

**Mid and West Wales Regional Violence Against Women,
Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group (VAWDASV)**

Terms of Reference

Purpose

The Mid and West Wales Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group (“Strategic group”) is a multi-agency collaboration that will drive forward the work of the Mid and West Wales Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Executive Board (“Executive Board”) in delivering the regional strategy on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Area of Benefit

The Mid and West Wales Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group is co-terminus with the boundaries of the Hywel Dda and Powys Teaching Health Boards covering the Local Authority areas of Ceredigion, Carmarthenshire, Pembrokeshire and Powys. This area is also co-terminus with the Dyfed-Powys Police Service.

Areas of Focus

The work of the Strategic Group is concerned with all forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence as it affects all citizens across the region including adults, children and young people. The term ‘Violence against Women’ incorporates all forms of violence against women; honour based violence, forced marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM), trafficking, sexual violence and exploitation and domestic abuse.

The term ‘Violence against Women’ refers to the disproportionate experience of women to such forms of abuse. Whilst it is important that this is acknowledged and communicated, it does not mean that the violence and abuse directed towards men or perpetrated by women is neglected. References within the document to ‘violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence’ should include all forms of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Glossary to include definitions of the types of abuse are attached as Appendix A.

Aims and Objectives

The Strategic Group will drive forward the work of the Executive Board by: ensuring multi-agency protocols and procedures are in place; creating and driving the action plan to meet the strategic aims; enabling voices within the partnership; monitoring performance and informing and reporting to the Executive Board.

The Strategic Group will ensure the Executive Board receives the information it needs to make decisions, changes and improvements to the delivery plan.

Governance and Accountability

The Strategic Group will ensure the issues of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are being addressed by providing leadership and direction to those who are performing the actions within the strategic plan.

As laid out within statutory guidance issued under the VAWDASV Act (Wales) 2015 members of this group will be Heads of Services or Assistant Director or equivalent level who understand the practical implications of the strategic aims. This group will mirror the Executive Board in membership, utilising the expertise of the specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services to achieve identified strategic objectives. The Strategic Group will derive its authority from the Executive Board. Its members will have delegated authority and will be accountable to their nominating bodies.

All members of the Strategic Group are expected to:

- Prioritise attendance at meetings and are required to identify an appropriate delegated person who will attend in their absence. The regular member shall take responsibility for adequate briefing of the delegate member.
- Contribute to the development, delivery and reporting of the actions resulting from the regional strategic plan;
- Be accountable for communication and reporting between the Strategic Group and other representative partnerships;
- Promote equality of opportunity in the work of the Strategic Group and constructively challenge any discriminatory practice;
- Be accountable for leading, implementing or influencing the Strategic Groups policies and protocols within their agency;
- Bring to the attention of the Chair any conflict of interest between their membership role and individual organisational responsibilities.

A governance structure is shown in Appendix B

Membership

The members of the strategic group are detailed in Appendix C

Chair

The Chair and Vice Chair were nominated and selected by members of the Executive Board for a period of 1 year. The Chairs will be of a senior strategic position to drive forward the work of the Strategic Group.

Frequency of Meetings

Meetings will be held quarterly timetabled to enable effective sequencing with the Executive Board.

Use of Technology

Because of the size of the region, meeting arrangement will be made for members to participate by MS Teams to reduce travelling times and improve efficiency.

Administration

- The Regional VAWDASV Team will provide a minute-taker and co-ordinate the meetings working with the support of the Group members.
- Minutes of the Strategic Group will be summary minutes, reflecting summary discussions, key decisions and highlighting agreed actions.

In order to promote efficiency and effectiveness of meetings, the following arrangements will apply:

- Minutes of meetings will be circulated for comment within one week of a meeting taking place.
- An agenda and associated papers will be circulated no less than seven days before a meeting.
- Items for the agenda must be notified to the Regional Adviser no less than two weeks before a meeting

APPENDIX A: GLOSSARY

Violence against women

The United Nations defines "Violence against Women" as a "form of discrimination against women and a violation of human rights and shall mean all acts of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or mental harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life."

Domestic Abuse

According to the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 domestic abuse means abuse where the victim of it is or has been associated with the abuser. This can be committed by an intimate partner, ex-partner, spouse, civil partner or family relative (a full definition of intimate and familial relations can be accessed within the Act).

The abuse can be physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse.

This is in line with the Home Office's definition of domestic abuse as any incident or pattern of incidents of controlling, coercive, threatening behaviour, violence or abuse between those aged 16 or over who are, or have been, intimate partners or family members regardless of gender or sexuality.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 legally defines the offence of coercive and controlling behaviour within intimate or familial relations as domestic abuse. Controlling behaviour is a range of acts designed to make a person subordinate and/or dependent by isolating them from sources of support, exploiting their resources and capacities for personal gain, depriving them of the means needed for independence, resistance and escape and regulating their everyday behaviour.

Coercive behaviour is an act or a pattern of acts of assaults, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten their victim.

Rape and sexual violence

Sexual violence is any unwanted sexual act or activity. *According to the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 sexual violence means sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or threats of violence of a sexual nature. The act further defines sexual exploitation as something that is done to or in respect of a person which warrants an offence under Part 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003. This includes the following definitions:*

- Rape is when a person intentionally penetrates the vagina, anus or mouth of another person with his penis when that other person does not consent to the penetration, and/or he does not reasonably believe that the other person consents.
- Assault by penetration is the intentionally sexual penetration of the vagina or anus of another person with a part of the person's body or anything else, when that other person does not consent to the penetration, and/or he does not reasonably believe that the other person consents.

- Sexual assault is a person intentionally touching another person sexually in a manner to which the other person does not consent to the touching, and/or the person does not reasonably believe that the other person consents.
- Child sex offences including rape or any sexual activity with a child, familial child sex offences and meeting a child following sexual grooming.

Sexual harassment

According to the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 harassment means a course of conduct (including speech) by a person which he or she knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other. For incidents that took place after 1st October 2005 there is two types of sexual harassment – unwanted contact on the grounds of your sex and unwanted physical verbal or non-verbal conduct of a sexual nature.

Gender based violence

According to the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 gender-based violence means:

- *Violence, threats of violence or harassment arising directly or indirectly from values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation.*

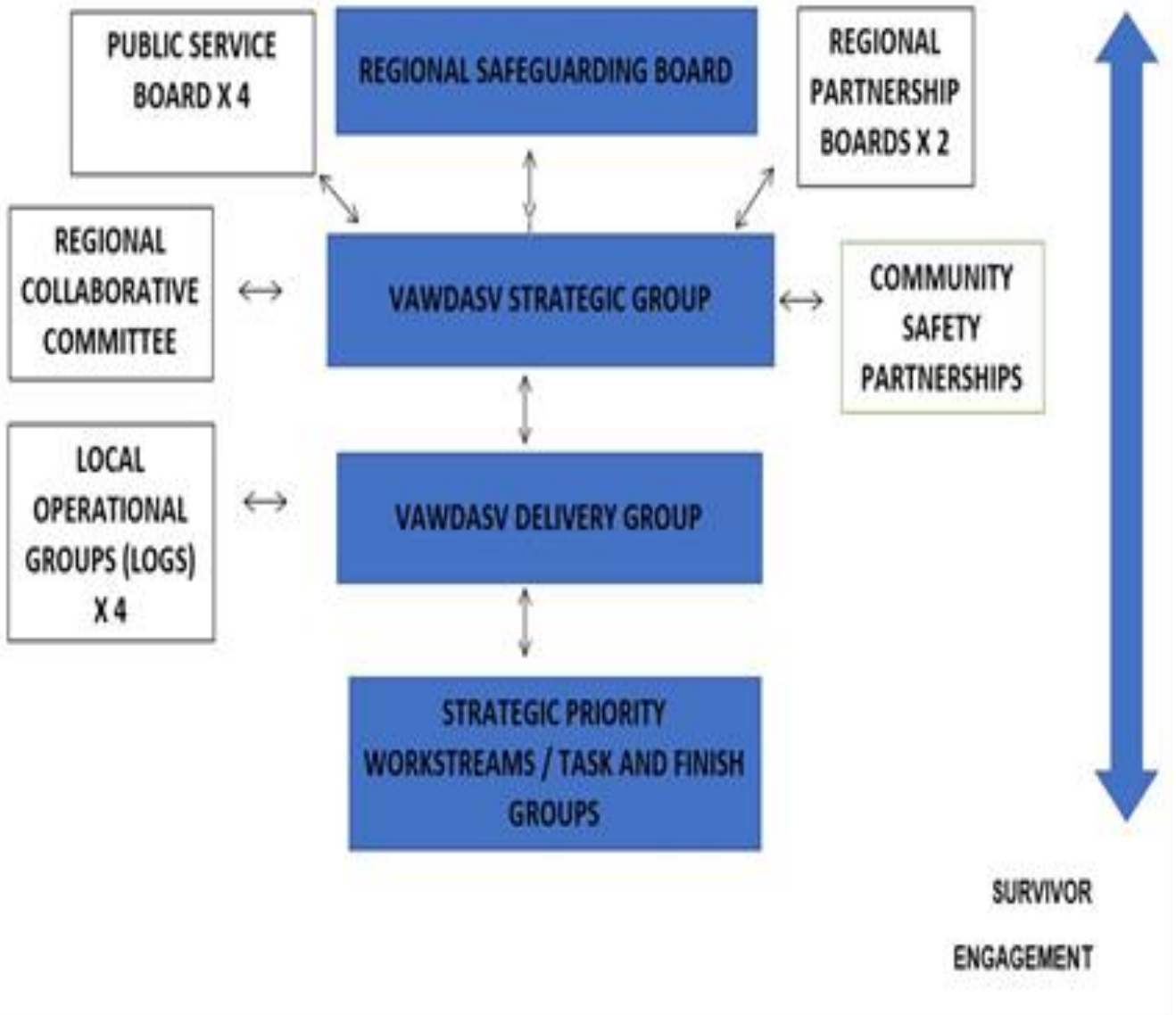
This includes 'Honour based violence' which can be distinguished from other forms of violence, as it is often committed with some degree of approval and/or collusion from family and/or community members. Examples may include murder, un-explained death (suicide), fear of or actual forced marriage, controlling sexual activity, domestic abuse (including psychological, physical, sexual, financial or emotional abuse), child abuse, rape, kidnapping, false imprisonment, threats to kill, assault, harassment, forced abortion. This list is not exhaustive.

- *Female genital mutilation which is an act that is an offence under sections 1, 2 or 3 of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003.*

FGM also known as female circumcision or female genital cutting, is defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO) as "all procedures involving partial or total removal of the external female genitalia or other injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons" as defined by the World Health Organisation (WHO).

- *Forcing a person (whether by physical force or coercion by threats or other psychological means) to enter into a religious or civil ceremony of marriage (whether or not legally binding). This is commonly known as Forced Marriage. The pressure put on people to marry against their will can be physical (including threats, actual physical violence and sexual violence) or emotional and psychological (for example, when someone is made to feel like they're bringing shame on their family). Financial abuse (taking your wages or not giving you any money) can also be a factor.*

APPENDIX B: GOVERNANCE
MID AND WEST WALES VAWDASV



APPENDIX C

Mid and West Wales Regional Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group Membership



Partner Agency	Number of Reps	Name	Email Address
Hywel Dda University Health Board	1	Mandy Nichols- Davies	Mandy.Nichols-Davies@wales.nhs.uk
Powys Teaching Health Board	1	Jane Wheeler Sexton	Jayne.WheelerSexton@wales.nhs.uk
Dyfed Powys Police	1	Richard Yelland Ch Insp	richard.yelland@dyfed-powys.police.uk
Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Dyfed-Powys	1	Alison Perry	alison.perry.opcc@dyfed-powys.pnn.police.uk
Carmarthenshire County Council	2	Cathy Richards Jan Coles	CRichards@carmarthenshire.gov.uk JColes@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Ceredigion County Council	1	Audrey Somerton Edwards	Audrey.SomertonEdwards@ceredigion.gov.uk
Pembrokeshire County Council	2	Chris Harrison	Chris.harrison@pembrokeshire.gov.uk

		Darren Mutter	darren.mutter@pembrokeshire.gov.uk
Powys County Council	1	Holly Gordon	holly.gordon@powys.gov.uk
Regional Safeguarding Board	1	Julie Breckon	Julie.Breckon@pembrokeshire.gov.uk
Youth Justice	0		
Mid and West Wales Fire Service	0		
Regional VAWDASV Adviser and Partnership Coordinator	2	Natalie Hancock Claire L Williams	nhancock@carmarthenshire.gov.uk ClaireLWilliams@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Probation Service	2	Christine Harley Nicola Brown	Christine.Harley@probation.gsi.gov.uk Nicola.Brown9@justice.gov.uk
CSP Regional Representative	1	Kate Harrop	KHHarrop@carmarthenshire.gov.uk
Specialist Service Provider Reps	3	Jackie Stamp New Pathways Victoria Pedicini Threshold DAS	Jackie.Stamp@newpathways.org.uk vpedicini@threshold-das.org.uk

		Michelle Pooley West Wales DAS	michelle.pooley@westwalesdas.org.uk
Total	19		

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