

Report to:	EXECUTIVE CABINET
Date:	25 January 2023
Executive Member:	Councillor Eleanor Wills – Executive Member (Population Health and Wellbeing)
Reporting Officer:	Debbie Watson – Director of Population Health Lisa Morris, Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager, Population Health
Subject:	WHITE RIBBON ACCREDITATION
Report Summary:	White Ribbon Accreditation is a nationally recognised programme for organisations who are committed to improving their workplace culture, progress gender equality and end violence against women and girls. This report outlines the Accreditation Framework that organisations are required to implement in order to achieve accreditation status and begin to raise awareness, inspire culture change and ensure people know how to access support.
Recommendations:	That Executive Cabinet be recommended to agree that Tameside Council seek White Ribbon Accreditation, including an annual accreditation fee funded from the existing ring-fenced Domestic Abuse Transformation fund; and undertake the required actions set out in Section 2.3 of the report in order to gain White Ribbon accreditation.
Corporate Plan:	This piece of work directly supports delivery of the objective to reduce victims of domestic abuse under the priority ‘Nurturing Communities’ in the Corporate Plan.
Policy Implications:	A key element of the accreditation process requires the organisation to demonstrate an ongoing and sustained commitment to ending male violence against women and girls by making changes in the way priorities are determined through communications, HR policies, employee development, training, and overall organisational culture.
Financial Implications: (Authorised by the statutory Section 151 Officer)	The financial impact arising from the report is a total cost of £1,740 that covers from 22/23 for 3 years. (Approx. £600 per annum). Funding source has been identified from the existing Domestic Abuse Transformation Fund and will cover this in full.
Legal Implications: (Authorised by the Borough Solicitor)	There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report. The proposal to seek White Ribbon accreditation compliments the council’s existing policies.
Risk Management:	There are no major risk management issues associated with this report. The management of risk in relation to the wider policy of addressing domestic violence is managed by Domestic Abuse Steering Group.
Background Information:	The background papers relating to this report can be inspected by contacting Lisa Morris, Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager Telephone: 07980906027 e-mail: lisa.morris@tameside.gov.uk

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Addressing domestic abuse is a key priority within Tameside's Corporate Plan, supported by Tameside Domestic Abuse Strategy 2021-2026. The strategy commits to a 5-year ambition of transformation in how domestic abuse, in Tameside, is understood, identified and challenged.
- 1.2 The Domestic Abuse Strategy aims to address domestic abuse across seven key priority areas:
- 1.2.1 Making domestic abuse everybody's business
 - 1.2.2 Creating safe spaces for disclosure
 - 1.2.3 Meeting the needs of victims through local services
 - 1.2.4 Helping victim-survivors stay safe in their homes
 - 1.2.5 Better outcomes for children impacted by domestic abuse
 - 1.2.6 Identifying problem behaviours early
 - 1.2.7 Holding perpetrators accountable
- 1.3 ***“White Ribbon Accreditation is a nationally recognised programme for organisations who are committed to improving their workplace culture, progress gender equality and end violence against women and girls.”*** (White Ribbon UK)
- 1.4 White Ribbon UK is part of an international movement to engage men in tackling Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). VAWG refer to acts of violence or abuse that disproportionately affect women and girls including rape and other sexual offences, stalking, domestic abuse and honour-based abuse.
- 1.5 Recognising the important role that workplaces have to play in addressing societal attitudes and beliefs that contribute to harassment, abuse and violence against women and girls, the White Ribbon Accreditation programme provides a framework to support organisations to develop a holistic approach to tackling these issues.
- 1.6 White Ribbon accreditation would contribute to the large programme of work that is already underway across the Borough to deliver the priorities set out in the domestic abuse strategy. This includes raising awareness of domestic abuse through multi-agency training via the Safeguarding Children Partnership and targeted public communications campaigns such as the recent White Ribbon campaign linked to the World Cup or the Open Up campaign encouraging male victims of abuse to access support. Both of these areas of work aim to ensure that, professionals, victims and survivors are able to recognise domestic abuse, access appropriate and timely support and that risk of harm is being reduced.
- 1.7 A key element in ending domestic abuse is the acknowledgement of, and commitment to addressing gender inequality within communities and wider society. Whilst the White Ribbon work builds on the gendered nature of domestic abuse, recognising that it predominantly affects women and girls, any work that is undertaken will continue to provide advice, support and guidance for male victims.

2. ACCREDITATION

- 2.1 The value of White Ribbon Accreditation is that it demonstrates a visible commitment to:
- Having a positive and safe organisational culture
 - Having staff who are knowledgeable and skilful in recognising and addressing violence against women, including abusive and sexist behaviour
 - Raising awareness among staff, enabling them to become allies and positive role models
 - Improving the experience of customers and stakeholders

- Influencing wider societal change beyond the organisation to end violence against women

Furthermore, accreditation represents a commitment to transparency and cultivates a level of trust both internally and externally by allowing an independent specialist organisation to validate what the organisation is doing and to hold the organisation publically accountable for continued delivery of their commitment to addressing violence against women and girls.

- 2.2 Across the UK, over 100 organisations have achieved White Ribbon Accreditation, including Local Authorities, emergency services, housing etc. Within Greater Manchester, Stockport Council, Oldham Council, Manchester City Council and Greater Manchester Combined Authority are accredited authorities.
- 2.3 According to White Ribbon UK, organisations that have achieved White Ribbon accreditation have reported that they are creating better places to work, attracting and retaining staff, fostering positive wellbeing, increasing customer retention and have improved their reputation. More importantly, they are building better and safer environments for women.

3. ACCREDITATION PROCESS

- 3.1 The accreditation is divided into four key areas, which support the organisation to assess capabilities and current practice, enabling the identification of appropriate actions:
 - a) Strategic Leadership – starts with a commitment by the organisation to gain accreditation and establish senior level support. Throughout the action plan, this will be further developed by considering how the aim of ending violence against women and girls is reflected within policies, training and organisational development.
 - b) Engaging men and boys – this is central to the accreditation and recognises the role and responsibility that men and boys have in ending violence against women and girls. A key element of the accreditation is the recruitment of male ambassadors across as many levels and departments within the organisation as possible.
 - c) Changing culture – seeks for the organisation to work across all departments to reduce the likelihood of people using harassing, abusive or violent behaviours in the workplace or at home. It seeks to develop a culture where men are allies and employees feel supported and enabled to disclose any issue they are facing.
 - d) Raising awareness – amongst men and boys, organisations and decision makers about what abuse and violence is, the root causes and the impact it has on equality.
- 3.2 White Ribbon Ambassadors and Champions are key to the delivery of the White Ribbon Action plan.
- 3.3 Ambassadors are men within the organisation who act as formal representatives of White Ribbon. They are positive role models who take a stand against male violence against women and girls and encourage other men and boys to do the same. An Ambassador is required to:
 - 3.3.1** Actively reflect on their own behaviours, beliefs and actions.
 - 3.3.2** To educate themselves about what violence is, its root causes and the effects it has on equality.
 - 3.3.3** To look to positively influence other men and boys, and to instigate ally ship.
 - 3.3.4** Where safe to do so, challenge dominant masculine norms and unacceptable behaviour.

- 3.4 Champions can be both males and females, but tend to be primarily females who support the White Ribbon work and the ambassadors within their organisation.
- 3.5 The responsibilities of both ambassadors/champions are
- 3.5.1 To encourage men and boys to take an active role in preventing men's violence against women and girls.
 - 3.5.2 To promote White Ribbon UK amongst friends and colleagues and in the community.
 - 3.5.3 To use White Ribbon UK presentations and materials and follow guidelines for other events.
 - 3.5.4 To work towards encouraging 100 people, especially men, to make the White Ribbon Promise.
 - 3.5.5 To advise the White Ribbon UK office of activities undertaken in the role as a White Ribbon Ambassador/Champion.
 - 3.5.6 To keep in touch with White Ribbon UK and offer feedback and suggestions.
- 3.6 Once recruited Ambassadors and Champions will be required to access local domestic abuse training via the Safeguarding Children Partnership and to attend the local Domestic Abuse champions' network, which is being established across the Partnership. They will also have access to training and information through the dedicated White Ribbon resource hub and a wider network from across the Country.
- 3.7 Before an application can be submitted to White Ribbon the organisation must complete the following actions:

Action	Tameside position
1. Assign a Lead Contact to oversee the application process and the Accreditation.	Propose that this is the Strategic Domestic Abuse Manager.
2. Identify a senior leader who must be a White Ribbon Ambassador or Champion	<p>Proposal for a male elected member or MP to be identified as a White Ribbon Ambassador.</p> <p>This will be supported by a senior officer who will also undertake the role of an Ambassador to provide consistency in the event of a change in political leadership.</p> <p>The Assistant Director Group proposed that the officer should be the Assistant Director for Population Health, supported by the Assistant Director for Place.</p>
3. Formally confirm the decision to become accredited at a strategic level	Report to be presented by Cllr Wills at Board meeting on 11 January 2023.
4. Establish a White Ribbon Steering Group	A steering group to be established with key leads from across the Council, including HR, Organisational Development and Policy. The group will report quarterly into the Domestic Abuse Steering Group and the Assistant Director Group on progress.
5. Core members of the White Ribbon Steering Group register	This will be progressed once the group has been established.

as White Ribbon Ambassadors or Champions	
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- 3.8 Once the application has been submitted and approved, the steering group is required to develop a three-year action plan to be submitted to White Ribbon within the first 6 months. Annual light touch reviews must then be submitted to White Ribbon to demonstrate progress and status of the plan.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The annual accreditation fee is determined by the organisation's revenue budget. For public sector bodies:
- Up to £125m - £300
 - £125m-250m - £600
 - £250m - £1bn - £1000
 - Over £1bn - £3200

As the Council's revenue falls within the £125m-£250m, the annual fee will be £600. This can be paid in one lump sum attracting a 10% discount on year one. This fee will be met from the ring-fenced Domestic Abuse Transformation Fund in the 22/23 financial year, which will secure accreditation costs up to the end of 2025/26.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 As set out at the front of the report.