



**Glasgow Community Planning Partnership**

**Safe Glasgow Partnership**

**Report by George Gillespie, Executive Director, Neighbourhoods,  
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**Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership Report to Safe Glasgow  
Partnership**

**Purpose of Report:**

To report on the work of the city wide strategic multi-agency Violence Against Women Partnership.

**Recommendations:**

The Safe Glasgow Partnership are asked to:

- Consider the information provided and note the contents of the GVAWP report.

## **1. Introduction and Background**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Safe Glasgow Partnership on the work undertaken by Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership (GVAWP).
- 1.2 The Glasgow Violence Against Women Partnership is established to bring together key multi-agency partners to take forward actions at a local level as agreed in Scottish Government Equally Safe Strategy to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls.

## **2. Detail of Report**

### **2.1 GVAWP**

- 2.1.1 The production of the GVAWP city wide strategic plan will be discussed by Partners at meeting 19<sup>th</sup> November. The launch of Equally Safe Delivery Plan was delayed until August 2024. Equally Safe has 7 outcomes and city-wide activity will be realigned to these outcomes. The plan in its current format is ambitious and the GVAWP agree that deliverables must be streamlined in line with capacity and ability to deliver.
- 2.1.2 NRS VAW Services strategic support team is small. There is one dedicated VAW&G Coordinator to support the work of the GVAWP, the post holder also has day to day management of MARAC Coordination in Glasgow, both roles demand an important level of responsibility. This continues to challenge our ability to participate and deliver GVAWP work priorities as well as be engaged with colleagues across the Council family to provide expert inputs in relation to violence against women and girls. While there is significant pressure on public expenditure there is an urgent need to consider opportunities to further develop the Team to support the delivery of MARAC Coordination and drive forward GVAWP priorities which will meaningfully be effective.
- 2.1.3 In August 2024 GVAWP provided funding to bring Professor Jane Monkton Smith to Glasgow to present on [Homicide Timeline](#). In 2018 Scotland introduced new legislation criminalising Coercive controlling behaviour, this was enacted in April 2019. Professor Monkton Smith has assimilated a homicide timeline which gives professionals an opportunity to consider the bigger picture of risk, identifying patterns of behaviour, including violence, separation, threats, control, rather than individual incidents.
- 2.1.4 One hundred and eighty delegates attended from a range of Public Sector and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sector services, including COPFS, Glasgow HSCP, GCC Education Services, Women's Aid Groups. Evaluations from the event were overwhelmingly positive and powerful, most citing how relevant it was to their practice, a desire to further develop skills into practice. Glasgow HSCP Criminal Justice Services have now organised a separate event targeting their staff teams across the service. [A BBC podcast is available](#), where Professor Monkton Smith applies the homicide timeline to domestic abuse murders in Northern Ireland.

### **3. Domestic Abuse Homicide Reviews**

- 3.1 In December 2022, Scottish Government established a taskforce, to provide leadership for the development of a national [multi-agency domestic homicide and suicide review model for Scotland](#). Following the production of the [DHSR Consultation analysis report](#) in December 2023, there was a commitment to explore legislative opportunities to underpin the process.
- 3.2 In September 2024, as part of the programme for Government the Scottish Government introduced the [Criminal Justice Modernisation and Abusive Domestic Behaviour Reviews \(Scotland\) Bill](#), to create the statutory framework for the national multi-agency domestic homicide and suicide review model. This will provide a robust review process to take place following the death of a partner, ex-partner, or child where abuse is known or suspected.
- 3.3 The task force is committed to continued engagement with stakeholders; experts and continue to be informed by other jurisdictions. This also includes a commitment of continued engagement with lived experience of those bereaved.

### **4. Delivering Equally Safe**

- 4.1 Delivering Equally Safe (DES) is a Scottish Government funding stream which supports the delivery of front-line services across Scotland including Glasgow. This funding stream is to March 2025 and projects in receipt of this funding had expected to receive notice of a one year extension, it has now been indicated that no funding decisions will be taken until December 2024. The following projects currently receive DES funding include:
- Glasgow Women's Aid
  - Hemat Gryffe Women's Aid
  - Financially Included
  - SAY Women
  - Aberlour Bridges Project
  - Glasgow & Clyde Rape Crisis
  - ASSIST Children & Young People's Service

The DES investment in VAW services in Glasgow is £2,074,875.47. Given the timescales involved projects reliant on these funds are concerned that late notification will involve introducing exit strategies, should funding cease or be reduced. This will impact on ability to respond to new referrals, exiting existing clients and consulting with staff on potential redundancies. It should be recognised that any reduction in service provision will impact on public sector services.

### **5. Sustainable Funding Review Project Board**

Scottish Government established a Sustainable Funding Review Project Board who would assume responsibility of identifying priority actions following on from the production of the [Independent Review of Funding and Commissioning of VAW&G Services](#).

5.1 Members of the Project Board recently wrote to Scottish Government Ministers, regarding their concern of the lack of progress in identifying and implementing any recommendations from the report. Discussions are ongoing.

## 6. WAIR Group (Women, Immigration, Asylum and Refugee)

6.1 The WAIR working group is concerned with responding to the needs of women who are subject to immigration barriers. This includes women asylum seekers, women on spousal visas, student visas or other immigration status and women from the European Union, who have arrived in UK from 31 December 2020. The WAIR Group is the only working group of its kind in the UK.

6.2 The WAIR Group are now focused on updating and prioritising an Action Plan as part of the GVAWP Strategic Plan.

6.3 Following the General Election in July, the UK Government announced that most provisions contained within Illegal Migration Act 2023 will not proceed to implementation.

6.4 This includes key sections relating to removal, detention, disapplication of modern slavery provisions, age assessments, and unaccompanied children. The Home Office produced new [regulations](#) to amend provisions outlined within Illegal Migration Act 2023. This allows asylum claims to be processed by those who arrived in UK from March 2023 and applications from 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 onwards.

## 6. Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

6.1 Referrals to MARAC in Glasgow remain consistently high. The table below demonstrates the month to month referrals over last 3 years.

Month	Referrals 2021	Referrals 2022	Referrals 2023	Referrals 2024
January	111	90	69	87
February	89	119	112	86
March	99	91	109	87
April	73	97	72	112
May	91	92	92	88
June	72	85	87	99
July	73	82	109	209 (2 cycles)
August	101 (2 cycles)	164 (2 cycles)	186 (2 cycles)	101
September	177 (2 cycles)	85	103	121
October	89	81	107	109
Total No of Referrals	975	986	1,046	1,099

- 6.3 SafeLives have produced practice guidance for partners where counter allegations are made. Glasgow MARAC has already implemented a pre MARAC multi-agency discussion where counter allegations, male referrals or same sex referrals are considered prior to processing referral to MARAC. This process is intended to ensure that no institutional risk is created by discussing a primary perpetrator of domestic abuse as a victim. MARAC is currently reviewing these guidelines to help further develop and inform our multi-agency procedures.
- 6.5 In May 2024, MARAC reinstated 5 dedicated MARAC meetings in a 4 week cycle and by June all clients waiting, were discussed at MARAC. To support next steps Glasgow HSCP, Social Work Governance Board directed a practice audit to be undertaken. The practice audit report was discussed at Social Work Governance Board in October and is to be discussed by Chief Officers Group prior to circulation to NRS VAW Services and MARAC Steering Group.
- 6.6 Glasgow MARAC continues to discuss a higher number of Repeat referrals, a sizeable proportion of these involve Breach of court protective conditions or orders by perpetrators. A proposal is in development with SafeLives to allow us to interrogate Repeat referrals to allow us to better understand perpetrator behaviour and explore the opportunity to introduce actions which will disrupt and deter behaviours leading to breaches.
- 6.7 The MARAC Coordination team closely monitors volume and quality of referrals, we continue to work closely with referring partners to ensure that all referrals meet the MARAC criteria. Over and above this the MARAC Steering Group has been involved in the review of other models of implementation.
- 6.8 Glasgow MARAC multi-agency funding arrangements will end September 2025 and discussions will begin early in 2025 regarding the continued delivery of MARAC in Glasgow.

## **7. Commercial Sexual Exploitation**

- 7.1 In March 2024 Scottish Government launched their strategy which identifies [Scotland's strategic approach to challenging and deterring Men's Demand for the Purchase of Prostitution](#).
- 7.2 Approaches were made by Scottish Government to pilot work in Glasgow which is not proceeding. Glasgow Routes Out Project has been operational in the city for over 30 years, already delivering support and advocacy for women exploited in systems of prostitution.
- 7.3 Scottish Government has now agreed to pursue strategic work with Justice Partners in Police Scotland.
- 7.4 We are hopeful that discussions will continue to take place Scotland wide which will allow all key stakeholders to review the current framework.

## **8. Financially Included**

8.1 The project is now nearing 3 years of service delivery. The project is unique and is the first of its kind in Scotland.

8.2 In August of this year the project attracted additional funding to employ an Energy Advisor. The post holder has made significant impact in supporting women to access energy redress.

8.3 The project has benefitted

- 390 women accessed the service since January 2022 till June 2024.
- 70% of women accessing the service aged between 25 and 29
- 44% from BAME communities
- 40% registered as unfit for work in UK
- 79% of FI clients are recorded in deepest poverty – this number excludes women subject to No Recourse To Public Funds

8.4 Typically women present with a number of issues these include:

- Coerced debt
- Access to discretionary housing payments (including 3 child cap)
- Access to benefits and allowances
- Support with energy suppliers and redress
- Support with debt write off and arrangements
- Public Sector debt

The project has had significant success in securing financial gains for clients. The complexity of cases is such that clients often remain within the service for lengthy periods of time, before exiting.

8.5 Along with Scottish Women's Aid and Aberlour, Financially Included has contributed to the development of a joint briefing for MSP's on [Public Sector debt](#).

## **9. Partnership Working**

### **9.1 VAW&G Needs Assessment**

An oversight group is established with a focus on the delivery of VAW&G service provision within Northeast of the city. To inform their work, following a tender process Social Value Lab have been appointed to do needs assessment research across all VAW&G services. This will launch in November 2024. NRS VAW Services are part of the oversight group.

### **9.2 No Wrong Door**

Following a presentation to the GVAWP, a working group was established to consider the role of VAW&G within the No Wrong Door approach. We know from the work undertaken by Financially Included there is a unique relationship between violence against women and girls and child poverty.

Women with or without children living with any form of VAW&G are more likely to live in poverty for longer and more likely to have lived with coerced debt, experience fuel poverty, more likely to have public sector debt.

- 9.2.1 In Glasgow 8,000 families are identified as living in poverty, the single highest group 64% are headed up by a lone mother. The working group is exploring along with Financial Inclusion Services how we might give greater profile to violence against women and girls, in particular domestic abuse within the child poverty agenda.

### 9.3 **VAW&G Homelessness**

Domestic abuse is the single biggest presentation reason for homelessness of women and children. NRS VAW Services are working with Glasgow HSCP Community Case Work Team to explore how responses to women fleeing domestic abuse can be improved when presenting as homeless. This has involved interrogating data, reviewing practice and guidance. More recently a round table took place with front line service providers from the women's sector and a series of next steps identified along with short term actions. This has included developing a trauma informed response within homelessness services; if hotel accommodation is the only available option, women will be prioritised for temporary furnished accommodation and clear indicators of how long they might expect to be in hotel accommodation.

- 9.3.1 The acute housing crisis in the city has a disproportionate impact on BAME families who will often remain in temporary accommodation for longer because of larger family size.
- 9.3.2 Both public housing and women's sector are keen to work together in partnership to develop a robust strategic approach to homelessness of women, where domestic abuse, coercive control are identified.

### 9.4 **Carter Foundation: Inform Women Transform Lives: Where We Stop**

- 9.4.1 The Inform Women, Transform Lives campaign is an initiative of The Carter Centre in the USA, working to empower women around the world by providing them with access to information. The campaign recognises that women are often disadvantaged when it comes to information access and aims to address this inequality. The Carter Centre has partnered with Glasgow City Council Lord Provost Office to develop a campaign targeting young women who are experiencing abuse within their own intimate relationships.
- 9.4.2 With leadership from Lord Provost Office a working group consisting of representatives from across Glasgow City Council services, women's sector, youth work services and have partnered with film makers to produce Where We Stop.
- 9.4.3 Where We Stop will launch in Glasgow 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024 at Social Hub.

## **10. Twenty Years of Delivering Specialist Domestic Abuse Court Advocacy**

10.1 At the end of October 2024 ASSIST, (Advocacy, Support, Safety, Information Services Together) celebrated 20 years of delivering a specialist domestic abuse advocacy and support service focused on reducing risk to and improving the safety of victims of domestic abuse. First established through the work of the GVAWP by Glasgow City Council in 2004 to work in tandem with the Glasgow Sheriff Court's pioneering Domestic Abuse Court, it is now the biggest service of its type in Scotland. It is funded by the Scottish Government and supports victims of Domestic Abuse from Argyll and Bute; Ayrshire (East, North and South); Dumfries and Galloway; Glasgow; Dunbartonshire (East and West); Inverclyde; Lanarkshire (North and South) and Renfrewshire (including East Renfrewshire).

## **11 Recommendations**

11.1 The Safe Glasgow Partnership are asked to:

- Consider the information provided and note the contents of the GVAWP report.