

## **Motion – Violence against women and girls**

### **Council notes:**

- That the murder of Sarah Everard, just over 1 year ago, launched a wave of anger and protests across the country.
- That according to national crime statistics in the UK, on average one woman is killed by a man every three days.
- The ONS reported that in 2020 alone 618,000 women were victims of a sexual assault or an attempted sexual assault by a man.

Street harassment and violence against women and girls is endemic in the UK:

- 80% of women of all ages have been sexually harassed in public, with 90% of these women not reporting it as they don't believe it will make a difference
- One in two women are sexually harassed in the workplace
- One in three women will experience domestic violence in their lifetime
- One in five women will be raped in their lifetime
- Two women a week are killed by a current or former partner (this rose to three a week during lockdown), and three women a week take their own lives following domestic abuse.
- Women who report rape have a 3% chance of the report ending in conviction\*. Most women who survive domestic violence do not receive justice from the criminal justice system.
- That transphobia has become more commonplace under the cover of 'protecting women's spaces'.

\*information updated since publication of Agenda due to incorrect information in original motion.

### **Council notes:**

- Swale Borough Council, on behalf of the Swale Community Safety Partnership, is a White Ribbon Borough meaning we're committed to leading by example and taking the White Ribbon pledge – to never excuse, commit or remain silent about male violence against women.

### **Council believes:**

- That transphobia, homophobia, misogyny and all forms of hate crime have no place in modern society.
- That male violence against women and girls is part of a broader culture of misogyny in society.
- Perpetrators of serious violence usually have a history of inflicting abuse and harassment against other women and girls. Tackling violence against women and girls means dismantling this culture.
- The seeds of violent behaviour are often sown at a young age and if the right interventions are not made in time, the problem continues to perpetuate.

**This Council resolves to:**

- Stand in solidarity with protestors who oppose violence against women, and girls.
- Commends work by the Community safety Unit and Kent Police as they look to the eradication of violence against women and girls.
- Commits to the delivery of the Violence Against Women and Girls action plan, that forms part of the Swale Community Safety Plan, delivered jointly with key partner agencies.
- Seek to develop work with schools and youth providers to educate and empower girls and young women regarding healthy relationships and safety
- Continue to work to ensure appropriate provision is in place for perpetrators of violence against women and girls to seek to change their behaviour
- Support Kent Police with delivery of their Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy
- Do all we can as a council and in our communities to champion the rights and entitlements of women and girls and to tackle violence against them. This includes continuing to invest in vital services, listening and responding to women and girls about the action we need, and calling out misogyny and sexism wherever we see and hear it.
- To support those providing services in Swale to deliver culturally competent services for VAWG which fully serve our diverse population.
- To continue to commit to the white ribbon pledge and to promote schemes that aim to educate men through campaigns that empower male “allies”.
- Work with our partners in the LGBTQ Community and Stop Hate UK to produce a Transphobia Hate Crime awareness plan
- Promote the Police “community voice” platform for reporting concerns

To ask the leader to write to the Home Secretary to ask that:

- There is an urgent Royal Commission into male violence against women
- For public sexual harassment to be made a crime, as was originally indicated in the Home Office Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) consultation.
- Increase investment in victims’ services including in particular, refuges, mental health services and legal aid support for all victims of male violence.

Proposed by: Councillor Hannah Perkin

Seconded by: Councillor Corrie Woodford