



## **Glasgow Community Planning Partnership**

### **Safe Glasgow Partnership**

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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 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 remains in draft format and has not yet been formally approved. Partners participated in a series of discussions regarding content, this is now finalised. We are hopeful that a final draft will be made available for public engagement in March however this element is contingent on resources being identified to support analysis of the process. Following this, we expect the strategy to be produced and available online, timeline to be confirmed.
- 2.1.2 The GVAWP has now reverted to its 1/4ly meeting schedule for 2024, over the course of the pandemic and recovery the partnership had increased the number of meetings to expedite decision making.
- 2.1.3 The Scottish Government and COSLA have now produced the refresh of [Equally Safe](#) The delivery plan to accompany the strategy will be produced in Spring 2024. A series of consultation workshops are planned with key stakeholders including Violence Against Women Partnerships which will take place 29<sup>th</sup> February, 2024.
- 2.1.4 Following on from our previous report Scottish Government have appointed a dedicated team to consider the recommendations contained within the commissioned Scottish Government Funding Review of Funding and Commissioning of Violence Against Women and Girls services. In addition to this a Sustainable Funding Project Board is appointed to oversee the development of a sustainable funding model for violence against women and girls services.

## **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](#).
- 3.2 Following national consultation, the priorities are identified and the taskforce will now begin the job of developing the model.

#### **4. Fund to Leave**

- 4.1 Scottish Government in partnership with Scottish Women's Aid Groups have created a ['Fund to Leave'](#), this pilot project will operate in 5 local authority areas, including Glasgow and all 3 Women's Aid Groups in the city have been made an award. The fund will support women and children experiencing domestic abuse by making awards up to £1,000 to reduce risk and increase their safety. The project will run until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2024.

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

- 5.1 This 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.
- 5.2 The WAIR Group are now focused on updating and prioritising an Action Plan as part of the GVAWP Strategic Plan.
- 5.3 The UK Government Illegal Migration Act 2023 is now passed and received Royal Assent on 20 July. This Act is now in the process of implementation and is of concern to WAIR Group members. Once the provisions relating to the duty to remove come into force, all people who arrive in the UK by irregular means including vulnerable women and families will have their claim for asylum marked as inadmissible and will be returned to a 3rd country (this being Rwanda at time of writing), this includes victims of trafficking. Victims of trafficking are no longer protected if their route to the UK is identified as irregular, their asylum applications will be treated as inadmissible and this will place them at significant risk of further harm, exploitation, including re-trafficking. It also presents significant challenges to public services in their duty and responsibility to safeguard vulnerable people.
- 5.4 There are safeguarding concerns from WAIR Group membership for single women subject to immigration controls being accommodated in hotels, that are mostly occupied by single males. These environments have the potential to be predatory, exposing vulnerable women to trauma, sexual exploitation and other forms of exploitation including trafficking. The group are further concerned that once accepted into the asylum system, women can be dispersed anywhere in the UK, further isolating them from any support or advocacy networks they have established in Glasgow, again increasing vulnerability.
- 5.5 COSLA and the Improvement Service have developed a new Elected Member Briefing which briefs elected members on how [No Recourse to Public Funds \(NRPF\)](#) conditions are applied and the increased risks of destitution facing people with NRPF.
- 5.6 It provides members with information on the impact of NRPF conditions upon people and communities and highlights the critical role members can play in

raising awareness and supporting people at risk of destitution. It is also intended as a legacy resource for councils including local authority frontline teams supporting people with NRPF.

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

- 6.1 Glasgow MARAC continues to receive a high volume of referrals. In 2023 **1,252** referrals were made. This includes **1,168** females, **1,995** children and **71** males. The introduction of the Pre-MARAC referral meeting to consider referrals where counter allegations were made, identified 13 males as primary perpetrators of domestic abuse. Please see table below for comparable figures in previous years.

**Breakdown of referrals 2023**

Month	Referrals 2021	Referrals 2022	Referrals 2023
January	111	90	69
February	89	119	112
March	99	91	109
April	73	97	72
May	91	92	92
June	72	85	87
July	73	82	109
August	101	164 (2 cycles)	186 (2 cycles)
September	177 (2 cycles)	85	103
October	89	81	107
November	94	80	118
December	77	68	87
<b>Total Nos</b>	<b>1,146</b>	<b>1,134</b>	<b>1,251</b>

- 6.2 This included **750** unique and **484** repeat referrals. Of the 484 on repeat, **312** of these involved a breach of bail or other protective order offence, where the perpetrator has had some form of contact with the victim that they have been ordered by the court not to contact or communicate with.
- 6.3 We continue to work in partnership with Police Scotland and ASSIST to convene pre-MARAC referral meetings where counter allegations of domestic abuse are made, if the referral is male or same sex relationships. To date **28** referrals have been discussed, **15** have proceeded to MARAC discussion. This process is intended to undertake a risk assessment and attempt to identify primary perpetrator and primary victim. All partners are committed to continuing the project and all are agreed that this is a model of good practice. There is interest from elsewhere in Scotland to replicate the process.
- 6.4 There are 3 dedicated locality meetings, which can discuss up to 25 high risk victims at each meeting. Referrals to MARAC exceed this number regularly and additional multi-locality meetings are convened to discuss any additional

referrals. The nature of MARAC is such that no waiting list should be created and all referrals are discussed within the soonest possible timescale.

- 6.5 These additional multi-locality meetings were not routinely attended by Glasgow HSCP services. In 2021 Glasgow HSCP Criminal Justice received Scottish Government Covid Recovery funding which allowed the appointment of a dedicated post to take part in these meetings, this funding has now ended and the post deleted. Across, Glasgow HSCP there are resource and capacity challenges which in turn has impacted on its ability to attend the multi-locality meetings. The non-participation in meetings is a cause for concern for those services in attendance at the additional meetings and creates a number of risks for clients and for services referring them. The Steering Group meet on 22<sup>nd</sup> February to address these concerns and discussions are planned with Glasgow HSCP to achieve a robust and safe solution which continues to place the safety of the high risk victim at the centre of early effective interventions.

## **7. Commercial Sexual Exploitation**

- 7.1 Scottish Government has launched their strategy which identifies [Scotland's strategic approach to challenging and deterring Men's Demand for the Purchase of Prostitution](#).
- 7.2 The Scottish Government also announced the development of pilot [national hubs](#) to support women to exit prostitution. Glasgow has been identified as one of the pilot hub areas, others include Ayrshire, Edinburgh, Borders, Perth & Kinross, Highland, Aberdeen and Dundee.

## **8. Equally Safe at Work**

- 8.1 Glasgow City Council has been awarded Equally Safe at Work accreditation. This is excellent news and is evidence of the commitment to progress gender equality across the workforce and provide a working environment where any employees affected by violence, feel safe and confident in seeking support and assistance. A formal award will be made at Glasgow City Chambers, 12<sup>th</sup> March, 2024.

## **9. Financially Included**

- 9.1 The project has begun its third year of operation. The project is unique to Glasgow and seeks to tackle the impact of financial and economic abuse, often a feature in coercive control.
- 9.2 Financial & economic abuse can be one of the first red flags that indicate abuse and coercion within a relationship. This can take many forms including coerced debt, prevented from working, impacts on credit scores and ability to pay utility bills by direct debit, repaying coerced debt long after the end of the relationship.

- 9.3 To date 337 women have engaged with the project; realising over £1,000,000 financial gains for clients related to debt write offs, benefit claims and charity grants.

## **10. Recommendations**

- 10.1 The Safe Glasgow Partnership are asked to:
- Consider the information provided, and
  - Note the contents of report