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Surrey joining up to tackle violence against women

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A new countywide, partnership strategy has been agreed to boost the county's collective efforts to end Violence Against Women and Girls in Surrey. Work will now commence with partners across Surrey on an action plan to support work over the next three-years

The Surrey Partnership VAWG Strategy was developed with the County's key partners, including survivors and communities, specialist service provision, police, education and health, to build upon the extensive work already in progress to end VAWG, such as our Safer Streets initiative. The response will address VAWG across four pillars: Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue. These pillars underpin four key objectives: prevent violence against women and girls, support victims and survivors, hold perpetrators to account and partnership working.

The strategy frames all crime types we know to disproportionally affect women and girls, such as domestic abuse, sexual offences, and 'honour' based abuse, under the framework of tackling violence against women and girls.

It goes wider to include educating children on respectful relationships, tackling sexism in the office, and harassment and intimidation of women and girls in Surrey's communities. The County recognise that VAWG impacts LGBTQ+, minoritised communities and children and adults with care and support needs in different ways, and the authority will look to collaborate with specialist service provision to ensure an intersectional approach to supporting all survivors, and work to break down additional barriers.

Harnessing the experiences and knowledge of all partners across the County's multi-agency network, the strategy will set out its shared vision, principles, and commitments. The governance framework will ensure accountability and enable effective implementation of action plans by their partners.

Informed by the lived experience of women and girls within Surrey, the work of the partnership will help to empower survivors, help them to feel safe and be safe, hold perpetrators to account and bring them to justice.

Joanna Killian, Chief Executive Surrey County Council said: "*With the launch of our new county wide partnership VAWG strategy we strive to end violence against women and girls in Surrey. The safety of women and girls within our communities is a top priority for us, and we must ensure that they have opportunities to flourish without fear for their safety. For too long abuse, violence, and harmful attitudes towards women and girls has been allowed to thrive, this stops with us. This partnership strategy ensures collective action to tackle all forms of VAWG within Surrey, and we hope to be a beacon of best practice for other counties across the UK. Together, with our residents, specialist services, partners, and the expertise of women and girls, we will achieve our collective goal.*"

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