

Response ID ANON-1WEK-1XJW-2

Submitted to **Transforming the response to domestic abuse**

Submitted on **2018-05-31 10:02:08**

Personal details

A I understand that there are two versions of the consultation. If I have already completed the short version I will not answer the following questions again: 6, 7, 9, 12, 24, 25, 26, 32, 35, 39, 43.

Yes

B What is your name?

Name:

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C What is your email address?

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D What region are you in?

Please select your region:

Greater London

E Are you responding on behalf of an organisation or as a member of the public?

Please choose an option below:

Organisation

F If relevant, which, if any, best describes you/your organisation?

Please select one of the options that best describes you:

Charitable/voluntary domestic abuse organisation

If none of the above please specify below:

G If applicable, please give the name of your organisation/ profession.

The name of your organisation, if relevant.:

Restored

Introducing a new statutory definition of domestic abuse

1 Do you agree with the proposed approach to the statutory definition?

Strongly agree

Please explain your answer.:

We agree with the proposed approach to the statutory definition. There remains a common misunderstanding that domestic abuse is limited to physical violence. As long as that misconception continues it is less likely that (i) action will be taken to deal with perpetrators; (ii) help and support will be given to those suffering from domestic abuse; and (iii) those within abusive relationships will seek help and protection.

Further, we agree with the suggested extension to refer to 'economic abuse' rather than 'financial abuse'. All forms of abusive behaviour should be contained within the statutory definition.

It will be vital for this more accurate definition of domestic abuse to be widely publicised, understood and embedded.

2 Will the new definition change what your organisation does? Please select 1. (This question is for organisations only)

Yes, in a positive way

Explain how it will change what your organisation does.:

Restored seeks to end violence against women. As mentioned above, there is a common misconception that domestic abuse involves just physical violence, whereas the issues that we are seeking to help address also include, for example, controlling and coercive behaviour.

The extended statutory definition will assist Restored in making known the true nature of domestic abuse.

Again, as mentioned above, it will be essential that the new statutory definition is communicated and understood widely.

3 How can we ensure that the definition is embedded in frontline practice?

Please provide your answer in the box provided:

The introduction of the proposed new definition is an opportunity to raise awareness of the wide-ranging nature of domestic abuse.

It will be essential that all relevant professionals are made aware of and operate in accordance with this definition.

Communication and training will be vital. For example, an on-line training module should be developed, with a requirement for successful completion as part of compulsory on-going training.

Relevant policies both in the public and private sectors (eg Domestic Abuse policies within the work environment) should be updated.

The proposed statutory definition also needs to be widely communicated to those suffering within abusive relationships. The provision of leaflets in, for example, local authority offices, medical waiting rooms and churches would be very useful.

4 What impact do you think the changes to the age limit in the 2012 definition have had?

Positive

Please explain your answer.:

We consider that the 2012 decision has had a positive impact in raising awareness of domestic abuse as being an issue that transcends stereotypes. It may also have had the effect of the need for 'healthy relationships' education being recognised in schools.

Further, it has meant that 16 and 17 year-olds can be recognised as being victims at an early stage, meaning that prevention measures can be put in place to educate and enable young people to identify signs of abuse in relationships and equip them to make positive choices.

5 We are proposing to maintain the current age limit of 16 years in the statutory definition – do you agree with this approach?

Agree

Please explain your answer.:

Child Protection and Safeguarding procedures have become increasingly robust over the last few years. Professionals have become increasingly experienced at ascertaining and addressing issues.

There has to be a risk that some children will 'fall between the cracks' if there is a blurring of the lines between domestic abuse and child abuse.

NOTE: It is clear that more support is required for social workers, who are often overstretched and under-resourced, to assist in identifying signs of abuse of young people under the supervision of social care in their relationships . Furthermore to ensure that the education of professionals challenges stereotypes of people from lower income backgrounds, which could well have been a contributing factor in cases such as Rotherham not being identified and dealt with appropriately earlier.

Educating young people on relationships

6 In addition to the changes being made to how relationship education will be taught in schools, what else can be done to help children and young people learn about positive relationships and educate them about abuse?

Please provide your answer in the box below::

Restored is a Christian organisation. We believe that the Church has a vital role here. Church Ministers are able to speak against abuse and emphasise relationship wholeness. They are also able, when acting in a pastoral capacity, to identify victims of abuse and potential abusers .

The potential influence of Ministers of Religion/Churches cannot be underestimated. Many young people have regular contact with religious organisations during their formative years - be they within a Church (Church Youth Workers often have contact with young people on a regular, weekly basis), a Mosque, a Gudwara or whatever. Religious organisations can have a marked increase in understanding the nature of relationships.

Further, children and young people need positive role models - it could be that some form of Young Person's Ambassador would be of merit. Organisations such as the Citizenship Foundation could play a useful role.

It is extremely important that relationship education is provided to both boys and girls. This should include (i) education in respect of healthy relationships and (ii) education to prevent gender inequality and injustice.

Reporting domestic abuse to statutory agencies

7 Which statutory agencies or groups do you think the UK Government should focus its efforts on in order to improve the identification of domestic abuse? Please tick your top 3 from the list.

Health professionals, Police, Social workers

If you selected other please add your response here::

It would obviously be of great benefit if all of the above agencies and/or groups were better able recognise the signs of domestic abuse.

Restored assists Churches in identifying domestic abuse through training and resources, together with its relationships with organisations such as CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service). Restored also encourages Churches in their contacts with relevant local service providers/organisations

8 In addition to improving training programmes and introducing guidance, what more can the government do to improve statutory agencies' understanding of domestic abuse?

Please explain your answer:

Training needs to be both relevant and continually updated. In relation to Domestic Abuse it should be part of mandatory Continual Professional Development. On-line training modules that culminate in some form of 'test' that has to be passed are often useful.

Sometimes, however, the need is for a change in attitude/culture eg 'moving' people away from considering incidents to be 'just a domestic' to one that fully appreciates the serious nature of domestic abuse.

There should therefore be some form of monitoring to ensure that there is a genuine, lasting understanding of this issue.

Alternative ways to report domestic abuse

9 What further support can we provide to the public (employers, friends, family, community figures) so they can identify abuse and refer victims to help effectively?

Please give answer below:

As mentioned above, the role of faith organisations in identifying abuse and referring victims can be very important. For example, again as mentioned above, it is common for Church Ministers to become aware of such situations within pastoral conversations.

All parts of the Church need to recognise the extent and severity of the issue - hence Restored has an increasing focus here and has:-

(i) recently completed and publicised research on the extent of domestic abuse within churches ("In Churches Too: Church Responses to Domestic Abuse" 2018);

www.restoredrelationships.org/CumbriaResearch

(ii) published a Church 'pack' to assist churches in addressing issues; www.restoredrelationships.org/churchpack

(iii) provides training to Churches;

(iv) provides assistance to the Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service (CCPAS) in making known the seriousness of these issues

Improving support services for all victims of domestic abuse and their children

10 We are in the process of identifying priority areas for central Government funding on domestic abuse. Which of the following areas do you think the UK Government should prioritise? Please select up to 3.

Advocacy for victims to enable them to stay safely in their own home (Independent Domestic Violence Advisors or their equivalent), Helpline services for those affected by domestic abuse to call for advice and support, Perpetrator programmes which aim to change offenders' behaviour and stop reoffending

If you selected other please add your response here:

All of the above are important.

The prime focus must always be the safety of survivors of domestic abuse.

Increased resources aimed towards changing the behaviour of offenders would also be of considerable value, in order to prevent similar abusive behaviour occurring in subsequent relationships.

Restored's 'First Man Standing' campaign is a major initiative aimed at getting men to consider and change their own behaviour, along with 'calling out' and challenging the behaviour of others.

11 What more can the Government do to encourage and support effective multi-agency working, in order to provide victims with full support and protection? Please select up to 3.

Guidance, Sharing effective practice, Training

If you selected other please add your response here:

Funding is, however, also essential is effective in respect of the preparing and delivery of effective guidance, training and sharing effective practice. The good intentions within this consultation document will founder if insufficient funding is provided by Government.

Supporting victims with specific needs

12 What more can the Government do to better support victims who face multiple barriers to accessing support?

Please give answer below:

For those from insecure financial environments, easy access to public resources/benefits will be vital. Otherwise there is a danger that they will feel that they have no option other than to remain with the perpetrator of abuser.

Also, as mentioned above, faith organisations often have the trust that statutory agencies sometimes do not have, hence Restored's focus upon Churches.

Supporting female offenders

13 How can we work better with female offenders and vulnerable women at risk of offending to identify their domestic abuse earlier? Please select your top 3.

If you selected other please add your response here::

Women can, of course, also be responsible for the perpetration of domestic abuse. However, Restored's focus is upon ending violence against women (most domestic abuse is, of course, against them) and it would therefore be more appropriate for others to comment here.

14 How can we make greater use of women-specific services to deliver interventions in safe, women-only environments? Please select your top 3.

If you selected other please add your response here::

Again, Restored's focus is upon ending violence against women and it would therefore be more appropriate for others to comment on issues relating to women offenders and vulnerable women at risk of offending.

In respect of female survivors of domestic abuse, our experience is that women-only services are essential. Sufficient and sustainable funding must be available to maintain such services.

Supporting those with difficulties getting financial support

15 In addition to reviewing who may be eligible for the Destitute Domestic Violence Concession, what other considerations could the Government make in respect of protecting domestic abuse victims with no recourse to public funds?

Please give answer below:

The availability and extent of Legal Aid is essential. It is, for example, important to review the eligibility criteria detailed in the Legal Aid, Sentencing and Punishment of Offenders Act 2013.

This is particularly required in order to protect survivors from further abuse.

Keeping victims safe – creating a new domestic abuse protection order

16 Do you agree that the Domestic Abuse Protection Notice issued by the police should operate in broadly the same way as the existing Domestic Violence Protection Notice (except that it would also be able to be issued in cases of abuse which do not involve violence or the threat of violence)?

Yes

Please explain your answer.:

The linking to the new proposed statutory definition of domestic abuse is both logical and important.

The creation of a single, flexible pathway for victims, police and other practitioners would assist in avoiding confusion. It would mean that it is more likely to be used.

17 Which of the following individuals/organisations should be able to apply for a Domestic Abuse Protection Order? Please select all that apply.

The victim, Certain persons associated with the victim (for example certain family members) on behalf of the victim, The police (following the issue of a Domestic Abuse Protection Notice or at any other time), Relevant third parties, who would be specified by regulations, on behalf of victims (see Question 18 for further details), With permission of the court, any other person or organisation

If you selected other please add your response here.:

Essentially, all of the above.

18 Which persons or bodies should be specified by regulations as ‘relevant third parties’ who can apply for a Domestic Abuse Protection Order on a victim’s behalf? Please select all that apply.

Local authority safeguarding or social care professionals, Providers of probation services, Specialist domestic abuse advisers/ Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs), Specialist non-statutory support services (for example refuge support staff)

If you selected other please add your response here.:

Again, all of the above. Those suffering from domestic abuse are often severely traumatised and the more assistance that can be provided the better.

19 We propose that there should be multiple routes via which an application for a Domestic Abuse Protection Order can be made, including:

Yes

If you chose Yes or No, please explain your answer.:

We consider that it is preferable for there to be as many routes as possible to obtaining such an Order. We are concerned though that there might be a possibility of someone considering that it is the responsibility of someone else to make such an application. This risk will need to be mitigated by close cross-agency working.

20 Do you agree that family, civil and criminal courts should be able to make Domestic Abuse Protection Orders of their own volition during the course of any proceedings.

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer:

One of the major advantages of such an Order has to be increased flexibility, including in respect of those who can make apply. As such, the provision of such a discretion being given to the courts would be both a logical extension and of clear benefit.

21 Do you agree that courts should be able to impose positive requirements as well as prohibitions as part of the conditions attached to the proposed order?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer:

The prime focus must always be on protecting those who are suffering/have suffered domestic abuse.

The imposition of positive requirements could be of benefit in lessening the risk of perpetrators acting in similar ways in future relationships.

22 Do you agree that courts should be able to require individuals subject to a domestic abuse protection order to notify personal details to the police?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer::

Notification to the police can 'concentrate the mind' of alleged perpetrators - eg the understanding that the police are aware and may be monitoring repeat behaviour.

23 If you selected 'Yes' to question 22 what personal details should the courts be able to require individuals to provide to the police? Select all that apply.

Name/change of name, Home address/change of home address, Formation of new relationship with an intimate partner, Change of circumstances relating to household - including where a new child is born or otherwise joins the household, Details of child arrangements orders for where and with whom a child is to live and with whom a child is to spend time or otherwise have contact.

If you selected other please add your response here::

All of the above.

24 Do you agree that breach of the proposed order should be a criminal offence?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer:

It is important that such an Order has 'teeth'. The fact that a breach can result in a criminal prosecution could result in alleged perpetrators 'thinking twice'.

25 If you do agree that breach of the proposed order should be a criminal offence, should it be possible for breach to alternatively be punished as a contempt of court?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer:

Please see the response to Question 25.

26 Do you agree that courts should be given an express power to impose electronic monitoring as a condition of a Domestic Abuse Protection Order?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer:

Electronic monitoring is useful in ascertaining whether court orders have been complied with. They are a means of reducing the possibility of future abuse.

27 Which particular statutory safeguards relating to the use of electronic monitoring with Domestic Abuse Protection Orders should be put in place?

Please give your answer below:

Electronic monitoring will be particularly relevant where there has been a history of physical violence within the context of the relationship in question or where the alleged perpetrator has a history of physical violence in previous relationships.

Anonymous registration

28 How much easier do you think it will be for domestic abuse victims to register to vote anonymously, once the changes summarised above happen?

Easier

29 What further support could survivors receive to prove their safety would be at risk if their name and address appeared on the electoral register? Please put forward one suggestion.

Please give your answer below:

Specific advice and assistance from relevant agencies eg social workers.

It will be important for such persons to have this at the forefront of their minds when advising/assisting victims of domestic abuse.

30 Do you have any further comments or suggestions on how to make it easier for domestic abuse survivors to anonymously register to vote?

Please provide your answer:

No.

31 Aside from anonymous registration, how else can we keep victims' addresses safe?

Please provide your answer in the box below::

Updated, frequent training on the issue of domestic abuse and its dangers will assist as a foundation for the importance of non-disclosure of addresses. The removal of the 12 month time limit for anonymous addresses, making this indefinite. NOTE: Women are at the greatest risk and threat of death when leaving a partner who is abusive.

The Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme

32 Before reading this consultation, were you aware of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme (Clare's Law)?

Yes

33 Do you agree the guidance underpinning the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme should be put in to law?

Agree

Please explain your answer:

Anything that can protect victims and potential victims against domestic abuse is of great benefit. Guidance should recommend training of police officers to better understand the scheme's purpose and the application process. It should also ensure that there are effective referral pathways to specialist domestic and sexual abuse advocacy and support services. It is also important for those women who request background checks on current partners and chose to stay in their relationships not to face a 'blame culture' in any potential future investigations or court proceedings related to domestic violence or abuse.

34 How do you think we can best promote awareness of the Domestic Violence Disclosure Scheme amongst the public?

Media (for example newspapers, magazines)

Use this box to explain your answer or if you selected 'other':

We consider that all of the above should be utilised. It is important to promote awareness to as many people in as many ways as possible.

Economic abuse

35 What practical barriers do domestic abuse victims face in escaping or recovering from economic abuse and how could these be overcome?

Please give your answer below:

In cases of economic abuse, the perpetrator has generally had control of the finances. This means that it can be very difficult for the domestic abuse victim to access sufficient funds to feel that they can escape from living with the person perpetrating abuse. It will often also be difficult to locate and afford alternative accommodation.

The provision of emergency funding for living expenses, easier access to credit and the provision of accommodation are all vital.

Online threats and the role of technology in domestic abuse

36 What more can we do to tackle domestic abuse which is perpetrated online, or through control of technology?

Clear guidance from social media companies on privacy settings for users at risk or victims of domestic abuse on online domestic abuse

Use this box to explain your answer or if you selected 'other':

Online abuse is an increasing problem and as much action as possible needs to be taken to address it. It is critical that information is given as to spyware and GPS locators when purchasing mobile devices. Switching these off and maintaining control over these is essential in order to keep women safe from those choosing to abuse.

Improving the police response

37 How can we continue to encourage and support improvements in the policing response to domestic abuse across all forces and improve outcomes for victims?

Please give your answer below:

It is accepted that there has been a change in the attitude of some police officers in recent years. However, police practice needs to be consistent throughout all police forces, as the need for an appropriate response to these serious issues is far from embedded. Training needs to address the underlying attitudes of police officers towards domestic abuse, some of whom may carry the general myths about domestic abuse. Women have varying experiences of policing on domestic abuse based on geography and the individual officers dealing with the cases. Much more consistency and training is required to ensure positive responses and options for those reporting abuse.

Improving victims experiences of the justice system

38 Do you think creating a legislative assumption that all domestic abuse victims are to be treated as eligible for assistance on the grounds of fear and distress (if the victim wants such assistance), will support more victims to give evidence?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain your answer:

Court proceedings are daunting and will be intensely stressful to victims. Apart from anything else, they may be required to give evidence against someone with whom they have had a close relationship and might well be a parent to their child/children. Any assistance that can be provided in these circumstances is to be welcomed.

39 Is there more this government could do to explain the range and remit of existing measures for victims to help support them in the criminal justice process?

Yes

If you selected Yes, please explain your answer:

Restored cannot specifically comment on this question, but there is, of course the possibility that victims are not fully aware and/or may not completely understand the support available, For example, information provided at a very traumatic time may not be taken in.

40 Do you know of instances in criminal proceedings when an application to prevent cross-examination of a victim by an unrepresented defendant has been denied in a domestic abuse case?

Don't know /no answer

If you selected Yes, where possible, please provide evidence or details of the experience to support your answer.:

41 Do you think extending the prohibition on cross-examination in criminal proceedings would support more domestic abuse victims to give evidence?

Yes

If you selected 'Yes' or 'No' please explain your answer:

It is often difficult for a victim to 'face' a perpetrator. The new proposed statutory definition rightly highlights the issue of controlling and coercive behaviour. Faced with direct cross-examination by a defendant, victims may well be affected by fear and memories of such behaviour.

We understand that in sexual offences cases, Solicitors are often appointed by the Court to cross-examine on behalf of unrepresented defendants. This process should also be extended to domestic abuse cases. Sufficient funding will need to be made available for this.

The knowledge that such measures are in place is likely to support more domestic abuse victims to give evidence.

Prosecution without victim's evidence

42 Do you have suggestions for how we can better support prosecutions through to conclusion, including providing better support for witnesses who currently disengage from the process?

Yes

If you selected 'Yes' please explain why and, where possible, providing evidence or details of the experience to support your answer.:

Access to advocacy should be given as a right in line with the Istanbul Convention. Specially trained advocates such as IDVA's and IDVA's should be consistently available across the whole country and available to those who would benefit from such support.

43 What more can police, witness care units and the Crown Prosecution Service do to support victims through the justice process from the point of report onwards?

Where possible, please provide evidence or details of the experience to support your answer.:

There is a need to address and reduce the significant time delays through the court process and procedures which can result in a survivor of abuse dropping out of the process or a perpetrator regaining power and control over the woman and convincing her to change her mind.

44 Are there other aspects of the criminal court treatment of vulnerable people which the family court could learn from?

Yes

If you selected Yes, please explain why:

There is a need to ensure cooperation between court jurisdictions. Some women see their perpetrator sanctioned by the criminal courts only to find that this is ignored when they then appear in the family court.

Further, court workers may display little understanding of abuse (especially coercive and controlling behaviour) and in adjudications abusive parents who have relevant convictions may still, for example, be given access to children (especially relevant given that the Consultation is suggesting recognising harm to children in households where there is domestic violence as an aggravating factor). The family courts should specifically consider the appropriateness of making any presumption of shared parental access in families where domestic violence has occurred.

There should be a clear prohibition of cross examination by perpetrators in civil/family courts as well as special measures for victims of domestic violence (including screens and video links)

Coercive or controlling behaviour offence

45 Do you think there is further action the government could take to strengthen the effectiveness of the controlling or coercive behaviour offence?

Yes

Please give further detail.:

We are not aware as to how many successful prosecutions there have been since the introduction of this offence - we note that 300 cases have been charged and reached a first hearing but are unaware as to the number of convictions (if any) that have been achieved.

The Government needs to make the existence of this offence more widely known. In particular, there should be mandatory training of all front line police officers in how to recognise and respond to coercive and controlling behaviour

Aggravating factors in sentencing

46 Do you think the current approach of using sentencing guidelines, as per guidelines issued in February 2018 is effective in ensuring sentences imposed reflect the seriousness of domestic abuse when it involves children?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain why.:

All domestic abuse is serious. The consequences are often lifelong and destructive.

Sentencing guidelines should reflect this.

We agree that the involvement of children and the effect that domestic abuse has on them both at the time and in future years is a specific aggravating factor.

We encourage the Government to implement the recommendations from the Ofsted led report on the harm to children when there is domestic abuse, including programme preventative work with the perpetrator.

47 Is a statutory aggravating factor needed in order for the court to reflect the seriousness of offences involving domestic abuse and children in sentencing?

Yes

If you selected Yes or No, please explain why.:

It will help in ensuring that the magnitude is not overlooked by the courts.

48 Please share any other views on how to ensure domestic abuse and its impact on children are taken into account in sentencing?

Please provide your answer below:

It is important to acknowledge that perpetrators of domestic abuse, stalking and harassment do misuse/abuse family and civil courts to cause further distress and exercise control over their victims. Strengthened sanctions should be available in family courts where there are cases of breaches of restraining or other restrictive orders. In the event of multiple breaches, there should be a presumption of custody.

The Istanbul Convention

49 Do you agree that taking extraterritorial jurisdiction over these offences is sufficient to satisfy the requirements of the Convention?

No

50 If you answered 'No' to question 49 what additional offences do you think we should take extraterritorial jurisdiction over and why?

Please provide your answer below:

Please note that the listing of offences/laws above is not in line with the Istanbul Convention and requires correction to ensure realignment.

NOTE: Restored considers that it is essential that the UK Government ratifies the Istanbul Convention at the earliest opportunity. This is because (i) issues of domestic abuse are increasingly extraterritorial and (ii) it sends a positive message to other states as to the seriousness with which the UK takes these issues.

51 Do you agree that relying on the civil law remedy in the Protection from Harassment Act 1997 is sufficient to satisfy the sexual harassment requirements of the Convention?

No

52 If you answered 'No' to question 51, what do you think is necessary to satisfy those requirements?

Please provide your answer below:

As mentioned above, it is important that the UK Government ratifies the Istanbul Convention as a whole. It will send a clear message to other states as to the seriousness that the UK takes these issues and will prevent states with less robust enforcement provisions within their national laws from being able to find an excuse for non-implementation. The UK should take the lead here.

Preventing reoffending

53 Do you agree we should explore (with the Crown Prosecution Service) further controlled and monitored use of conditional cautions with rehabilitation programmes than is currently permitted for lower-level, normally first time domestic abuse incidents?

Yes

If yes, please explain your answer suggesting what procedures should be in place to ensure a conditional caution would only be given in appropriate cases with appropriate conditions attached.:

Restored considers that anything that can be done to eliminate repeat offending is of benefit.

We consider that all perpetrators are mandated to undertake a Respect accredited course to ensure quality standards and good practice are secured and maintained.

The use of conditional cautions must, however, be coupled with monitoring for compliance and enforcement in the event of non-compliance.

If you answered No please explain your answer.:

54 Do you have any additional evidence on current conditional caution practice which we should consider in relation to this issue?

Don't know /no answer

If you answered Yes, please explain your answer.:

Managing serial and repeat offenders

55 What changes to current policies or procedures would help police and other agencies to better manage serial and repeat abusers, in particular those who are not subject to a sentence of the court?

Please give your answer below:

We agree with the above.

Sufficient sustainable funding will need to be provided by Government.

Working with perpetrators to change their behaviour

56 What more could be done to work with perpetrators in prisons, particularly offenders who receive a sentence of less than 12 months and do not have sufficient time to complete a domestic abuse programme in custody?

Please give your answer below:

We urge the Government to ensure that all perpetrators of domestic abuse undertake a Respect accredited programme that, if not completed whilst in custody, be completed once released as a condition of that release.

Survivors of abuse should also be informed, with sufficient notice, when their perpetrator is to be released, in order that they can make arrangements, if necessary, to keep themselves safe from harm.

57 What more could be done to work with perpetrators in the community (convicted or non-convicted) to change their behaviour?

Please give your answer below:

Any programmes working with perpetrators of abuse should be Respect accredited to ensure that they seek to address the underlying attitudes, actions and behaviours of those who choose to abuse.

Restored are working alongside Churches to address issues of domestic abuse in relation that perpetrated upon women and girls. As mentioned above, we have created a 'Church Pack'; and are working alongside CCPAS (Churches' Child Protection Advisory Service).

Our 'First Man Standing' initiative also seeks to challenge men to refrain from abusive behaviour and to challenge (on a peer level) that displayed by others.

Improving performance using data

58 Please select which of the following you believe should be priorities for improving data collection. Please choose up to 3.

Improving the collection and reporting of data on when domestic abuse is a feature of a case/ intervention, Improving data to enable better tracking of outcomes in domestic abuse cases/ intervention, Linking data to enable better tracking of interventions and reoffending

If you selected 'Other' please add your response here.:

All of the above would be of assistance.

Establishing a Domestic Abuse Commissioner in law

59 Do you agree with the proposed model for a Domestic Abuse Commissioner outlined above?

Strongly agree

Please explain your answer.:

We consider that the creation of a Domestic Abuse Commissioner will seek to highlight the alarming rate of domestic abuse and the need for the behaviours of individuals and society's response to domestic abuse to change.

As mentioned above, Restored is a faith-based organisation working alongside churches. We are very much of the view that the Commissioner should involve and work with faith organisations. The importance that faith organisations have in addressing these issues is widely recognised by eg:-

a. The domestic abuse interfaith statement made in the House of Lords. <https://www.restoredrelationships.org/resources/info/110>

b. The Anglican Communion Resolutions 15.7 and 16.3 (2014), pages 27 to 44.

<http://www.anglicancommunion.org/structures/instruments-of-communion/acc/acc-15/resolutions.aspx#s7>

and 16:3 <http://www.anglicancommunion.org/structures/instruments-of-communion/acc/acc-16/resolutions.aspx#s3>

c. United Nations CSW 62 agreed conclusions on Violence against Women and Girls, which mentions religious institutions in the prevention and response to Violence against Women and Girls.

60 Of the proposed powers and resources, which do you consider to be the most important for a Domestic Abuse Commissioner? Please choose up to 3.

Map and monitor provision of domestic abuse services against the National Statement of Expectations, and publish this information to showcase and share best practice, as well as to highlight where local provision falls short of what is expected, Oversee the Domestic Homicide Review Quality Assurance process, including any potential changes implemented following this consultation, feeding lessons learned into their recommendations, Provide recommendations to both national and local Government to improve the response to domestic abuse, accompanied with a duty on the responsible person/organisation to respond to these recommendations

If you answered other please state other functions the commissioner should fulfil:

We are concerned that no mention is made of leading on the prevention of domestic abuse.

The Domestic Abuse Commissioner could overview best practice in the rehabilitation of perpetrators of abuse and also seek to ensure that there is a consistent focus on attitude and behaviour change across all sections of society, in an endeavour to make domestic abuse unacceptable in all circumstances.

61 What would be the practical implications of complying with the proposed Domestic Abuse Commissioner's powers?

Please give your answer below:

Not applicable - Restored is a Charity, not a public body.

Learning from Domestic Homicide Reviews

62 One proposal is that the Domestic Abuse Commissioner could routinely collate, quality assure and share lessons learnt from DHRs. What more could be done to increase awareness of the learning from DHRs?

Please give your answer below:

We are unable to comment on this question.

63 How can areas best hold their own local agencies to account in terms of monitoring delivery against DHR action plans?

Please give your answer below:

Agencies should publish annual reports detailing progress against the implementation of recommendations, with timeframes, and address, with allocated resources, those that remain to be delivered.

Sharing best practice across government

64 How can the government better share and promote effective practice on domestic abuse across all public services both in regard to commissioning and delivery of services?

Please give your answer below:

Restored is pleased to note the Government's proposals in this Consultation document. The issue of domestic abuse is one that requires urgent and vital attention. The statistics detailing the number of women that are experiencing/have experienced such abuse are alarming.

However, many of these proposals carry with them a costs implication. It is essential that long term sustainable funding is made available by the Government to ensure that good intentions become effective action and lead to enduring change.

Local services supporting women fleeing abuse are at crisis point and are often forced to compete with one another at a local level for scarce funding and resources rather than encouraged to cooperate and collaborate with one another to provide the best services available for women and the children that are escaping the trauma of domestic abuse.

It is imperative that the Government reverses its decision to place the responsibility for the funding of Refuges to local authorities - this has resulted in the closure of many Refuges across the country.

We would also encourage the Government to take the lead in providing a national provision of services for women escaping abuse and also the provision of specialist services for BAME women, women living with disabilities and those with multiple and complex needs, together with the provision of long term sustainable funding that is essential for the provision of these services.

65 What role should local areas play in sharing good practice?

Please give your answer below:

Local areas can feed good practice back to the Domestic Abuse Commissioner to then share nationally.

The Government should not confuse the need for specialist services and local responses as an endorsement that so called 'localism' is the best way to address domestic abuse. Domestic abuse is a serious crime that sees women lose their lives every week. If we are to see wholesale societal change in attitudes, behaviours and responses to domestic abuse it requires a national vision and lead with allocated resources that involves all areas of society in the response, including churches and other faith organisations.

Equality and confidentiality statements