

**Draft Minute of the meeting of the Cross Party Group on Men's Violence
Against Women and Children**

19 Sep 2017, 12.30 – 14.00, Scottish Parliament, Room T4.40 – CR1

1. Present/Apologies

Present

CPG Members

- Claire Baker MSP
- John Finnie MSP
- Rhoda Grant MSP
- Christina McKelvie MSP
- Emma Ritch- Engender
- Brenna Jessie- Scottish Women's Aid
- Roseanna Macdonald- Scottish Women's Aid
- Marsha Scott- Scottish Women's Aid
- Davy Thompson- White Ribbon Scotland
- Ellie Hutchinson- The Empower Project
- Lily Greenan
- Stephen Madill-

Non-Member Visitors

- Emma Forbes
- Samantha Ferrell-Schweppenstedde
- Angela Voulgari- Bright Choices

Apologies

- Ann Hayne- NHS Lanarkshire
- Sandie Barton- Rape Crisis Scotland
- Sandy Brindley- Rape Crisis Scotland
- Louise Johnson- Scottish Women's Aid
- Liz Ely- Zero Tolerance
- Isobel Hart
- George Eckton
- Vikki Kerr

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of CPG Feb 28 2017 and May 31 approved. Outstanding action: C McKelvie and M Scott to meet to discuss possible strategies for addressing services restricted by immigration/refugee status.

3. Confirmation of new members

- a. Ellie Hutchison from The Empower Project
<https://theempowerprojectscotland.com/>
 - b. Kallia Manoussaki, lecturer in Psychology at the University of the West of Scotland
4. SWA presentation on Building Equality (Employability Project for women recovering from domestic abuse) was postponed for November meeting to be included as part of discussion regarding women's economic independence, Equally Safe, and Scottish economic and budget planning.
 5. Claire Baker MSP commented on commitment to change **presumption on short-term sentences** in recently announced Programme for Government and asked if VAWG organisations had concerns. MS gave updates on SWA discussions with Cabinet Secretary regarding safeguarding the safety of women and children if use of custody is reduced. Testing of expanded use of electronic monitoring in context of domestic abuse and improved guidance and training for officials working with community sentences are two priority areas that Justice has committed to. SWA is not confident that women and children will not be at higher risk because of moving the presumption to a year (planned for after implementation of new Domestic Abuse (Scotland) bill under current status quo. In addition, MS pointed out that judiciary will always have power to use shorter sentences but that without training on domestic abuse, it is unclear how sheriffs will make the decision. SWA is calling for all sheriffs hearing domestic abuse cases to have specialist training.

CB to draft something a letter to Cabinet Secretary expressing CPG concerns around short-term sentencing.

6. **Presentation from Emma Forbes** on her research around DA victims' experience of court system and giving evidence. Overview of proposed art installation based on her research. Encouraged CPG members to lend support to funding proposal for art installation.
7. **Power Up/Power Down** Roseanna MacDonald presented on SWA's joint project with Children and Young People's Commissioner for Scotland (CYPCS) to address problems with court-ordered contact in context of domestic abuse. The video shown was aimed at professionals and explores findings from children and young people about how different elements of the system (courts, sheriffs, solicitors, schools, advocates and children's services, etc.) can improve children's experiences. The video, accompanied by a book, recounts recommendations for system improvement, with a particular focus on how children's voices should be heard and their views included in decisions that affect them.
8. **Next meeting: November 29, 2017, time to be confirmed.**