

## **Model Council Motion: Scrap the Fee for Domestic Violence Victims**

### **Council notes:**

National statistics have not changed for decades. Two women are killed every week in England and Wales by a current or former partner. One in four women will experience domestic violence in their lifetimes.

Legal Aid is a lifeline for women fleeing domestic abuse. It helps them to protect themselves, their children and secure their financial situation. Yet due to Government changes to the rules for women to qualify for legal aid, they now need to provide a prescribed piece of evidence to prove they have been subjected to abuse.

One of the accepted forms of evidence is a letter from a GP. However some GPs charge a fee – in some cases as much as £75 – to produce that letter.

### **Council believes:**

That it is everyone's responsibility to stop domestic violence and abuse and it is our ambition that people treat one another with respect and compassion.

No GP should charge victims of domestic abuse for a letter they need to access legal aid. It's unfair. It's immoral. And it has to stop.

### **Council resolves:**

To support the Scrap the Fee campaign, which was established by Tom Watson MP following a plea from Wythenshawe Safe Spots.

To call on the Government to scrap this unfair and unjust charge, by bringing this service back under the NHS contract.

We would like to thank Councillors Suzanne Richards and Sarah Judge of Manchester City Council and Wythenshawe Safe Spots for their help in developing this motion.