

Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Group

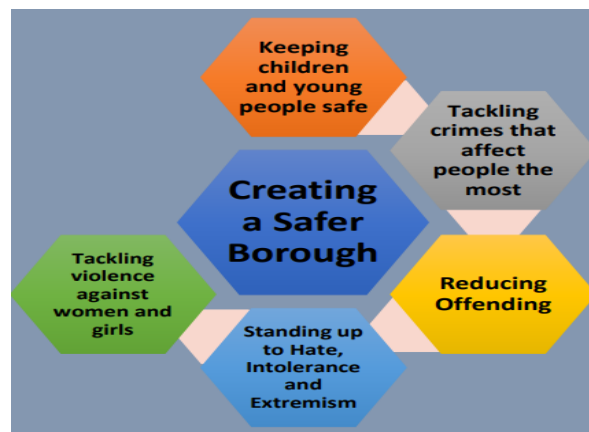
Terms of Reference

Introduction

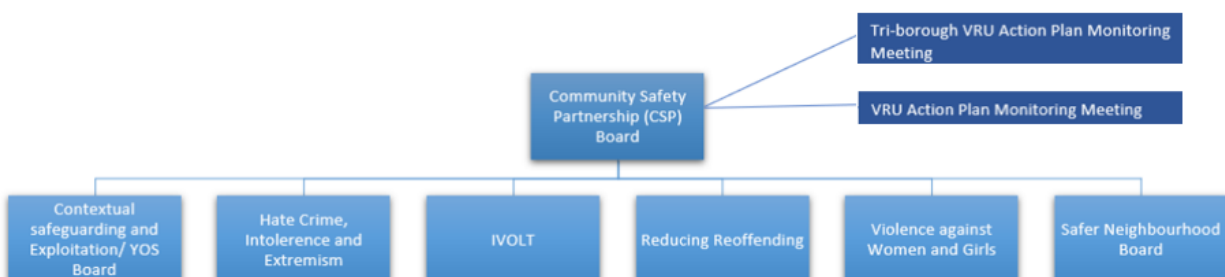
This document sets out the ways in which the partner agencies that comprise the Barking and Dagenham Community Safety Partnership (BDCSP) Violence Against Women and Girls Strategic Group (VAWGSG) work together to achieve aims.

BDCSP Priorities

The BDCSP works together to strategically oversee the delivery of the priorities identified and detailed in the BDCSP Community Safety Plan 2019-22. The priorities of the BDCSP were stated in the 2021 refresh of the plan, as follows:



The CSP Board holds overall responsibility for delivering the priorities outlined in the Community Safety Partnership Plan and other local strategies such as the VAWG strategy. This requires partner organisations to work together at a strategic and operational level to share the skills, powers and resources that are available to them. The BDCSP has established a structure consisting of five priority sub-groups:



The composition of the BDSCP recognises the need for a coordinated, partnership approach to delivering the priorities and addressing community safety concerns across the borough, as well as ensuring compliance with statutory requirements.

Partnership environment

The BDCSP, and the VAWGSG, sits within a wider framework of partnerships. The VAWGSG is part of the BDCSP, but also has responsibility to the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Executive. See Appendix 1 for further detail.

Violence Against Women and Girls

Violence Against Women and Girls is an umbrella term which includes the following types of abuse:

- Domestic abuse, including coercion and control
- Sexual violence, abuse and exploitation including rape and forced prostitution
- Sexual harassment
- Stalking
- Crimes committed in the name of 'honour'
- Harmful practices, including female genital mutilation (FGM) and forced marriage
- Modern slavery and human trafficking
- Gendered gang violence

The BDCSP VAWGSG will ensure effective strategic planning and use of resource (including commissioning), a coordinated approach to meeting statutory requirements and timely delivery of activity to deliver priority outcomes.

The group recognise that across all forms of VAWG, victim/survivors are disproportionately women/girls, and the perpetrators are disproportionately men/boys. The use of the term disproportionately means that men/boys are not excluded as possible victim/survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence, forced marriage etc., and it is also recognised that some perpetrators are women.

VAWGSG Responsibilities

The responsibilities of this group include:

- To ensure delivery of the VAWG priority actions as outlined in the BDCSP Community Safety Plan 2019-22 (2021 refresh), and report by exception to the BDCSP accordingly
- To achieve this through the development of a VAWG strategy and managing its implementation, including effective performance management of key performance indicators
- To deliver the outcomes of the Domestic Abuse Commission and agreed Domestic Abuse Improvement Plan
- To identify funding streams across partners to drive VAWG commissioning and service delivery
- To be assured of excellent standards and continuous improvement by the MARAC, as directed by the MARAC Steering Group, ensuring effective management of high-risk cases and positive outcomes for survivors
- To agree multi agency commissioning plans, underpinned by evidence, needs, and focused on delivering genuine outcomes
- To ensure that the lived experience of survivors informs strategies, plans and commissioning and their voice is heard
- To lead on Domestic Homicide Reviews as required (the BDCSP holds responsibility for determining when a DHR should be commissioned, and members are responsible for the costs associated with a DHR)
- To promote systems working, continuous improvement, sharing of best practice and multi-agency learning

VAWGSG Membership

The following organisations/departments/roles are represented as the core membership:

Organisation / group	Position / detail
London Borough of Barking and Dagenham	Lead Commissioner(s), People and Resilience
	Principal Social Worker, Children's Care and Support
	Principal Social Worker, Adults' Care and Support
	Head of Universal Lifecycle, Community Solutions
	Head of Triage Lifecycle, Community Solutions
	Head of Support Lifecycle, Community Solutions
	Operational Director Enforcement, Regulatory Services and Community Safety / Community Safety Partnership Manager, Law and Governance
	Head of Parks and Environment, My Place
Police	Detective Superintendent, Public Protection, East Area BCU
Probation	
NHS North East London Clinical Commissioning Group, Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge Integrated Care Partnership and North East London Health and Care Partnership	Designated Nurse Safeguarding, CCG
	Integrated Care Director, NELFT
	Head of Universal Children's Services Barking & Dagenham, NELFT
	Mental health, a and e, sexual health
Statutory partnerships	Independent Chair of the Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Adults Board (BDSAB) (Chair)
	Barking and Dagenham Safeguarding Children Partnership (BDSCP) Neglect and Early Help subgroup representative (Vice Chair)
	Barking and Dagenham Health and Wellbeing Board representative
Service provider / user representation	Service Manager, Refuge
	Senior Operations Manager, Refuge
	Victim Support East London Service Manager
Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) Steering Group representation	Detective Chief Inspector, Public Protection Investigations, East Area BCU

Each member has one vote. The Chair has the casting vote.

There will be a wider invitation list to the meetings of the BDCSP VAWGSG, for example other local authority representatives. These attendees will not have a vote.

Individuals and organisations with known expertise and knowledge may be requested to attend meetings as observers. Observers may participate in meetings but shall have no decision-making powers. If a member would like an observer to attend a meeting, they should seek the permission of the Chair.

Each VAWGSG member will be assigned an area to champion into the wider partnership and organisational environment.

Quorum

A valid quorum for meetings is half of the members with the right to be heard. This is the minimum requirement for a decision to be taken. No decision shall be taken without:

- One local authority representative
- One CSP statutory partner representative
- One service provider / user representative

Membership expectations

- To attend the meetings of the BDCSP VAWGSG and when they cannot attend to send a named deputy who has been briefed prior to their attendance. The named deputy will have full voting rights
- To have authority to be able to act and make decisions as required
- To commit to developing an appropriate level of understanding around violence against women and girls' issues, policy and practice as required
- To work together productively to overcome any cross-organisational barriers
- To take the lead on the delivery of specific priorities, projects or actions as required

Chair

The role of the Chair is to ensure:

- The BDCSP VAWGSG is delivering agreed activity as outlined in agreed strategies and plans, with quarterly performance reporting by exception and an annual performance report produced
- Priorities are reviewed and refreshed on an annual basis
- Governance, including the delivery groups and related action plans, is annually reviewed

The lead officer of the BDCSP will act as vice chair as required.

Confidentiality

All attendees have a duty of confidentiality regarding all information disclosed, shared, and discussed between and during BDCSP VAWGSG meetings. There will be occasions when selected information must not be disclosed outside the BDCSP. The person disclosing such information is responsible for identifying it as confidential at the time it is given and for ensuring that its confidential status is identified in all relevant written material. Any challenge to the confidentiality of information will be referred to the Chair, whose decision on the matter will be final.

Administrative support

The administration of the VAWGSG shall be managed by the Council.

Subgroups

The MARAC Steering Group (MARACSG) is a subgroup of the VAWGSG.

Further subgroups are established as required by the Chair. Each subgroup should have a full terms of reference and should work on a task and finish basis.

Meeting frequency

The VAWGSG will meet at least four times per annum. The VAWGSG may request sub-group meetings on particular topics more frequently.

Performance indicators

The VAWGSG will agree outcome indicators related to action plans. These will provide a performance framework to capture progress and to identify and tackle emerging issues. They will be reported on by exception at each VAWGSG meeting and an annual performance report shall be produced.

Urgent matters

Decisions may be made about urgent matters without a group meeting providing the written consent of the Chair is sought and given. In this case the Chair must ensure that every effort has been made to consult informally with members and report any decisions taken at the next meeting.

Representation at BDCSP

The Chair or lead officer of the VAWGSG will attend meetings of the BDSCP and it is their role to ensure a two-way flow of information between the fora.

Appendix 1

