

Subject: Domestic Abuse

Report to: Police and Crime Committee

Report of: Executive Director of Secretariat

Date: 30 October 2019

This report will be considered in public

1. Summary

1.1 This report serves as a background paper to a discussion on domestic abuse in London.

2. Recommendations

2.1 **That the Committee notes the report as background to the discussion on domestic abuse in London and notes the subsequent discussion.**

2.2 **That the Committee delegates authority to the Chair of the Committee, in consultation with party Group Lead Members and Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM, to agree any output from the Committee's investigation into domestic abuse in London.**

3. Background

3.1 Domestic abuse makes up the majority of Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) offences. In 2011, there were around 46,000 domestic abuse offences recorded by the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS), compared to just over 85,000 in 2018: around ten per cent of all recorded offences that year.¹ Contrary to public perception there is a significant proportion of male victims of domestic abuse: the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) reports that nearly a quarter of victims in London in 2018/19 were male.²

3.2 The number of recorded domestic abuse offences that involve violence with injury is also rising: in 2018 there were nearly 24,000 offences, compared with 17,500 in 2011.³ The number of domestic homicides has fluctuated over the past decade. In 2018 there were 23 domestic abuse homicides, compared with eight the previous year and 15 in 2016. The highest number of domestic homicides in London in the past decade occurred in 2013 (31).⁴

¹ Metropolitan Police website, [Hate Crime and Special Crime Dashboard](#)

² MOPAC, [Domestic and Sexual Violence Dashboard](#)

³ Metropolitan Police website, [Hate Crime and Special Crime Dashboard](#)

⁴ Metropolitan Police website, [Hate Crime and Special Crime Dashboard](#)

- 3.3 The MPS has a range of powers available to help tackle domestic abuse. This includes, for example, Domestic Violence Protection Orders, Criminal Behaviour Orders, and the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare’s Law). The Assembly concluded, however, in its January 2019 report, *Domestic Abusers Register*, that “the tools given to the police remain far too patchy.”⁵ The MPS also runs several operations to tackle domestic abuse, including Operation Dauntless+; Operation Athena; and Operation Encompass.
- 3.4 The Mayor’s commitments related to domestic abuse are set out in the Police and Crime Plan and the VAWG Strategy. This includes, for example, a commitment to maintaining the level of Independent Domestic Violence Advocate provision across London.⁶ The Police and Crime Plan sets out measures that are intended to evaluate performance against the Mayor’s domestic abuse commitments. These are to:
- Encourage more domestic abuse victims to come forward;
 - Reduce repeat victimisation; and
 - Reduce the rates of attrition in cases of violence against women and girls as they progress through the criminal justice process.

4. Issues for Consideration

- 4.1 The Committee’s investigation aims to examine:
- Whether the Mayor is making sufficient progress on his objectives and commitments to tackle domestic abuse, and whether his commitments to are still suitable, in light of the current context of domestic abuse;
 - What more is needed from the MPS and other criminal justice partners to effectively tackle domestic abuse, and how the Mayor can facilitate this; and
 - What lessons can be learned and replicated from best practice, both nationally and internationally on tackling domestic abuse.

Remit of the discussion

- 4.2 The Committee will hold an open discussion with invited guests to explore the practical solutions to the increase in domestic abuse in London. Questions for discussion with the guests may include:
- Are victims of domestic abuse getting the support that they need?
 - How can we prevent domestic abuse from happening?
- 4.3 Guests invited to the session have been identified as key stakeholders or commentators on the issue of domestic abuse, including specialist support services for victims and offenders working both nationally and in London. The discussion at this meeting will help to inform the Committee’s output from its scrutiny investigation into domestic abuse in London.

⁵ London Assembly, [Domestic Abusers Register](#), January 2019

⁶ Mayor of London, [A Safer City for Women and Girls](#), March 2018

5. Legal Implications

5.1 The Committee has the power to do what is recommended in this report.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications to the Greater London Authority.

List of appendices to this report: None

Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985
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List of Background Papers: None

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