

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

29 Nov 2017, 12.30 – 14.00, Scottish Parliament, Burns Room TG.40-CR1

1. Present/Apologies

In attendance

MSP Members

- Claire Baker (Chair)
- John Finnie
- Rhoda Grant
- Claudia Beamish (Co-Chair)

Non-MSP Members

- Emma Ritch - Engender
- Marsha Scott - Scottish Women's Aid
- Ania Kinross - Scottish Women's Aid (minutes)
- Davy Thompson - White Ribbon Scotland
- Kirsty Pate – Community Justice, Safer and Stronger Communities, Edinburgh
- Rachel Adamson – Zero Tolerance
- Sandie Barton – Rape Crisis Scotland
- Sarah Weldon – Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS
- Vikki Kerr - Community Justice DA Services Edinburgh

Non-Member Visitors

- Leah McCabe (PhD student)
- Selina Kerr (Research assistant)

Apologies

MSP Members

- Christina McKelvie

Non-MSP Members:

- Ellie Hutchinson – The Empower Project
- Stephen Madill – Safer Families, City of Edinburgh Council
- Kallia Manoussaki – Individual
- Linda Rogers – Edinburgh Women's Aid & EDDACS
- Louise Johnson – Scottish Women's Aid
- Melanie McMarry – Strathclyde University

2. Approval of Minutes

- a. Minutes of CPG Sep 19 2017 were approved as an accurate record.

- b. Matters arising from minutes:
 - Comments on Cabinet Secretary's response to Claire Baker on the issue of short sentences: Marsha Scott shared that Scottish Women's Aid (SWA) had concerns about sentencing of domestic abuse offenders. SWA has had several meetings with Justice to discuss need to prioritise safety of women and children experiencing domestic abuse and the Cabinet Secretary had committed to improving use of electronic monitoring (EM) measures, including a specific pilot on EM and domestic abuse, as well as developing specific guidance for community disposals in context of domestic abuse.
 - Item added to the agenda: introduction and outline of *Building Equality* (employability project for women recovering from domestic abuse)

3. Presentation on *Building Equality*

Emma Ritch introduced the project, co-ordinated by Scottish Women's Aid in partnership with Close the Gap and Engender. The project was set up in response to need for improving women's economic independence as part of recovery from domestic abuse. There is a lack of gender-specific employability projects, of which there are currently only 8 in all of the 32 local authority areas. Marsha Scott explained that the project assumes that employability support could be part of the core advocacy work provided in services and a critical support for helping women and their families move out of long-term in-work poverty. MS suggested that it would be good to include the employability services in the Equally Safe strategy and asked whether CPG would support such development. Claire Baker suggested that Scottish Women's Aid provides a briefing note for the MSP's present.

Action: MS to provide a briefing note to MSP members of the CPG.

4. **Prevention of VAWG:** What should be on Scotland's agenda?

Due to absence of Gary Gillespie, Emma Ritch explained her role as chair of Primary Prevention for Equally Safe and gave a **presentation on the causal story of domestic abuse** (slides attached). In reply to questions from CPG members ER replied that the sector's role is to strengthen the understanding of the parliamentary and local representatives of the causes of DA. ER also emphasized the need for more accountability and education. Marsha Scott added that it might be easier for people to understand the causal story if statistics and information gathering focused more on the perpetrators, not the victims. Sandie Barton pointed out the importance of the primary, secondary and tertiary prevention models, as opposed to responsive practices within schools, housing providers etc. Davy Thompson added that, compared to previous years, he has noticed a greater understanding of what DA is within his recent engagements with children and young people.

5. **Members' updates**

- a. Rape Crisis Scotland: the service is facing an unprecedented demand, currently over 500 people are waiting to receive services as funding doesn't meet the demand. Claudia Beamish suggested that Sandie Barton gives an overview of the data with regards to the service. Also,

the following week presentation will take place of the annual Write to End Violence Against Women awards.

Action: SB present the data on service use at the next CPG.

- b. Zero Tolerance: Together with SWA, launching briefing for journalists on coercive control as well as One Thousand Words campaign.
- c. Community Justice DA Services: roll out of Caledonian programme on national level and training in partnership with ADOS. In response to a question from Marsha Scott, Vikki Kerr explained that part of managing the programme is raising awareness of responsible service delivery and the risks involved in using freelancers, rather than accredited workers.
- d. Scottish Women's Aid: external conference on 1 December with focus on coercive control, recent launch of "[One Thousand Words](#)" project with Zero Tolerance. Considering a "What about the men?" conference or seminar in the spring. Marsha Scott expressed her thanks to all involved in the 2nd amendment to the DA Bill. Additionally, the Safe and Together Consortium is currently looking for funders interested in funding system change and hoping to attract match funding for money from Justice.

6. Confirmation of new members

- a. Caledonian System, represented by Rory MacRae
- b. Community Justice Domestic Abuse Services Edinburgh, represented by Vikki Kerr
- c. Edinburgh Women's Aid, represented by Linda Rodgers
- d. Clinical Psychology Division of the Forensic Mental Health and Learning Disability Service of Greater Glasgow and Clyde NHS, represented by Dr Sarah Weldon
- e. City of Edinburgh Council Community Justice, Safer and Stronger Communities, represented by Kirsty Pate, Sector Manager Groupwork Services

7. 16 Days' updates

Claudia Beamish praised WA South Lanarkshire and East Renfrewshire for their excellent and very prominent topical display in her constituency. Marsha Scott encouraged members to send information and updates on their 16 Days activities to SWA for further dissemination.

8. Date and time of the next meeting – to be arranged