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## Consultation Document

# Statutory guidance under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

Effective Multi-Agency Collaboration Guidance

Date of issue: **24 September 2015**

Action required: Responses by **17 December 2015**

## Overview

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 ('the Act') ensures a focus across the public sector on the prevention of these issues, the protection of victims and the support for those affected by such issues.

The provisions within the Act strengthen the leadership and strategic approach to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. One provision of the Act (section 15) provides the Welsh Ministers with the power to issue guidance to relevant authorities on how in the exercise of their functions they could contribute to the achievement of the purpose of the Act.

This consultation relates to draft statutory guidance to be issued under this power.

This guidance outlines the value of collaboration between organisations for the purposes of ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

It sets out the necessary stages of collaboration and identifies good practice in establishing partnership arrangements and the key components for effective partnerships.

## How to respond

This is a written consultation. Questions are summarised in a questionnaire at the end of this document, please use this questionnaire to provide your feedback. Responses can be e-mailed/posted to the contact details below.

## Further information and related documents

Large print, Braille and alternative language versions of this document are available on request.

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 can be found at:

<http://gov.wales/legislation/programme/assemblybills/domestic-abuse/?lang=en>

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## Data protection

### How the views and information you give us will be used

Any response you send us will be seen in full by Welsh Government staff dealing with the issues which this consultation is about. It may also be seen by other Welsh Government staff to help them plan future consultations.

The Welsh Government intends to publish a summary of the responses to this document. We may also publish responses in full.

Normally, the name and address (or part of the address) of the person or organisation who sent the response are published with the response. This helps to show that the consultation was carried out properly. If you do not want your name or address published, please tell us this in writing when you send your response. We will then blank them out.

Names or addresses we blank out might still get published later, though we do not think this would happen very often. The Freedom of Information Act 2000 and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004 allow the public to ask to see information held by many public bodies, including the Welsh Government. This includes information which has not been published. However, the law also allows us to withhold information in some circumstances. If anyone asks to see information we have withheld, we will have to decide whether to release it or not. If someone has asked for their name and address not to be published, that is an important fact we would take into account. However, there might sometimes be important reasons why we would have to reveal someone's name and address, even though they have asked for them not to be published. We would get in touch with the person and ask their views before we finally decided to reveal the information.

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## 1. The language used within the guidance

This guidance on convening and maintaining effective strategic and operational case-focused partnerships focusses on particular forms of violence and abuse which are disproportionately experienced by women and girls. Evidence shows that women disproportionately experience repeat incidents of domestic abuse, all forms of sexual violence and other forms of violence and abuse such as forced marriage and female genital mutilation.

Whilst it is important that this disproportionate experience is acknowledged and communicated through the guidance and the subsequent work of the relevant authorities, the purpose of the guidance is to ensure that professionals work together to provide an effective response to anyone affected by any form of gender-based violence, including violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

References in this guidance to “violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence” or “violence and abuse” should therefore be read to capture all forms of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence as defined in section 24 of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

## 2. Definitions

**Abuse (as defined by the Act):** Physical, sexual, psychological, emotional or financial abuse

**Ask and Act:** A process of targeted enquiry across the Welsh Public Service in relation to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and a process of routine enquiry within maternal and midwifery services, mental health and child maltreatment settings.

“Ask and Act” should apply at an organisational rather than individual level and take the form of targeted rather than routine enquiry.

The term targeted enquiry describes the recognition of indicators of violence against women, domestic abuse, and sexual violence as a prompt for a professional to ask their client whether they have been affected by any of these issues.

**Client:** Client is used here as a term to describe a person experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. The term encompasses the terms “victim”, “survivor”, “service user” and “patient”. Different partners use different words to define their relationship to the person at risk and so the guidance reflects this.

In practical terms it is suggested a person experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence selects the term they prefer, where a term is required. It should generally be possible to use a client’s name rather than other descriptive terms.

**Collaboration:** The term “collaboration” refers to a co-ordinated interagency response via a formal structure, or fora, where the primary focus is to safeguard the victim, reduce secondary victimisation and hold perpetrators to account. The fora should:

- (a) adopt consistent, joint policies and procedures, including an agreed risk assessment and risk management and safety plan, which co-ordinates and standardises the professional interventions to all those at risk and which reduces the risk of harm;
- (b) share information to increase the safety, health and well-being of victims/survivors - adults and their children;
- (c) work together to reduce repeat victimisation;
- (d) improve agency accountability;
- (e) improve support, including training, for all staff involved in domestic abuse cases; and
- (f) determine whether the alleged perpetrator poses a significant risk to any particular individual or to the general community.

**DACC:** Domestic Abuse Conference Call

**Domestic abuse:** Abuse where the victim of it is or has been associated with the abuser.

A person is associated with another person for the purpose of the definition of “domestic abuse” if they fall within the definition in section 21(2) or (3) of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

**Female Genital Mutilation:** an act that is an offence under sections 1, 2 or 3 of the Female Genital Mutilation Act 2003 (c. 31)

**Gender-based Violence:** (a) violence, threats of violence or harassment arising directly or indirectly from values, beliefs or customs relating to gender or sexual orientation;

(b) female genital mutilation;

(c) 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);

**Harassment:** A course of conduct by a person which he or she knows or ought to know amounts to harassment of the other; and for the purpose of this definition:

(a) a person ought to know that his or her conduct amounts to or involves harassment if a reasonable person in possession of the same information would think the course of conduct amounted to or involved harassment of another person; and

(b) “conduct” includes speech.

**Independent Domestic Violence Adviser (IDVA):** Trained specialist worker who provides short to medium-term casework support for high risk victims of domestic abuse

**Local Authority (as defined in the Act):** A county or county borough council

**MARAC:** Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference

**MASH:** Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub

**MAPPA:** Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements

**Public Service:** Public services are services delivered for the benefit of the public. This can include services delivered through the third sector, through social enterprise or through services that are contracted out.

**Relevant authorities:** county and county borough councils, Local Health Boards, fire and rescue authorities and NHS trusts.

**Sexual exploitation (as defined by the Act):** something that is done to or in respect of a person which

- (a) involves the commission of an offence under Part 1 of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 (c. 42), as it has an effect in England and Wales, or
- (b) would involve the commission of such an offence if it were done in England and Wales;

**Sexual Violence (as defined by the Act):** sexual exploitation, sexual harassment, or threats of violence of a sexual nature.

**SWOT:** Sex Workers Operational Team

**Targeted enquiry:** The process utilised in “Ask and Act”

**The Act:** The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

**Violence against women:** The experience of gender based violence (as defined in the Act) by women.

### 3. Executive Summary

This guidance explores the necessary stages of collaboration and identifies good practice in establishing partnership arrangements. In order to improve outcomes for those who experience violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence collaboration must occur at all levels of organisations - within strategic leadership, operational management and amongst those at the frontline.

Section 4 of the guidance is issued under section 15 of the Act and outlines specific requirements on relevant authorities (as defined in section 14 of the Act) in relation to multi-agency collaboration.

The remainder of the guidance is issued under section 60 of the Government of Wales Act 2006 and outlines guidance to assist Relevant Authorities in practicing effective multi-agency working. It outlines the value of multi-agency collaboration in relation to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and the key components necessary for effective partnerships. The guidance then moves to explain what collaboration should look like at each of the following levels:

- the strategic partnership;
- the operational partnership; and
- multi-agency fora.



1) **Strategic partnerships** which are created to address common goals, identified through strategic needs analysis. (e.g. Local Service Boards).

2) **Operational partnerships** which ensure the goals agreed at the strategic partnership are delivered. Those in the operational partnership provide leadership and direction to those who are performing the actions which deliver goals.

3) **Multi-agency fora** which bring front line professionals together to share information to promote the safety of those affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Next, it details what is required within agencies to deliver on their partnership commitments and embed a robust response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence within their agency.



Finally, the guidance outlines the key pillars of an effective multi-agency fora intervention and the process for engagement within an organisation. When the work to end violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is formulated and embedded in this way, multi-agency fora are more likely to be successful in their aims.

#### **4. Guidance issued under section 15 of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015**

This section of the guidance is issued under section 15 of the Act. The majority of the guidance is issued to all relevant authorities as defined in section 14 of the Act<sup>1</sup>. Where the guidance is only to apply to a single, or a particular number of relevant authorities, specific reference is made. Where no reference is made, all relevant authorities must adhere to this guidance.

In accordance with section 17 of the Act relevant authorities, or particular relevant authorities to which specific requirements in this section of the guidance are addressed, must follow the course set out in this section of the guidance.

A relevant authority is not however required to follow this section of the guidance if:

- It thinks there is a good reason for it not to follow the guidance in particular categories of case or at all,
- it decides on an alternative policy for the exercise of its functions in respect of the subject matter of the guidance, and
- a policy statement issued by the authority in accordance with section 18 of the Act is in effect.

Section 18 of the act provides that the policy statement issued by a relevant authority must set out how the relevant authority proposes that functions should be exercised differently from the course set out in this section of the guidance and the authority's reasons for proposing that different course. The policy statement must be published and a copy sent to the Welsh Ministers.

Section 19 of the Act enables the Welsh Ministers to direct relevant authorities to take any action which the Welsh Ministers consider appropriate for the purpose of securing exercise of functions by the authority in accordance with this section of the guidance where the Welsh Ministers consider that the authority's alternative policy (in whole or in part) is not likely to contribute to the pursuit of the purpose of the Act<sup>2</sup>.

Whilst the Welsh Government is not requiring the use of a specific multi-agency collaboration model, relevant authorities are required to have in place formal multi-agency arrangements at the strategic, operational and fora levels.

## The Strategic Partnership

**The purpose of the Strategic Partnership is to develop, approve and monitor the local strategy on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.**

In terms of **Strategic Collaboration**, relevant authorities are required to:

- establish a new, strategic partnership which is focussed specifically on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence; **or**
- review any existing strategic partnership which is focussed specifically on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Relevant authorities are required to ensure such a strategic partnership complies with the following minimum standards:

- membership of the strategic group must be at a senior level of the relevant authorities and includes those authorised to act and make decisions on behalf of their organisation. It should also include the Chairs of the operational group (see Chapter 8) and of any relevant sub-committees or task and finish groups;
- all necessary partners must participate in the group at an equivalent senior level, including the police, probation and specialist third sector organisations, and this engagement must be demonstrated;
- a Terms of Reference or a Memorandum of Understanding is required to ensure there is consensus and clarity on what partners agree is the basis for their collaboration, what the commitment entails and how accountability will be managed. This agreement must outline the purpose of the group and how it:
  - fits within the overall local governance structure;
  - will monitor and report on the local strategy on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and how the relevant authorities are delivering on the purposes of the Act;
  - will ensure any collaborative work and actions are reflected in local strategies;
  - will deliver and be accountable for actions and responsibilities identified through any established partnerships;
  - will ensure regular service-user input; and
  - will ensure appropriate governance of the group including the minimum requirements on members, frequency of meetings, responsibility for day-to-day organisation and coordination of the group.
- an agreed common, integrated set of outcomes and a joined-up dataset is required which:

- monitors the care pathway;
  - assesses whether the strategic objectives are being met;
  - informs the group's oversight of the delivery of the local strategy;
  - and
  - includes information and feedback from service users.
- agreement on a common set of policies to be used across partners including risk assessment information-sharing and training;
  - agreement on how services should be funded to address local needs and provide value for money processes such as joint commissioning or joint funding arrangements; and
  - support must be provided for the work of the National Adviser to raise awareness and to monitor, coordinate and improve provision and practice.

The requirement for local strategies on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence will come into force in Spring 2016. As such aspects of this guidance specifically relating to local strategies will only be applicable once those requirements are in force.

### The Operational Partnership

**The purpose of the Operational Partnership is to deliver the local strategy on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence through collaboration and, where necessary, to oversee functions of frontline fora in the locality and undertake improvement work where necessary.**

In terms of **Operational Collaboration**, relevant authorities are required to:

- establish a new, operational partnership which is focussed specifically on delivering violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- or**
- review any existing operational partnership which is focussed specifically on delivery of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Relevant authorities are required to ensure such an operational partnership complies with the following minimum standards:

- ensure membership of the operational group focussed on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is at an appropriately senior level and includes those authorised on behalf of their organisation to ensure delivery is achievable;
- invite all necessary partners, including the police, probation and specialist third sector organisations at an equivalent senior level, with

whom collaboration is required to deliver the strategic aims and address any problems which arise; and this engagement must be demonstrated;

- monitor attendance and highlight any consistent absences for the attention of the strategic group;
- clearly outline within either a Terms of Reference or a Memorandum of Understanding the purpose of the group and how it:
  - fits within the overall local governance structure, including reporting to the strategic group;
  - will deliver the local strategy on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence once enacted;
  - will deliver and be accountable for actions and responsibilities identified through any established partnerships; and
  - will ensure appropriate governance of the group including the minimum requirements on members, frequency of meetings responsibility for day-to-day organisation and coordination of the group.
- adherence to a common set of policies to be used by all partners including risk assessment, information-sharing and training;
- agree an action plan, which will become part of the local strategy, to deliver the strategic aims, detailing who is responsible for delivery of the actions;
- review the action plan on a quarterly basis and report on it annually as part of the local strategy review requirements;
- gather, analyse and monitor all performance and financial information against the action plan; and
- ensure there is an agreed care pathway established for all partners to use for those suffering violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

### Multi-agency fora

In terms of **multi-agency fora**, relevant authorities are required to:

- review any existing collaborative arrangements/groups/partnerships/fora in relation to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, such as MARAC and MASH, to ensure they meet the practice requirements outlined in this guidance (Chapter 9). This will be particularly necessary for those who are not identified as at high risk of imminent, serious harm to intervene earlier and identify potential escalation;

- where and when there is a recognised need to establish any new fora, relevant authorities must follow the Project development model for client focussed multi-agency fora (Chapter 9) to ensure it is monitored for purpose, effectiveness and outcome;
- establish an appropriate governance structure which must link and report to the operational and strategic groups;
- ensure systematic methods of identifying clients who require a multi-agency response throughout the organisation which replicate and complement other relevant authority and fora processes;
- ensure this identification leads to appropriate referrals by regularly publishing and publicising the referral criteria for the multi-agency fora to staff teams;
- ensure participation by all partners in a referral pathway to specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence service providers to ensure all identified victims have access to specialist support;
- sign up to local Information Sharing Protocols to ensure legal and appropriate information sharing through the forum;
- nominate representatives from relevant departments who will represent the organisation at the multi-agency fora. These departments should include, but are not limited to: pregnancy and post partum services, Accident and Emergency, children's social care, adult social care, mental health services, substance misuse services, education, housing and youth offending teams;
- ensure deputy representatives are in place to maintain consistent and informed representation and attendance at multi-agency fora;
- ensure, wherever possible, all necessary partners, in addition to relevant Authorities, engage in the fora, including the police, probation and specialist third sector organisations, and demonstrate this engagement; and
- take into account any statutory requirement of membership e.g. Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Domestic Homicide Reviews; Safeguarding Boards etc.

### In terms of **the role of individual organisations in collaborative working**

Each of the relevant authorities are required to:

- identify a violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence lead to oversee its efforts and provide strategic drive within

the organisation;

- develop internal policies and procedures, clearly outlining the organisation's expected approach and commitment on training, information sharing and collation of data.<sup>3</sup>
  - commit resource to facilitate the strategic goals within their own organisations. This may include funding for training staff, as well as ensuring they have time to participate in such learning. Partners will need to ensure the training they provide fits the National Training Framework;
  - require continuing professional development through multi-agency training on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence for all staff who come into contact with the public;
  - ensure information-sharing protocols adopted are in line with the WASPI (Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information)<sup>4</sup> framework and Welsh Government statutory guidance;
  - incorporate violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence work into their internal performance management systems;
  - create internal systems for recording and sharing information with partner agencies as part of their work, but they may also need to expand their systems to accommodate their work in support of the action plan and any further contributions they are making to help those experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence;
  - ensure their own agency has an internal care pathway for victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence which links to the partnership pathway;
  - collect data which reflects their work along the care pathway, for example, the number of people who were asked about violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, the number who disclosed, number of safety plans created, the number of people referred and to which service. Partner agencies may also contribute data as evidence of outcomes, for example, the reduction in clients' risk or perpetrators successfully prosecuted; and
  - review what the organisation is doing to address violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence on a quarterly basis. This will feed into the requirement to report annually as part of the local strategy review requirements once enacted. This will identify areas which are working well or which require improvement.

## **5. Why multi-agency collaboration?**

Collaboration between organisations for the purposes of ending violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is a broad, far reaching concept.

It is recognised that an effective response to some forms of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence requires Multi-Agency collaboration. Those who have experienced domestic abuse tell us that multi-agency responses work because they only have to tell the story of their abuse once, they get help the first time they tell anyone and they receive the same response from all agencies.

Wales has a long history of innovation and drive in tackling gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence. At a client focussed level, Welsh innovation created the MARAC (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference) model, which is now utilised and practiced internationally. Strategically, we also demonstrate best practice in examples of strategic partnerships including the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Advisory Group and the Female Genital Mutilation Leadership Group.

The Welsh Government wishes to develop this strong track record to further encourage collaboration between public services to enable a holistic and effective response to promoting the safety of individuals at risk of all forms of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

### **A strategic and operational focus**

When considering multi agency work it is important to consider strategic leadership in partnership and operational collaboration which drives progress and ensures effectiveness.

Partnership work requires effective communication, meetings and planning in several spheres: to develop strategic and operational frameworks and a united care pathway for all the strands of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence; to share information and develop co-ordinated interventions in particular cases; and then to monitor the care pathway and review outcomes to develop the response.

Partners will need to be the link between the multi-agency collaboration and their own agencies, ensuring their internal processes complement and enhance the multi-agency work. Individual agency's involvement in multi-agency work and interventions will need to be supported by their own agency's strategic commitment, operational systems and management.

### **A victim focus**

Given the generally well embedded MARAC model and continued Welsh and UK Government support for this work, it is particularly important proven Welsh



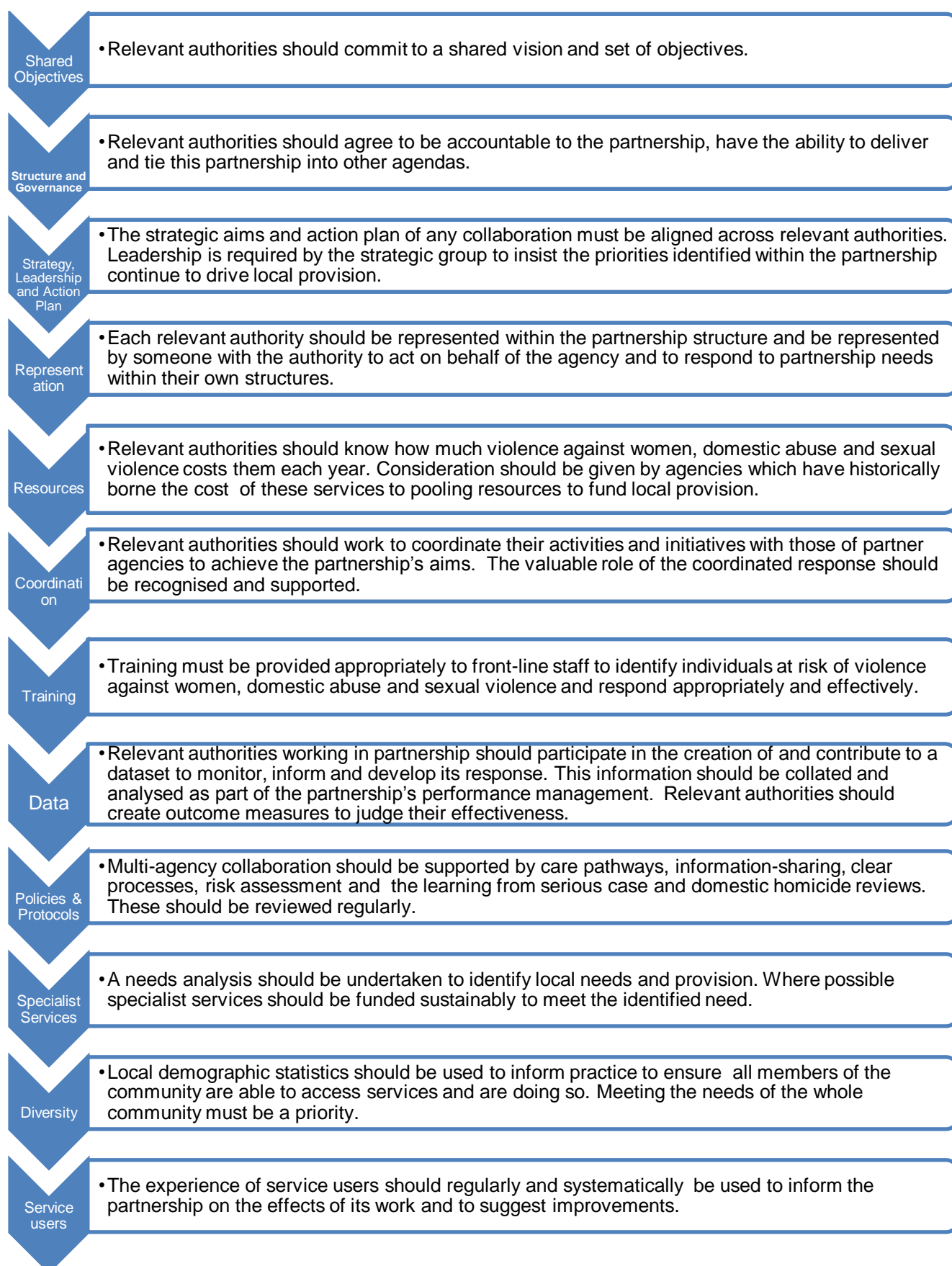
creativity is focussed on integrating and developing responses around earlier identification and prevention.

Whilst the Welsh Government aims to promote needs led development at a local level it is important nonetheless to ensure consistency and quality assurance. In doing so it is crucial partners test their proposals against a series of developmental milestones to ensure the proposed model meets its objectives and provides the required solution to the identified problem. Models of multi-agency work should not be created for their own sake, they must be purpose focussed and effective.

Twelve key components for effective partnership work are recognised in “*In Search of Excellence: A Guide to Effective Domestic Violence Partnerships*”<sup>5</sup>, an exploration of 30 visits to local partnerships across the UK. The guidance incorporates partnership experiences related to violence against women and girls and the lessons about commissioning gleaned from the Local Authorities visited.

The following diagram outlines the essential components for strategic and operational collaboration and will be useful in the consideration of new partnership proposals and in reviewing the effectiveness of ongoing partnership work.

## Effective partnership working: Good practice



## The evidence base

It is the aim of the Welsh Government to encourage services which are effective, maintained and of a consistently high standard across Wales. Evidence-based interventions are key to ensuring those experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are getting the most effective services possible.

There is evidence showing the value of some interventions, such as those of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs) and the Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC). For some of the newer innovations such as Multi-agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), the evidence has not yet been collected and analysed, partly because the interventions vary in their focus and practice from area to area.

As areas develop their local responses to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, they will need to collate data to identify how they are performing and which interventions are best for keeping victims of violence against women, safe in the short and long term.

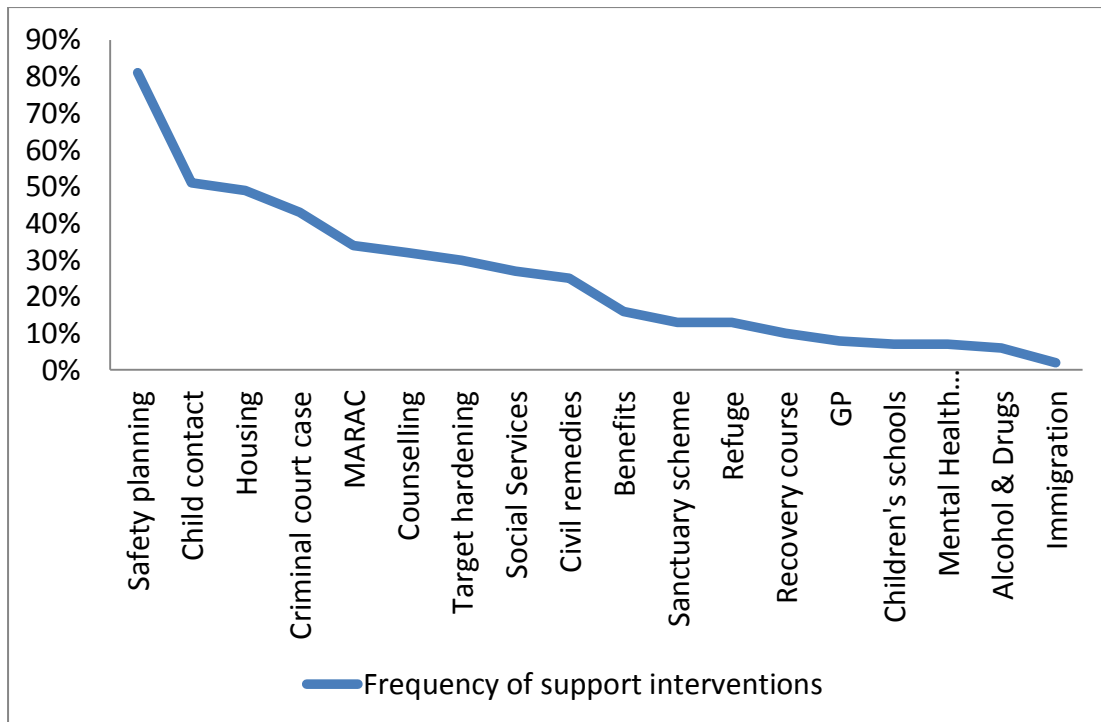
Multi-agency partnerships, collaboration and robust information sharing processes are considered essential for an effective response to those experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. Wales has long shown innovation and drive in tackling such violence and abuse, both at an operational level where partnership working developed such interventions as MARACs (Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conferences) and strategically; the Welsh Government's 'Right to be Safe Strategy'.

This section outlines the evidence base for a collaborative response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence to support the improvement of work in this area.

### Improved effectiveness

To improve victims' safety, a number of agencies need to be involved. *Safety in Numbers*<sup>6</sup>, a study of the work of IDVAs in 7 locations and with more than 2,000 victims of domestic abuse, found the intensity of support (number of contacts with an IDVA) and the number of interventions (provision of services and support by other agencies) correlated to reductions in the severity and frequency of abuse. So, with more contact and a greater variety of support, victims experienced abuse less often and it was less severe.<sup>7</sup> The study also found victims needed not only specialist IDVA services, but a 'model of continuing safety' to address the many needs which develop over a period of abuse<sup>8</sup>.

The types of intervention which were engaged and the frequency of the use of each are seen in the following table<sup>9</sup>.



This illustrates the variety of support and help those suffering domestic abuse may need to reduce the harm they face. This is also likely to be true for victims of gender-based violence and sexual violence.

### Better protected children and vulnerable adults

In research by SafeLives<sup>10</sup> (previously CAADA) on the work of MARACs with IDVAs, two-thirds of victims had children living in or visiting the home where domestic abuse was taking place. Most of these children were under 5 and had been living with abuse for most of their lives. On average it took victims with children a year longer to access support than those without children. Children who live with violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are at increased risk of behaviour problems and emotional trauma, as well as mental health difficulties in adult life<sup>11</sup>.

By designing a more complete response to people suffering violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, the need for help should be identified earlier and more resources mobilised to help, enabling a quicker, bespoke response to victims and their children. An earlier response should reduce the harm suffered by victims and their children and reduce the number of interventions needed to enable them to be safe. It should also allow for earlier interventions to address perpetrators' behaviour.

Vulnerable adults often have regular access to services. Their reliance on these services and the carers who provide them may increase their risk of abuse and make them less likely to disclose abuse of any form. This is an under-researched area, but a study found 50% of disabled women in the UK may have experienced domestic abuse in their lives<sup>12</sup>. A multi-agency approach will allow

for the greatest possible input to create an appropriate response for these victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

### **Improved outcomes for those with complex needs: substance misuse and mental health**

Domestic abuse and other abuse is the most prevalent cause of depression and other mental health difficulties in women<sup>13</sup> and results in self-harm and suicide rates among survivors which are at least four times higher than the general female population.<sup>14</sup>

Where victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence suffer from mental health problems – whether as a result of the abuse or where the mental health problems make them more vulnerable – psychological interventions are unlikely to improve their lives without addressing the abuse or violence, assessing risk and helping clients to be safe. The psychological impact of the abuse also needs to be acknowledged in the therapy. At the time of writing, in Wales, 70% of MARACs have regular mental health attendance which provides an invaluable additional resource when planning actions for service users.

The link between problematic substance misuse and abuse has been established through a number of studies. Research has shown women who have experienced abuse are 5.5 times more likely to be diagnosed with a substance use problem over their lifetime<sup>15</sup> and a perpetrator's chronic use of alcohol or drugs is a risk factor when assessing the risk to domestic abuse victims.

In some areas, the issues of substance misuse, mental health and violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence continue to be addressed separately. In the Home Office's review of Domestic Homicide Reviews, one of the common themes was the need to raise awareness and understanding of how best to work with those suffering abuse who also have mental health or substance misuse needs.<sup>16</sup> A more effective approach combines the expertise of specialists in violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and in substance misuse work, mental health professionals, and other agencies.

### **A consistent response to individuals at risk**

Regardless of the agency or professional a victim or perpetrator approaches first, they should get the same response. All agencies should give victims the same messages: violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are not tolerated, the victim is not at fault, and there is help available.

The same messages can be publicised through awareness-raising campaigns, in public offices, to staff and to victims when they disclose. The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 is a significant step towards a change in culture where violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are as unacceptable as child abuse. Only by

working together to harmonise processes and responses can these messages be reliably consistent, giving victims' confidence in the response they will get.

### **Reduced, shared costs**

The work of Sylvia Walby, *The Cost of Domestic Violence*, has helped improve the understanding of the costs of domestic violence. In her original research (2004), she identified the total cost to England and Wales of domestic violence. In 2009 she updated this work and, based on this research and population-based estimates, the costs of domestic violence in Wales was estimated to be £303.5 million annually - £202.6 million for service costs and £100.9 million in lost economic input.

In the later research<sup>17</sup>, she found the total cost of domestic violence had fallen by £23 billion to around £16 billion per year. She found the reduction in costs had been partly a result of the development and increased use of public services, showing investment in public services' responses had been cost effective.

### **Better information and improved planning**

For a number of strands of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, e.g. FGM and so called "honour"-based violence, under-reporting has resulted in unreliable statistics which make it difficult to assess through a needs analysis. With increased awareness and more developed responses from all public bodies to these issues, the evidence base will be stronger and inform better planning and improved services.

### **Shared responsibility**

By working together to address violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, partner agencies will be aware of the changes in other services which affect the care pathway. By collaborating, changes can be flagged, publicised and addressed so victims do not fall through the cracks when services reduce, expand, or change their remits. This close working will enable the partnership to manage any growth, reduction or changes in services so the overall outcomes continue to be realised.

### **Identification of and a response to service-generated risks**

A problem with multi-agency work which is often unnamed and unaddressed is that of 'service-generated risks'<sup>18</sup> or 'intervention-generated risk'<sup>19</sup>. This describes occasions when the systems or practice of professionals creates or increases the perpetrator's risk to the client, or creates additional obstacles for the client. By working together and including a step in planning which asks whether the actions intended will increase the perpetrator's victim's risk or difficulties the client faces, the partnership can ensure they are working with a more complete picture of the victim's risk.

This term arose in the course of understanding where multi-agency work around domestic abuse can go wrong, but will apply to all structures around any form of gender-based violence and sexual violence.

Identifying a service-generated risk is not a reason to step back from action, but should prompt agencies to safety plan further in an individual case and to address and alter any structures which regularly generate such risks.

### **Value of collaboration to victims**

People who have experienced violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence identify the value of partnership work to them including:

- they only have to tell the story of their abuse once;
- they get help the first time they tell anyone;
- they receive the same response from all agencies;
- they obtain support to navigate the different rules and criteria for different agencies; and
- they are led, through a route map, to safety and a better, more equal, life.

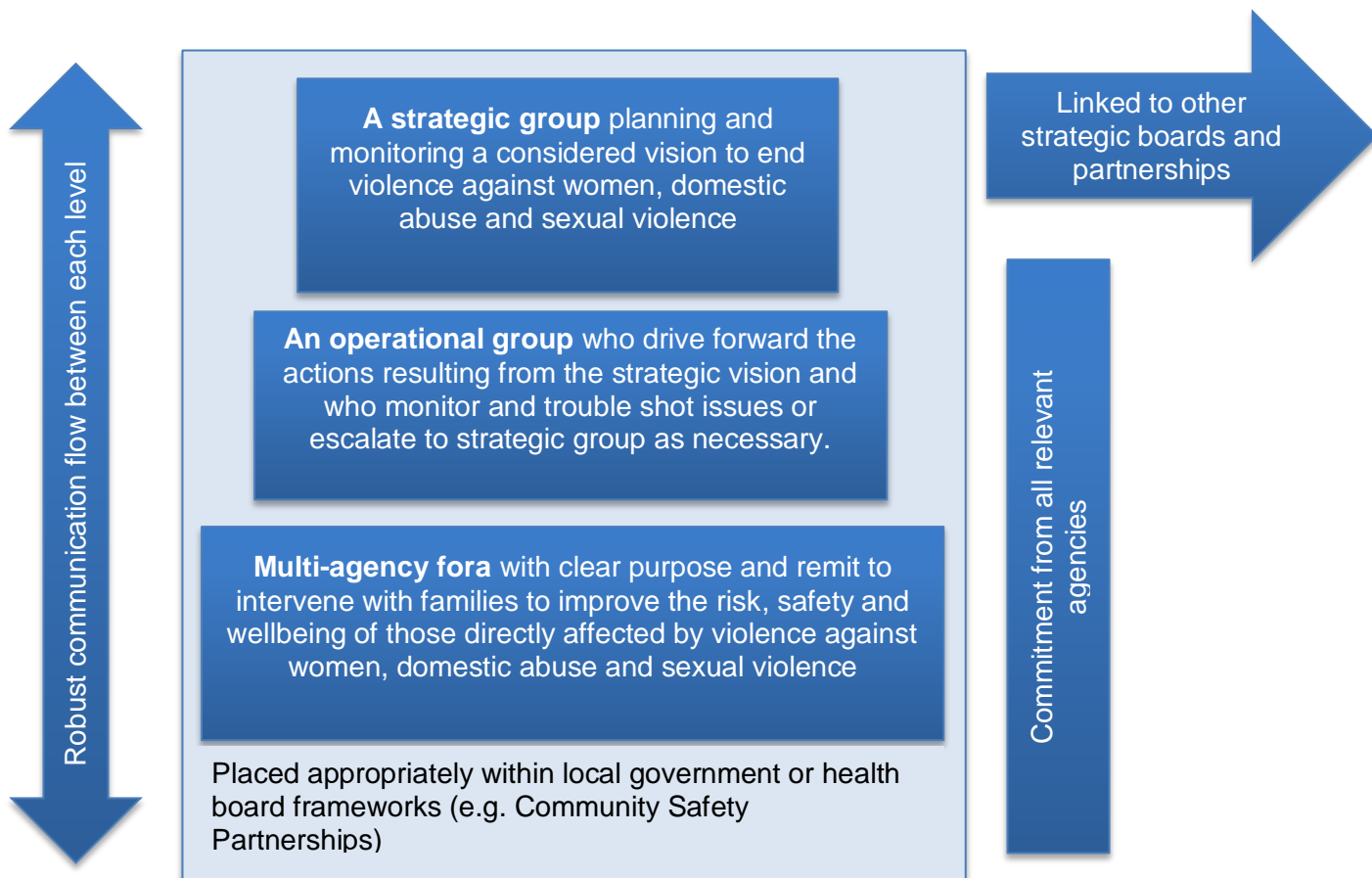
A victim's understanding that it is their right to be free of fear and abuse is confirmed when they get the same, consistent response everywhere. They understand their community and the services which support it are working to ensure those rights.

## 6. Collaborative working in relation to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Collaborative work in relation to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is often focussed on multi-agency fora which bring organisations together to support and case manage those at risk. This is a fundamental and requisite element of an effective response to those at risk and this guidance outlines how such fora should be developed and maintained.

However, client focussed, multi-agency fora only work when led strategically and when monitored and governed by operational groups. Only when a combined and co-ordinated response is delivered across the public service do victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence receive a response which is consistent, effective and sustained.

The diagram below shows how the three levels should work together:



### Where does the partnership sit?

Local areas will need to determine where partnerships on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence sit within the local framework. Any partnership will need robust connections to Local Safeguarding Boards, Adult Safeguarding, the Community Safety Partnership, future Public Service Board and the Supporting People Regional Collaborative Committee. Strategic



partners will need to understand how violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence fit into all the other agendas and ensure partners on those Boards see the connections too.

### **Who are the partners?**

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 specifies relevant authorities as Local Authorities, Local Health Boards, Fire and Rescue Authorities and NHS trusts. These relevant authorities are required to be partners.

Clearly, strong partnership work goes beyond the relevant authorities, set out within the Act. All services, whether devolved, statutory, non-statutory or specialist third sector must be engaged and must participate.

Core partners, required for a robust response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are the Police, Children's Social Services, Adult Social Services, the Probation Service, Housing, Mental Health, Substance Misuse Services, Education, Health Services (A&E, NHS Trusts, Welsh Ambulance Service Trust, Maternity Services, GPs) Youth Services, Flying Start and Team around the Family co-ordinators and the specialist third sector.

Particular partners have been identified as having a duty to participate in specific multi-agency work, e.g. Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) and Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs).

Partners necessary for a co-ordinated community response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are:

- community organisations;
- courts;
- drug and alcohol services;
- education;
- employers;
- health providers;
- legal services and professionals;
- LA housing and registered social landlords;
- public protection – police and probation;
- social services;
- specialist services;
- voluntary organisations; and
- Wales Ambulance Service Trust

### **The role of the specialist third sector**

A common weakness in such partnerships is that they mirror statutory boards by focusing on statutory obligations and the activities they directly fund. They often ignore activities and contributions which they do not fund or control. The provision of services for victims has, for decades, been delivered by the

specialist third sector and these organisations have developed expertise which should be fundamental to this partnership work.

Multi-agency forum work must therefore involve the specialist third sector. The sector provides specialists in the different strands of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and they understand, through their work with clients, where the obstacles in the systems lie. They can provide the experience of the victim to any multi-agency group.

All the services and agencies which work with victims and perpetrators in any capacity, devolved, non-devolved, publicly-funded or specialist third sector, should be part of the partnership at some level. By creating this broad partnership, all the services will link up and complement each other, providing a comprehensive service for those experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

Where the specialist third sector has been commissioned to do so, they will be delivering the partnership's strategic aims. Outside of centralised and local funding streams, the specialist third sector will also identify additional needs within the community they work with. To do this they will often undertake independent fundraising, contributing to the amount of money spent on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence locally and increasing local provision.

Given this contribution and the innovation often demonstrated by the specialist third sector it is crucial for partnerships to collaborate carefully in planning. Consistent provision is key, as is joint enterprise towards clear outcomes.

## 7. Collaborating strategically

### The role of the Strategic Partnership

Strategic partnerships are created to address common goals linked to particular community need. These goals are best identified through strategic needs analysis such as those carried out by the Local Service Boards (LSBs).

Those who sit on a strategic partnership group to target violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence will, ideally, be the Directors and Chief Executives of their organisations, Chairs of the operational group (see Chapter 8) and particular sub-committees or task and finish groups. They need to have the authority in their own organisation to connect the work of any partnerships with their own local strategy on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (required under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015) so they reflect, complement and enhance each other. They need to provide leadership within the partnership and within their organisation and be able to clear any systemic barriers to delivering the goals of this group.

The membership of this group should include the core partners required to deliver a violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence response including devolved, non-devolved and specialist third sector organisations to ensure this group has the widest possible perspective and range of information.

### Determination of strategic aims

The Welsh Government will publish guidance on preparing a violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence local strategy. A short overview is provided here.

Both Local Authorities and Local Health Boards should have identified responsibilities within their local strategy under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 which are monitored, reported on and analysed by both authorities. They will need to agree a common, integrated set of outcomes and a joined-up data set to inform their oversight of the delivery of the strategy.

The Act specifies a number of statutory assessments which both authorities must have regard to in the preparation of the local strategy. These include:

- the assessment carried out by the Local Authority in conjunction with a Local Health Board under section 14 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014 (the “population assessment” of needs for care and support, support for carers and preventative services); and

- the strategic assessment prepared in accordance with regulations under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (c.37) relating to reducing crime and disorder in the Local Authority area.

The needs assessments and work in preparing local strategies will inform Local Authorities and Local Health Boards as to what collaboration is required to address any identified needs.

### **Evidence gathering and outcomes monitoring**

This work will require the development of a coherent set of data which monitors the care pathway and assesses whether the strategic objectives are being met.

Partners will need to distinguish clearly between monitoring data and outcomes:

- Monitoring data from along the care pathway will need to be reviewed to see if there is a significant change along the way. For instance, the journey from reporting a crime to successful prosecution has many points at which data and information can be collected to review the process.
- Outcomes tell us whether individuals at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are being made safer. This is a challenging area for partner agencies and one where regional and national collaboration will be vital. Outcomes should **always** include information from service users.

Fora which are developed to meet the needs of victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence should be gathering and providing data to assess the impact of this work for victims and thus the strategic aims.

### **Embedding violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence into all agendas**

Strategic partners will be expected to champion violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence work and service provision on other Boards and ensure this work is linked to other agendas. The strategic partnership will create accountability (where appropriate) and communication mechanisms to other strategic boards, e.g. Local Service Boards, Local Safeguarding Boards, the Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group<sup>20</sup>. It will be important to ensure consistency across organisations - nationally, regionally and locally - to ensure the development of any new or existing programmes and services complement each other and that any conflicts or duplication are spotted and resolved quickly. In initiating new services, consideration must be given to existing provision, and whether this can be utilised or adapted.

There will also be benefit in regional communication to share learning and in doing so provision for those at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and responses to those who perpetrate these abuses will be unified. This may also enable maximised use of resources. Partners should

look to link to regional leadership structures such as the Gwent 'G7', the Cwm Taf Collaboration Board and the North Wales Regional Leadership Board.

## Funding

A particular challenge for strategic partnerships is to ensure funding is aligned to deliver the strategic aims and it is spent according to the agreed identified need and objectives. The partnership will wish to consider what processes are required to achieve this such as joint commissioning or joint funding.

There has been a move to commissioning violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services over the last few years and further interest in the benefits of joint commissioning. Pooling of funds offers opportunity to avoid duplication of services, ensure value for money and efficiency, develop coordinated services and share best practice, expertise and intelligence about needs. This is a challenging area for partners but can maximise the impact of their contributions.

Cost-benefit analyses can help identify the agencies which will benefit most from an investment. As a starting point, an estimated cost for each Local Authority area is available<sup>21</sup>. It breaks down costs for physical and mental health care, criminal justice, social services, housing and refugees, civil legal services, and lost economic output, as well as human and emotional costs. Some authorities have gained an additional perspective on their partnership by including the investment specialist third sector organisations are making into local provision through their own fund-raising activities and money provided by other sources such as grant-making trusts. In one area, that was as high as 30% of the investment locally.

Funding will need to reflect the local need and geography, such as the cost of delivering in a rural area, and the particular needs of different populations. Commissioners will also need to work with providers and partners to determine whether needs around the lesser-developed strands of gender-based violence and sexual violence are best met through existing services or commissioning new, dedicated services.

When commissioning services, the partnership should consider the expertise and structure offered within existing public services and the value added by specialist organisations.

One of the hidden costs of providing specialist services is the loss of provision through short funding cycles where time and money is lost through reapplying and adapting services to changing specifications. When commissioning services, partners should acknowledge these difficulties for services and seek to minimise them by being as transparent as possible, streamlining the process where this can be achieved and reviewing and lengthening funding cycles, if feasible.

The partnership will also need to identify funding to support multi-agency fora with administrative support, data-collection, and analysis.

## **Specialist third sector innovation**

In strong partnerships the specialist third sector is funded to deliver specific services and also continues to fund raise to launch projects which, if successful, will meet the needs of their service users. The strategic partnership can support such services to apply for external funding and thereby increase local provision.

By alerting the partnership to these new ventures and involving them in the planning, such pilots can be supported through referrals and local partnership recommendations, as well as feedback. They can also ensure innovation contributes to local strategic direction. The partnership will gain additional services which are influenced by the partnership's aims and an idea of the services they might commission in the future.

## **Accountability**

Partnership work requires a level of commitment and engagement to this agenda which may be new to some – a commitment which means partners may hold them and their agency accountable, for instance, for the following:

- engaging at the right level and ensuring their organisation engages with partnership groups – strategic, operational or multi-agency fora – and those attending have the authority to speak for their organisation on those issues;
- participating in appropriate multi-agency work;
- providing leadership to adapt own agencies' work practices to prioritise the safety of those suffering violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence improve agency responses, and eliminate service-generated risks;
- keeping the group informed of relevant matters;
- contributing to the agreed common integrated data set which contributes to the partnership understanding of local need and provision;
- providing funding, where appropriate; and
- working with partners and supporting the work of the National Adviser to raise awareness and to monitor, coordinate and improve provision and practice.

## **8. Collaborating operationally**

### **The role of the operational partnership**

An operational multi-agency partnership ensures the issues of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are being addressed. The operational partnerships provide leadership and direction to those who are performing the actions. Members of the operational partnership are Heads of Services or are at Assistant Director level who understand the practical implications of the strategic aims.

This group will mirror the strategic group in membership, utilising the expertise of specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence services to achieve any identified strategic objectives.

The operational partnerships are likely to have responsibility for the following:

#### **Creation of a care pathway**

The partnership will need to ensure multi-agency protocols and procedures are in place to support multi-agency work and hold organisations to account. In particular, the operational partnership will ensure there is a care pathway for all partners to use for those suffering violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. This care pathway should include local and national service provision and existing arrangements for further information and guidance for staff.

Fundamental to this work is an agreed information sharing protocol between partners. Advice on information sharing will be published by the Welsh Government as part of the Ask and Act statutory guidance.

#### **Creating and driving an action plan which meets the strategic aims**

The operational partnership should collaborate to deliver the strategic aims through an action plan which forms part of the local strategy. The operational group can address any problems which arise, escalating concerns to the strategic group where they cannot be resolved at an operational level. The collaboration should be solution focussed and identify and address any service generated risks.

The operational group must understand how and where the existing processes need to change to include violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence responses and identify when the action plan is slipping behind schedule or where it is not meeting the strategic aims.

All partners should have actions in the plan and partners should hold each other to account for the delivery of their part of the plan. When circumstances or outcomes require a change to the action plan, this group should be well-positioned to propose an alternative method of achieving the same outcome. As the action plan forms part of the local strategy it must be reviewed and reported on annually.

## Overseeing multi-agency fora

The operational group will oversee multi-agency responses to ensure they further the aims of the strategic group.

This group will be able to support fora by identifying those with a duty to participate, i.e. professionals in relevant agencies which are involved with an individual and/or have a professional interest or potential professional interest in any individual who is the subject of a multi-agency forum. The operational group can assist in ensuring the forum has the appropriate engagement and membership from devolved agencies and relevant non-devolved and specialist third sector organisations. The operational group should monitor attendance and highlight any consistent absences for the attention of the strategic group.

The operational group can also link related fora, for instance, they can ensure the processes and protocols of local multi-agency fora complement one another and link both into a wider care pathway.

## Enabling voices within the partnership

To address new issues, smooth the care pathway or bring particular voices into the partnership, the operational group may, where necessary, create task and finish groups or standing sub-groups or committees as required. A task and finish group might be asked to review existing fora against identified needs.

Such a group could report on how an existing multi-agency forum might be adapted to address a wider client group, or review the need for a new forum. A task and finish group might also be formed to review existing services against the new action plan. It is likely such groups will have a clear objective and will be time limited.

Standing sub-groups of such operational partnerships may include the following:

- MARAC Steering Committee – this group oversees the MARAC process, ensures accountability of the participating agencies, promotes sustainability, and demonstrates it is a process which delivers equality and outcomes for victims.
- Health sub-group – for health services to address common issues together and provide a strong health voice in the violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence partnership. A common theme in Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) is the need for improved training and awareness on domestic abuse for GPs and healthcare professionals.<sup>22</sup>
- Criminal Justice sub-group – to ensure the courts' systems are responsive to the particular needs of this client group and delivers the best possible service. This group might also gather and report on the criminal justice outcomes for this client group.
- Specialist Advisory Group – for delivering specialist services directly to victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence. This group will be composed of commissioned and non-commissioned



services and work to ensure the care pathway runs smoothly for all victims, spotting and addressing any gaps in and between services early. They can share and develop best practice and provide expertise to the partnership.

- Service-user groups - for empowering those who have needed services and gathering input from them about how to improve those services. Service users can tell providers and funders where the money is best spent. The Welsh Government provided funding in 2013-14 to support regional service user processes and issued best practice guidance, in September 2013, on how to establish such groups which can be found on the live fear free website<sup>23</sup>.

### **Monitoring performance**

The operational group should gather information from frontline practice and ensure issues are resolved at the right level and systems are adapted as required to meet the goals. They will identify and promote good practice.

The operational group should gather, analyse and monitor all performance information against the action plan. They can also review performance to ensure funds are being used in the best way. They can assess if the training partners have received has led to better engagement of service-users, or increased identification and referrals.

The operational group will also see where issues may require the development of processes and practices with neighbouring regions or partnerships. For instance, the MARAC may want to make a referral to a neighbouring MARAC and transfer information there, partners may want intelligence on serial perpetrators from another area or the partnership may want to establish a referral route to a specialist organisation which is constituted to serve a different area or region.

The following are examples of several basic monitoring questions the operational partnership may ask and the significance of them:

- is the value of training reflected in more disclosures and referrals? If not, are partner agencies supporting staff to ask and respond to disclosures?
- do the number of disclosures and referrals reflect the expected number, based on population? If not, how can it be made easier for people to disclose?
- do the number of people accessing specialist services correlate to the number of people referred? If there is a significant drop in numbers between those referred and those seen by specialist services, the people at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence are not getting the response they need to be safe.

### **Informing and reporting to the strategic group**

The operational group must ensure the strategic group receives the information it needs to make decisions, changes and improvements. It reports on the delivery of the action plan, and flags any deviation from the plan. The performance measures are analysed and provided to the strategic group with comments and recommendations. The operational group should highlight areas which require strategic intervention to resolve.

The operational partnership should provide not only data, but case studies, service user input, and knowledge of issues identified and resolved. The operational group may also propose adaptations to the local strategy when circumstances or outcomes suggest a different approach might be needed to meet the strategic aims of the partnership.

## 9. Multi-agency fora for responding to individual cases

In order to provide a comprehensive response to those experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence it is important all relevant authorities contribute and attend local multi-agency fora which facilitate information sharing and promote the safety of individuals at risk.

These fora are particularly valuable for addressing many aspects of clients' lives: the harm they face, the harm their children face, the systems they must negotiate to get help, as well as personal vulnerabilities which heighten their risk. A primary purpose of these meetings is to share information and work together to support victims and identify perpetrators to bring them to justice.

An active commitment to these fora requires the agencies involved and the boards they are part of to integrate the work of these groups into their internal structures, accountability mechanisms and data collection systems, as outlined above.

As partner agencies benefit from training and are able to identify victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence more readily through a process of 'Ask and Act', they will want to understand and contribute to the partnerships which help those who have experienced violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

### Key Elements of Multi-Agency Fora

An effective response to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence requires multi-agency collaboration. Several fora exist to provide such a response and appropriately address issues of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (a list of which is provided in appendix 1). These fora also allow consideration of additional vulnerabilities and wide engagement with services.

The most established form of multi-agency fora in Wales is the MARAC. MARACs have been running in Wales for over 10 years and have proved a successful example of multi-agency fora, providing a collaborative response to those identified to be at "high risk" of significant harm or death due to domestic abuse. There is national coverage of MARACs and during 2013-2014 the cases of 6,000 high risk adult victims were dealt with, which included 7,000 children.<sup>24</sup>

The MARAC process focusses on providing a priority response to those at the highest risk to prevent further escalation and serious harm to victims and children. Although not a statutory process, the MARAC is now well embedded, with established outcomes and development processes.

Local areas are also developing responses to those who are not identified to be at high risk in order to provide earlier identification and prevention based services to those at lower risk. This is an important area of practice and local areas are demonstrating innovation and creative thinking in order to develop responses. These include potential development of Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH), the use of conference calls and multi intervention triggers. This innovation is crucial

in responding to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and is important to achieve consistency of response across Wales.

Whilst areas may choose to develop their own models it is important each relevant authority considers its response to those victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence who are not at high risk of imminent, serious harm to intervene earlier and identify potential escalation.

In doing so it is crucial relevant authorities test their proposals against a series of developmental milestones to ensure the proposed model meets its objectives and provides the required solution to the identified problem. Models of multi-agency work should not be created for their own sake; they must be purpose focussed and effective.

## **10. The role of individual organisations in collaborative working**

Collaborative working goes beyond attendance at meetings and fora. When individuals return to their own organisations, they have a responsibility to carry on the work of the partnership and ensure their agency's work reflects the collaborative goals.

The principles of representing an organisation well in partnerships are similar whether the partnership is strategic or operational. In each partnership group, individual partners are the voice of their agency, identifying where their own agencies' objectives support and add to the partnership objectives, where working together improves the effect and makes the links to other strategies.

### **Leadership within the organisation**

The violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence lead within partner agencies should oversee its efforts and provide strategic drive within the organisation.

These organisational leads will need to provide leadership and use their influence with colleagues and staff to make violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence core business, to fulfil the requirements detailed in Chapter 4.

Information-sharing protocols should be developed in line with the WASPI (Wales Accord on the Sharing of Personal Information)<sup>25</sup> framework. For some partner agencies, these protocols may require a change in culture and understanding of their responsibilities to services users. Such changes will need to be introduced with thought and care so staff confidence is not undermined.

### **Responsive systems within the organisation**

Partners in both operational and strategic collaboration will need to build responsive systems within their own organisations to ensure the goals of the partnership are met.

These will include reviewing the National Training Framework and ensuring appropriate, recognised training is provided for staff, delivering on the requirement for continuing professional development through multi-agency training on violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence for all staff who come into contact with the public.

Partners will need to reinforce the training staff receive with internal discussions and training on internal processes. This will include identifying a confidential space in which to "Ask and Act". For organisations which have been identified as hosting the priority professions for "Ask and Act", strategic partners will need to oversee the development of this change in practice. Separate guidance on "Ask and Act" is being published by the Welsh Government.

Every Local Authority and Local Health Board in Wales has in place a workplace policy for violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence which should outline the support offered to those at risk and address behaviours of staff

perpetrating these issues. This is good practice and other partner agencies, including the specialist third sector, should follow this lead.<sup>26</sup>

Partners should ensure their employment practices universally support staff who disclose abuse by acting to keep staff safe at work and supporting them to stay safe outside work.<sup>27</sup> Staff should be briefed on this and this message should be repeated to staff regularly.

### **Monitoring performance**

Performance data will be vital in the work to improve services. It will also be essential information for the partnership to have and combine with data from other partner agencies to understand the whole picture of what is being achieved through collaboration. Specific requirements in respect of data collation are detailed in Chapter 4.

This information should be gathered and used within agencies to inform and improve their services, as well as providing it to their partners. Partner agencies' own performance management indicators should include ones associated with this work.

Within their own agency, strategic partners will also need to commit resource to facilitate the strategic goals. This may include funding for training staff, as well as ensuring they have time to participate in such learning. Partners will need to ensure the training they provide fits the National Training Framework.

### **Supports the work of multi-agency fora**

All partners who have contact with people at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence and have information to share should contribute to multi-agency fora. These fora are formed to share information and promote the safety of individuals at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

For staff to participate appropriately with these fora, their agency will need to:

- identify a person at the right level and with the appropriate information;
- determine what relevant information and data the agency has to share;
- align internal data protection policies and forum information-sharing policies and processes;
- decide how and by whom information will be extracted from the system for this work and how any information gained through the forum will be recorded and stored;
- update internal systems to meet these new responsibilities, e.g. by creating the capacity to flag a file or adding a new field in an electronic system to allow a particular search;
- feed the results of the forum process back into own systems to enhance the quality of the agency's work with people at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence; and

- include a review of this process and its impact on the work of the agency as part of performance reviews of the work and staff participating.

## 11. Project development model for client focussed multi-agency fora

### Reviewing an existing forum or setting up a new response – checklist (further explained below)

#### Deciding on objectives

- What does the forum want to achieve?
- What do individuals at risk of violence against women domestic abuse and sexual violence want and need?
- How will the forum know it is succeeding?

#### What structures does the forum need?

- Who needs to be there?
- Who is the lead organisation?
- What legal and procedural framework documents are needed?
- How will effective, safe and legal information sharing be enabled?
- Who is responsible for the day to day organisation and coordination of this forum?
- How will the work of this forum be explained to those it seeks to help?

#### Governance and funding

- What process or group is in place to oversee this forum?
- What are the responsibilities and obligations of partners?
- How will you hold each other to account for their part?
- How will the forum be resourced in the short term and the long term?

#### Connections to existing fora and organisations

- How does this forum link to other multi-agency work and boards?
- How does this forum work alongside related agencies, other existing multi-agency fora and statutory multi-agency meetings such as the MAPPA?
- Has the forum researched and reviewed other fora with similar goals/client groups?

#### What will be required from partners

Identification  
Key worker  
Service user engagement  
Referral procedures  
Research and information sharing  
Action planning  
Action and reporting

#### Factors to monitor to maximise the benefits of the forum

Referrals  
Membership  
Volume  
Equality and diversity

### Creating an evaluation framework

- What does success look like for this intervention?
- How and when can you collect service users' assessment of the change in their situation?
- Do these outcomes link to the strategic aims?
- Consider the cost of this intervention against the benefits for clients and agencies



## Reviewing an existing forum or setting up a new response

### Deciding on the objectives

- What does the forum want to achieve? Partners should agree on the goal of the forum, and consider risk, safety, client wellbeing and holding perpetrators to account. When reviewed, partners should determine if the forum is meeting its objective and whether it still supports the strategic aims of the partnership.
- What do individuals at risk of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence want and need? This should be derived from a needs analysis and from consultation with service user groups and should inform the planning and review of fora.
- How will you know you are succeeding? Determine and collect salient information to analyse qualitative and quantitative outcomes. Agree or reconsider what is expected from the intervention. How will you monitor and evaluate?

### What structures does the forum need?

- Who needs to be there? Agree on appropriate partners and the level of seniority needed to achieve the forum's goals. Bear in mind that some partners, such as police and probation, may be non-devolved, but their membership is vital. When reviewing, consider new partners and the level of engagement of existing partners.<sup>28</sup>
- Identify a lead organisation for operational matters. In a review and refresh of an existing fora, consider if the lead organisation or individual is still able to provide the leadership required or whether this responsibility should pass to another.
- What legal and procedural framework documents are needed? Create joint policies and procedures – identifying service-generated risks and eliminating them. One of the common themes in DHRs is the need for a consistent approach to risk identification, assessment and management for all professionals.<sup>29</sup>
- When appraising an existing forum, review the framework documents: are they still adequate? Are partners still using them? If partners no longer have a common understanding of key elements of the forum and their approaches are inconsistent, the governing group should revisit the fundamentals to re-create uniformity.
- How will effective, safe and legal information-sharing be enabled? Will you seek and need the consent of the individual to share information? Another common theme in DHRs is the need for improved information-sharing about risk between agencies. Advice on information sharing will be published by the Welsh Government as part of the Ask and Act statutory guidance and fora should follow this guidance.
- Who is responsible for the day-to-day organisation and coordination of the forum? Who will resource this? As with the lead organisation above, these questions should be reviewed regularly.

- How will this intervention, the work of this forum, be explained to those it seeks to help? Partners should agree on an explanation of this work and provide a simple guide to those whose cases are being discussed, if it is safe to do so, to support their engagement.

### **Governance and funding**

- What process or group is in place to oversee this forum? The forum governance structure should link and report to the partnership operational and strategic groups.
- What do partners expect of each other? What are the responsibilities and obligations of partners? As an example, partners should use the agreed forms and processes; they should provide particular data and information to the forum; and partners should complete their agreed actions within a specific time period.
- The forum partner agencies should agree how they will hold each other accountable. They will also need to ensure their own agency expects them to report back regularly. For a refresh, consider whether these accountability mechanisms are working and address any lapses.
- Information and outcomes should be gathered and fed to the strategic partnership so they can seek funding. Start with linking the outcomes and benefits to responsibility for funding.

### **Connections to existing fora and organisations**

- How does this forum link to other multi-agency work and boards? Avoid duplication and co-ordinate and highlight the work to all relevant and responsible organisations and authorities.
- How does this forum work alongside related agencies and other existing multi-agency fora and statutory meetings such as the Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA)?<sup>30</sup> Are there arrangements for transferring information between fora, for example, are there MARAC-to-MARAC transfer procedures in place? If the same people are being discussed at several different fora, is this necessary? What processes are in place to ensure the information shared is consistent and the action plans are compatible and completed with knowledge of the other process?
- Has the forum done its research? Does the group know about other interventions in the locality, the region, or in Wales which have similar goals or client groups, or use innovative processes which might work to achieve the same goals?

**What will be expected from the partners in a multi-agency intervention?**

Once the purpose, procedures and partnership commitment have been agreed, the systems for each forum will need to be developed. There are several key steps to any multi-agency intervention. These steps are outlined below, with examples from the MARAC process, the most widespread and established of multi-agency interventions.

<b>Steps of an effective multi-agency intervention</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Questions participants and their organisations need to ask:</b>	<b>Examples of practice and resources from MARAC<sup>31</sup></b>
Identification	A specific assessment process or tool is used by all partners to find those who will benefit from the intervention  Partners should aim for a common assessment tool	Does the organisation have a systematic way of identifying clients who would benefit from the multi-agency fora?  Is this process replicated across partners?  How will the organisation identify people suitable for this intervention?	SafeLives DASH Risk Identification Checklist
Key worker	Victims will have a key worker who provides support and is or can link to specialist violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence provision and the multi agency fora	Who will provide the specialist support for each strand of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?  Have established referral pathways been established with local and national services to offer effective support efficiently?	Trained IDVA
Service user engagement	Service users will need to be contacted for up-to-date information, their views and to alert them to the fora meeting, if safe to do so	How does the organisation encourage and engage clients in this process?  Can the organisation or the forum meet victims' expectations: their views are heard, they are kept informed and the process is transparent, (where it is safe)?  How do you capture this	Trained IDVA  Information for victims referred to MARAC  Service user feedback

Steps of an effective multi-agency intervention	Explanation	Questions participants and their organisations need to ask:	Examples of practice and resources from MARAC <sup>31</sup>
		<p>information?</p> <p>How is the user's experience used to improve the process?</p>	
Referral Procedures	A clear care pathway with steps and forms for providing victims with appropriate sources of help and providing appropriate information to the forum	<p>Does the organisation have a clear pathway for frontline workers to follow when clients have been identified?</p> <p>Is this process well publicised?</p> <p>Is there a standard referral route into the fora?</p>	<p>MARAC Referral Form</p> <p>MARAC-to-MARAC Referral Form</p>
Research and information sharing	Partners search their files and attend meetings with appropriate and full information	<p>Is the organisation signed up to the relevant Information Sharing Protocol?</p> <p>Is information shared with the forum in line with this and the legislative framework?</p> <p>What information does the organisation hold which can be shared to provide a better service for the client</p>	<p>MARAC Research Form</p> <p>Information-sharing without consent form</p> <p>FAQ – disclosure of information at MARAC</p>
Action planning	Everyone contributes to the action plan and has the capacity to deliver on actions. Action plans prioritise risk	<p>What actions can the organisation offer?</p> <p>Are they SMART?</p> <p>Can you work jointly to improve the responses to the victims?</p> <p>How can you utilise and coordinate with the work of other partners</p>	MARAC Minutes and Action Plan
Action and reporting		<p>How is the forum informed actions are completed?</p> <p>Is the implementation of</p>	Action-tracking form for use by MARAC

<b>Steps of an effective multi-agency intervention</b>	<b>Explanation</b>	<b>Questions participants and their organisations need to ask:</b>	<b>Examples of practice and resources from MARAC<sup>31</sup></b>
		multi-agency action planning core business to the organisation?	Coordinator Information & data gathered and analysed to evidence the impact of MA work.

### Factors to monitor to maximise the benefits of the forum

For a forum to meet an identified need, particular factors are important, though are not indicators of success in themselves. Relevant organisations should monitor points along the care pathway and indicators of partnership engagement. These are aspects which, should they start to slip, are likely to affect the overall success of the intervention.

This is a short list of such factors. Relevant organisations may find there are additional key factors for their multi-agency forum. When performance against these start to deteriorate, the governing body established to oversee the forum will want to address the issues. Where such factors remain poor, the governing body may wish to return to the review questions above and the outcome measures to reassess whether the established forum is the best way to meet the identified needs of the client group.

<b>Factor</b>	<b>Why it is important</b>	<b>What can go wrong</b>	<b>Remedy</b>
Referrals	All partners need to be identifying victims of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.	Partners can assume someone else will make the referral or it is someone else's responsibility. Partners may also make inappropriate referrals for a number of reasons.	Monitor referrals from all agencies and assess and address low referrals, drops or increases in referrals.
Membership (devolved and non-devolved) and attendance	Clients will have a variety of needs which require the involvement of a variety of organisations. Without their involvement, the	Key organisations do not attend. Voluntary services are not invited or do not attend. Those attending do not have the authority to	Monitor attendance and lead agency and/or governing body address absences. Explore why the

	quality of the combined intervention will be poorer.	commit resources.	attendance has changed and address problems.
Volume	The number of people referred to the multi-agency forum is commensurate with your local population and/or criminal activity, e.g. modern slavery.	The number of people referred drops or increases significantly. Referrals only from one or two agencies.	Explore the reasons why – is it a systemic problem or linked to a particular local issue or event.
Equality & diversity	So that the multi-agency forum is a process which delivers equality for all members of the community.	Hard to reach communities do not engage with the process	Review membership of forum to invite specialist organisations. Create task and finish group to address weakness.

### Creating an evaluation framework

Key indicators and outcomes are determined for the intervention, data is collected and analysed regularly. Forum partners will need to agree on baseline data and collect this as an initial step. This is likely to be a process rather than a decision as IT systems and paperwork may need to be created or adapted to capture indicative data.

When developing a set of outcomes for a multi-agency forum, think about:

- what does success look like for this intervention? How do you evidence the effectiveness of the intervention, that is, the changes and improvements in people's situations and lives;
- service users' assessment of the change in their situation – how and when can you collect this information?;
- do these outcomes link to the strategic aims?; and
- consider the cost of this intervention and weigh that against the benefits for clients and agencies.<sup>32</sup>

As a multi-agency forum intervention develops and the partner agencies' understanding and practice become more sophisticated the outcome measures are likely to develop too. The governing group should revisit the set of outcomes regularly to be sure to capture the full value of the work. Flexibility should be built

into the outcomes model so the value of the intervention is not lost through a rigid adherence to the original forecast.

Once the multi-agency forum has been running for a significant period of time, it is useful to review the gains of the work against the costs. Can the benefits documented be delivered in a different, more scaled-down way?

## Appendix 1

### Multi-agency fora operating in Wales

Below is a sample of multi-agency fora operating in Wales. Some fora are available in only one area. When partners are considering whether a new multi-agency group should be formed to address an identified need better, they should review existing fora in their area and ask several questions:

- If this fora is serving the same client group – could the identified need be met through this other group?
- What lessons can be learned from the experience of these other groups?

For information about the multi-agency work being done locally, partners can contact their local domestic abuse coordinator.

### Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC)

A MARAC is a meeting between local service providers where information is shared about adult victims of domestic abuse who have been assessed as being at high risk of murder or serious harm. Victims can be referred by any participating agency and the MARAC is commonly attended by representatives from police, health, child protection, housing, specialist domestic abuse services, probation, mental health, substance misuse and other specialists from the statutory and voluntary sectors. Victims are contacted before the meeting by specialist services (IDVAs), if safe to do so, and their views are represented by that specialist service, who also reports back from the meeting to the victim.

During the meeting relevant and proportionate information is shared about the current risks that the victim of domestic abuse is facing. This information enables representatives to identify options to increase the safety of the victim and their children. A multi-agency action plan is developed at the meeting, the aim of which is to reduce the risk faced by the victim and their children and to tackle the risk posed by the perpetrator of the abuse.

The Home Office's Research Report 55 (2011) found that MARACs (and IDVAs) had the potential to improve victim safety and reduce re-victimisation reported on the effectiveness of MARACs. SafeLives' *Saving Lives, Saving Money*<sup>33</sup> reports that early analysis showed that up to 60% of domestic abuse victims reported no further violence where a MARAC had been in place.

Partner agencies can access information about their local MARAC through the local domestic abuse coordinator, usually based in the local Community Safety Partnership. Practical tools can be downloaded from the SafeLives website: [www.safelives.org.uk](http://www.safelives.org.uk).

### Domestic Abuse Conference Call (DACC)

Domestic abuse conference calls are chaired by the police and take place every day to discuss the domestic abuse incidents which were reported overnight. The



calls involve a number of relevant professional agencies. The information is posted on a secure web site which can be accessed by statutory partners to share information safely, freely and quickly.

During the call a risk management plan is agreed to protect the victim and the wider family and to address the behaviour of the perpetrator. The aim of the calls is to intervene earlier (before risk escalates), share information efficiently and responsibly for each case across a range of agencies.

Partners find it beneficial to gain information early, increasing identification and referral of victims to specialist services. Interventions offered to victims at all levels of risk were smarter, as they were more timely and appropriate to the specific needs of the individuals, agencies were more aware of the serial perpetrators and victims and able to offer more holistic interventions.<sup>34</sup> When agencies engage with victims at lower risk levels, less harm has been caused and the outcomes are expected to be better for the victim and the victim's children. Perpetrators are also identified and held accountable<sup>35</sup>.

Benefits of the Domestic Abuse Conference Call (taken from the Gwent police website<sup>36</sup>):

- early intervention opportunities to make victims safer;
- fast and effective information sharing;
- greater scrutiny and supervision;
- shared responsibility and accountability;
- improved referral to Social Services Department;
- raising domestic abuse on agenda for all agencies;
- early identification of risk, threat and harm issues;
- cementing the principles of 'working together'; and
- early analysis has shown a 28% drop in repeat victims.

### **Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH)**

The MASH is a recent innovation and the acronym is being used to describe several different models of work.

Most MASHs have a focus on safeguarding children and often provide the physical location for a team of professionals from a range of agencies including police, probation, fire, ambulance, health, education and social care. These professionals share information to ensure early identification of potential significant harm, and trigger interventions to prevent further harm. In some places the MASH serves a triage function where, with the information gathered from every agency, they determine which agency is in the best position to engage and hold that case. In other places, MASH staff use the gathered information to decide the most appropriate intervention to respond to the child's identified needs. Some models are developing to include adults who come to notice as safeguarding concerns.

Virtual MASHs and MASHs with a specific focus on specialist areas (including domestic abuse) are also in place.

The Home Office undertook a review of the existing multi-agency information sharing models that are in place and published their findings in July 2014<sup>37</sup>. The project team carried out a survey of all Local Authorities and visited 37 Local Authorities to carry out interviews with local safeguarding professionals working across different specialist areas.

The agreed core functions of a multi-agency hub were listed as:

1. Acting as a single point of entry – gather all notifications related to safeguarding in one place.
2. Enabling thorough research of each case to identify potential risk (and therefore the opportunity to address that risk).
3. Sharing information between agencies, supported by a joint information sharing protocol.
4. Triaging referrals, exemplified in the use of agreed risk ratings.
5. Facilitating early intervention to prevent the need for more intensive interventions at a later stage.
6. Managing cases through co-ordinated interventions.

The report identified that MASHs have led to an improved standard of safeguarding practice, ultimately leading to safer children and adults. Specifically, MASHs were considered to have helped:

1. More accurate assessment of risk and need;
2. More thorough and driven management of cases;
3. Better understanding between professionals of the general approach to safeguarding, and;
4. Greater efficiencies between process and resources.

### **Domestic Homicide Reviews**

Since April 2011, local community safety partnerships have been obliged under Section 9 (3) of the *Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act 2004* to instigate domestic homicide reviews into deaths where 'a person aged 16 or over has, or appears to have, resulted from violence, abuse or neglect by (a) a person to whom he was related or with whom he was or had been in an intimate relationship, or (b) a member of the same household as himself, held with a view to identifying the lessons to be learnt from that death.' The agencies required to be part of these reviews are:

- Chief officers of police for police areas in England and Wales;
- Local Authorities;
- NHS Wales Commissioning (since April 2012);
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (since April 2012);
- Providers of probation services;
- Local Health Boards; and
- NHS Trusts

These reviews require partner agencies and those who have had contact with the victim or perpetrator to review the circumstances of a death together to establish what lessons are to be learned regarding the way local professionals and organisations work together to safeguard victims and implement changes to prevent domestic abuse homicides and improve intra and inter-agency service responses for all domestic abuse victims and their children.

### **One-stop shops**

One-stop shops gather a group of professionals together to allow a victim of domestic abuse to access a variety of agencies in one place, for instance legal advice, housing information, police contact and specialist advisors and workers.

In some models, the IDVA provides a central resource that provides access to other services that a person might need and becomes a virtual 'one-stop shop'.

### **Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC)**

A SARC is a one-stop location where victims of rape, sexual abuse and serious sexual assault, regardless of gender or age can receive medical care and counselling, and have the opportunity to assist a police investigation, including undergoing a forensic examination, if they so choose. As such they contribute to the work of both the NHS and Police. Existing services have developed in a variety of ways over time with different governance arrangements, funding regimes and approaches to service provision.

### **Sex Workers Operational Team (SWOT)**

The SWOT undertakes a similar role to the MARACs with a focus on sex workers. The SWOT brings together professionals from Police, Health, Probation, DIP, Housing, Substance Misuse Services and the specialist third sector to share information and coordinate work in relation to sex workers.

### **Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group**

The Wales Anti-Slavery Leadership Group provides strategic leadership for the delivery of tackling slavery in Wales. This Group co-ordinates collaboration between devolved and non-devolved partners and NGOs to plan and support delivery in Wales.

The group is chaired by the Welsh Government and includes relevant partners such as ACPO Cymru, National Crime Agency, Wales Regional Intelligence Unit, Gangmasters Licensing Authority, Home Office, Crown Prosecution Service, Probation Service in Wales, Welsh Local Government Association (WLGA), Wales Anti-Slavery NGO Forum and Bawso.

### **Regional Anti Slavery Fora**

There are now regional groups established across Wales, in Gwent, South Wales, Dyfed Powys, North Wales and Western Bay. They are composed of relevant partners, including Community Safety, Serious Organised Crime, police, NOMS,

Youth Justice Boards, Health Boards, Local Authorities and Bawso, who meet quarterly to report progress against the delivery plan and to share information and intelligence<sup>38</sup>.

### **Wales Anti-Slavery NGO Forum**

This consists of Barnardo's Cymru, Bawso, New Pathways, Safer Wales and the Welsh Refugee Council – frontline agencies working together to raise awareness and improve services and support for people who have been trafficked in Wales.

### **National Crime Agency's UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC).**

Partners should have a process, a care pathway, to follow where frontline staff think the client they are talking to may be a potential victim of trafficking (PVoT). There are identified First Responders who have had training to respond to those who may be modern slaves. There is a prescribed National Referral Mechanism with forms and frameworks for decision-making to identify whether a person is a modern slave and routes to resources to help them.

### **Wales Strategic Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) Leadership Group**

The Wales Strategic FGM Leadership Group is made up of key strategic decision makers from statutory devolved, and non-statutory devolved organisations and from other organisations including the voluntary sector. It is co-chaired by the Welsh Government and the Crown Prosecution Service. Welsh Government representation includes Health, Education, Safeguarding Children, and more widely within Wales, the Youth Justice Board, Welsh Local Health Boards, Welsh Local Government Association, Bawso, NSPCC and the Children's Commissioner for Wales.

The aim of the Leadership Group is to provide strategic direction for the delivery of tackling FGM in Wales. The Group is in a unique position to add value by co-ordinating collaboration between partners to plan and support delivery in Wales, thereby maximising the opportunities presented by the delivery landscape.

### **The All Wales FGM Forum**

This group provides a forum for statutory, specialist third sector and community representatives to work collaboratively to end FGM through education and awareness and through improving policy and practice to protect women and girls.

Its core membership includes representatives from Bawso, Children in Wales, Community representatives, Education, Health (Primary and Secondary care), Henna Foundation, Islamic Social Advisory Network, Migrant Help, NSPCC, Police, Public Health Wales (Safeguarding), Social Services, Welsh Centre for Voluntary Action, Welsh Government, Welsh Refugee Council and Welsh Women's Aid.

## Appendix 2

### Resources for building a better multi-agency response

Intervention	Resource	
MARAC	Practical tools for participation in the MARAC: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ SafeLives ACPO DASH risk indicator checklist</li> <li>○ MARAC referral forms</li> <li>○ MARAC to MARAC transfer forms</li> <li>○ Agency-specific guidance</li> <li>○ Toolkits</li> </ul>	<a href="http://www.safelives.org.uk">www.safelives.org.uk</a>
Modern Slavery	Best Practice Guide for working with potential victims of trafficking	<a href="http://www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/best-practice-guide">www.nationalcrimeagency.gov.uk/about-us/what-we-do/specialist-capabilities/uk-human-trafficking-centre/best-practice-guide</a>
	National referral forms for potential child and adult victims of trafficking whether First Responder or not.	<a href="http://www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms">www.gov.uk/government/publications/human-trafficking-victims-referral-and-assessment-forms</a>
Mental health and substance misuse	The Stella Project addresses the overlapping issues of domestic and sexual violence, drug and alcohol use and mental health.	<a href="http://www.avaproject.org.uk">www.avaproject.org.uk</a>
Employers	Calculator for the cost of DA to a business  Resources for employers	<a href="http://www.caadv.org.uk">www.caadv.org.uk</a>
	Guidance for employers and colleagues for supporting victims at work	<a href="http://www.safelives.org.uk">www.safelives.org.uk</a>
Partnership work	Guidance on multi-agency partnership	<a href="http://www.standingtogether.org.uk">www.standingtogether.org.uk</a>
Developing service user groups	Welsh Government provided funding and guidance direct to Local Authorities	<a href="http://www.gov.wales/livefearfree">www.gov.wales/livefearfree</a>

## References

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<sup>1</sup> Local Authorities (defined in section 24(1) as councils of a county or county borough in Wales), Local Health Boards, fire and rescue authorities and NHS trusts.

<sup>2</sup> The purpose of the Act is defined in section 1 of the act as: to improve – (a) arrangements for the prevention of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence; (b) arrangements for the protection of victims of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence; and (c) support for people affected by gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

<sup>3</sup> See *Responding to Domestic Abuse: Guidance for General Practices*, a joint publication from the Royal College of General Practitioners, the IRIS project, and SafeLives at [http://www.SafeLives.org.uk/dvservices/CAADA\\_GP\\_guidance\\_manual\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.SafeLives.org.uk/dvservices/CAADA_GP_guidance_manual_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.waspi.org/page.cfm?orgid=702&pid=50458>

<sup>5</sup> Wills, A, Jacobs N, Montique, B, Croom L, *A guide to effective partnerships. Standing Together Against Domestic Violence* (2011)

<sup>6</sup> Howarth, E, Stimpson, L., Barran, D., Robinson, A., *Safety in Numbers: A Multi-Site Evaluation of Independent Domestic Violence Advisor Services*, November 2009. [http://safelives.org.uk/policy/Safety\\_in\\_Numbers\\_full\\_report.pdf](http://safelives.org.uk/policy/Safety_in_Numbers_full_report.pdf) Information was gained from IDVAs in 7 services in urban, suburban and rural locations. Information was gathered from 2567 victims at the point of referral and from 1247 at the close of the casework or after 4 months, whichever came first.

<sup>7</sup> Follow-up was limited to case closure or 4 months after engagement and recorded only on those that remained engaged.

<sup>8</sup> Howarth, *et al.*, p. 93.

<sup>9</sup> Howarth, *et al.*, p. 10.

<sup>10</sup> *A Place of Greater Safety*, CAADA, 2010. [www.safelives.org.uk](http://www.safelives.org.uk)

<sup>11</sup> NSPCC (2010) 'The Impact of Abuse and Neglect on the Health and Mental Health of Children and Young People'. London: NSPCC.

<sup>12</sup> Magown, P. "The impact of disability on women's experience of abuse: an empirical study into disabled women's experiences of, and responses to, domestic abuse." PhD Research, University of Nottingham, 2004.

<sup>13</sup> Astbury, J. (1999) *Gender and Mental Health* (Paper prepared under the Global Health Equity Initiative Project based on the Harvard Centre for Population and Development Studies); O'Keane, V. (2000) "Unipolar depression in women" in Steiner, M. et al. (2000) *Mood Disorders in Women* (London: Martin Dunitz, Ltd.) Humphreys, Cathy (2003) *Mental Health and Domestic Violence: A research overview*. Paper presented at the "Making Research Count" Seminar on Domestic Violence and Mental Health, Coventry, 2003; Humphreys, Cathy and Thiara, Ravi, (2003) "Mental Health

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and Domestic Violence: "I call it symptoms of abuse", *British Journal of Social Work* 33, pp.209-226; Vidgeon, N. (2003) *Are support services failing victims of domestic violence?* Unpublished Master's Thesis. Anglia Polytechnic University, Cambridge.

<sup>14</sup> Humphreys, Cathy and Thiara, Ravi (2003) Mental Health and Domestic Violence: 'I call it symptoms of abuse', *British Journal of Social Work*, 33, 209-226; Golding, J. (1999). Intimate partner violence as a risk factor for mental disorders: a meta-analysis. *Journal of Family Violence*. 14:2, 99-132

<sup>15</sup> Rees, S. et al (2011) 'Lifetime prevalence of gender-based violence in women and the relationship with mental disorders and psychosocial function, ' *Journal of American Medical Association*, 306/5: 513-521.

<sup>16</sup> Home Office Report, *Domestic Homicide Reviews: Common Themes Identified as Lessons to be Learned*.

<sup>17</sup>Walby, Sylvia. *The Cost of Domestic Violence: Update 2009*, p. 9 – 10.

<sup>18</sup> From the Caledonian System's Women's Services' Framework for Safety Planning<sup>18</sup>, part of the Caledonian System, a perpetrator programme in Scotland

<sup>19</sup> Pence and Sadusky's *The Praxis Safety and Accountability Audit Tool Kit*, Praxis International.

<sup>20</sup> Established in February 2013 and made up of key strategic decision makers from statutory devolved and non-statutory devolved organisations and other organisations including the voluntary sector. Its purpose is to provide strategic leadership and inform decision-making and co-ordinate activity aimed at tackling human trafficking.

<sup>21</sup>[www.avaproject.org.uk/media/60461/costs%20of%20dv%20by%20local%20authority.pdf](http://www.avaproject.org.uk/media/60461/costs%20of%20dv%20by%20local%20authority.pdf)

<sup>22</sup> Home Office, *Domestic Homicide Reviews: Common Themes Identified as Lessons to be Learned*, 2013.

<sup>23</sup> [www.gov.wales/livefearfree](http://www.gov.wales/livefearfree)

<sup>24</sup> [www.SafeLives.org.uk](http://www.SafeLives.org.uk)

<sup>25</sup> <http://www.waspi.org/page.cfm?orgid=702&pid=50458>

<sup>26</sup> Resources: *Responding to colleagues experiencing domestic abuse: Practical guidance for line managers, Human Resources and Employee Assistance Programmes*, a joint publication by the Department of Health and SafeLives:

[www.SafeLives.org.uk/documents/DH\\_DV\\_Employers\\_guidance\\_FINAL.pdf](http://www.SafeLives.org.uk/documents/DH_DV_Employers_guidance_FINAL.pdf)

<sup>27</sup> For example: *Responding to colleagues experiencing domestic abuse: Practical guidance for line managers Human Resources and Employee Assistance Programmes*, and a joint publication by the Department of Health and CAADA. There is a linked publication for staff called: *Responding to colleagues experiencing domestic abuse: Practical guidance for employees experiencing domestic abuse*. Both are in the Resources section at [www.SafeLives.org.uk](http://www.SafeLives.org.uk)

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<sup>28</sup> Examples of existing partners set out in chapter 6 under ‘Who are the Partners’ sub-heading

<sup>29</sup> The Home Office, *Domestic Homicide Reviews: Common Themes Identified as Lessons to be Learned*.

<sup>30</sup> MAPPA Guidance 2012:  
[www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/offenders/mappa/mappa-guidance-2012-part1.pdf](http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/offenders/mappa/mappa-guidance-2012-part1.pdf).

<sup>31</sup> [www.SafeLives.org.uk](http://www.SafeLives.org.uk)

<sup>32</sup> Examples of this include the Outcomes Star ([www.outcomesstar.org.uk](http://www.outcomesstar.org.uk)) and the MARAC measure of reduction in repeat incidents reported to all agencies.

<sup>33</sup> [www.SafeLives.org.uk](http://www.SafeLives.org.uk).

<sup>34</sup> Robinson (2012) Task & Finish Group report, p. 46 and 47

<sup>35</sup> Thomas and Allen (2012) Evaluation of the Gwent Domestic Abuse Conference Call.

<sup>36</sup> <https://www.gwent.police.uk/advice-and-guidance/victims-of-crime/domestic-abuse/the-role-of-policing/daily-conference-calls/>

<sup>37</sup> Multi Agency Working and Information Sharing Project - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/working-together-to-safeguard-children-multi-agency-safeguarding-hubs>

<sup>38</sup> Annual Report of the Welsh Government’s Anti Human Trafficking Co-ordinator, 2013



**Consultation  
Response Form**

Your name:

Organisation (if applicable):

Email / telephone:

Your address:

**General questions**

**1. Does the draft guidance provide the necessary information to help relevant authorities establish collaborative working arrangements to assist them in meeting their duties under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015?**

Agree

Tend to  
agree

Tend to  
disagree

Disagree

**If not, what else needs to be covered?**

**2. Are there any barriers to successfully establishing and operating collaborative working arrangements? What are these and how could they be addressed?**

**3. Do you agree with the requirements proposed in relation to strategic collaboration arrangements?**

Agree

Tend to  
agree

Tend to  
disagree

Disagree

**If not, what requirements would be more appropriate and why?**

**4. Do you agree with the requirements proposed in relation to operational collaboration arrangements?**

Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>If not, what requirements would be more appropriate and why?</b>							
<b>5. Do you agree with the requirements proposed in relation to Multi-agency fora for responding to individual cases?</b>							
Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>If not, what requirements would be more appropriate and why?</b>							
<b>6. Do you agree with the requirements proposed in relation to the role of individual organisations in collaborative working?</b>							
Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>If not, what requirements would be more appropriate and why?</b>							
<b>7. Do you agree with the Project development model for client focussed multi-agency fora?</b>							
Agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to agree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tend to disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>	Disagree	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>If not, what changes do you suggest?</b>							
<b>8. What opportunities are there to promote the use of the Welsh Language in relation to this guidance? Do you have concerns that any part of this guidance could have an adverse effect on opportunities to use the Welsh language?</b>							

**9. We have asked a number of specific questions. If you have any related issues which we have not specifically addressed, please use this space to report them:**

Responses to consultations are likely to be made public, on the internet or in a report. If you would prefer your response to remain anonymous, please tick here: