

COMMUNITY OUTCOMES MEETING

15 June 2021

**SUBJECT: Violence Against Women and Girls**

**PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

1. This report provides an update and outlines West Yorkshire Police’s current response in relation to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG).

**RECOMMENDATION**

2. That the Mayor uses this report to scrutinise performance in respect of Violence Against Women and Girls.

**POLICE AND CRIME PLAN 2016-21**

1. Supporting all victims, including women and girls is central to the work of the WYCA Policing and Crime Dept, the Police and community safety partners. Violence Against Women and Girls covers a number of priorities specifically outlined in the Police and Crime Plan. The Government’s VAWG Strategy defines it as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual, psychological harm or suffering to girls and women including threats of such acts, the coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life including: Domestic abuse and violence, Sexual abuse and violence, Child sexual abuse, Stalking, So called Honour based abuse, Forced Marriage, Female Genital Mutilation, and Human Trafficking. Other aspects which are related are Gang related violence, and Hate crime based on gender and misogyny.

**KEY INFORMATION**

2. The West Yorkshire Victims and Witnesses strategy 2019-2021 “Supporting People Harmed by Crime” was launched in February 2020. It has seven key objectives which are available to view here: [www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/west-yorkshires-victims-and-witnesses-strategy](http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/west-yorkshires-victims-and-witnesses-strategy)
3. The WYCA Policing and Crime Dept’s ’s commissioned services to support victims are available to all victims of crime, including those who do not report to the police. This includes the core referral and local support service and the restorative justice service. [www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/how-we-work/supporting-victims](http://www.westyorkshire-pcc.gov.uk/how-we-work/supporting-victims) Specialist VAWG services commissioned include the Sexual Assault Referral Centre, the West Yorkshire ISVA service, and the CARA programme for domestic abuse perpetrators.
4. The Dept also provides grant aid to local organisations in the specialist sexual violence sector, such as rape crisis. This includes female only provision.

5. In June 2020 an independent report into support services for victims and survivors was presented to the West Yorkshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board. It set up a Task Group to advise on implementation of its recommendations. So far the Task Group has considered referral pathways and partnership working between services, mental health services, and criminal justice outcomes.
6. The OPCC and now Dept has led in bidding to the Ministry of Justice for additional funding for victims and survivors of domestic and sexual abuse. A further round of bidding is now underway.
7. Work is underway within the Police and with its LCJB partners to improve criminal justice outcomes. The Police have a Rape and Domestic Abuse Improvement Board, and with the CPS are implementing the NPCC / CPS Joint Action Plan on Rape.
8. On 15 April 2021, an online meeting was held aimed specifically to address current concerns relating to Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG). The event brought together over 80 colleagues from the third sector and other stakeholders across West Yorkshire to discuss their overarching issues and concerns.

Key outcomes from this meeting included: setting up a reference group under the West Yorkshire Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board to take a strategic approach to develop thinking around the issues raised, recognition of the importance of male leaders providing leadership in challenging violence against women and girls, the need to influence national action plans and legislation in parliament – in terms of the Home Office VAWG strategy; the Government Domestic Abuse strategy to follow on once the Domestic Abuse Bill become law; the revised Victims Code and forthcoming Victims Law and the need to do more to understand and address the quality of life issues for women and girls around the long term impact of fear of crime.

## **PARTNERSHIP CONTRIBUTION**

9. The main partnership body in respect of these issues is the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Board. It includes all the main stakeholders including the WYCA Police and Crime Dept, West Yorkshire Police, the five local authorities, different parts of the NHS, CPS, Fire Service and third sector. The Board has oversight of the delivery of the Domestic and Sexual Abuse Strategy, agreed in 2017. The strategy is to be reviewed shortly.

## **EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION**

10. One of the key outcomes of the Police and Crime Plan is to put victims first, regardless of where they live, their age, gender/identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, disability or their offending history.

11. Women are disproportionately impacted by the types of crime covered in this paper. As the Police paper states, these crimes are both a cause and consequence of gender inequality and sexism in our society.

12. It is important to acknowledge that women and girls experiences vary very significantly according to the age, ethnicity, disability and sexual orientation. It is important to take account of intersectionality. This recognises the interconnectedness of different identities. The levels of poverty experienced by women and girls also has a huge impact.

## **ATTACHMENT**

[Violence Against Women and Girls](#)