

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

30th March 2022, 18.00-19.30 via Zoom

Minute

1 Present

MSPs

Rona Mackay (RMa) (Convener)
Elena Whitham (EW) (Deputy Convener)
Audrey Nicoll (AN)

Invited guests

Ruth Boyle, Close the Gap
Fiona McMullen, ASSIST

Non-MSP Group Members

Eilidh Dickson, Engender (ED)
Ann Fehilly, ASSIST (AF)
Nicola Gilbert, Scottish Women's Aid (NG)
Lily Greenan (LG)
Ann Hayne, NHS Lanarkshire – EVA Services (AH)
Kait Laughlin, Women's Support Project (KL)
Gill McKinna, Community Justice Scotland (GMcK)
Sarah McMillan, Scottish Association of Social Workers (SMcM)
Katy Proctor, Glasgow Caledonian University (KP)
Linda Thompson, Women's Support Project (LT)
Catherine Robertson, UN House Scotland (CR)
Marsha Scott, Scottish Women's Aid (MS)
Davy Thompson, White Ribbon Scotland (DT)
Jan MacLeod, Women's Support Project (JMacL)

Apologies

Kate Wallace, Victim Support Scotland
Laura Thomson, Zero Tolerance
Pam Hunter, SAY Women
Rachel Adamson, Zero Tolerance
Sandy Brindley, Rape Crisis Scotland

2 Theme: COVID and VAWG and Gender

a. Eilidh Dickson (Engender)

- a. In her presentation, ED reviewed the impact of Covid on VAWG and Gender.
- b. She also explored the terms of reference of the Covid inquiry, which did not include areas such as social care and the Equality Act.
- c. ED noted that the UK government inquiry includes terms of reference that the Scottish Government response does not.

b. Ruth Boyle (Close the Gap)

- a. RB delivered a presentation, which resonated with a number of the themes explored in ED's presentation.
- b. In the Q&A which followed, when asked to choose key priorities from the list in her presentation, RB highlighted:
 - i. An almost total lack of available intersectional data.
 - ii. The rising tide of poverty among women, which the pandemic has exacerbated.
 - iii. The cost to the economy of losing women from the workforce.
 - iv. The lack of jobs with flexible options.
 - v. How vital it was to mainstream equalities across all new programmes in Covid recovery, including green jobs, which are often concentrated in currently male-dominated industries such as energy and construction.
 - vi. The importance of wraparound childcare, which is especially important for shift workers.
 - vii. Addressing the gender pay gap, especially at the lower end of the pay scale. It was acknowledged that this alone would have a positive impact on VAWG.
 - viii. It was agreed that the real living wage is essential for all staff, not least as the country faces a cost of living crisis.

c. Fiona/Ann (ASSIST)

- a. FMcM delivered a presentation which detailed the wide-ranging impacts of delays in the court process.
- b. It was noted that virtual trials are not due to be introduced before 2025.

d. Kate Wallace (Victim Support Scotland)

- a. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Kate Wallace had given her apologies for the meeting.

e. Q&A and Decisions: CPG Response

- a. There was a discussion around each presentation.
- b. Decisions/Actions
 - i. The Convener will investigate inviting Cabinet members involved in each of the pertinent areas – the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and the Economy and the Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery to attend the CPG.

- ii. An invitation to the Minister for Equalities and Older People to attend the CPG will be extended.
- iii. Work will be carried out to progress the possibility of a Government debate.
- iv. RMack suggested exploring the possibility of inviting Baroness Kennedy, in relation to the Working Group on Misogyny and Criminal Justice in Scotland and the report it had delivered.
- v. MS suggested writing a letter to Lady Poole and the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Covid Recovery, about the omission of VAWG in the terms of reference of the inquiry and asking how this would be remedied. It was stressed that equality is a theme runs through all of the work this CPG carries out.
 - 1. MSPs to continue discussion following the meeting, about a response to the inquiry terms of reference and the subject of enabling meaningful input into public consultation for the terms of such a report.

3 Cross Party Business

- a. **Approval of 26th January 2022 Meeting Minute**
 - a. These will be approved at the next meeting of the CPG.
- b. **Member Updates**
 - a. There were no member updates on this occasion.
- c. **AOCB**
 - a. There were no items of AOCB on this occasion.

4 Date and Time of next Meeting – to be confirmed