

Cross Party Group on Men's Violence against Women and Children

26th October 2022, 18.00-19.30 via Zoom

Minute

1 Present

MSPs

Rona Mackay (RMA) (Convener)
Elena Whitham (EW) (Deputy Convener)
Rhoda Grant (RG)
Audrey Nicoll (AN)

Invited guests

There were no invited guests on this occasion.

Non-MSP Group Members

Mariam Ahmed (MA), Amina The Muslim Women's Resource Centre
Mirella Yandoli (MY), Church of Scotland
Hannah Brisbane (HB), Engender
Ann Fehilly (AF), ASSIST
Nicola Gilbert (NG), Scottish Women's Aid
Ann Hayne (AH), NHS Lanarkshire Gender-based Violence Services
Marsha Scott (MS), Scottish Women's Aid
Kirsty Strickland (KS), Scottish Women's Aid
Davy Thompson (DT), White Ribbon Scotland
Jenny Wartnaby (JW), Zero Tolerance
Richard Whitecross (RW)

Apologies

Katy Clark, MSP
Lily Greenan
Melanie McCarry
Jan MacLeod, Women's Support Project
Sarah McMillan, Scottish Association of Social Workers
Linda Rodgers, Edinburgh Women's Aid
Tess White, MSP

2 Cross Party Group Business

A AGM

- a. AGM 2020 - Minute approval
 - The minutes of the 2020 AGM CPGMVAWC, held on 30th November 2020 were approved as an accurate record – proposed by RMa and approved by MS.
- b. Selection of office-bearers (Rona Mackay, Elena Whitham)
 - Convener
 - Rona Mackay, MSP was re-elected as Convener of the Group – nominated by EW and seconded by RG
 - Deputy Convener
 - Elena Whitham, MSP was re-elected as Deputy Convener of the Group – nominated by RMa and seconded by MS.
 - Secretariat
 - Scottish Women's Aid was re-elected as Secretariat for the Group – re-elected by acclamation.

B Approval of previous meeting minutes

- a. 26th January 2022
 - The minutes of the CPGMVAWC meeting, held on 26th January 2022 were approved as an accurate record – proposed by RMa and approved by EW.
- b. 30th March 2022
 - The minutes of the CPGMVAWC meeting, held on 30th March 2022 were approved as an accurate record – proposed by MS and approved by EW.

Following the approval of the minutes, RMa gave a review of work carried out by the group since its first meeting in September 2021 and following notification of accordance of recognition on 4th November 2021.

- The January 2022 meeting focused on horizon-scanning to identify issues for the coming year, with input from Rape Crisis, Engender and Scottish Women's Aid. It was decided that the focus of the next meeting would be COVID and VAWG and gender.
- The March 2022 meeting included inputs from Close the Gap about the gendered impact on women's participation in the labour market, from ASSIST and Victim Support

Scotland about the court backlog, delays and high caseload. Engender also provided input regarding the disproportionate impact of the management of COVID, where women were concerned. The group also discussed the impact on women involved in commercial sexual exploitation. The group agreed that CSE would be picked up as a theme for 2022.

C New Member Applications

- a. Central Advocacy Partners, Falkirk
 - Central Advocacy Partners, Falkirk were welcomed as new members of the CPGMVAWC.
- b. Professor Liz Gilchrist
 - Professor Liz Gilchrist was welcomed as a new member of the CPGMVAWC.

D Thematic Session

- a. Commercial sexual exploitation (CSE) – Women’s Support Project, Linda Thompson
 - A video presentation by Linda Thompson of the Women’s Support Project on CSE was followed by a discussion on the subject.
 - The prevalence of domestic abuse in cases of CSE was highlighted.
 - There were questions about statistics regarding how many women were involved in court cases, or issues regarding access to their children.
 - It was acknowledged that there was a large piece of work around informing men about CSE.
 - There was discussion about the importance of the cost of living crisis in relation to CSE and agreement that the cost of living crisis should be a theme at the next meeting of the CPGMVAWC.

E Member Updates

- a. Commission of Inquiry into the Delivery of 70/30, set up by the Cross Party Group for The Prevention and Healing of Adverse Childhood Experiences (Marsha Scott).
 - MS introduced the agenda item and the Group continued discussion, agreeing that a co-ordinated response from the Group would be appropriate.
- b. White Ribbon Scotland

- DT updated the Group on the increase in community projects in which White Ribbon Scotland are involved, and the development of a platform, that is being set up, to help keep in touch with the various projects and provide resources to volunteers and make it simpler to submit training opportunities.
- c. Amina The Muslim Women's Resource Centre
 - MA updated the group on a number of items:
 - 'The Muslim Narcissist' event, involving Dr. Mona Alyedreessy. The event was very successful, attracting over 100 attendees, exploring links between narcissistic behaviour and domestic abuse and encouraging much productive discussion.
 - The issue of trans-national marriage abandonment.
 - The 'Izzat Aye? Let's talk about "Honour"' event which takes place on Thursday 1st December and involves Payzee Mahmood, a survivor and IKWRO campaigner.
- d. Rona Mackay, MSP
 - RMa confirmed there would be a members' debate on 7th December, during 16 Days of Action.
 - *Post Meeting Note:* In an update, there would now not be a members' debate. However, there would be a Government debate.
- e. Scottish Women's Aid (MS and KS)
 - MS and KS confirmed that the Scottish Women's Aid focus during 16 Days would be the Cost of Living and the Cost of Leaving, including how men are exploiting the Cost of Living Crisis, as was the case during COVID lockdown, restricting their partner's access to money and the possibility of leaving an abusive relationship.
 - MS and KS also highlighted work being undertaken by the reference group regarding murders of women and children.
- f. NHS Lanarkshire Gender-based Violence Services (AH)
 - AH highlighted an event taking place during 16 Days, led by Jan MacLeod, focusing on women and evictions.
 - Work involving NHS Lanarkshire and Barnahus.
- g. Church of Scotland (MY)
 - Updated the Group on work around the intersection that can occur between religion and domestic abuse, and the role the church can play.
- h. Zero Tolerance (HB)

- A number of staff have recently come into post and are organising an anniversary event for MSPs and other decision-makers during 16 Days, focusing on work with marginalised communities.
- Work currently being carried out on primary prevention and integration which, it is hoped, will result in a report.

F **AOCB**

The Group discussed a recent significant court case, where a man was prosecuted under Scotland's new domestic abuse law, rather than the crime of rape.

The Group agreed this should be discussed further at the next meeting, with input from a representative with legal expertise in that area.

3 Date and Time of next Meeting

- a. The date of the next meeting is to be confirmed.