FIRST EVER PLAN FOR MALE VICTIMS OF GENDER BASED VIOLENCE

Friday 22 November, 2024

Greater Manchester has become the first place in the UK to have a dedicated plan for tackling gender-based violence against men and boys.

Co-authored by Professor David Gadd (University of Manchester) and Duncan Craig OBE (Chief Executive Officer of We Are Survivors), alongside the Mayor (Andy Burnham) and Deputy Mayor (Kate Green) of Greater Manchester, the plan sets out how the city region will:

- Tackle domestic abuse and sexual violence towards men and boys
- Raise awareness of support services and reporting mechanisms for male victims/survivors, with a focus on services for men from minoritised communities
- Expand trauma- informed and trauma-responsive training for Greater Manchester Police, teachers, social workers and professionals to improve recognition and response to male gender-based violence, including 'so called' honour based abuse

In the development of the plan, partners already delivering work that meets the needs of men and boys in Greater Manchester, we engaged and supported the work; alongside the collection and analysis of data which evidenced 1 in 5 recorded offences of rape were against male victims, compared to the national data of 1 in 10.

Duncan Craig OBE, founder and Chief Executive of We Are Survivors – a Greater Manchester based charity supporting male victims/survivors of sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation – and a survivor of sexual abuse, rape and sexual exploitation himself – said:

"In the absence of a coherent national strategy that tackles gender-based violence against men and boys, Greater Manchester is leading the way in launching our own plan, which addresses the full range of violence, abuse and exploitation in which men or boys are victims, and in which their gender, sexuality or intimate relationships are motivating or prevailing factors in their suffering.

"Victims of gender-based violence face numerous barriers to reporting and seeking support, including fear of disbelief, social ostracism, and lack of awareness about available help. For male victims, there are additional challenges such as societal expectations about masculinity, fear of homophobic reactions, and concerns about the consequences of disclosure.

"It is crucial to recognise the complex power dynamics in abusive relationships and prioritise support for all victims, addressing their specific needs. Developing comprehensive support for male victims is essential, if we are to truly tackle gender-based violence."

In January 2020, Britain's most prolific rapist Reynard Sinaga was sentenced in Manchester Crown Court to a minimum of 30 years for committing 136 rapes against 48 men, with Greater Manchester Police holding evidence that over a 30-month period, Sinaga raped over 200 men – the majority of whom identified as 'straight'. The case shone a spotlight on the considerable barriers men face in reporting experiences of victimisation and is now the biggest rape case in British legal history.

Kate Green, Greater Manchester's Deputy Mayor for Safer and Stronger Communities said:

"Our plan aims to reduce gender-based violence against men and boys, encourage them to seek help and live well, and ensure high-quality, accessible services across Greater Manchester. We are committed to a trauma-informed and responsive, inclusive approach that addresses the specific needs of male victims and recognises the complex power dynamics and intersectional challenges they face.

"Last year, male victims accounted for one in five reports of rape and sexual assault offences to Greater Manchester Police and sadly, we know the actual cases of gender-based abuse and violence affecting men and boys is much higher as they are less likely to report cases to the police.

"This is why it's so important to have a bespoke plan for male victims that ensures the right support and services are available and that professionals understand the distinct needs of male victims, particularly those from minoritised communities.

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“We are very grateful to our partners and the experts that have helped to develop this plan as an extension of our 10-year strategy and our unwavering commitment to making our communities safer and stronger.”

Statistics show that in the year ending June 2024, Greater Manchester Police (GMP) recorded 9,904 offences of rape and sexual assault, of which 1,836 (one in five) related to male victims.

In Greater Manchester, the average time taken by male victims to report sexual assault to police is four years and less than four percent of reports result in a charge.

The plan will see the extension of the trailblazing housing reciprocal to male victims of domestic abuse and violence. The reciprocal is an arrangement across all 10 boroughs of Greater Manchester which ensures that victims can be rehomed in suitable housing in any borough. Previously victims of domestic abuse could only be rehomed within their borough, which often led to further trauma or abuse.

As set out in the plan, Greater Manchester will invest in Independent Domestic Violence Advisors to specialise in supporting men and boys and support ambitions to be a trauma-responsive city-region, and establish a Male Victims Service Coordinator role, to help enhance therapeutic and advice services.

The plan will also see the creation of pathways for victims at risk of committing sexual offences or causing harm, including through work with the Violence Reduction Unit.

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GM GBV Strategy for Men and Boys

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