

Evidence session on the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 **- 13 October 2016, action point**

- *Details of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council VAWDA Leadership Group Board, including its Terms of Reference and details of what, and how, the Board has learned*

The introduction of the VAWDA&SV (Wales) Act 2015 was very timely for Neath Port Talbot as they were about to review their Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan. The Domestic Abuse Strategic Group (DASG) was losing momentum following a number of senior officers leaving the authority and it was not holding partners and providers to account effectively for their service delivery.

In January 2016 NPT commissioned an independent consultant to review all the Domestic Abuse structures, services and funding streams and as part of this review numerous consultation workshops took place with:-

- NPT staff
- Partners
- South Wales Police
- ABMU Health Board
- Third sector providers
- Third sector agencies
- DA survivors and
- DA victims

Early indicators of the review made it clear that this was going to be a much bigger piece of work than had been anticipated and also highlighted that the current DASG was not fit for purpose and no longer fulfilled its function.

Once the review was completed in April 2016 all the partners and agencies who took part were invited to attend a consultation meeting looking at the way forward and the new obligations under the Act. At this meeting it was decided to set up a VAWDASV Leadership Group which people of a senior level would sit on to steer the new work forward.

The Terms of Reference (see attached) of the group reflect the membership as outlined in the VAWDASV Act and sub groups and task and finish groups were set up to undertake the necessary work to tackle the priorities that the review and consultation highlighted. (VAWDASV Leadership group work plan attached,)

The new Leadership group also identified the linked partners that they would want to receive update reports from and Planning Frameworks that the group would report to; to make sure that governance conditions were met and there was a cohesive communication strategy in place to ensure good flow of information.

To date the NPT VAWDASV Leadership group has met three times and is making good progress. There are still some partners who are yet to make a full commitment to the group but the attendance is improving and steps are being taken to ensure all the right partners at a senior officer level are signed up to the group.

Neath Port Talbot has already made a start on the local strategy using the findings of the review to inform it and the draft National Strategy to shape it. We are currently undertaking a gap analysis to identify what further research and data collection is required to produce the draft document and we are hoping to meet with a representative of the ABMU Health Board shortly to further develop the draft strategy.

Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence **(VAWDASV) Leadership Group**

TERMS OF REFERENCE **August 2016**

1. Introduction

1.1. The purpose of this paper is to set out the Terms of Reference of the Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) Leadership Group

1.2. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will replace the former Domestic Abuse Strategy Group (DASG) in line with the Draft Statutory Guidance on Effective Multi-Agency Collaboration under the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act 2015, which states;

“relevant authorities are required to review any existing strategic partnership which is focused specifically on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence”

1.3. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will sit within the Safer Neath Port Talbot structure

2. Purpose of the Group

2.1. The overall purpose of the VAWDASV Leadership Group is to be the strategic board implementing the requirements of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Act 2015, with participation from all relevant agencies and links to other Strategic Boards and Partnerships

2.2. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will develop, approve and monitor the NPT VAWDASV Strategy

2.3. The group will be outcome focused, as opposed to information sharing only, agreeing and taking forward any actions identified as necessary, to facilitate improvements in both the arrangements for the prevention of VAWDASV and the arrangements for the protection and support of victims and those affected by VAWDASV

3. Objectives

3.1. To support Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council and ABMU Health Board in developing the NPT VAWDASV strategy

- 3.2. To progress and monitor the strategic priorities and objectives as set out in the Neath Port Talbot Violence Against Women Strategy and how local partners are delivering on the purposes of the Act
- 3.3. To agree a common, integrated set of outcomes and an associated data set
- 3.4. To ensure effective commissioning of services to make certain that services meet the needs of victims, survivors and all others affected by VAWDASV
- 3.5. To keep abreast of emerging issues in respect of VAWDASV and in initiating new services, give consideration to existing provision and whether this can be utilised or adapted
- 3.6. To discuss funding and resource issues affecting local provision for all individuals experiencing any form of VAWDASV, ensuring funding is aligned to deliver the strategic aims and is spent according to identified need and objectives
- 3.7. To promote understanding and raise awareness of VAWDASV within Neath Port Talbot
- 3.8. To work with other disciplines within the locality to ensure an expert and coordinated response to VAWDASV, strengthening leadership and accountability
- 3.9. To promote a common set of policies across partners, including risk assessment and training
- 3.10. To secure regular feedback and input from service users to ensure the work of the Group is relevant and effective
- 3.11. Consider and offer comment to the Welsh Government, National Adviser as may be required
- 3.12. Ensure there is an agreed core pathway for all partners to use, for those suffering VAWDASV

4. Sub Groups and Task & Finish Groups

- 4.1. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will be able to establish Sub Groups and Task & Finish Groups

Initially the Sub Groups will be as follows;

- Joint Commissioning Group
- Communications & Engagement Group
- Ask & Act Training Group

- 4.2. Time limited Task & Finish Groups will be established by the VAWDASV Leadership Group, for any emerging issues that would not otherwise be appropriate for the Sub Groups to address or take forward

- 4.3. The purpose of these Sub Groups and Task & Finish Groups will be to progress any work tasked to them as set out in the NPT Violence Against Women Strategy and / or by the VAWDASV Leadership Group
- 4.4. Membership will be made up of members of the VAWDASV Leadership Group and representatives of others agencies whose role and duties are relevant to the Sub Group or Task & Finish Group
- 4.5. Each Sub Group will appoint a Chair, drawn from the Leadership Group. Terms of Reference for the Sub Groups will be agreed between the Chair and the Leadership Group
- 4.6. The frequency of Sub Group or Task & Finish Group meetings will be decided by the Chair

5. Reporting

5.1. The Leadership Group will discuss and receive information on the work of the Sub Groups at every meeting and from the Task and Finish Groups as and when appropriate

5.2. The Leadership Group will receive information and updates from Linked Partners;

- One Stop Shop Partnership Board
- Area Planning Board: Mental Health / Substance Misuse
- Schools
- Specialist Domestic Violence Group

5.3 The Leadership Group will report into local Planning Frameworks and be accountable to the Community Safety Partnership for any actions / responsibilities identified through those established partnerships;

- Community Safety Partnership (Accountable)
- Western Bay Safeguarding Boards (Reporting)
- Area Planning Board (Reporting)
- Public Service Board (Reporting)
- Supporting People Group (Reporting)

6. Membership & Accountability

6.1. Membership must be at a senior level and include those authorised to act and make decisions on behalf of their service / organisation

6.2. Members must provide leadership within their partnerships / organisation and be able to clear any systemic barriers to delivering the goals of the group

- 6.3. Members will be expected to champion VAWDASV work and service provision on other boards and ensure this work is linked to other agendas
- 6.4. Membership will include the core partners, including specialist 3rd sector organisations, to ensure the group has the widest possible perspective and range of information
- 6.5. The engagement of all members must be demonstrated, in order to drive progress and ensure the effectiveness of the Leadership Group
- 6.6. All members must keep the Leadership Group informed of any relevant matters
- 6.7. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will consist of the following members;
- Chair; Councillor A Lockyer
 - Vice Chair – Mrs. Karen Jones
 - Head of Corporate Strategy & Democratic Services
 - Head of Children & Young People Services
 - Head of Commissioning & Support Services
 - Head of Substance Misuse Strategy & Development
 - Head of Participation
 - Community Safety Manager
 - ABMU Ask & Act Lead Officer
 - ABMU Lead for VAWDASV
 - ABMU Mental Health
 - Superintendent South Wales Police
 - Chief Executive Welsh Womens Aid
 - Director Port Talbot & Afan Womens Aid
 - Chief Executive Calan DVS
 - Chief Executive Hafan Cymru
 - Fire & Rescue Service
 - Probation
 - Ambulance Service
 - Courts
 - NPT Homes
 - Neath Port Talbot CVS
- 6.8. Support will be provided by;
- VAWDASV Lead Officer
 - Community Safety Project Support Officer

7. Meetings

- 7.1. VAWDASV Leadership Group meetings will take place bi-monthly.
- 7.2. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will be coordinated and supported by the VAWDASV Lead Officer.

- 7.3. Agendas and relevant papers will be sent out at least a week in advance of the meeting taking place.
- 7.4. Meeting minutes will be taken and circulated to members and relevant partner organisations as soon as possible, along with an Action Register
- 7.5. The Terms of Reference for the VAWDASV Leadership will be reviewed bi-annually.



Joint Commissioning Group	Draw together all planning / commissioning and contracting arrangements, to ensure coherent, integrated approach to the commissioning of VAWDASV Services	Angela Thomas	Steve Adie, Neil Thomas, Sian Morris, Hayley Bearman, CVS, Julia Lewis, Elinor Wellington , Sam Williams, Peter Oakeshott
Communications & Engagement Group	Raise awareness of Domestic Abuse and Local Partnership Work	Sian Morris	Mary P Williams, Kate Jones, Lisa Voisey, PTAWA, PCSO, Elinor Wellington
Ask & Act Training Group	To implement the National Training Framework, Ask & Act Model and identify / arrange other training	Wendy Sutherland-Evans	Rachel Dixon, Julia Lewis, Elinor Wellington

**Sub Groups to feed in to every Leadership Group meeting – Agenda Items to be scheduled.*

Time Limited Task & Finish Groups:-

Perpetrator Programme Development	To identify evidence based interventions that can address perpetrators	Lucy Holmes	Ruth Allen Calan DVS Probation
Accommodation Review	Review the existing service models and identify improvements that can be delivered alongside a reduction in expense	Karen Jones (Temp Chair)	Hayley Bearman, Lucy Holmes, Katie Blackburn, Ruth Allen, Gwendolyn Sterk, Claire Maimone, Julia Lewis
High Risk Victim Support	Review the effectiveness of existing arrangements to identify and support victims deemed to be high risk	Liane Bartlett	Julia Lewis
Information Sharing Protocol	Establish an ISP	Karen Jones	
Research / Data	Identify outcome measures, performance data required to support the work of the partnership	Elinor Wellington	
VAWDASV Strategy Development	To create a Strategy for the NPT area which fulfils the requirements of the Act	Elinor Wellington	

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- *Details of how local authorities are seeking the views of survivors of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence*

The Neath Port Talbot VAWDA&SV Strategy will be Involving survivors and victims in their consultation - survivors are legitimate and equal partners within the VAWDA strategy and there is a commitment to ensure their involvement to inform the planning, design and delivery of strategy, services and associated interventions. Survivors of domestic violence know what makes an effective response for someone who has suffered violence and we need to support survivors to speak out, listen and take action.

Neath Port Talbot engage with victims and survivors by:-

Attending coffee mornings - all three providers host a coffee morning (one with child care) to encourage victims and survivors to come along to access support, information and informal therapies.

Projects and initiatives - e.g. Material Girls is a social enterprise set up by Port Talbot & Afan Women's Aid to teach victims and survivors to sew and upcycle pre-loved garments. The project enables victims to learn new skills, build confidence, self-esteem and provides a support network for those in difficult situations. The project has an annual fashion show and has an online shop. www.material-girls.co.uk

Target Hardening - all victims who are recipients of target hardening measures to make their homes safe and secure are asked to complete a wellbeing survey following the installation and these responses are taken into account when planning new security measures.

'Are you listening and am I being heard' - This report on the findings of survivor consultation will help shape and inform our local strategy.

Third sector providers - We have a very good relationship with all three third sector providers

- Port Talbot & Afan Women's Aid
- Calan dvs
- Hafan Cymru

These organisations provide us with data and statistics which helps guide the work of the statutory partners and the VAWDA Leadership group.

The Review - While the independent review was being completed early in 2016 the consultant made links with survivors who were invited to a

workshop to express their views and opinions on what help and support based on their experiences is needed for today's victims.

Anecdotal information – By having regular discussion and supervision with the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVA's) and MARAC Co-ordinator it gives us an insight on the complex needs of the victims that are currently being supported. When victims are successfully supported to move on to a new and safe life it is encouraging and also sets a benchmark for the level and quality of support required going forward to help more victims become survivors.

NOTE

One item of anecdotal information we have recently gleaned is that there are currently women in the refuge fleeing Domestic Violence who were temporarily living in refuges as children when their mother was fleeing Domestic Violence!

We need to invest in appropriate and relevant interventions to enable organisations and agencies to 'Break the Cycle' of vulnerable young people today becoming victims or perpetrators of Domestic Abuse in the future.

Sian Morris

Community Safety Manager
Neath Port Talbot CBC