

## **Urgent motion – aftermath of Sarah Everard protests**

Proposed by Cllr Asma Begum

Seconded by Cllr Rachel Blake

### **This Council notes:**

1. The murder of Sarah Everard has launched a wave of anger and protest across the country. Reports from the vigil held at Clapham Common show police officers using excessive force against protestors
2. Blessing Olusogun's death remains unexplained
3. Nicole Smallman and Bibaa Henry were killed after meeting friends in a park. Police officers were detained at the time on suspicion of misconduct in public office on the grounds that they took and shared unofficial and inappropriate photographs of the women at the crime scene
4. Deaf and Disabled women, women from Black Asian Minority Ethnic backgrounds and LGBTQ women are even more likely to experience harassment, discrimination and abuse. Women from diverse backgrounds experience abuse differently and male power is used against them differently.
5. Women living in poverty are particularly vulnerable to experiencing violence and face disproportionate challenges in accessing the necessary support to make them safe. Lack of access to secure housing, precarious employment, difficulty accessing social security and poverty work to keep women in abusive situations.
6. There are on average 12 honour killings every year in the UK
7. Whilst serious physical assaults by strangers are rare, 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
  - 97% of young women have been sexually harassed
  - One in two women are sexually harassed in the workplace
  - One in three women experience domestic violence in their lifetime
  - One in five women will be raped in their lifetime
  - 2 women a week are killed by a current or former partner, and 3 women take their own lives following domestic abuse
8. Women who report rape have a 3% chance of it ever being heard in court. Most women who survive domestic violence do not receive justice from the criminal justice system.
9. In Nottingham, police have trialled treating misogyny as a hate crime.
10. Tower Hamlets Council has an established a Champions programme to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls
11. Tower Hamlets has a No Place for Hate campaign to send a clear and consistent message that hate will not be tolerated in our borough
12. Tower Hamlets has invested in Independent Domestic Violence Advocates

### **This Council believes:**

1. Male violence against women and girls is part of a broader culture of misogyny in society.
2. 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.

3. It also means tackling other forms of discrimination and the economic system that further enables abuse against women and girls.
4. That a justice system that allows one of the most heinous crimes to be effectively decriminalised is not fit for purpose. Sustained cuts to all elements of the justice system, as well as institutional misogyny mean that crimes against women and girls that are reported are not effectively investigated. The decision to fail to resource this work is a political choice.

**This Council resolves to:**

1. Stand in solidarity with protestors against violence against women and girls
2. Call for an urgent and thorough investigation into the operational policing of the vigil which took place on 13 March 2021 and for swift action to be taken
3. Call on the Home Secretary to thoroughly investigate the leadership of the policing of the vigil which took place on 13 March 2021
4. Call for this investigation to be held sensitively in public
5. Call for investment in the whole justice system
6. Call for the CPS not to insist that victims phones are confiscated, particularly when this isn't necessary, and making this a condition for the crime to be investigated
7. Call on the Government to ratify the Istanbul Convention on preventing and combatting VAWG
8. Call on the Government to ratify the International Labour Organisation's No.190, recognising the right of everyone to work free from gender based violence and harassment
9. Work with women across Tower Hamlets, organising listening and peer engagement events, to submit evidence to the investigation into the policing at the weekend
10. Call on the Tower Hamlets Borough Command Unit to prioritise investigating crimes against women and girls and ask them to ensure that people aren't penalised when they report a crime
11. Deliver culturally competent services which fully serve our diverse population
12. Support the design of a feminist city through our planning and design processes
13. Work with the Tower Hamlets Borough Command Unit on improving women's safety
14. Educate men through campaigns and bringing in male "allies"
15. Utilise all our resources to publicise all missing women and girls
16. Strengthen ward panels to have agenda items on hate crime incidents and domestic violence.
17. Continue the Violence Against Women and Girls Champions Programme
18. Work with schools and families to tackle toxic masculinity culture
19. Join local, London and national networks working to end Violence Against Women and Girls
20. Campaign for misogyny to legally recognised as a hate crime.