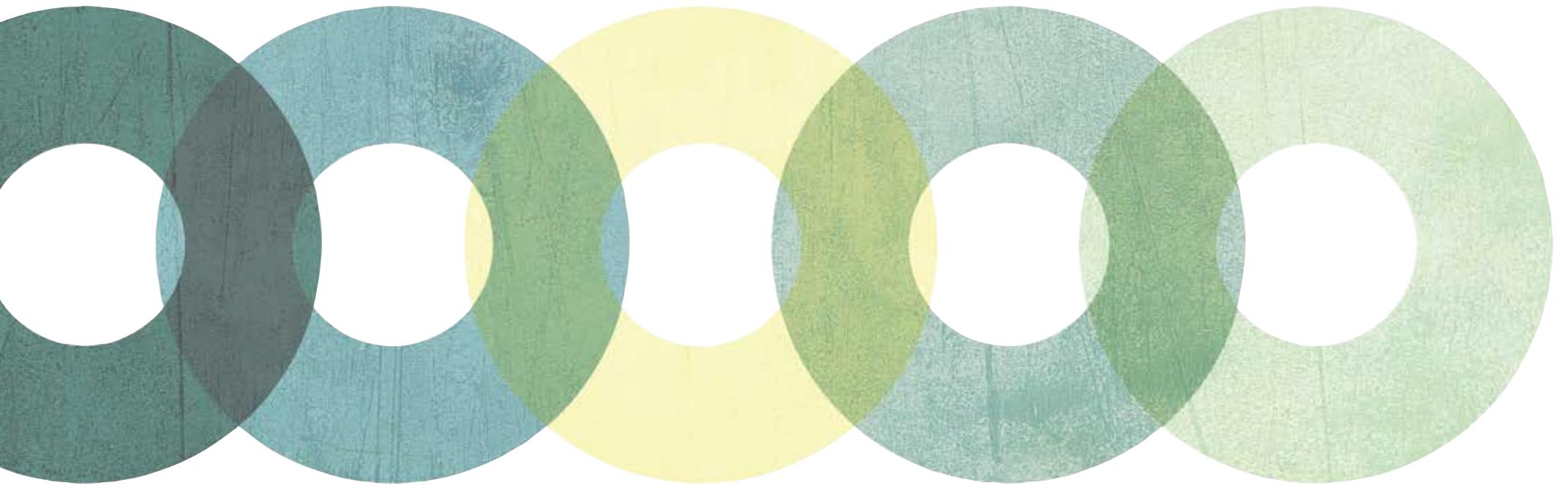




DOMESTIC ABUSE REDUCTION STRATEGY

2017 - 2020



CONTENTS

- Background to Domestic Abuse 1
- The Knowsley Vision 3
- What is Domestic Abuse 5
- Scope of Strategy 6

STRATEGIC APPROACH

- How are we going to deliver the Knowsley Vision? 7
- What is being done locally? 9

OUTCOMES

- Overarching Logic Model 11

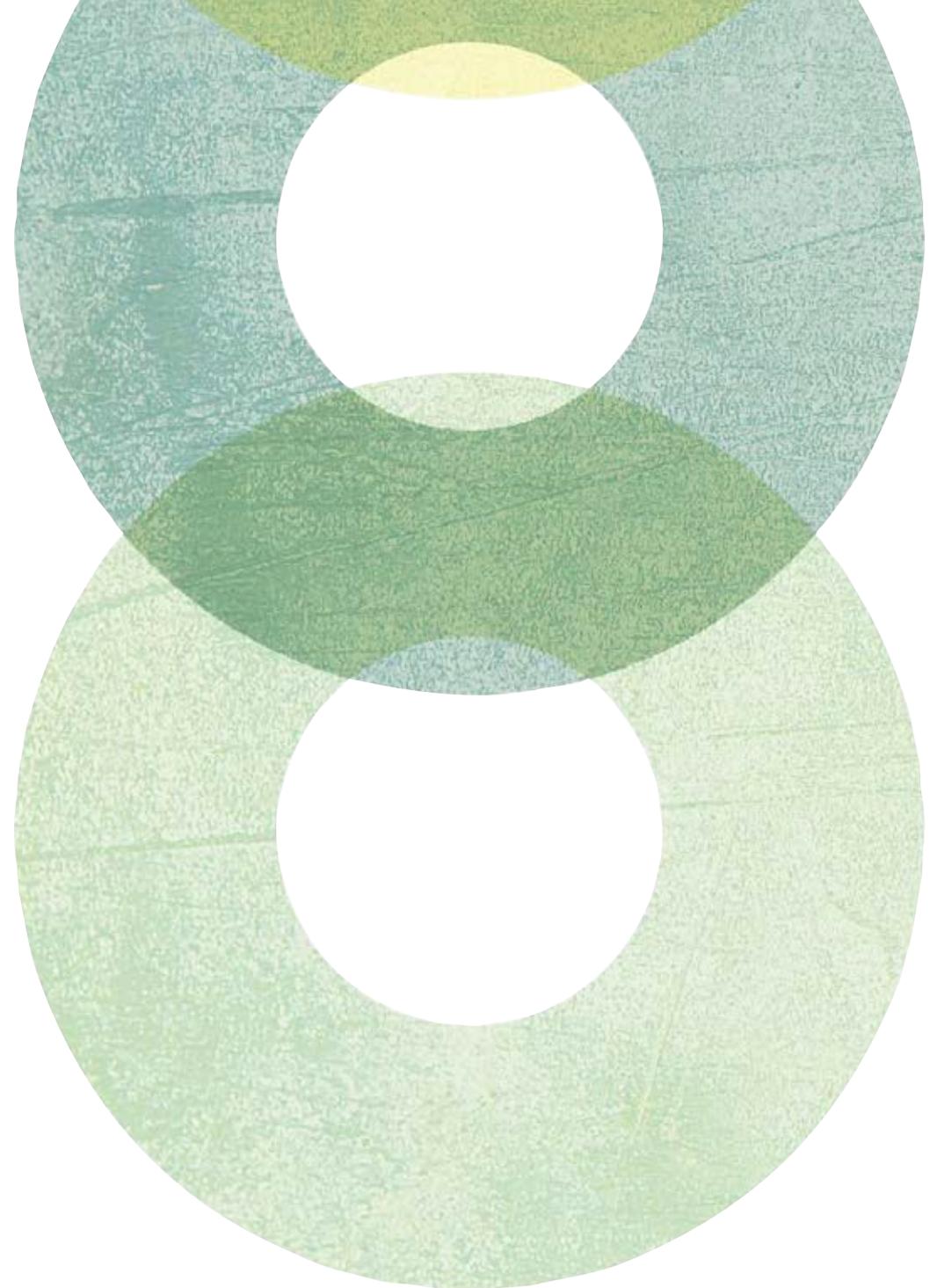
GOVERNANCE

13

Supporting Documents (not attached):

Nested Logic Models

Action Plan



INTRODUCTION

Background to Domestic Abuse

Domestic abuse can happen to anyone, regardless of age, gender, race, sexuality, economic position and geography. However key risk factors are associated with greater risk, for example, women are more likely to be victims of domestic abuse, sexual orientation can be a disincentive to reporting for fear of being “outed”, individuals with disabilities may not feel able to report concerns due to possible reliance on the perpetrator to meet day to day needs and those with children aged under 5 years of age show a greater reluctance to report concerns for fear of breaking up the family unit, losing the family home or impacting upon employment opportunities or prospects. More information on risk is available [here](#).

Nationally evidence suggests that one in three women and one in six men have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 (Flatley, 2013). This translates to around **15,000 women and 6,800 men** in Knowsley. However, this is likely to be an underestimate as often domestic abuse is hidden and unreported.

Further insight is provided by Women's Aid who are a leading domestic abuse support organisation and who are representative of over two hundred agencies working in the sector. They express concerns with the England and Wales Crime Survey methodology (formerly British Crime Survey) with regard to how the rate and levels of domestic abuse are counted. For example the reporting of incidents is capped to five incidents per respondent. If the cap is removed it shows a 60% increase in violent crime. Uncapping also shows a 70% increase of violence against women by partners. They further state that 72% of abused women are victimised more than once with an average of twenty incidents per victim.

In England and Wales during 2013/2014 46% of female homicide victims and 7% of male homicide victims were killed by a current or former partner. (National Office of Statistics 2015). Gender asymmetry is also evident in Crown Prosecution Service reporting for 2014 which shows that 93% of defendants are men and 84% of victims are women. In addition women typically experience abuse for longer periods and are more likely to be injured or experience emotional effects as a result of the abuse. (Roes' BCS 08/09)

Domestic abuse is a significant national and local issue, having a major impact upon those directly affected and their families. Domestic abuse further has significant short and long term impact on victims and their families, this includes physical injuries, mental health issues, behavioural issues and can lead to substance misuse, self-harm and suicide.

Living with domestic abuse adversely affects children's health, development, relationships, behaviour and emotional wellbeing, which has consequences for their educational attainment and future life. These Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACE) are strongly related to the development of risk factors for disease and social wellbeing as they get older.

Scale of the Problem - Local Data

Merseyside Police records the numbers of incidents that are domestic in nature, and the number of crimes that are domestic related. This figure is then reflected as a percentage of all crime and the percentage of incidents that are then converted into crimes due to the nature of the act reported. The table below shows Knowsley data on recorded domestic abuse incidents and crimes from 2011-12 to 2014-15.

| Year* | All Crimes | Domestic Abuse Crimes | DA% of all Crimes | Domestic Abuse Incidents | Conversion Rate - Incidents/Crimes |
|-------------------------|---------------|-----------------------|-------------------|--------------------------|------------------------------------|
| 2011 - 2012 | 9710 | 440 | 4.5% | 3805 | 11.5% |
| 2012 - 2013 | 8854 | 496 | 5.6% | 3537 | 14% |
| 2013 - 2014 | 8822 | 553 | 6.2% | 3356 | 16.4% |
| 2014 - 2015 | 9238 | 947 | 10.2% | 3406 | 27.8% |
| TOTAL | 36,624 | 2,436 | N/A | 14,104 | N/A |
| AVERAGE (A YEAR) | 9,156 | 609 | 6.7% | 3,526 | 17.3% |

***Financial year – April 1st – 31st March** - Merseyside Police records for 2014/15 show that around 10% of all crimes are domestic incident related, this percentage has increased year on year since 2011 and has more than doubled since 2011/12.

Domestic abuse crimes in 2011 and 2012 (440 and 496 respectively) are fairly consistent but there is then a rise, particularly in 2014/15 when the figure rose to 947. This would suggest a massive spike in domestic abuse offences, however this is not borne out in the number of incidents, where in fact data from 2011 to 2015 shows that on average the police deal with approximately 3,500 domestic incidents each year in Knowsley and this has been relatively consistent. The main explanation for the change is the conversion rate of incidents to crimes which has risen consistently in each of the last four years from 12% in 2011/2012 to 28% during 2014/2015. This is as a result of more rigorous reporting and recording standards, greater scrutiny of police incident logs to ensure that they comply with National Crime Recording Standards, and also a greater importance being placed on the issue and thus more thorough investigation methods. In addition, there has been significant media interest, high profile cases and campaigns to raise awareness of domestic abuse.



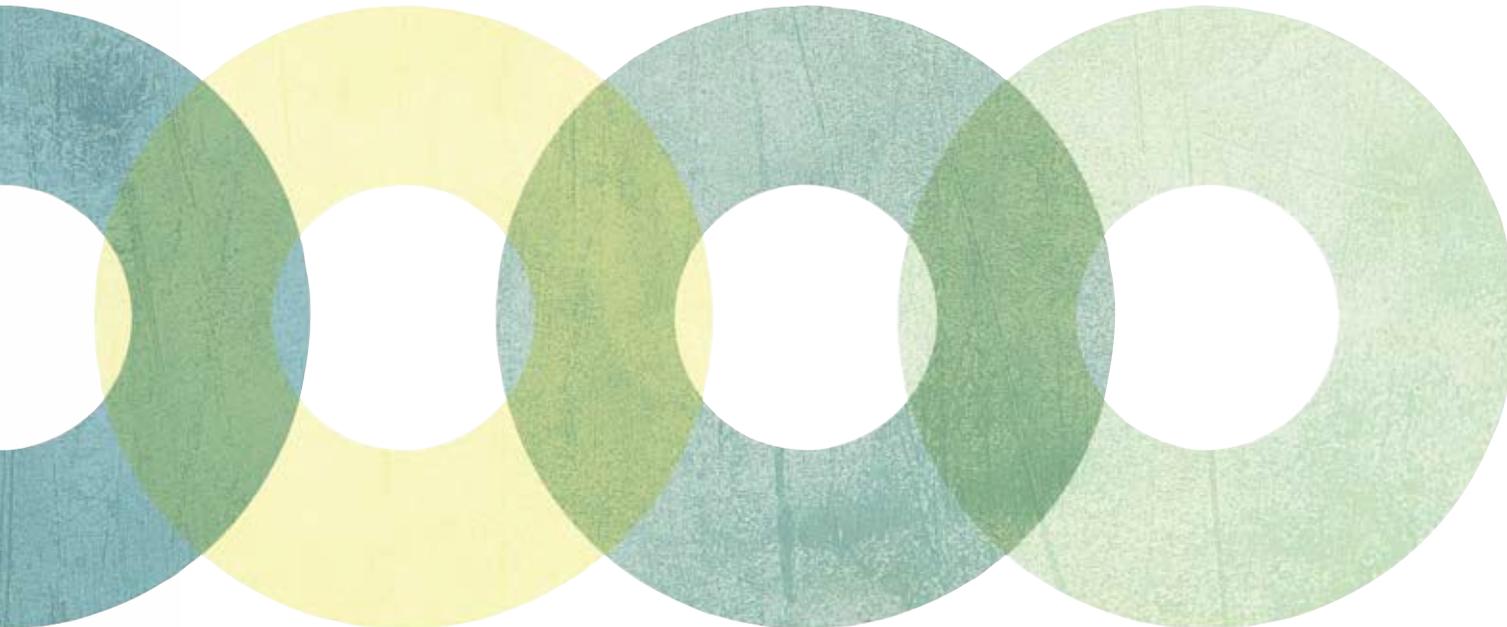
THE KNOWSLEY VISION

Knowsley is a place that has a zero tolerance approach to domestic abuse. Individuals, families and communities are supported to reach their potential and have safer, healthier and happier relationships and lives.

A data sharing exercise has recently been undertaken between Merseyside Police and Knowsley Council (July 2015) to understand the links between reported domestic abuse incidents and engagement with Family First. This has taken place as part of the development of the Knowsley Council Safer Communities Team domestic abuse victim offer. Of the 3937 incidents recorded (June 2014 – June 2015) there had also been referrals to Family First in just under 30% of the cases. The referrals had been made both pre and post the incidents and to deal with a range of issues, so not specifically domestic abuse related. This is however significant in that it shows the direct relationship between the needs of a family being met by a range of agencies and the presence of domestic abuse within that family circle.

Locally, as detailed in the domestic abuse Joint Strategic Needs Assessment, police incident audits indicated that in around half of incidents least one child was present (under the age of 18), over half of which were under 6 years old. From a social care perspective, it is estimated that there is an element of domestic abuse/violence, in over 85% of child social care assessments according to practitioners against the categories of need. Similarly, the number of children on protection plans provides another indicator of domestic violence/abuse, because the biggest cohort of children subject to such plans is placed under the category of Emotional Abuse – which usually involves an element of domestic abuse.

Tackling Domestic Abuse is a priority for key agencies and partners across Knowsley. It is the responsibility of the Domestic Abuse Governance Group to encourage agencies/partners to work collaboratively to create an environment where domestic abuse is not tolerated and to reduce its impact on victims within Knowsley.





**DOMESTIC ABUSE IS
NATIONALLY 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”.

WHAT IS DOMESTIC ABUSE?

The abuse can encompass, but is not limited to:

- psychological
- physical
- sexual
- financial
- emotional

Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from resources or support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act, or a pattern of acts, of assault, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to punish or frighten their victim.

This definition, which is not a legal definition, includes so called “honour” based violence, female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

Domestic abuse takes place in all types of relationships including, lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender relationships. Domestic abuse can also involve other family members, including children.

SCOPE OF THE STRATEGY

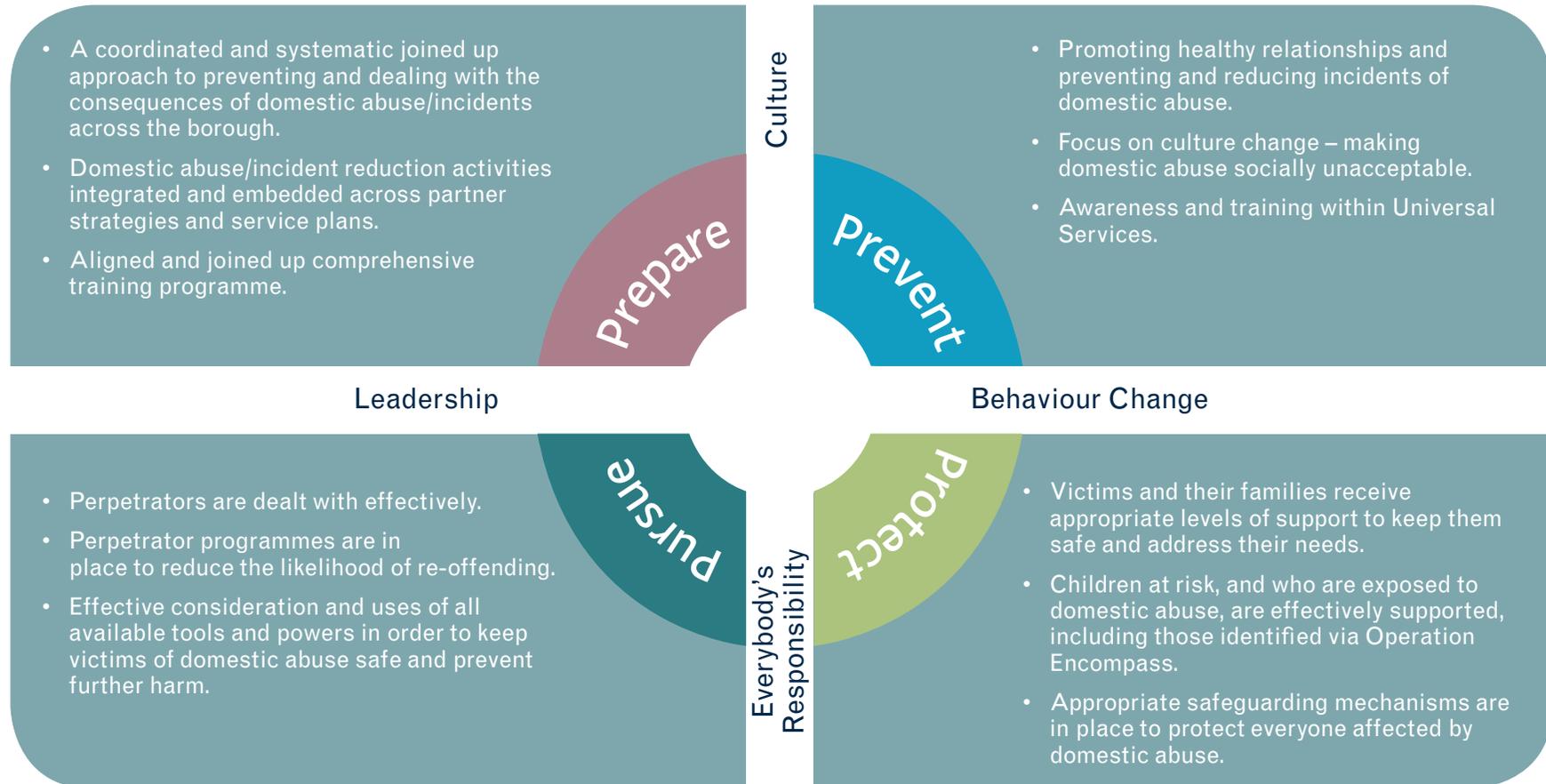
Knowsley recognises the cross government definition of domestic violence/abuse as outlined above, however, Knowsley further acknowledges that domestic incidents/abuse may occur that fall outside of this definition. This strategy adopts the cross government definition but, for domestic abuse/incidents in Knowsley, extends this to include incidents or patterns of abuse involving:

- Child/Adolescent to Parent domestic incidents; AND
- Domestic incidents between those in a relationship but aged under 16 years.

A young boy with short brown hair and blue eyes is the central focus, wearing a white t-shirt and covering his ears with both hands. He has a serious, somewhat distressed expression. In the background, a woman with red hair wearing a blue and black plaid shirt is gesturing with her hand, and a man with a beard is looking towards her. The setting appears to be a classroom or a school hallway.

STRATEGIC APPROACH

HOW ARE WE GOING TO DELIVER THE KNOWSLEY VISION?



WHAT ARE WE DOING LOCALLY?

Operation Encompass

What it is: Operation Encompass aims to support children, by ensuring police communicate directly with schools to inform them that an incident of domestic abuse has happened in a child's home enabling schools to provide appropriate emotional and wellbeing support to the child.

What we want to do: Ensure that activities and outcomes are appropriately recorded in order to ensure a consistent and joined up support offer for children and to enable and share best practice across schools.

Perpetrator Offer

What it is: Knowsley currently has a clear perpetrator offer, encompassing challenge and support, in order to ensure that perpetrators are educated and supported to change their behaviours to prevent re-offending and re-victimisation. The offer includes 1:1 support and attendance on group programmes.

What we want to do: We want to make sure that perpetrators are appropriately challenged and supported to change their behaviour at the earliest opportunity and are extending our support offer in order to achieve this. Where perpetrators refuse to change their behaviour then clear pathways will be developed with clear consequences and outcomes for perpetrators and improved links into the local Integrated Offender Management programme.

Victim/Survivor Offer

What it is: Knowsley currently has a victim offer ensuring that "medium risk"¹ domestic abuse victims are offered 1:1 support (all "high risk" victims being supported via the MARAC process and 1:1 IDVA support). Knowsley further has a wider offer of group programmes that run throughout the year.

What we want to do: We want to make sure that every victim, regardless of risk level, is provided with appropriate support at the right time for them. We are looking to further extend our victim offer to achieve this through co-location and joint delivery/support between a wider variety services/agencies. Knowsley is further looking to extend its offer of group programmes.

¹ Please note, in line with the rest of Merseyside Knowsley uses the MERiT risk assessment tool.



MARAC Offer

What it is: Knowsley's Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference meets every other Tuesday of the month and is well attended by a variety of partners in order to ensure appropriate support is in place to reduce risks to individuals referred into the meeting. Recent investment in this meeting process means that meetings and information sharing is operated via a secure web based system to enable more timely recording and information sharing.

What we want to do: Knowsley want to ensure that the MARAC process remains fit for purpose and ensures that the most high risk victims are effectively safeguarded.

Training

What it is: Partners have developed and agreed a wide ranging and consistent local training offer that is delivered through the Knowsley Safeguarding Children's Board but available to all partners.

What we want to do: Continue to ensure that the local training offer remains fit for purpose and accessible by all services and agencies requiring training.

Dedicated Children's Pathway and Support

What it is: Recognising the devastating impact that witnessing domestic abuse can have upon the wellbeing of children, Children's Services have developed a local Children's Pathway utilising the DARIM process and meaning that children will have access to emotional and wellbeing support appropriate to their individual needs.

What we want to do: Continue to embed the Children's Pathway locally, reviewing outcomes to ensure that it remains fit for purpose and ensuring that learning is appropriately identified to ensure that the best outcomes for children and young people are achieved.

Governance

What it is: Domestic abuse affects a wide range of individuals accessing a variety of services and support throughout the borough. Through the establishment of a Domestic Abuse Governance Group (DAGG) with clear reporting pathways, Knowsley has implemented a process to ensure a consistent approach to domestic abuse is delivered within the Borough and partners are held accountable in respect of the delivery of the objectives and outcomes.

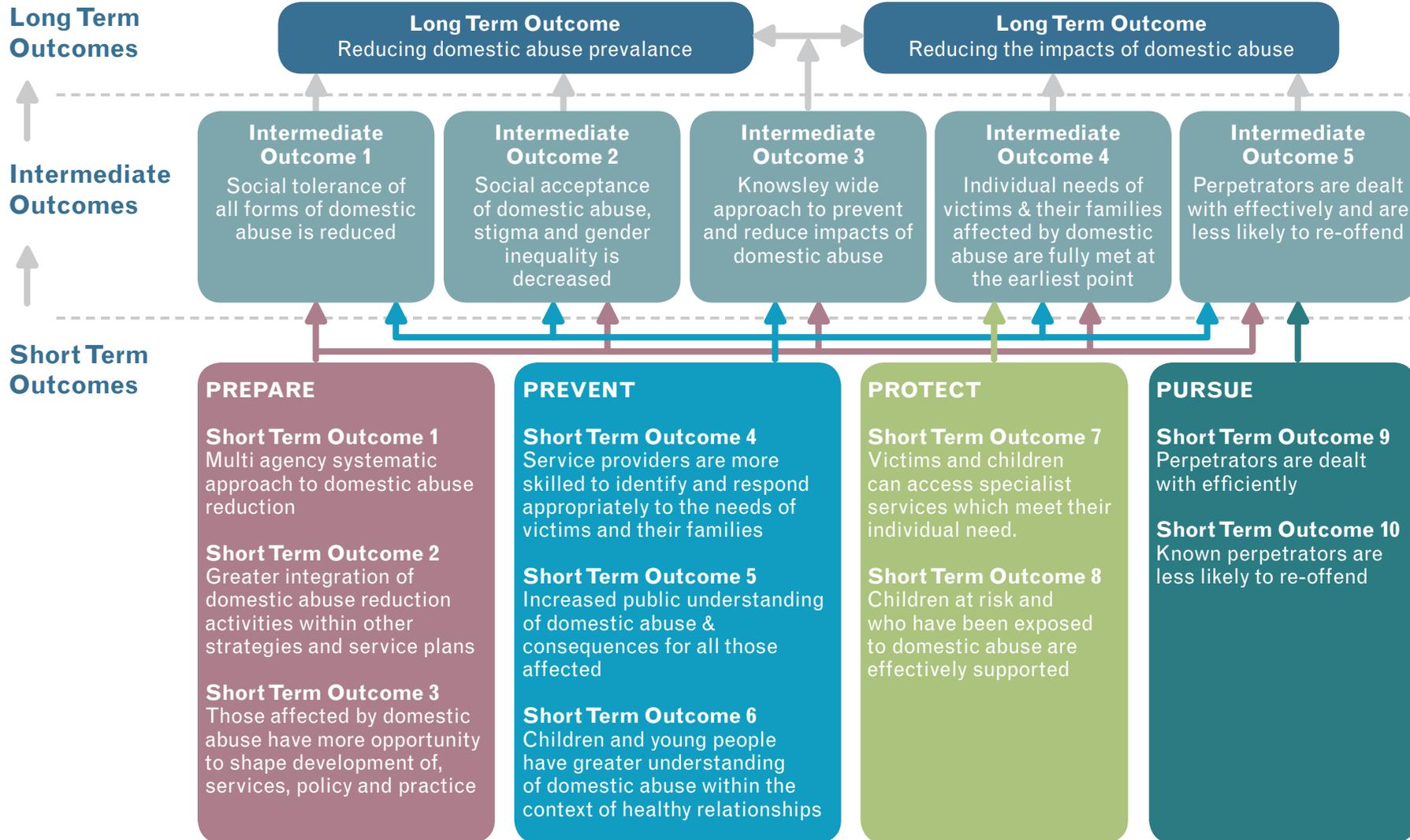
What we want to do: Building on what has been established we want to ensure that there is consistent dialogue, approach and outcomes throughout Knowsley and that agencies continue to deliver against the agreed strategy, logic models and action plan.

* further information on all of the above are available via the Logic Model and Action Plans.



OUTCOMES

OVERARCHING LOGIC MODEL



(NB: Nested Models available for each Short Term Outcome)



GOVERNANCE

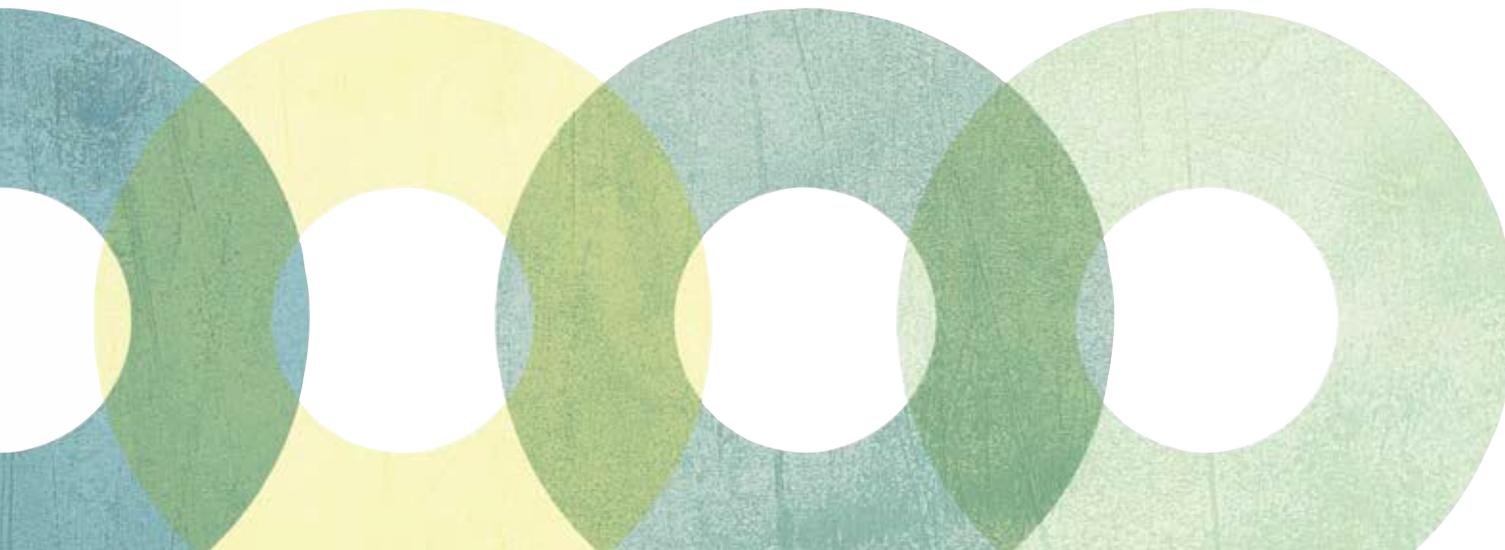
The Domestic Abuse Governance Group (DAGG) will undertake the responsibility on behalf of, and be accountable to, the Knowsley Community Safety Partnership, for the oversight of the coordination, offer and discharge of services and support to those who have experienced domestic abuse, this includes support to victims (including children affected by domestic abuse) and the challenge / prosecution / rehabilitation of offenders.

The DAGG will implement this three year Domestic Abuse Strategy and be responsible for the ownership, oversight and update of the outcome led Logic Model and Action Plan. This strategy document links to other key local, regional and national strategies.

The DAGG will provide annual reports to the Knowsley Children's Safeguarding Board, Knowsley Adult Safeguarding Board and the Knowsley Health and Wellbeing Board.

Aims and Objectives

- To hold services/agencies to account in ensuring an adequate and suitable response is in place for those experiencing domestic abuse, including children affected by domestic abuse;
- To ensure joined up commissioning arrangements are in place to support the Partnership response to domestic abuse;
- To establish, from time to time, sub groups to ensure that emerging or priority issues are addressed;
- To ensure that a joined up and consistent response, across all services/agencies, for those experiencing, or perpetrating, domestic abuse.





ACTION PLANS

Outcomes will be delivered through a strategic outcome based action plan with strategic leads identified under each of the 4P's approach, these are:



Delivery of the activities contained within the action plan is the responsibility of each of the relevant/identified strategic partners. Strategic leads are responsible for the coordination of a quarterly response/report into the DAGG.

In addition to strategic leads, Knowsley has also developed and identified Domestic Abuse Champions within each service/organisation as follows:



Domestic Abuse Champions will:

- Be their organisation/service's contact in respect of domestic abuse concerns or issues;
- Cascade information in respect of domestic abuse within their organisation/service;
- When working on the frontline, identify victims/perpetrators and refer them for support utilising local pathways;
- Have the opportunity to share learning and raise queries with Champions from other organisations/services; AND
- Have access to shared resources, documentation and learning.

We will continue to develop and extend the Domestic Abuse Champion partnership offer throughout Knowsley.