

REPORT AUDIT TRAIL**CONSULTATION**

*This is important as it shows that consultation has been undertaken in the preparation of the report and provides a quick reference point for specific comments, whilst the report will not be publishable if these areas have not been completed by the named persons below. **You must liaise with and receive sign off from the relevant Cabinet Member(s).***

Name/Position	Portfolio/Ward/ Directorate	Date Sent	Date Received	Comments in para:
Councillor <i>Victoria Cusworth</i>	Cabinet Member for Children and Young People	04/08/25	12/08/25	Happy to approve this ODR Good to see more money for DA in Rotherham and allocation looks fine.
<i>Andrew Bramidge</i>	Assistant Chief Executive/ Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment	Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter a date.	
Chloe Parker	Finance and Customer Services	24/07/25	29/07/25	6.1
Bal Nahal / Stewart Fletcher	Legal Services	24/07/25	30/07/25	7.1
<i>Helen Rowe,</i> Human Resources	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	24/07/25	29/07/25	8.1
<i>Karen Middlebrook,</i> Procurement	Finance and Customer Services	24/07/25	24/07/25	6.1
Equalities	Assistant Chief Executive's Office	24/07/25	30/07/25	10.1
<i>Other officers below</i>		Click here to enter a date.	Click here to enter a date.	

REPORT APPROVAL TRACKING			
Equalities Your report will not be authorised for submission to Cabinet by your Strategic Director if you have not undertaken and included an initial equalities screening. All equalities analysis documents should be sent to Equality@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback prior to being included as appendices.	Initial Screening completed and included with report	YES	29.07.2025
	Full Assessment completed and included with report	YES	29.07.2025
Carbon Impact Assessments Carbon Impact Assessments are to be appended to the associated cabinet reports. Carbon Impact Assessments should be sent to climate@rotherham.gov.uk for feedback prior to your report being sent to your Strategic Director for approval.	Carbon Impact Assessment completed and included with report.	YES	15.07.2025
Background information MANDATORY: Insert headings for a few main public documents you have used or referenced to write this report. This is a legal requirement. For Cabinet reports, insert hyperlinks . Do not list private documents.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local Authority Domestic Abuse Duty: 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 funding allocations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) - Core Spending Power table: provisional local government finance settlement 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK - Rotherham Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-27 - Domestic Abuse Act 2021 - Recommissioning of Rotherham’s Domestic Abuse Refuge REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER - National DA Commissioners report- Victims in their own Right dac_bcyp_main-report_V6-DIGITAL.pdf 		
Appendices If appendices are essential to the understanding of the report, list titles here. Ensure that appendices have proper titles. List any appendices relevant to the decision being taken first with the Equality Analysis documents coming next and the Carbon Impact Assessment being listed as the last Appendix for all reports.	Appendix 1 - DA training prospectus Appendix 2 - Equality Analysis - Part A Appendix 3 - Equality Analysis - Part B Appendix 4 - Climate Impact Assessment		
Cabinet Member Approval		Click here to enter a date.	

<p>You should retain an email confirming the Cabinet Member approval for your records. Strategic Directors should not authorise reports unless Cabinet Members have given sign off</p>		
<p>Report Authorised by Strategic Director</p>	<p>YES/NO (delete as appropriate)</p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>
<p>Report Authorised for publication by Chief Executive</p>	<p>YES/NO (delete as appropriate)</p>	<p>Click here to enter a date.</p>

Committee Name and Date of Committee Meeting

Delegated Officer Decision – 18 August 2025

Report Title

Domestic Abuse duty funding allocation report for the financial year 2025-26

Is this a Key Decision and has it been included on the Forward Plan?

No, but it has been included on the Forward Plan

Strategic Director Approving Submission of the Report

Andrew Bramidge, Strategic Director of Regeneration and Environment

Report Author(s)

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Ward(s) Affected

Borough-Wide

Report Summary

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced new requirements for local authorities to complete in relation to domestic abuse services. As a result, to complete those requirements, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) formerly Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has provided domestic abuse funding to Rotherham Council for each financial year as follows:

Amount	Year
£617,969	2021-2022
£619,679	2022-2023
£632,075	2023-2024
£644,001	2024-2025
£802,591	2025-2026

Considering the likely continuation of this funding year on year, the Council's Cabinet previously agreed to a range of projects which are detailed in this report. Many of which were agreed to be recurring projects to ensure sufficient time to embed and make a continuous positive change to the lives of victim / survivors.

In January 2025, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirmed the 2025-26 domestic abuse duty funding of £802,591 which is an uplift from the previous year of £158,590. This funding was previously provided to the

Council in the form of the New Burden Grant, from 2025/26 funding has been included within the Local Government Finance Settlement.

This report outlines the allocation of the 2025-2026 funding for the continuation of the current established projects that are working well to support victim / survivors.

The report will also set out a proposal to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment (Delegated Officer) to allocate the uplift of funds which will endeavour to enrich the current offer and address gaps in provision in line with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory duty.

Recommendations

1. That the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment acknowledges the funding uplift allocation for the 2025-2026 financial year and agrees the proposals to allocate this funding as outlined in section 3 of the report.
2. That the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment agrees for any decisions required within the year relating to the re-allocation of underspend in 2025-26 can be made by the Council's Head of Service, Community Safety and Regulatory Services (SRP Domestic Abuse Strategic Priority lead) in consultation with the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Children and Young People.

List of Appendices Included

Appendix 1 - DA training prospectus

Appendix 2 - Equality Analysis - Part A

Appendix 3 - Equality Analysis - Part B

Appendix 4 - Climate Impact Assessment

Background Papers

- Local Authority Domestic Abuse Duty: 2023 to 2024 and 2024 to 2025 funding allocations - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- [Core Spending Power table: provisional local government finance settlement 2025 to 2026 - GOV.UK](#)
- [Rotherham Domestic Abuse Strategy 2022-27](#)
- [Domestic Abuse Act 2021](#)
- [Recommissioning of Rotherham's Domestic Abuse Refuge REPORT TEMPLATE FOR CABINET & COMMISSIONER](#)
- National DA Commissioners report- Victims in their own Right [dac bcyp_main-report_V6-DIGITAL.pdf](#)

Consideration by any other Council Committee, Scrutiny or Advisory Panel

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Name of Committee – Click here to enter a date.

Council Approval Required

No

Exempt from the Press and Public

No

1. Background

- 1.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (the Act) introduced a range of new statutory duties on local authorities. As a result of the new duties, the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (formally the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) have provided funding for the last 5 years as follows:

Amount	Year
£617,969	2021-2022
£619,679	2022-2023
£632,075	2023-2024
£644,001	2024-2025
£802,591	2025-2026

These funds have been used on a range of projects which has strengthened the Council's overall response to domestic abuse and ensured the delivery on the statutory provision within the Act.

Previous decisions on the funding allocation recognised the need to take longer term decisions to ensure best value for money and to provide the best chance of improving outcomes for victims of domestic abuse was acknowledged. It was also important to minimise, as far as possible, the uncertainty and interruption of services to victims and survivors that can be caused by short term funding allocations. Therefore, several projects were agreed as recurring projects to be continued as longer-term projects should Government funding be awarded in future years. As funding was subsequently received, these projects continued.

Decisions relating to the allocation of any remaining funds have been previously delegated to the Strategic Director for Regeneration and Environment, as linked here ([Domestic Abuse Duty Funding Proposals for the Financial Year 2024-25 - Rotherham Council](#)). Delegated Officer decisions are made following consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Members and the Rotherham multi-agency domestic abuse partnership group.

The recommendation is to continue projects in accordance with the statutory duty on Tier 1 local authorities under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, which requires that a multi-agency partnership board is convened to support the local authority to:

- Assess the need and demand for accommodation-based support for all victims and their children.
- Prepare and publish strategies for the provision of support to cover the locality and diverse groups of victims.
- Give effect to strategies by making commissioning/de-commissioning decisions.
- Meet the support needs of victims and their children.
- Monitor and evaluate local delivery.

- Report back to government when required.

2. Key Issues

2.1 The following commitments were agreed on the 15th of February 2024 by Delegated Officer report as recurring costs as shown below in table 1 and table 2.

These projects have subsequently been agreed again as recurring projects on the 31st of March 2025 as shown with the Officer brief, **please see Appendix 1.**

Table 1 - Current projects 2024/25 with costs and the predicted 25/26 cost

Project	Grant or Contract	Provider	Actual Cost (2024 / 25)	Estimated Cost (2025/26)
Increased refuge contract value to provide Safer Options support.	Service Contract	Hopian	£120,000	£120,000
Domestic abuse outreach contract budget increase agreed by Cabinet 25 th January 2021	Service Contract	Hopian	£150,000	£150,000
Maintenance of 13 domestic abuse 'Safe Accommodation' properties and visiting officer	N/A	RMBC	£45,000	£45,000
Homelessness Prevention for domestic abuse victims in private rented or own property	Goods and Services Contract	Shefflock	£25,000	£25,000
Homelessness prevention fund	Various one-off purchases	Range of supplier's dependent on need	£42,900	**£40,000
2x Domestic Abuse Housing Officers salary (100%)	N/A	RMBC	£89,527	*£83,276

1x Community Safety Service Manager salary (30%)	N/A	RMBC	£21,900	*£23,044
2 x Full time Community Safety Officers (Domestic Abuse) salaries (100%)	N/A	RMBC	£110,883	*£115,554
1x Domestic Abuse Performance Analyst salary (100%)	N/A	RMBC	£38,765	*£44,176
Total:			£643,975	£646,050

* Pay calculations are based on the 2025-26 pay rates with an estimated 3% added for the 2025-26 pay award

** Due to 2024/25 underspend of the Homeless Prevention fund, forecasted spend has been reduced to £40,000 from £42,900

Table 2 - Description and achievements of projects delivered 2024/25.

Project	2024 / 25 overview and outcomes
Increased refuge contract value to provide Safer Options support.	<p>The Council commissions a bespoke refuge package, currently provided by Hopian. This contractual arrangement ensures that the Council can provide safe accommodation to those fleeing violence. The contract provides for a bespoke refuge building, dispersed properties and, critically, wrap-around support which relates to the Council's legal duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.</p> <p>This contract uplift provides additional funding, with the priority being accommodation and support for victims who have presented as homeless to the local authority, or short-term 'move on' accommodation for victims in refuge accommodation who wish to reside in Rotherham.</p>
Domestic Abuse Outreach contract budget increase	The commissioned service, Hopian, provide outreach support and pathway via "one front door" for all domestic abuse victim referrals, covering all levels of risk. The aims and objectives of the service are to:

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Safeguard victims and any dependants involved. • Empower victims to have a voice and take control of their lives. • Break the cycle of abuse by working with individuals affected by domestic abuse. • Build on the strengths of the individual to help them to live well in the community where they have choice and control about how their needs are met. • Support victims to develop coping strategies and a support network which will help them to achieve their optimum level in independent living and social engagement. • Reduce the risk of homelessness through preventing further abuse and fleeing their home. <p>This project provides an additional funding contribution (contract uplift) to meet the additional Domestic Abuse Act 2021 duties. The service is operating successfully to provide victims with a single point of access to domestic abuse services.</p> <p>Hopian provide a range of support programmes tailored to the needs and requirements of the victim, including group work, one to one support, risk assessment, safety planning and by and for services for protected characteristic groups, including female and male victims, minority ethnic and refugee communities, LGBT+ communities and young person and children's workers.</p>
Maintenance of 13 domestic abuse 'Safe Accommodation' properties	All 13 properties are fully furnished, and target hardened, for additional security. In combination with the support from the Domestic Abuse Homelessness Officers, the victim and family have the safety, security, confidence, and empowerment within a safe home to make the all-important positive steps into their own permanent accommodation.
Homelessness Prevention for domestic abuse victims in private rented or own property (Shefflock)	<p>Shefflock provide essential target hardening to domestic abuse victims/survivors, for example ring doorbells / cameras and door locks, enabling families to stay safe in their own properties or to move on to a safe and secure property.</p> <p>When target hardening is completed, it has allowed the victim to stay at their own property, this has enabled</p>

	<p>families to remain within the area that they know, and the children have been able to remain at their current schools.</p> <p>This offer allows the family to remain safe in their own home and reduces risk of further incidences occurring at the property. If a victim has to move properties, the additional security allows them to feel confident in their new home.</p>
Homelessness prevention fund	<p>The Homelessness Prevention fund is used to provide immediate help and support for victims of domestic abuse who have presented as, or are at immediate risk of becoming, homeless.</p> <p>Funds from this project are available to in-house council services, commissioned services as well as any external organisation or charity to apply for. The purpose of the grants is to allow victims and families to be supported quickly into safe accommodation as well as supporting the victim in overcoming any barriers that may be standing in the way of safe and secure accommodation.</p> <p>The fund has been used to pay for rent arrears and rent bonds where these were a barrier to victims and families to being able to move into properties, as well as providing essential items to allow the victim to feel safe, secure, and comfortable in their home, for example new furniture, essential white goods and amenities and transport/storage of personal items. Applications to the fund are considered by a cross-directorate/service panel.</p> <p>From April to December 2024, £30,000 worth of applications were approved which have provided essential support to over 150 victims and families.</p> <p>Positive feedback has been received from victims and front-line domestic abuse workers on how this fund allowed them to move forward in their road to recovery and live free from fear of domestic abuse.</p>
2x Domestic Abuse Housing Officers salary (100%)	Two specialist Domestic Abuse Homelessness Officers have been appointed to provide immediate support for victims of all risk levels of domestic abuse who present as homeless to RMBC, to find suitable accommodation, including within RMBC domestic abuse safe

	<p>accommodation properties, additional security to remain in their own homes, or to move out of the area if required.</p> <p>Several case studies are available showing how domestic abuse victims, with the officers' help, have been able to access services and dramatically changed their lives for the better.</p> <p>From April to December 2024, the Domestic Abuse Homelessness Officers have worked with 80 victims and families providing intensive and appropriate support.</p>
<p>1x Community Safety Service Manager salary (30%)</p>	<p>The role supports the Council and Safer Rotherham Partnership strategic leaders and Boards in managing the increased statutory requirements of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and to continue to drive improvements in domestic abuse strategy, services, and performance.</p> <p>The role has management responsibility for the Council Community Safety team and function, including the Domestic Abuse Community Safety Officers, Domestic Abuse Performance and Quality Officer and the domestic abuse strategic function.</p> <p>The role is key in developing and maintaining highly effective partnerships across the Council and wider partners and ensuring delivery against strategic objectives.</p>
<p>2 x Full time Community Safety Officers (Domestic Abuse) salaries (100%)</p>	<p>These roles, based within the RMBC Community Safety team, support the Council and Safer Rotherham Partnership strategic theme leads to deliver community safety priorities and objectives relating to domestic abuse. Duties include developing, implementing, monitoring, and evaluating work to deliver legal duties and wider initiatives on domestic abuse (under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021).</p> <p>In line with the act, some of the key achievements so far have been monitoring, reviewing and driving the domestic abuse strategy 2022-2027 and action plan, with emphasis on actions relating to the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and supporting the functioning of the Safer Rotherham Partnership Domestic Abuse Priority Group (Rotherham's domestic abuse partnership board). Opportunities to strengthen partnership work have been identified with community safety partners and voluntary and community sector organisations to achieve domestic abuse priorities.</p>

	<p>The officers work collaboratively with Council commissioning officers in relation to commissioning and contract monitoring. Work takes place with partners to jointly commission services and seek additional funding opportunities. Referrals to services are monitored and prompt action is taken to identify changes in demand to ensure a continuous offer of support for domestic abuse victims. The officers also coordinate domestic homicide reviews and act on lessons learnt following review.</p> <p>Performance reports are provided to relevant governance structures, including the Domestic Abuse Priority Group, Safer Rotherham Partnership Board, Elected Members, and other strategic leads/groups.</p>
1x Domestic Abuse Performance Analyst salary (100%)	<p>This role supports the oversight of domestic abuse delivery through the provision of performance and data analysis, alongside overseeing any quality related processes.</p> <p>The officer collates and maintains performance and quality information from across the partnership, ensuring this is used and managed effectively to inform decision making in relation to strategy, policy and overall delivery of the Safer Rotherham Partnership priorities and Domestic Abuse Act 2021 requirements.</p> <p>The officer actively supports the decision-making processes for the homelessness prevention fund by quality assurance of all homelessness prevention fund application forms. The officer also has responsibility for budget monitoring, enabling budgetary decisions to be made effectively and appropriately. This part of the role includes contributing to budget setting and ensuring financial transactions are accurate, evidenced and properly accounted for.</p>

3. Options considered and recommended proposal

- 3.1 This year Rotherham Council received an uplift of funding from the previous year to £802,591. Considering the 2025-2026 current project continuation costs as shown above in Table 1, the remaining funds to allocate will be £156,541. The proposals to allocate these funds are show below in table 3 and table 4.

Table 3 – Summary of 2025/26 Uplift spends projects proposal.

Project	Grant or Contract	Predicted Cost
Additional uplift to the refuge contract – (Hopian)	Contract	£15,000

Cranstoun - Inspire to Change perpetrator intervention programme – (extension £12,000 and uplift £30,000 contribution)	Contract	£42,000
Domestic Abuse awareness programmes - (specifically for victim survivors with children working with Social Care)	Contract	£40,000
Domestic Abuse 'Capturing Service Survivor Voice'	Grant	£30,000
Domestic and Sexual Abuse training / engagement and emerging issues fund	Unknown at present	£29,541
Total		£156,541

Table 4 – 2025/26 Uplift spends projects proposal in detail.

<p>Additional uplift to refuge contract</p> <p>The Refuge contract has been re-procured with an uplifted contract value, as agreed at Cabinet on the 20th of January 2025.</p> <p>As the contract term spreads two financial years, the remaining uplift for 2025/26 of £15,000 is proposed to be allocated when the new contract commences on 1st October 2025. Therefore, this has been allocated from this funding uplift.</p>
<p>Cranstoun Inspire to Change</p> <p>The Domestic Abuse perpetrator programme is a South Yorkshire wide service funded jointly by Rotherham, Barnsley, Doncaster and Sheffield councils and the South Yorkshire Mayoral Combined Authority (SYMCA) previously the South Yorkshire Police and Crime Commissioner (SYPCC).</p> <p>The programme delivers domestic abuse intervention with male and female perpetrators aged 16 and above, including those with complex needs, to encourage, empower and support perpetrators to change. It is a voluntary service for those who recognise they cause harm. Individuals are expected to engage with the programme for a period of 6 months.</p> <p>The current contract was extended and is now due expire on the 31st of March 2026. The cost of that extension from its original end date of 5th September 2025 was £24,000. £12,000 allocated within the total cost outlined above and £12,000 paid via RMBC Housing Services as agreed.</p>

Sheffield City Council will lead on the recommissioning of the service and have such requested the commitment from partners to recommission a contract for this service for a further 3 years.

Current outcomes of the programme:

Since its commencement in September 2021, 241 perpetrators have completed the programme in South Yorkshire, with Rotherham residents accounting for 63 of these nominals.

The engagement rate in Rotherham currently sits at 59%, meaning that 59% of perpetrators that start the programme go on to successfully engage and complete the full 6 months intervention, this figure is slightly above the South Yorkshire average.

In November 2024, SYMCA completed a South Yorkshire wide analysis of all perpetrators known on the police database that had completed the programme, the key findings being that Domestic Abuse (DA) reoffending has been reduced by 73% in the nominals that had completed the programme.

Rotherham's previous whole funding contribution to the contract has been £48,000 per year. 50% is paid from RMBC Housing Services and 50% was previously funded from the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

As this is a Domestic Abuse perpetrator intervention, this project is better aligned with the Domestic Abuse duty funding and therefore now allocated to this project.

The lead Local Authority for the recommissioning of the perpetrator programme is Sheffield City Council. As such they have requested an uplift of funding from £48,000 to £60,000 from all areas that are inputting into the project.

A 50% contribution of £30,000 has been allocated from the MHCLG fund as referenced in the table above, and £30,000 has again been agreed to be funded via RMBC Housing Services

Domestic Abuse awareness programmes - (specifically for victim survivors with children working with Social Care)

In 2021, children were, for the first time, recognised in law as victims of domestic abuse in their own right, in England and Wales. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 defines a child victim as any child who “sees or hears or experiences the effects of the abuse”.

The most recent national crime survey data found that 2.3 million people aged 16–59 experienced domestic abuse in 2023/24, many of whom will have child(ren). The impact of domestic abuse on children can be profound,

and will vary according to a range of factors, such as gender, age, severity of abuse, and length of time subject to abuse. Alongside the distress experienced while abuse is occurring, such as increased levels of fear, inhibition, isolation, loss, anxiety and depression, the likelihood of longer-term trauma such as physical and mental health, development, behaviour and emotional wellbeing is where concern in relation to the aftereffects.

Domestic abuse can bring significant disruption to a child's life. Social and support networks can fall away, after repeatedly having to move school and homes to access safety. Having to keep silent to protect family members can cause a further sense of isolation and, together, these changes create additional layers of complex trauma for children.

In Rotherham we recognise this impact and want to strengthen and support families by enhancing the current provision for victims / survivors who have children placed on Child in Need (CIN) plans or Section 47 of the Children Act Child Protection Plans (CPP) for reasons of emotional neglect due to Domestic Abuse.

The intention is to commission a service to provide:

Domestic Abuse awareness programme/s to a specific cohort of victims / survivors of Domestic Abuse, who have children and are currently working with Children's Social Care to improve support and safety for children within the home. A clear focus of the programmes will be:

- Help victim / survivors have an awareness of Domestic Abuse
- Help victim / survivors make sense of what has happened to them and the impact the abuse has on their children
- Help victim / survivors recognise how children are affected by being exposed to this kind of abuse and how their lives are improved when the abuse is removed
- Build resilience and prevent crisis or escalating situations
- Build parental confidence, parenting skills
- Build awareness of the early signs of abuse with the aim to stop repeat incidents
- Refer victim / survivors and their children to various continued support options linking in with statutory and voluntary services as well as the RMBC Domestic Abuse pathway
- Support trauma recovery, linking in with schools, referral units, youth teams where necessary
- Support the current Domestic Abuse pathway
- Reduce the time families are on plans due to the emotional impact of domestic abuse

Outcomes expected:

- Support families and children to recover from Domestic Abuse particularly the longer-term trauma such as physical and mental health, development, behaviour and emotional wellbeing, for both Adult and Child.

- Support a reduction in repeat Domestic Abuse incidents where children are in the household and the need for Children's Social Care involvement
- The reduction in the length of time a family is working with Children's Social Care due to Domestic Abuse and both Children's Services and the adult parent feeling confident that Domestic Abuse will unlikely repeat and trauma recovery for the child/ren can take place
- Links are made with any wider support services where appropriate and schools to help promote long term trauma recovery.
- Reduce the current wait times / demand for programmes for victim/survivors with children who are working with Children's Services, by offering an alternative child focussed programme.
- RMBC compliance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, ensuring children who see / hears, or experiences effects of Domestic abuse are supported.

Route to market will be a formal quotation process, inviting 3 services to bid for this opportunity. This will be advertised via the Merzell portal.

Domestic Abuse Grant 'Capturing Survivor Voice'

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 promotes awareness and understanding of Domestic Abuse. The Rotherham Domestic Abuse strategy 2022 – 2027 states 'we will work using a 'grass roots upward' approach, involving community assets, social hubs, and community leaders, to engage people across diverse and minority groups'.

This grant work will help drive this grass roots approach and widen opportunities to capture the service user voice within all Rotherham Domestic Abuse functions. The Project will capture 'experts by experience' voice from a range of communities, social hubs and underrepresented victims. This aims to help drive changes to policies / strategies and provide effective guidance for any future commissioning.

Aims of this work will be:

1. Work with Domestic Abuse services as well as other statutory and non-statutory partners to capture domestic abuse service user voice.
2. Meet with Domestic Abuse Community Safety Officers on a regular basis to discuss feedback and create a shared action plan.
3. Engaging all community groups within Rotherham to feed into the survivor voice work.
4. Pro-actively engaging with survivors who have experience of DA / and the need for safe accommodation in Rotherham and survivors from marginalised groups.

5. Develop and utilise a range of methods to capture the survivor voice including surveys, consultations, and discussions to feed into the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Priority Group.
6. Consult with survivors on policy, protocols, service design and delivery, experience of services and communications, plus emerging issues for survivors.
7. Identifying good practice and areas for improvement which will be used to inform strategy and commissioning.
8. Creating ways to feedback so survivors are informed of the outcome/ changes made.
9. Attending the quarterly Domestic and Sexual Priority Group and any other partnership meetings as needed to represent the voice of people that have experienced domestic abuse.

Project outcomes will be:

1. Development and growth of the existing service user voice currently captured within commissioned and RMBC domestic abuse services.
2. Establish wider links with agencies (commissioned and non-commissioned), including safe accommodation services and any existing service user groups where DA could be a factor.
3. Regular updates to be provided at the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Priority Group.
4. Written / verbal reports to the necessary boards around any gaps identified
5. Victims feeling empowered, listened to, and valued.

Route to market will be formal quotation process, inviting 3 services to bid for this opportunity.

Domestic and Sexual Abuse training / engagement and emerging issues fund

Doncaster and Rotherham Council previously had a reciprocal agreement on training professionals on all aspects of domestic abuse. Meaning that Rotherham's professionals could access City of Doncaster Council's extensive training offer in return for sharing any specific commissioned learning events and materials.

However, unfortunately in August 2024 due to a change in Doncaster staffing arrangements this agreement could no longer take place, thus meaning Rotherham training options were less flourished.

Community Safety Officers alongside commissioned service Hopian are now currently delivering a core package of domestic abuse training to both internal Council staff and external partner professionals across the Borough.

Please see attached the current training prospectus - Appendix 2

Although this core training offer is being delivered, there are still some training elements that have surfaced as key themes through Domestic Abuse

Related Death Reviews (formally Domestic Homicide Reviews), that require specialist knowledge and delivery.

For example:

- Understanding the trio of vulnerabilities.
- Understanding the additional risk of victims who have Adverse Childhood Experiences
- Recognising Violent resistance/self-defence by victims in intimate relationships
- Recognising the barriers to support for wider communities.
- Trauma informed approach training

It is also recognised that as we aim to capture the victims voice and utilise the above-mentioned survivor liaison officer, we may need to involve stakeholder groups and voluntary sector services to help us engage with members of the public.

This may also shed light on any emerging issues that we have not foreseen.

Therefore, funding is allocated to ensure actions and learning from reviews are established and embedded in policies and procedures as standard daily practice. Any survivor liaison work can be supported, and any emerging issues be tackled.

Continued monitoring of all commissioned services and funded projects is currently, and will continue to take place, with governance provided via the Domestic Abuse Priority Group placed under the Safer Rotherham Partnership Board. This provides an ongoing mechanism to identify any potential issues or gaps in service and to seek opportunities if unmet needs are subsequently identified.

4. Consultation on proposal

4.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a statutory requirement on local authorities to consult with the statutory Domestic Abuse Partnership Board.

The Rotherham Domestic Abuse strategy and local priorities consultation has been conducted with all statutory bodies which form the partnership and with voluntary and community sector partners.

The priorities and progress are reviewed at quarterly Domestic Abuse Partnership Board meetings.

Consultation has also taken place with the Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Community Safety and Finance/Chair of the Safer Rotherham Partnership.

5. Timetable and Accountability for Implementing this Decision

- 5.1 The Delegated Officer Decision will be taken by the 18th of August 2025 with projects to continue or commence as soon as possible.

The Head of Service, Community Safety and Regulatory Services, will be responsible for implementing the decision as the lead officer for domestic abuse.

6. Financial and Procurement Advice and Implications (to be written by the relevant Head of Finance and the Head of Procurement on behalf of s151 Officer)

- 6.1 Within the Local Government Finance Settlement, the Council has been provided with a revenue grant allocation of £802,591 in 2025/26 in respect of its duties under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021. Prior to 2025/26, the funding was provided through a New Burdens Grant and was separate to the settlement. This represents an increase of £158,590 from 2024/25 This report sets out how it is proposed that this funding will be allocated for the Council to meet its statutory obligations.

The uplift allocations referred to for the Service Contracts within the report at sections 2.1 and 3.1 have been considered as part of the original procurement and are therefore built into the contracts established. Each procurement has been undertaken in compliance with the Council's Financial and Procurement Procedure Rules and Public Contract Regulations 2015 (as amended).

7. Legal Advice and Implications (to be written by Legal Officer on behalf of Assistant Director Legal Services)

- 7.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 place new statutory duties on local authorities in England to provide support to victims of domestic abuse and their children in safe accommodation. This includes assessing needs, developing and publishing strategies, and monitoring the effectiveness of those strategies. The Act also requires local authorities to collaborate with other relevant bodies and consult with the Domestic Abuse Local Partnership Board.

The arrangements which the Council has put in place to comply with these duties are set out in the body of the report and are in compliance with relevant Statutory Guidance published in 2022. The continuation of these arrangements and the increased allocation of funding as proposed in the report further strengthens the Councils arrangements and serves the needs of those affected by domestic violence. Appropriate contractual arrangements are in place with current providers which as stated above were procured in compliance with the Public Contract Regulations 2015

8. Human Resources Advice and Implications

- 8.1 There are no direct Human Resources implications arising from the recommendations contained in this report.

9. Implications for Children and Young People and Vulnerable Adults

- 9.1 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 specifically provides that a child (under 18 years old) who sees, hears, or experiences the effects of domestic abuse and is related to the victim or the suspect is also to be regarded as a victim of domestic abuse.

Domestic abuse services are critical in terms of supporting those affected by domestic abuse who, because of the abuse, will be vulnerable but may also have additional vulnerabilities. Safeguarding professionals from both children's and adults' services are engaged in the domestic abuse multi-agency partnership and in the domestic abuse strategy and internal governance arrangements. The proposals will have a positive impact on victims and their families in providing effective support.

The statutory response for children identified as in need of support or at risk of harm will continue to be met by Rotherham Children's Services and any other statutory agencies as appropriate.

10. Equalities and Human Rights Advice and Implications

- 10.1 Consideration continues to be given to equalities and human rights implications. In terms of equalities the Council has sought to develop its own portfolio of properties for domestic abuse victims ensuring that there is a diverse offer which will suit a range of needs. In addition, within commissioned services for domestic abuse, the Council closely monitors access to services and outcomes of services for protected characteristic groups and seeks to target communities as appropriate to ensure support is equitable and accessible.

An equality analysis, as required by the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010, has been completed to support this report and is included at Appendices 3 and 4.

11. Implications for CO2 Emissions and Climate Change

- 11.1 There are no direct implications in relation to climate change because of the decisions within this paper.

12. Implications for Partners

- 12.1 Partners have been consulted, as is the statutory requirement. Domestic abuse involves a range of agencies and partners to address and reduce the impacts of these issues. These investments have been supported by partners who will likely see a positive impact on their own demand levels and outcomes for victims and their families.

13. Risks and Mitigation

- 13.1 Internal and external governance is in place to monitor delivery and expenditure. Risks include incurring over or underspend. Financial monitoring arrangements are in place to mitigate risks. In relation to ensuring anticipated outcomes are delivered, robust performance monitoring and contract management arrangements are in place.

14. Accountable Officers

Emma Ellis, Head of Service, Community Safety and Regulatory Services
Sam Barstow, Assistant Director, Regeneration and Environment

Approvals obtained on behalf of Statutory Officers: -

	Named Officer	Date
Chief Executive	John Edwards	Click here to enter a date.
Strategic Director of Finance & Customer Services (S.151 Officer)	Judith Badger	Click here to enter a date.
Assistant Director of Legal Services (Monitoring Officer)	Phil Horsfield	Click here to enter a date.

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