

Kingston Domestic Violence Forum

Terms of Reference

Purpose

- To ensure that the needs of people in Kingston who are experiencing or who have experienced domestic violence are met by provision of accessible and holistic support services. To prioritise the safety of survivors and their children in planning of all services and to ensure that perpetrators take responsibility for their actions.

Domestic Violence

- The forum has adopted the government's core definition of domestic violence as '*any incident of threatening behaviour, violence or abuse (psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional) between adults who are or have been intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality*'. The definition incorporates issues such as forced marriage, female genital mutilation and so called 'honour' killings, as well as elder abuse when committed within the family or by an intimate partner ('Domestic Violence A National Report' March 05)

Strategic Aims

- To ensure that the key aims of the Kingston Crime, Drugs Misuse, Disorder and Anti-Social behaviour reduction strategy relating to domestic violence are implemented
- To ensure that the priorities outlined in the London Domestic Violence strategy are upheld in Kingston (increasing safety, holding abusers accountable, reducing social tolerance, educating children and young people)

Objectives

- To act as the multi-agency forum for the Royal Borough of Kingston in responding to domestic violence and to promote joint working, co-operation and mutual support
- In relation to local responsibilities under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended and in response to targets set by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to help to:
 1. Identify the nature and profile of domestic violence crimes in the borough by reference to qualitative work with survivors as well as local statistics
 2. Develop a strategy, for incorporation within the overall Crime and Disorder Strategy for the borough for dealing with domestic violence
 3. Establish a yearly action plan with long and short term targets to support the strategy
 4. Monitor and evaluate the impact of preventative action taken
- To increase awareness of domestic violence and its effects within the community and decrease social tolerance by organising and publicising events
- To produce, collate and disseminate information on services in the borough
- To highlight training needs and organise joint training programmes
- To ensure that the particular needs of people from vulnerable groups who are experiencing domestic violence are addressed in all activities, strategies and policies
- To identify gaps and work to develop and improve services, joint working protocols and responses towards women, children and men who have experienced or are experiencing domestic violence

- To work to improve service delivery to and accessibility for minority and hard to reach groups
- To continue to support the survivors group and to consult with survivors in planning of all new initiatives / services
- To support and contribute towards development of initiatives to bring perpetrators to justice and to address and prevent further violent behaviour
- To respond to consultation and consider new legislation and guidance and its implementation
- To report on the forum's activities to the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and the Local Safeguarding Children Board
- To form subgroups with relevant partners as necessary to lead murder reviews as dictated by metropolitan police procedure

Members Responsibilities

- Membership of the DV forum is open to representatives of services working in the borough of Kingston in areas that have contact with or responsibility for the protection of, people who have directly or indirectly experienced domestic violence. Membership will be agreed by existing members and should include representation from a variety of community groups.
- Membership should include senior representatives from relevant agencies / services who have responsibility for developing and implementing policies and strategies in their area of work and who are able to commit their agencies or RBK directorates
- Members will attend as many forum meetings as possible and agencies will be expected to nominate a deputy of appropriate seniority to attend in their absence where possible
- Members will represent their agency in matters relating to domestic violence and will feedback any relevant information / issues raised in forum meetings
- Members will take responsibility for progressing any agreed actions in relation to their service
- Members should share information lawfully and responsibly and be mindful of confidentiality when discussing issues outside of forum meetings*

Administration

- Forum meetings will be held quarterly
- From time to time subgroups of the DV forum may be formed to address specific issues / projects and these may meet more regularly. Any subgroups formed will have responsibility for reviewing their own terms of reference to be agreed with the forum and reporting back to the forum on their activity to ensure consistency of approach
- The DV forum is co-chaired by the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Manager and Kingston Police Community Safety Unit's Detective Inspector
- Where possible agendas and minutes of previous meetings will be circulated at least 5 working days in advance and minutes or action points will be distributed within 1 month of meetings

In the normal course of events it is envisaged that the forum will only deal with de-personalised information. Where the Forum **does consider it appropriate to exchange personal information with other partners at a meeting, this will be dealt with in a separate section of the meeting at which only those agencies with a direct interest in the case will be present. All information sharing must conform to the local protocol established to facilitate exchange of information between agencies under Section 115 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended. Any agencies who are not a party to the Information-Sharing Protocol are receiving the information on a confidential need to know basis, and as secondary disclosure for the purposes of the Data Protection Act 1998. Agencies should not, therefore, divulge any information received without the consent of the agency owning the information or data.*