

# MINUTES OF MEETING OF THE MULTI-AGENCY GROUP ON COMMERCIAL SEXUAL EXPLOITATION

TUESDAY 28 MAY 2019, EDINBURGH

## Present:

Saira Kapasi (*Co-Chair*), VAW Justice, Scottish Government  
Trevor Owen (*Co-Chair*), VAW Equalities, Scottish Government  
Katie Brown, Equally Safe, Convention of Scottish Local Authorities (COSLA)  
Rory Hamilton, Police Scotland  
Aaron Slater, SACRO  
Kirsti Hay, Violence Against Women Partnership Network  
Katie Cosgrove, NHS Health Scotland  
Bronagh Andrew, TARA  
Francois Roos, Child Protection, Scottish Government  
Gordon Smith, Human Trafficking, Scottish Government  
Roseann Cameron, Routes Out  
Alison Atkins, Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal (COPFS)  
Linda Thompson, Women's Support Project  
Eilidh Dickson, Engender  
Dr Alison Scott, NHS Lothian  
Peter Reid, Licensing, Scottish Government  
Paddy Makin, VAW Justice, Scottish Government  
Leonie Stone, VAW Equalities, Scottish Government

## Apologies:

Sandy Brindley, Rape Crisis Scotland  
Emma Pugh, Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Framework, Scottish Government  
Peter Hope-Jones, Human Trafficking, Scottish Government  
Kirstin McPhee, VAW Equalities, Scottish Government  
Louise Mclean, VAW Equalities, Scottish Government

### 1. Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted the apologies.

### 2. Minutes of previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed, with the request that future minutes note comments within the context of the discussion.

### 3. General update

VAW Justice updated members on the meeting held that morning with selected members of the multi-agency group with Ash Denham, Minister for Community Safety. The meeting was held to introduce the Minister to the value and aims of the group, clarified in the draft workplan.

VAW Equalities provided an update on the Experience Expert Panel (EEP). The EEP is responsible for embedding, the voices and needs of survivors of gender based violence into the delivery of Equally Safe. Attendees were asked if they could share existing information or feedback of the needs of survivors of commercial sexual exploitation (case studies, research, interactions with support services and public bodies such as Health or Police Scotland) to ensure their needs are built into any action taken around commercial sexual exploitation.

#### **4. Workplan**

The Chair introduced a draft workplan for the multi-agency group for members to comment on. The group will have until the end of June 2019 to discuss proposed areas activity in their organisations and feedback with comments and proposed timescales, recognising the existing pressures on members in their capacity in their organisations. It can be used to start discussions within attendees' organisations but should not be shared further at this stage. Members recommended using a series of regional workshops to involve stakeholders and develop the new content.

#### **5. Sexual entertainment venue licensing**

Licensing provided an update on the recent guidance for local authorities on the licensing for sexual entertainment venues (SEV). Work is underway at local authorities to develop statements of policy and it will be May 2020 at the earliest before an SEV licensing regime can be in place. Local authorities are encouraged to engage with their local violence against women and girls organisations and partnerships, and to use this evidence to inform their consideration and statement of policy.

#### **6. Operation of existing law on commercial sexual exploitation**

COPFS ran through the different sources of existing legislation on commercial sexual exploitation, most of which is aimed at on-street prostitution soliciting and purchasing, and the numbers for convictions under these offences. There is also guidelines from the Lord Advocate on presumption against prosecution of victims of human trafficking who are engaged in prostitution.

Police Scotland talked about the growth of off-street prostitution and its links to human trafficking and organised crime. Police Scotland are working to improve their initial response and implement a victim-centred approach.

There was also a gap identified in the legislation to protect women engaged in off-street prostitution, whether as individuals or in saunas or escort agencies, which will be entered into the workplan of the group.

Child Protection recommended attendees use their expertise, particularly on the prevalence of adverts for commercial sexual exploitation online, to respond to the UK Government's public consultation on online harm. The deadline for responses is 1<sup>st</sup> July 2019.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/online-harms-white-paper>

## **7. AOB**

The Chair recommended that the next meeting of the group be a workshop to finalise the workplan.

### **Actions:**

- **Officials to revise the format of the minutes of the group.**
- **Attendees to submit suggested amendments to workplan by end of June 2019.**

## **8. Next meeting**

The next meeting of the Group will be arranged by the Secretariat via Doodle poll.

Secretariat, Equality Unit  
31 May 2019