

Cross Party Group on Violence Against Women and Children

Date: 12/01/2016

Venue: Conference Room 24, Ty Hywel

Present:

Jocelyn Davies AM	Chair
Eleri Butler	Chief Executive, Welsh Women's Aid
Karan Sanghera	Welsh Women's Aid
Sion Sanders	Welsh Refugee Council
Anne Hubbard	Wales Strategic Migration Partnership
Paul Lewis	Children's Commissioner for Wales
Richard Lewis	Llamau
Isabelle Morgan	Hafan Cymru
Sarah Thomas	NFWI Wales
Elle McNeil	Citizens' Advice Cymru
Jim Stewart	Evangelical Alliance Wales
Jackie Jones	Wales Assembly of Women / BAWSO
Berni Bowen-Thomson	Safer Wales
Gwilym Roberts	Relate Cymru
Angharad Lewis	Researcher, Jocelyn Davies AM

Apologies received:

Mark Isherwood AM	
Bethan Jenkins AM	
David Melding AM	
Johanna Robinson	Survivors Trust Cymru
Steve Bartley	Older People's Commissioner Wales
Phillip Walker	The Survivors' Trust
Barbara Natasegara	Safer Wales
Professor Emma Renold	Cardiff University
Liz Newton	Office of Peter Black AM

1. Introduction

Welcome by Jocelyn Davies AM (Chair).

2. The future of the Cross Party Group on Violence Against Women and Children

Jocelyn Davies AM will be standing down as an AM at the Assembly election in May 2016 and will not be able to continue as Chair of the CPG. Bethan Jenkins AM and Mark Isherwood AM have been asked to take over as co-chairs of the CPG. Women's Aid Cymru, as the secretariat of the CPG, will work with them and their support staff to re-establish the CPG when the Assembly reforms.

It was agreed that a key responsibility of the CPG in future will be to influence the consultation on statutory guidance being issued following the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 by highlighting good practice and working to aid understanding of specialist service provision by those responsible for commissioning.

3. Welsh Women's Aid: Priorities for year ahead and issues facing services

Eleri Butler, Chief Executive of Welsh Women's Aid, outlined her organisation's priorities for the year ahead:

- The implementation of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015
- The ongoing drafting and consultation process for the statutory guidance on 'Ask and Act' for public services and delivery of training
- Impact of the European Directive on the rights, support and protection of victims of crime, which must have been implemented by Member States by November 2015
- Improving and clarifying primary prevention strategies

She highlighted the issues facing service provision in Wales:

- Funding for specialist services remains a concern
- Despite the protection of Supporting People funding in the Welsh Government's 2016/2017 budget, decision making about the commissioning of services is leading to cuts
- Those commissioning services have a lack of understanding of the importance of specialist service provision
- Some services are in danger of closure and, while statutory guidance on service provision is due to come into force in 2017/2018, many specialist services may have been lost by the time that guidance is in place

4. Agreement to produce a CPG legacy report

The CPG agreed that Welsh Women's Aid will produce a legacy report to summarise the achievements of the Group and to outline recommendations for the Group in the future.

Four key priorities were agreed:

1. Women with no-recourse to public funds

2. Commissioning of support services
3. Prevention of violence and abuse
4. Those with complex needs

The initial draft of the report will be distributed in mid-February.