide access to services for victims which are predicated on the different typologies of domestic abuse.
- Strengthen our response to challenging, disrupting and holding perpetrators to account.
- Ensure that there is a clear oversight on how organisations in Luton work both individually and collaboratively to effectively respond to and prevent Domestic Abuse

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