

WELWYN HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL  
CABINET HOUSING PANEL – 19 MARCH 2025  
REPORT OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR (RESIDENT SERVICES AND CLIMATE  
CHANGE)

DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY

**1 Executive Summary**

- 1.1 This report recommends the approval and adoption of the updated Domestic Abuse (DA) Policy set out in Appendix A. The policy applies to all council housing tenants and leaseholders of Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) as well as all residents of and visitors to the Borough
- 1.2 The draft updated DA Policy provides guidance on how the Council will deal with and respond to DA reports it receives through a framework of prevention, support and enforcement.
- 1.3 The updated draft DA Policy reflects changes to the previous policy in the following areas:
  - Review of legislation and regulatory standards

**2 Recommendation**

- 2.1 Cabinet housing Panel to note the content of the revised domestic abuse policy (as set out in Appendix A).
- 2.2 If Cabinet Housing Panel unanimously agree the domestic abuse policy, that the Panel agree that the decision to approve the policy be taken by the executive member using their delegated powers, subject to any feedback from the Residents Panel.

**3. Explanation**

- 3.1 The current DA Policy was approved in 2022 but is now due for revision.
- 3.2 The Council is a key partner in the Community Safety Partnership (CSP), which has four key priorities via a published annual action plan:
  - Help people feel safe within their homes and local community
  - Safeguard vulnerable people
  - Support and protect victims of DA and prevent future harm
  - Working in partnership to prevent and tackle serious violence
- 3.3 The DA Policy provides a consistent and proportionate response to all forms of behaviours that are classed as DA.

- 3.4 The DA Policy is clear on the Council's commitment to delivering a preventative and victim centred approach to dealing with DA.

### **Implications**

#### **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 The DA Policy was comprehensive reviewed and updated in 2022 in order to comply with the new Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Since the Policy was updated there has not been any significant changes in legislation or regulatory standards in order to comprehensively update the Policy.
- 4.2 This Policy will be reviewed and updated in due course should any significant legislative changes occur and at this point key partners will be consulted with.
- 4.3 In relation to our role as a landlord of council housing, there are Regulatory Standards set by the Regulator of Social Housing. The Neighbourhood and Community Standard requires that we must have a policy for how they recognise and effectively respond to cases of domestic abuse.

#### **Financial Implications**

- 5.1 There are no known new financial implications arising from the revised DA Policy.

#### **6. Risk Management Implications**

- 6.1 The risks related to this proposal are:
- Failure to manage domestic abuse could cause harm to residents and present a reputational risk to the Council. This would be significantly mitigated by having a robust policy in place.

#### **7. Security and Terrorism Implications**

- 7.1 There are no implications from this DA Policy.

#### **8. Procurement Implications**

- 8.1 There are no new procurement implications arising from this DA Policy at this time.

#### **9. Climate Change Implications**

- 9.1 There are no new climate change implications arising from this DA Policy.

#### **10. Human Resources Implication(s)**

- 10.1 There are no human resource implications arising from this DA Policy.

#### **11. Health and Wellbeing Implications**

11.1 DA can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of victims and children of victims, their wider families and the community. The DA Policy sets out a victim centred approach to have a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of residents and visitors to WHBC.

## **12. Communication and Engagement Implications**

12.1 The DA Policy will be published on the Council's website. The Policy communicates to the public what they can expect from how we will deal with DA, how services can be accessed and timescales for response. We also undertake campaigns and events to promote awareness of domestic abuse.

## **13. Link to Corporate Priorities**

13.1 The subject of this Policy is linked to the Council's Corporate Priorities:

- Together create opportunities for our community

## **14. Equality and Diversity**

14.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has been carried out and found there the policy generally has a positive impact on some of the protected characteristics. (Appendix B).

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### **Appendices:**

Appendix A – Revised Domestic Abuse Policy  
Appendix B - EqIA