



Equally Safe

Year Two Update Report

November 2019



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“Progressing gender equality supports a basic human right and will help people flourish and reach their full potential, which will ultimately create a wealthier and fairer society.”

Nicola Sturgeon, First Minister of Scotland

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Foreword

We are pleased to present the second annual progress report for Equally Safe, our strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls. This strategy was developed by the Scottish Government and COSLA in association with a wide range of partners from public and third sector organisations and was first published in June 2014, with an updated version published in March 2016.

The strategy provides an overarching framework for change and outlines our vision for a Scotland in which every woman and girl is safe and free from gender based violence in all its forms.

In order to help us realise this vision, we published our Equally Safe delivery plan in November 2017 which promotes a collaborative approach that recognises the different roles and expertise of organisations from the public, private and third sectors. It contains a clear outcomes framework with indicators to demonstrate progress nationally and locally towards preventing and reducing this violence and tackling the pervasive inequalities that create the conditions for it.

Awareness of the causes, nature, prevalence and impacts of violence against women and girls is improving, however, as Scotland's violence against women and girls policy and legislative developments through Equally Safe are further implemented, so pressures on services through which victims are supported and perpetrators engaged with and held to account, are growing. Improving our responses to those affected by less well understood forms of violence against women, particularly regarding our most vulnerable populations, requires us to maintain focus and determination across spheres of Government and the wider public sector. Many complex issues surround those most affected by the impacts of welfare reform and austerity measures, trafficked women and girls, asylum seekers, migrant women and girls and women with no recourse to public funds, among many other populations.

There has been significant activity and progress in relation to a number of actions contained within the Delivery Plan and some key pieces of work are highlighted within this report; however, we are clear that there remains much to do if we are to realise our ambition to make Scotland truly Equally Safe.

There is no doubt that our Equally Safe strategy demands major and sustained change but we firmly believe that, by continuing to work together to deliver on our shared commitments, we can realise our ambition of preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. We can create a Scotland to be proud of, where all of our citizens are Equally Safe and violence against women and girls is consigned to history.



Christina McKelvie
Christina McKelvie MSP
Minister for Older
People and Equalities



K. Parry
Councillor Kelly Parry
Community Wellbeing
Spokeperson, COSLA

Introduction and Overview

Introduction and Overview

Violence against women and girls is a fundamental violation of human rights. It has no place in our vision for a safe, strong and successful Scotland.

Equally Safe is Scotland's Strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls (alternatively known as gender based violence). For the purposes of the strategy and this report, violence against women and girls includes (but is not limited to):

- physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family (including children and young people), within the general community or in institutions, including domestic abuse, rape, and incest
- sexual harassment, bullying and intimidation in any public or private space, including work
- commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, lap dancing, stripping, pornography and trafficking
- child sexual abuse, including familial sexual abuse, child sexual exploitation and online abuse
- so called 'honour based' violence, including dowry related violence, female genital mutilation, forced and child marriages, and 'honour' crimes.

The gendered analysis that underpins Equally Safe recognises that women and girls are disproportionately affected by violence precisely because they are women and girls. It recognises that this violence stems from deep rooted and systemic gender inequality and the subordinate position women occupy in society in relation to men.

We recognise we will not make progress unless we tackle the root causes of women's inequality, and challenge the outdated gender stereotypes and societal attitudes towards women and girls that allow gender based violence to flourish. The Equally Safe Delivery Plan contains a total of 118 different actions across four overarching priorities in order to help us do this. The actions and activities in the plan are designed to deliver against these priorities and associated objectives. The purpose of this report is therefore to provide an insight and update into progress that has been made over the last year.

Governance and Monitoring Progress

Governance and Monitoring Progress

When the Delivery Plan was published in November 2017, the focus of the Scottish Government shifted to ensuring effective implementation of the actions within the Plan through collaboration between partners and key stakeholders. In order to ensure we took this forward effectively, we instituted fresh governance arrangements to identify emerging issues, drive progress, scale up participation, and maintain rigorous accountability. In doing so, we have instituted a refreshed Joint Strategic Board co-chaired at Ministerial/Spokesperson level by the Scottish Government and COSLA. This group focuses on influencing strategic direction and identifying major emerging issues in relation to gender based violence. We have also formed a Joint Delivery Group, co-chaired at official level by the Scottish Government and COSLA. Its main focus is to ensure that every agency and organisation are delivering their commitments under the Delivery Plan. These groups are complemented by a Stakeholder Advisory Forum, to harness the expertise of organisations and academics in this field, and an Experience Expert Panel, to ensure that we continue to build on learning from our pilot participation projects to ensure that lived survivors of gender based violence continue to influence the implementation of the plan.

With funding from the Scottish Government, COSLA has established an Equally SafePolicy Co-ordinator. This post ensures further focus to COSLA's leadership and implementation of Equally Safe across Local Government in Scotland.

The Scottish Government has also funded the Improvement Service (IS) to provide support to all multi-agency VAW Partnerships across Scotland to help them to measure the progress being made to implement Equally Safe at a local level and identify any areas for improvement. To support this, in May 2018 the Scottish Government, COSLA and the Improvement Service published the 'Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework'. The key findings from the 2018/19 data returns are outlined in this report.¹

Through the life of the Delivery Plan, the Scottish Government has received updates from agencies and organisations in relation to their progress against the actions and objectives within the Plan. COSLA's Community Wellbeing Board will raise awareness of the need for the adoption of a holistic response to the ambitions of Equally Safe across COSLA's Boards and will track and report on all linked progress.

A progress report will continue to be published on an annual basis over the lifetime of the Plan until 2021.

The narrative within this report sets out key achievements against some of the actions and associated objectives. It also outlines how we intend to build on this success and move forward.

¹ The statistics from the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework are based on 31 local authority areas that submitted data returns by October 2019.

Highlights and Moving Forward:

Priority One

Priority One

Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.

Objectives

- Positive gender roles are promoted
- People enjoy healthy, positive relationships
- Children and Young People develop an understanding of safe, healthy and positive relationships from an early age.
- Individuals and communities recognise and challenge violent and abusive behaviour

The Equally Safe strategy prioritises primary prevention and challenges the notion that violence is inevitable or acceptable. Many of the actions being delivered under this priority are intended to raise awareness and challenge the existing attitudes that create the societal conditions for gender based violence to flourish. A range of activity has been undertaken in the past year across Scotland to help us achieve our objectives under this priority. Much of this activity has also provided a foundation to build upon over the coming year. Actions have included:

Highlights

On-going work with Universities and Colleges to ensure the provision of a safe environment for students and staff, using learning from the ‘Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities’ project.

Our work is driven forward by the [Equally Safe in colleges and universities Working Group](#), whose membership includes NUS Scotland, Universities Scotland, College Development Network, Police Scotland and the third sector.

The Equally Safe in Higher Education toolkit was launched in 2018 and has been adopted by a number of Higher Education Institutions across Scotland including: the University of Strathclyde; Robert Gordon University; Abertay University; the University of Aberdeen; UHI; the University of Stirling; the University of the West of Scotland; and the Fearless Edinburgh grouping of colleges and universities.

Undoubtedly universities and colleges are recognising the crucial role they have to play in tackling violence against women and girls and supporting and are increasingly taking forward their own initiatives. Fearless Edinburgh, a group of colleges, universities and third and public sector organisations in Edinburgh, founded to tackle gender based violence, has adopted the toolkit and other areas are learning from the success of this initiative. A Fearless Glasgow grouping,

initiated by Glasgow Caledonian University, is now also in the process of formation.

The Working Group is informed by a Work Plan, agreed at its June 2019 meeting. Key pieces of work include the adaption of the toolkit for use in colleges, the completion of materials, including an on-line resource for staff and student education across the sector, the review of the Student Misconduct Guidelines, led by Universities Scotland, and the continued development of regional collaborative approaches, similar to Fearless Edinburgh and Fearless Glasgow.

The Scottish Government has supported three regional events, organised by the University of Strathclyde, which took place over March 2019. The events increased awareness of the toolkit and further encouraged regional collaboration. The learning has been distilled into a [best practice resource](#) for use by institutions in Fresher's Weeks and start of the College Year.²



In May 2019 the Minister for Further Education, Higher Education and Science launched gender based violence and Mental Health Support stickers at Edinburgh Napier University. The stickers list national and confidential support services for people within a college or university setting experiencing gender based violence and/or mental health issues. These complement the gender based violence staff support cards launched by the Deputy First Minister in September 2018.

The launch of the Equally Safe at Work employer accreditation programme pilot.

Close the Gap has developed Equally Safe at Work, an innovative employer accreditation programme, that is being piloted in Scotland's local government. The programme enables councils to undertake action that will advance gender equality at work, better support victim-survivors in the workplace, and prevent violence against women (VAW). Seven councils are participating in the pilot, with a further 18 councils engaged in a shadow group, the aim of which is to share learning from the pilot through a community of practice.

Activities delivered by early adopter councils has included convening cross-

² https://www.strath.ac.uk/media/1newwebsite/departmentsubject/socialwork/documents/eshe/ESCU_Regional_Events_2019_Final_Report.pdf.pagespeed.ce.xjW-uJTdCa.pdf

departmental working groups to oversee the delivery of organisational action plans; producing internal and external leadership statements on VAW and work; delivering staff awareness raising work on gender equality and VAW, and Equally Safe at Work; developing improved data gathering systems to improve the quantity and quality of gender-disaggregated data including staff experiences of VAW; reviewing and updating employment policies to ensure they are gender and VAW-sensitive; gathering benchmark quantitative and qualitative data from staff on attitudes to, and experiences of, gender equality at work and VAW. Activities for the remainder of the pilot will focus on delivering training for line managers on flexible working and VAW; disseminating guidance for line managers on VAW, and managing perpetrators; and developing organisation-specific initiatives to address occupational segregation.

The evaluation of Equally Safe at Work will measure if councils have an improved understanding of gender inequality and violence against women; improved understanding of their role in preventing violence against women and advancing gender equality; improved employment policies and practice that are gender- and violence against women-sensitive; and that tolerance of violence against women in the workplace has reduced. Following a successful evaluation, Close the Gap will explore a larger roll out of the programme.

Gender pay gap in median hourly earnings³



Progress with Equally Safe at School, a ‘whole schools’ approach to tackling gender inequality and violence against women and girls.

The Scottish Government have funded Equally Safe at School, a pilot whole school approach to preventing gender based violence, developed by Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS) and steered in partnership with Zero Tolerance (ZT), with evaluation partners

³ Data from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings.
<https://www2.gov.scot/Topics/Statistics/Browse/Labour-Market/Earnings/ASHE-SCOT-2017>



University of Glasgow. Over three years the intervention is being trialled and developed on an ongoing basis, promoting gender equality hand-in-hand with preventing and improving responses to gender based violence. Intervention mechanisms comprise an assessment, an action group formed of students and staff, staff training, a review of the curriculum and relevant policies and a young-person led initiative or campaign.

To date RCS and ZT have worked with three schools and are commencing work in a further four this academic year (2019-2020). The evaluation of the pilot will use baseline data and follow-up surveys with staff and students and focus groups to engage staff and students in discussions of 'systems change' to identify what aspects of the intervention are most impactful.

RCS and ZT will develop proposals following the project's evaluation and will work with the Scottish Government and other key partners to identify next steps for the pilot programme.

Progress with the Mentors in Violence Prevention Programme (MVP)

Mentors in violence prevention is a peer education programme developed by the Scottish Violence Reduction Unit which aims to tackle gender based violence, bullying and other forms of violence. MVP is being delivered by Education Scotland to young people in schools across 25 local authority areas. Based on the 'bystander' approach, MVP motivates everyone to get involved in safely challenging abuse and violent behaviour. The programme sees pupils as the school's greatest resource in achieving this and trains senior pupils to act as peer mentors who then deliver scenario based sessions to younger students in the school. MVP aims to empower students to safely speak out against all forms of violence, from rape and sexual assault, to bullying and abusive behaviour.

Pupil feedback received:



"I have learned a lot more about what emotional violence is and how to deal with it."

"I understand better the warning signs within a relationship and if there are any red flags that are obvious."

"I didn't realise many of the red flags in relationships were actually red flags. I know now what to avoid and challenge if I ever come across it in a relationship."

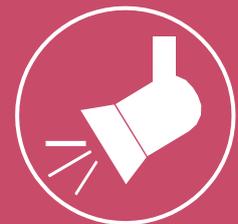
"Made me think more about what's healthy mentally in relationships and how you should feel."

Over 500 staff from 198 schools have completed professional training of either one or two days and over the last year (2018-19) approximately 2,600 young mentors have delivered 3,470 sessions to younger pupils. Following pre/post questionnaires 99% of participants felt a safe space was created to explore gender-based violence.

Recent developments include:

- The creation of a new child sexual exploitation scenario, developed in conjunction with Fearless – an organisation providing support for people experiencing domestic abuse in Scotland who identify as a man or from the LGBT+ community
- The first MPV Pilot programmes in Additional Support Needs (ASN) schools
- The creation of an MPV film to promote engagement of male mentors

Violence Against Women and Girls: Primary Prevention Guidance for Community Planning Partners



We must be ready to respond to VAWG when it happens, but we should also work to prevent it from happening in the first place by tackling gender inequality, the root cause of this violence. Community planning partners have a key role to play in this, both within their own organisations and as members of local strategic partnerships.

The Improvement Service and Zero Tolerance, in partnership with the National Violence Against Women Network, have published guidance that supports local community planning partners to develop effective local strategies and activities to promote and embed gender equality and prevent VAWG from ever occurring.

Future support for Violence Against Women Partnerships and other community planning partners includes a webinar series highlighting examples of good practice across several of the thematic areas included in the guidance.

A Zero Tolerance Media Event attended by Luke Hart

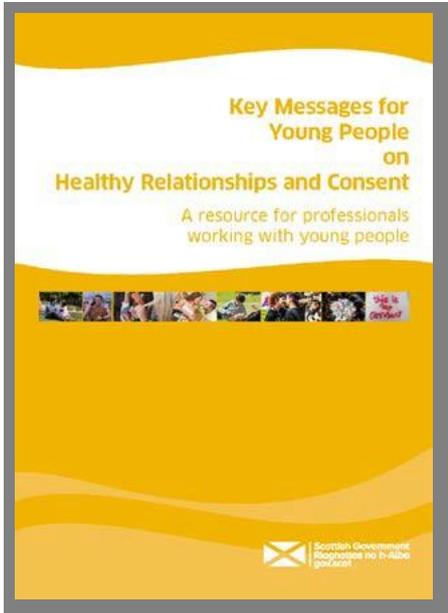
The Scottish Government supported Zero Tolerance to host a round table discussion to bring together journalists – both experienced and those at the beginning of their career - editors and members of the women's sector to share learning over the past six years, and to put in place concrete steps for the next few years to enhance media reporting on VAWG.

The event opened with Luke Hart presenting on his own harrowing personal experience of reporting on violence against women. Following the murder of his sister and mother at the hands of his father, Luke and his brother, Ryan, actively campaign to raise awareness of and speak out against violence against women and girls. His story generated engaged discussion and reflection on the accuracy of reporting in the media when certain myths and stereotypes are perpetuated, and the real impact reporting can have, both positive and negative.

This was followed by round table discussions aiming primarily to gather journalists' thoughts about the difficulties surrounding reporting on VAWG as well as which parts of our work were visible and useful as well as ideas for the future.

The insights gathered at this event are being used to inform future work to influence more responsible reporting on VAWG and specifically have shaped ZT's recent review of the organisation's Handle with Care guidelines, now called Media Guidelines. The new guidelines can be found here: www.zerotolerance.org.uk/work-journalists/

Publication of the 'Key messages for Professionals working with children and young people on consent and healthy relationships' resource.



In May 2019, Scottish Government published a new resource for professionals to help them support young people's understanding of healthy relationships and consent. This means that wherever a young person seeks advice - whether from a teacher, a health professional or a youth worker – they should receive consistent, age appropriate information.

The '[Key Messages on Healthy Relationships and Consent](#)' have been developed as part of the Scottish Government's work on supporting positive relationships and sexual wellbeing in young people. The messages set out that relationships should be mutually respectful, consensual, positive, healthy – and enjoyable. They are applicable to all romantic relationships regardless of whether they are in same

sex or mixed sex relationships.

The messages can be incorporated into any work with young people such as education about relationships, sexual health and parenthood (RSHP), information campaigns, one to one or group work, or into general discussions with young people.

They can be used as part of structured sessions or opportunistically / at teachable moments. In doing so, the intention is that a positive understanding of healthy relationships and consent will be consolidated over time.

Undertaking a review of Personal and Social Education (PSE)

The findings and recommendations of the review of Personal and Social Education (PSE) were published in January 2019. The Review came about following a report produced by the Scottish Parliament's Education and Skills Committee on how PSE was being taught which recommended PSE be reviewed. The Review was conducted in three phases: phase one was a review of PSE teaching resources; phase 2 was a thematic inspection of PSE Delivery in 55 schools undertaken by Education Scotland; and phase three was a programme of engagement with key stakeholders and importantly with young people currently receiving PSE education in Schools. Following analysis of the findings of the thematic inspection and the views gathered during Phase three the Review identified 16 recommendations to strengthen the delivery of PSE in Scottish schools. In particular, the Review recommended current guidance be reviewed to strengthen delivery of consent education that is stage and age appropriate. It also identified the importance of involving young people in the design and delivery of PSE to make learning relevant and engaging.

Although some work is already underway, a PSE Delivery and Implementation Group will be formed to take forward the recommendations of the review which will be jointly chaired by Scottish Government and COSLA and an Implementation Plan will be made available on the Scottish Government website to report on progress.

A PSE Lead Officers Network has also been created with membership of teaching practitioners from across Scotland. The network has met several times since the recommendations from the PSE review were announced.

Since publication of the recommendations of the PSE Review, the Scottish Government has also committed, through its Programme for Government, to developing national guidance for schools which will set out the range of support and practical prevention and intervention measures available which can be used to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people. Similar to the anti-bullying strategy, this document will be designed to ensure consistency in messages on sexual harassment and gender-based violence to everyone working with children and young people. It will be supported by appropriate teaching resources to help school staff deliver confident and meaningful learning to combat sexual harassment and gender-based violence.

The Scottish Government has also been working with key stakeholders to review and update the current teaching guidance for relationships, sexual health and parenthood (RSHP) education. The guidance was launched during the annual

Scottish Learning Festival and includes a section of further information on consent and healthy relationships which will give teachers additional support in delivering meaningful learning on this key topic. This section will complement the well-received document: 'Key Messages for Young People on Healthy Relationships and Consent' discussed above.

To ensure that the voices of children and young people at the heart of our approach in this area, we commissioned participation projects to consult with children and young people.

Everyday Heroes Programme

The Everyday Heroes Programme was funded by the Scottish Government to ensure children and young people – particularly young survivors of gender-based violence – influenced and participated in the development and implementation of the Equally Safe Delivery Plan. The reports detail their call for action to tackle gender inequality and improve justice and service responses. During the 16 Days of Action last year the Cabinet Secretary, Solicitor General and CoSLA met representatives of the Everyday Heroes to account for progress on their recommendations and hear their views in a lively exchange in Parliament. They pledged further action and worked with senior stakeholders and the Joint Strategic Board this year to take action forward and specify how young survivors might be involved.



Key Learning from the 2018/19 Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework Data Returns



82% of local authority areas in Scotland report meeting or partly meeting the Quality Standards for Equally Safe Priority 1 in 2018/19.



93% of local authority areas report that some level of engagement and communications takes place in the local community to increase people's awareness and understanding of the causes and consequences of VAWG, and the role they can play in tackling it.



90% of local authority areas report that the VAW Partnership has some processes in place to engage with primary and secondary schools across the local community to help ensure they deliver age-appropriate evidence-based interventions to raise children, teachers and parents' understanding and awareness of gender based violence, positive, healthy relationships and consent, as part of a whole school approach to tackling VAWG.



83% of local authority areas report that some youth work organisations across their local communities deliver interventions to raise young people's understanding and awareness of VAWG and the importance of positive, healthy relationships.



74% of local authority areas report that their local VAW Partnership has processes in place to engage with colleges and universities across the local community and works with them to identify opportunities for partnership working in preventing gender-based violence on campuses.



100% of local authority areas report that there is guidance in place about the services available to support women and children affected by VAWG in the local community and how people can access these services.

The following examples of good practice identified through the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework provide a snapshot of work taking place in local authority areas across Scotland to progress Priority Area 1:

» **Raising Awareness of the harmful impacts of Violence Against Women and Gender Inequality– Clackmannanshire**

Clackmannanshire Violence Against Women Partnership held a 16 Days event which raised the profile and understanding of Commercial Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and was followed up with the development of a working group and further contributions to address CSE in Forth Valley. The VAW Partnership was also influential in setting out a priority for the Community Justice Partnership which cites the requirement to specifically address unhealthy gender constructs.

» **Collaborative working with Youth Work services - Dumfries and Galloway**

Youth Work Services within Dumfries and Galloway have integrated VAWG and information on healthy relationships into all their work across the region. They provide an interactive resource that covers forms of VAWG for young people during the Youth Beatz festival. This is Scotland's largest free youth festival and is very well attended.

» **Working in partnership with primary and secondary schools – Glasgow**

The Glasgow VAW Partnership supports the delivery of two drama programmes. Crush is offered to every secondary school in the city and this drama is targeted at third-year pupils and explores abuse within teenage relationships. Gold Stars and Dragon Marks is a primary-school drama targeted at P5 to P7 and is delivered on a three-year rolling programme.

» **Working in partnership with colleges and universities – Highland**

University of Highlands & Islands (UHI) has commenced the Equally Safe in Colleges and Universities programme. The Highland VAW Partnership (HVAWP) sits on the Working Group and helped create UHI Staff Guidance on How to Respond to Disclosure of Gender Based Violence. Representatives from the HVAWP delivered workshops at the West Highland College annual staff conference on rape culture and responding to trauma/trauma informed practice. Inverness Women's Aid participated in the recent UHI Equally Safe Further Education toolkit seminar, Love Doesn't Hurt.

Moving forward

We intend to build on our achievements and successes and will take forward a range of initiatives in the coming year.

These will include:

- Developing an age and stage appropriate resource on healthy relationships and consent, aimed at professionals working with younger children
- Developing national guidance for schools which will set out the range of support and practical prevention and intervention measures available which can be used to ensure the safety, health and wellbeing of children and young people
- Reviewing learning from the Equally Safe at Work and Schools initiatives to help inform next steps in these areas
- Continuing to drive progress in our Equally Safe in colleges and universities project through an approved workplan
- Developing a new MPV scenario on sexual harassment in schools, with plans to launch before the end of 2019.

Highlights and Moving Forward:

Priority Two

Priority Two

Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically.

Objectives

- Women and girls are safe, respected and equal in our communities
- Women and men have equal access to power and resources.

We recognise that gender inequality is a root cause of violence against women and girls, and despite advances, there remains a persistent inequality between men and women. Many of the actions being delivered under this priority are intended to place women on a more equal footing with men, with access to the same power and resources. A range of activity has been undertaken in the past year across Scotland to help us achieve our objectives under this priority. Much of this activity has also provided a foundation to build upon over the coming year. Actions have included:

Highlights

Progressing the Gender Representation on Public Board Act through Parliament.

The Scottish Government is committed to ensuring that women are represented in all senior and decision making roles, including in the boardroom and in politics.

We are proud that this Government leads by example by having one of the very few gender-balanced cabinets anywhere in the world – with all ministers, male or female appointed by merit. It is clear that companies must go further than reporting, and commit to taking meaningful action.

Last year, our Gender Representation on Public Boards (Scotland) Act 2018 set a statutory objective for equal representation of women on public sector non-executive boards by 2022. This year, we reached a milestone with

Equalities minister Christina McKelvie said more action would be taken to work towards all public boards having 50% women appointed.



She told the BBC: “It’s a great day - not only have we put big cracks in the glass ceiling but we want to shatter it and continue this work.

“Just a year in, we have reached a really positive point, half of all the public appointment positions on public boards in Scotland are now filled by women.”

“We were already on the road a bit with voluntary measures. But the legislation just gave it that additional driver for other public boards to take that step forward and push a bit further.”

women accounting for half of all board members appointed to public bodies across Scotland. This is a significant step and this year we will continue our work to make sure there is equal representation on every individual board.

Continuation of the Workplace Equality Fund

The Scottish Government's Workplace Equality Fund addresses long standing barriers in the labour market so that everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential and improve Scotland's economic performance as a result. We recognise the importance of increasing employment rates and tackling workplace inequalities for specific groups who are disadvantaged in the labour market.

The Workplace Equality Fund in 2018/19 funded 22 projects with an overall budget of £750,000. The projects involved working with organisations and employers across Scotland and from a wide range of sectors. Projects included:

- supporting women returners into business services
- building flexible and agile workplaces for companies in the construction, STEM, finance, technology, and furnishing sectors
- improving mental health in the workplace
- delivering training in leadership and boardroom governance to women in the technology sector.

The new expanded (£800,000) Workplace Equality Fund for 2019/2020 is continuing to focus on supporting older workers, women, disabled people, and those from a minority ethnic background. The fund now also supports women transitioning through the menopause, victims of domestic abuse and workers who are experiencing social isolation and loneliness (such as unpaid carers).

It is also encouraging businesses with innovative projects to embed fair work dimensions in the workplace. A total of 22 projects, involving a range of employers, are receiving funding totalling £800,000.

Proportion of MSPs who are women⁴



⁴ Data from the Scottish Parliament Information Centre (SPICe).
<https://www.parliament.scot/parliamentarybusiness/15441.aspx>

Reducing Barriers to Elected Office

In November 2018, COSLA President Cllr Alison Evison hosted the 'Achieving Gender Equality in Local Politics' conference. This conference brought together women in politics and public life who are in a position to help remove barriers to participation and some of their supporters. It provided a platform for networking and idea sharing, encouraging participants to set their own goals for how they personally can contribute to achieving positive change.

Following the conference COSLA launched both a story sharing campaign and a safe online space, 'Women in Local Government', which aims to provide peer support both for women considering entering Local Government and those already active within it. These actions were taken as a result of needs expressed at the conference and progressed by the newly formed Barriers to Elected Office Special Interest Group. This Group is a nominated, cross-party group formed to ensure that efforts to promote equality and diversity in local democracy receive COSLA's full attention and are actively driven forward. The group considers and acts upon evidence and opinion from elected members and key partners on barriers to women and other under-represented groups to taking up and sustaining elected office.

The Barrier to Elected Office Special Interest Group have developed an action plan focused on:

- Promoting local politics as an opportunity to influence how our communities are run
- Improving terms and conditions for Councillors
- Improving cultures within councils
- Developing support networks

The group seeks to provide leadership on these issues through identifying and influencing changes in policy and practice to increase participation. A recent example of its work was the proposal of [parental leave guidance](#) for Councillors, which was approved by Council leaders for circulation to all Scottish Councils for voluntary adoption.

Work across government to address the First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls.

The First Minister's National Advisory Council on Women and Girls (NACWG)'s main purpose and focus is to provide independent strategic advice to the First Minister on recommendations to help further gender equality in Scotland.

COSLA's Leaders approved the signing of NACWG's public pledge and committed the support of Local Government to enhancing the reach of the Council and to

gathering key feedback on specific issues relating to gender equality, with each individual local authority making its own choice to participate in the Spotlight Wee Circles process.

The NACWG strategy is to explore annual topics which are the focus of their end of year report. Their focus in 2018 was Attitudes and Culture Change and the 2018 Report and Recommendations on this topic were submitted to First Minister in December 2018 and published on 25 January 2019.

This report sets out 11 wide ranging and systemic recommendations that the NACWG considered would help to accelerate the goal of gender equality and included legislating for local and national candidate quotas; incorporating the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination into Scots Law and creating two “Daddy Months” of use it or lose it paid paternity leave. The Scottish Government formally responded to the 2018 report on 26 June 2019 accepting all 11 recommendations in principle; 7 with immediate action to be taken and 4 with further consideration due to their complex nature.

On the recommendation to create a commission for gender equality in schools and increase childcare to 50 hours a week, the Scottish Government is committed to an ambitious expansion of high quality early learning and childcare to 1140 hours per year for all 3 and 4 years and those 2 year olds who will benefit most, from August 2020, almost doubling the current entitlement.

We are also investing an additional £210 million resource funding for local authorities to progress the expansion in 2019-20 and providing £175 million of capital funding to support the next phase of investment in new, refurbished or extended nurseries and family centres.

On the Recommendation to Create A What Works? Institute and Gender Beacon Collaborative the Scottish Government will work with prominent feminist expert organisations in Scotland, such as Zero Tolerance together with new voices and thinking from academia and the media, to explore what a practical, dynamic, evidence-led, gender focused institute would look like and operate. This group will develop an agreed framework for how the What Works? Gender Institute would be structured, agreeing what it will test, who it will work with and how it will measure change. This framework will include the coordinated action and interventions required to influence the structures, practice, attitudes and power differentials that underpin women’s inequality. The framework will be a blueprint for creating the What Works? Gender Institute, building on the resources already available as much as possible.

On the recommendation to create a resourced media body in Scotland to hold the media to account and provide guidance on gender equality the Scottish Government believes that women should be fairly and properly represented across

all sectors including the media and we hope media organisations will consider this recommendation. The Scottish Government also recognises the importance of having a diverse and independent media with a free press that is independently regulated.

Gender Equal Media Scotland (GEMS), brings together academics, journalists, campaign groups and organisations working for women’s equality in Scottish media. GEMS is an independent group and has an existing framework and expertise suitable for the type of media body envisaged. GEMS’ work is currently unfunded and the group therefore has limited capacity. The Scottish Government will fund a post to support GEMS to increase their impact, engagement and visibility amongst industry and other stakeholders.

After the first year of funding, progress will be assessed to establish whether further development would be beneficial to increase the groups’ activities and reach.

Scotland’s Women Stand: 7th September 2019

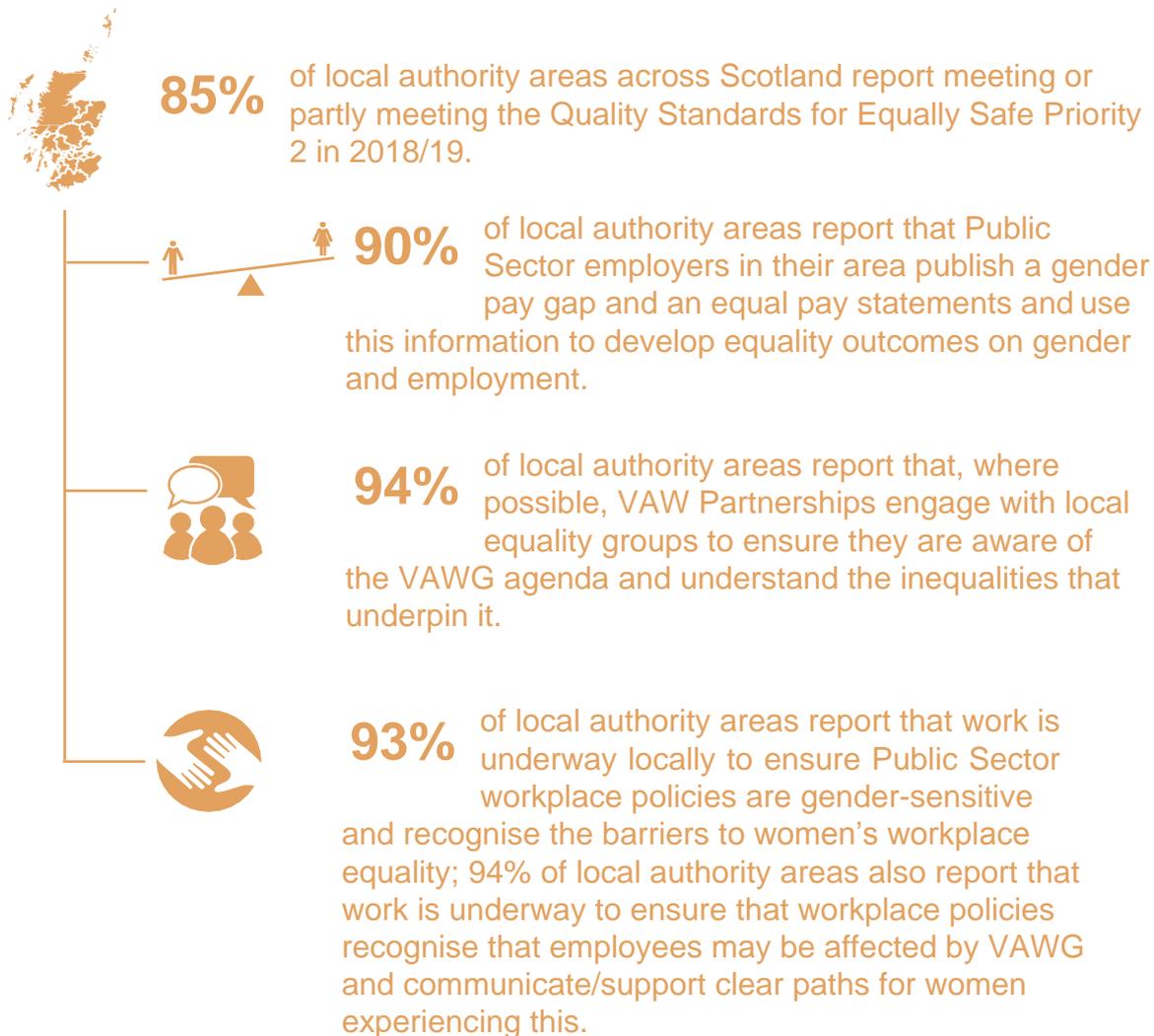


Scotland’s Women Stand was a 9 month campaign that culminated in a major event hosted by the Scottish Parliament to support and empower women of Scotland to stand for elected political office at community, local government and national levels. Funded by the Scottish Government and delivered by the Parliament Project and YWCA Scotland – the Young Women’s Movement, this event brought together over 400 women from across Scotland to hear women already engaged in elected politics share their inspiring stories of activism, campaigning and election. This included a panel of elected women in conversation about their experiences of differing spheres of politics, alongside a range of stalls and workshops encouraging participants to discuss and explore their own relationships with politics. The Minister for Older People and Equalities gave a key note address, COSLA’s President Cllr Alison Evison was a leading panel participant in the chamber debate and COSLA also ran workshops for women interested in standing for election as local councillors.



Photo credit: Witch Creations X Parliament Project

Key Learning from the 2018/19 Equally Safe Quality Standards & Performance Framework Data Returns



The following examples of good practice identified through the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework provide a snapshot of work taking place in local authority areas across Scotland to progress Priority Area 2:

» Ensuring Policies Meet the Needs of Women and Children affected by VAWG – East Ayrshire

East Ayrshire Council has adopted the Chartered Institute of Housing's Make a Stand pledge supporting people experiencing domestic abuse. The Make a Stand pledge, developed by the Chartered Institute of Housing in partnership with Women's Aid and the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance, encourages housing organisations to make a commitment to support people experiencing domestic abuse.

» **Developing Gender-Sensitive Policies – Falkirk**

Falkirk Council has adopted a gender-sensitive Equal Opportunities Policy and the principles of this are embedded in all other policies and processes. The Council has also introduced a Supporting Older Women in the Workplace Guidance. Following on from the implementation of free sanitary products in schools, the Council has also made these products available for employees in a number of Council premises.

» **Increasing Use of Equality Impact Assessments – Argyll & Bute**

Argyll & Bute VAW Partnership report that Equality Impact Assessments (EQIAs) are now routinely undertaken by the Council and Partners such as the Health Board and Police when developing all new major policies, processes and services.

» **Supporting Employees Affected by VAWG - South Ayrshire**

During 2018's 16 Days of Action campaign, South Ayrshire Council held an Employers Working Lunch event called 'DomesticAbuse: what can I do as an employer to support staff? A practical approach'. This was then followed up in May 2019 with a similar event with a Working Breakfast to further increase local businesses and organisations' awareness, knowledge and confidence on domestic abuse.

Moving forward

We intend to build on our achievements and successes and will take forward a range of initiatives in the coming year.

These will include:

- » Reviewing the effectiveness of the public sector equality duty with a view to implementing any necessary changes
- » Establishing a short-life taskforce chaired by the Deputy First Minister and Cabinet Secretary for Education and Skills which will bring together representatives from key parts of the education system and leaders in gender equality to explore how we can take additional, better connected and bolder action in order to embed gender equality within early years and school education
- » Funding a post to support GEMS to increase their impact, engagement and visibility amongst industry and other stakeholders.

Highlights and Moving Forward:

Priority Three

Priority Three

Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people.

Objectives

- Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and coordinated.
- Women, children and young people access relevant, effective and integrated services.
- Service providers competently identify violence against women and girls, and respond effectively to women, children and young people affected.

We recognise the importance of ensuring that women and children are supported and that service providers identify violence against women and girls and respond effectively. A range of activity has been undertaken in the past year across Scotland to help us achieve our objectives under this priority. Much of the activity has also provided a foundation to build upon over the coming year. Actions have included:

Highlights

Action to prevent and eradicate honour-based violence and abuse

Female Genital Mutilation

The Scottish Government considers Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) to be an unacceptable and illegal practice, and an extreme violation of human rights. FGM reflects deep-rooted inequality between the sexes, and constitutes a severe form of discrimination against women and girls. We are firmly committed to working with our partners across the public and third sectors, and potentially affected communities, to effectively tackle and eventually eradicate this unacceptable practice from our society.

We launched our National Action Plan to Prevent and Eradicate FGM on the 4th February 2016. The plan sets out a series of actions and objectives that fall under three categories: Prevention, Protection and Provision. Some of our achievements to date include:

- A multi-agency writing group, with membership from the statutory, third sector and community-based organisations developed non-statutory multi-agency guidance for agencies and organisations responding to, and supporting those affected by FGM.
- The Scottish Government continues to fund a range of community-based organisations to raise awareness of the harmful effects of FGM; particularly through our Equally Safe Fund. For example, Community Info Source are

receiving £75,000 over three years to invest into their project which seeks to combat FGM through awareness raising amongst men in potentially affected communities.

- We have also established the FGM National Action Plan Implementation Group, which oversees the implementation of the Action Plan. The group facilitates engagement between the public and third sectors for a more cohesive and considered approach to meeting our objectives in eradicating FGM in Scotland.

In November 2019, we published a full progress report on the National Action Plan to Prevent and Eradicate FGM.

In the National Action Plan, there was a commitment made to ensure that legislation to address FGM is fit for purpose. The Programme for Government 2018/19 contained a commitment to introduce a Bill strengthening the existing legislative framework for the protection of women and girls from FGM. The new Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) (Scotland) Bill was introduced to the Scottish Parliament on the 29th of May 2019 and includes provisions for FGM Protection Orders and Statutory Guidance. The Bill is currently up for the consideration of the Equalities and Human Rights Committee.

FGM Summit

The Scottish Government recently hosted a national summit which brought together a broad range of stakeholders to discuss preventing and eradicating FGM. In opening the summit Christina McKelvie, Minister for Older People and Equalities, said, “The Scottish Government considers FGM to be unacceptable and illegal. The practice is an extreme abuse and violation of human rights; it reflects deep-rooted gender inequality, and constitutes a severe form of discrimination against women and girls.”

The summit gave the Scottish Government an opportunity to hear stakeholder views of the Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) (Scotland) Bill and the accompanying statutory guidance. The Scottish Government published its national action plan to prevent and eradicate FGM in 2016. This will expire in 2020. The summit allowed stakeholders to take stock of achievements since publishing the plan, and to see where more work is required.



Forced Marriage

A forced marriage is an abuse of human rights. It is illegal for a person to use

physical or emotional pressure, for whatever reason, to try and force a person into marriage without their consent. We are working collaboratively with our partners in the statutory, third sectors, and communities to tackle these practices. We are committed to protecting those at risk and preventing the harm that can be associated with the practice. The law in Scotland provides both civil and criminal measures to do so.

The Scottish Government facilitates a multi-agency Forced Marriage Network to discuss the issue and allow for stakeholders to provide advice and information about best practice for the development of our policies in this area. We are currently in the process of developing a working plan, with clear objectives and actions for our work on preventing and eradicating Forced Marriage. This is being developed in close partnership with the members of the network. We are also in the process of refreshing our statutory guidance on Forced Marriage, with an aim of publishing by the end of March 2020.

Work underway on Scottish Women's Aid Building Capacity Project: Equally Safe in Practice

The Scottish Government is supporting Scottish Women's Aid to work with partners, the Improvement Service and Engender, to undertake capacity building, with a particular focus on the development of a model that creates and sustains a violence against women and girls (VAWG) training framework for Scotland.

The aim is to deliver affordable and high-quality gender and gendered VAWG training for public and third-sector organisations, VAW partnerships, and other policy and service providers in all areas of Scotland, informed by key VAWG organisations. The project has been renamed to Equally Safe in Practice (ESP) to reflect its purpose and activities.

A feasibility study report was completed earlier this year following consultation with a wide range of organisations and practitioners and identified a number of recommendations. One of the recommendations was to explore and review existing national training models and the staff team has engaged with the Welsh and Swedish national training models, learning from England WA training framework and learning from the successes and challenges of Training Consortia and National Training Strategy.

The team continue to engage key stakeholders and strategic partners to inform the development of the framework for Scotland.

Undertaking a consultation on how to improve forensic medical services for victims of rape and other sexual crimes.

The Scottish Government Programme for Government in 2019/20 set out our intention to introduce the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) Bill. Amongst other provisions, the Bill will provide the statutory basis for Health Boards across Scotland to establish a national self-referral model for victims of

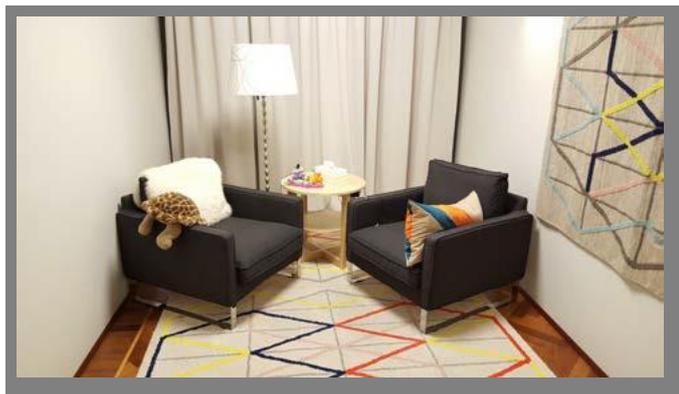
sexual crime who wish to have a forensic medical examination without first reporting to police. The Bill will underpin the work of the CMO taskforce, convened with the aim of improving healthcare and forensic medical services for adults and children who have experienced rape and sexual assault, or childhood sexual abuse. Consultation on the legislative proposals to improve forensic medical services for rape and sexual assault closed in May and the [analysis report](#) has now been published.

Completion of the Bill's parliamentary passage is subject to the will of Parliament.

Work underway to develop the Barnahus concept and explore how it can be applied in a Scottish context.

The Scottish Government reiterated their committed to exploring how the Barnahus concept could operate in the context of Scotland's child protection, health and justice systems in Programme for Government 2019-20.

Barnahus (which literally means Children's House) is a child-friendly, interdisciplinary and multi-agency centre for child victims and witnesses where children could be interviewed and medically examined for forensic purposes, comprehensively assessed and receive all relevant therapeutic services from appropriate professionals.



Typical interview room Barnahus Iceland

Barnahus originates in the Child Advocacy Model adopted in the US in the 1980s. It was firstly implemented in 1998 by Iceland followed by other Nordic countries (Sweden in 2005, Norway in 2007, Greenland in 2011, Denmark in 2013) under the name „Barnahus“ or Children's House.

The Barnahus model was adopted in order to create a multi-disciplinary system that responds to the special needs of children about whom there is suspicion that they have been subjected to violence or abuse. It also derives from the principle that the needs of children in these cases are totally different from those of adults in the same situation.

Progress has been made on the development of Scotland-specific standards for Barnahus. The Scottish Government has asked Healthcare Improvement Scotland, in partnership with the Care Inspectorate, to develop such standards, based on the European PROMISE quality standards which outline best practice for countries who wish to develop the model. The standards are at the development stage, and a stakeholder scoping event took place on 19 June 2019. It is anticipated that

draft standards will be available for consultation by the end of 2019, with finalised standards published by summer 2020.

The standards development group met for the first time in September 2019, and includes clinical expertise, health boards, children's services, the third sector, and statutory justice partners and will be informed by children and young people's lived experience. This will be assured by additional funding of £44,443 per year for two years from the Scottish Government to Children 1st to support funding for Participation and Children's Rights Workers who will ensure the voices of children and their families inform our approach to justice including work to explore Barnahus.

Once published, the standards will form a framework for health, justice and local authorities to understand what is required to improve our collective response to child victims and provide a roadmap for developing our approach to Barnahus in Scotland.

Supporting the Scottish Women's Rights Centre, increasing women's access to legal advice and advocacy services

The Scottish Government supports the Scottish Women's Rights Centre (SWRC), which was established in March 2015 and is a collaboration between Rape Crisis Scotland, JustRight Scotland and the University of Strathclyde Law Clinic. The SWRC provides improved access to justice through the provision of free legal information, advice, advocacy and representation to women who have or are experiencing gender based violence. Funding is provided by the Scottish Legal Aid Board and the Scottish Government.

In the last year, funding has enabled geographic expansion to develop locally based legal services in Inverness and Dundee, and expand legal provision in the central belt. The SWRC provide a range of services, including a national helpline, legal surgeries, advocacy services, online legal guides, and the Sexual Harassment Legal Service. The legal helpline is available four days per week, with the sexual harassment helpline available on an additional fifth day. The face to face legal surgeries, offering appointments with a solicitor, are currently available in Lanarkshire, Edinburgh, Glasgow and the Forth Valley. The SWRC have engaged in multi-agency meetings to establish new surgeries which are now available in Dundee and Inverness. The SWRC aim is to increase access to legal support in other locations, particularly in rural areas where availability can be limited. A weekly advocacy helpline has also recently been launched to promote access to justice through information, signposting to services and non-legal representation.

Publishing updated No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) Guidance published in February 2019

We realise that particular groups of women may be at an increased risk of domestic

abuse or particularly vulnerable to its impact. Women who do not have settled status in the UK or recourse to public funds can be particularly vulnerable. On 27 February 2019, the Scottish Government and COSLA launched new guidance on NRPF for Scottish local authorities. The guidance is a valuable tool to help local authorities reach decisions about the support they can provide, within immigration rule restrictions, and in recognition of people's human rights.

The Scottish Government funded the commission of the guidance and has supported its development. The guidance is available on the Scottish Strategic Migration Partnership website, which is run by COSLA: www.migrationscotland.org.uk/migrants-rights-entitlements/introduction/1-1-how-use-guidance

Supporting the launching of a pilot to record complainer's initial statement to police to be used as evidence.

The justice system should always take a victim-centred perspective in addressing sexual crime, and we are working with all partners – to ensure this happens across the board.

The Scottish Government has funded research by SCCJR, *Justice Journeys*,⁵ published in August 2019, which will help build the evidence base on people's experiences of the justice system to support particularly vulnerable people to give their best evidence. We will carefully consider the findings of the SCCJR Justice Journeys research and work with justice partners, victims organisations and researchers, such as SCCJR, to make a lasting difference.

The Justice Journeys research report has a specific recommendation that "Video recording of police statements to ensure their accuracy, as well as their use in court, should be strongly considered."

We have worked with partners (Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service (COPFS), Police Scotland and Rape Crisis Scotland) to finalise details of a pilot to visually record rape complainers' initial statement to the police and consider the potential for these to be used in appropriate cases as evidence in chief in any subsequent trial. Applications to use these visually recorded interviews as evidence in chief could be combined with applications to take the witness' evidence by commissioner which, if granted, would avoid the need for the complainer to give evidence in person during any subsequent trial.

The pilot which launched on 1st November 2019 is supported by the Scottish Government, and will be run by operational partners Police Scotland and the COPFS, and Rape Crisis Scotland is providing valuable advocacy support for

⁵ *Justice Journeys*, SCCJR University of Glasgow 2019. <https://www.sccjr.ac.uk/projects/justice-journeys-informing-policy-and-practice-through-lived-experience/>

victims. It will be trialled in three areas of Scotland which have rural and city locations, including one health care setting to embed a holistic response for the victim.

Much of the work in this area focuses on ensuring that victims and survivors have access to effective justice and service responses. However, we realise that many factors can have an impact on the response survivors and victims receive, including where they live.

Research: barriers to participation in action to end VAWG in rural areas



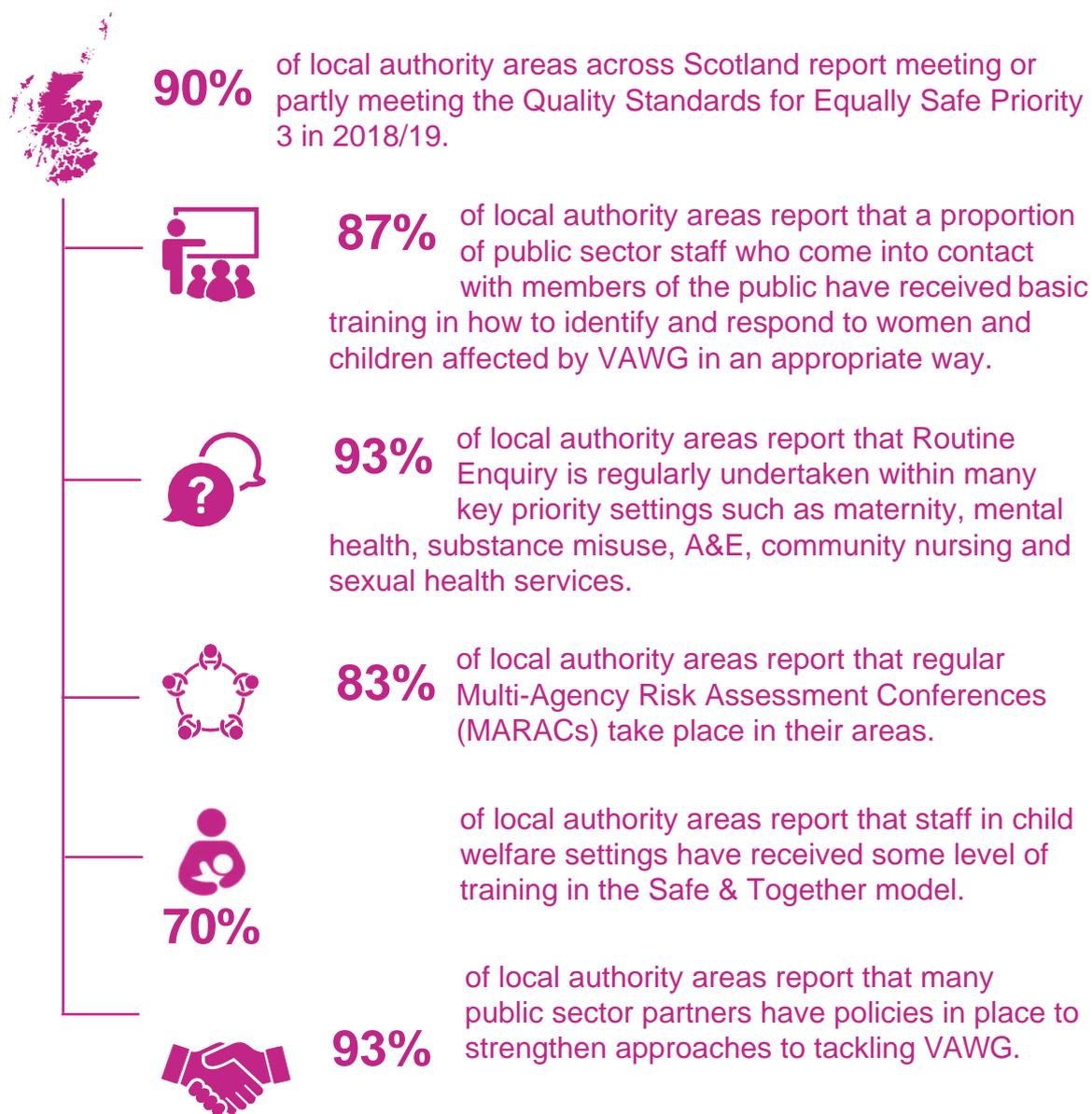
In 2017 Scottish Women's Aid (SWA) and Rape Crisis Scotland (RCS) were commissioned to consult with women who have experienced violence against women (VAW) about being involved in the work of Equally Safe. As part of this work, SWA consulted with 188 women in the Highlands and Islands about the barriers women in rural areas face in participating in local action to end violence against women and girls. A report was published in September 2019 a report was published by SWA making 13 recommendations to the Scottish Government on how barriers to meaningful participation can be overcome.

On the publication of the report, Minister for Older People and Equalities Christina McKelvie wrote to the women who participated in this research to thank them for their efforts. She said:

“As we work to make Scotland safe for all women and girls, we recognise that those living in more rural areas face particular challenges. We also know that survivors with lived experience are key to making sure that our national strategy, Equally Safe, works at a local level.

“So, I want to extend a huge thank you to each of the 188 women who shared their views on how we can make sure survivors are included with our work to end violence against women in the Highlands and Islands. Your experiences speak volumes. You have been clear about what we can do to improve things and your insight and recommendations will be invaluable in shaping our approach going forwards.”

Key Learning from the 2018/19 Equally Safe Quality Standards & Performance Framework Data Returns



The following examples of good practice identified through the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework provide a snapshot of work taking place in local authority areas across Scotland to progress Priority Area 3:

- » **Ensuring adequate housing options are in place for women and children affected by domestic abuse – Fife**
Fife Council is leading on a project reviewing housing options in Fife supported by Scottish Government and involving a range of partners from both Fife Housing Partnership and Fife Violence Against Women Partnership. This involves exploring how the accommodation needs of those affected

by VAWG in Fife are met, including improving processes, initial contact and housing options interviews. There is a focus on reducing homelessness and helping women to look at a range of other options. Ongoing work includes exploring how perpetrators can be re-housed, while women, children and young people safely remain in the family home.

» **Embedding the Safe & Together model – Renfrewshire**

Safe & Together training has been provided to staff across a number of organisations in Renfrewshire. Large groups of staff have heard directly from David Mandel over two sessions, social work managers have undertaken the one-day manager training, and some social work and police staff have undertaken the four-day training course. Renfrewshire GBV Partnership will review the provision of Safe and Together training over the next year to ensure that training is available as appropriate to the role.

» **Rolling out Routine Enquiry Training in Health Settings - South Lanarkshire**

Routine Enquiry training has been undertaken within all core health settings in South Lanarkshire with the exception of Emergency Care. This is due to incompatible facilities in the Emergency Care patient areas for suitability for carrying out Routine Enquiry on abuse. A rolling programme of training is available to ensure new staff have access to learning.

» **Identifying and Responding to Women and Children with Complex Needs – Stirling**

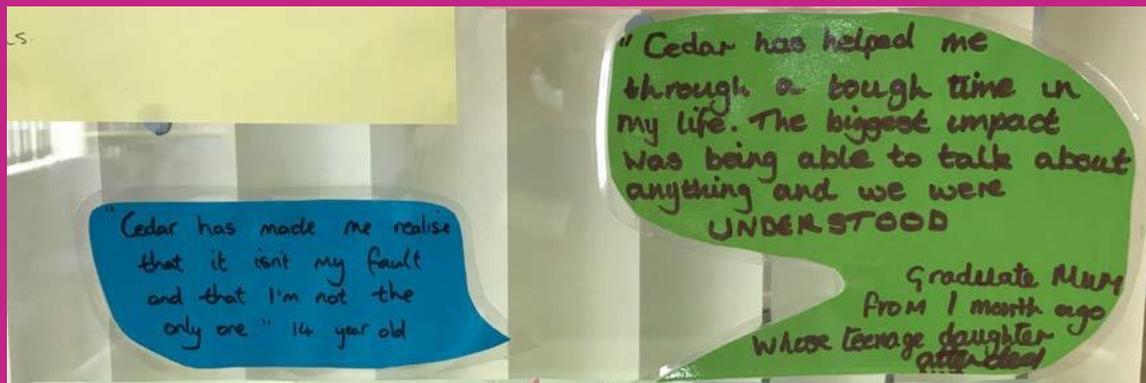
Stirling are undertaking a pilot with Safe Lives on barriers for women with learning disabilities who have experienced GBV to address the gaps in support. Forth Valley Rape Crisis service is able to provide support in three community languages other than English and can cover limited interpreting costs. They also take a trauma-informed approach and are able to offer support to those with complex needs with the partnership of other local and national agencies. Shakti Women's Aid has also worked closely with a number of voluntary and statutory organisations in Stirling to build a better support network and to provide an effective service which meets the needs of the BME women and their children. Shakti continue to arrange training and awareness session with other organisations and groups.

Cedar



Cedar (children experiencing domestic abuse recovery) is Scotland's leading evidence-based recovery programme available for children and young people. Cedar supports children and young people and their mothers in recovering from their experiences of domestic abuse by focusing on strengthening the mother-child bond. Cedar's vital early intervention work provides key contributions to improving outcomes for children and young people and in tackling violence against women and girls. With initial funding from Scottish Government to pilot Cedar in three areas from 2008 to 2011, Cedar has now been in Scotland for over a decade. There are currently 10 Projects across the country; the majority have been funded by the National Lottery Community Fund over the last seven years, with some Projects receiving funding from their local authority and independent funders.

The recent National Cedar Conference in May 2019 highlighted the vital need for domestic abuse recovery programmes such as Cedar and showcased Cedar's strengths in early intervention work. The event welcomed over 100 delegates representing over 60 organisations and agencies, with speakers ranging from COSLA, the Scottish Government and the National Procurator Fiscal for Domestic Abuse. A number of Cedar young people and mother graduates delivered keynotes and workshops on their recovery journeys, with delegates reflecting that the graduates' experiences were evidence of the "collective impact that has been made nationally with Cedar in the 10 years it has been running".



Moving forward

We intend to build on our achievements and successes and will take forward a range of initiatives in the coming year.

These will include:

- Taking the Female Genital Mutilation (Protection and Guidance) Bill through its parliamentary stages
- Introducing the Forensic Medical Services (Victims of Sexual Offences) Bill
- Supporting the development of the Equally Safe Multi Agency centre in Edinburgh which will bring expert from child and adult protection, healthcare, police and social work to provide age-appropriate, wrap-around care for children and young people and adults who have been victims of sexual assault and other forms of abuse and neglect
- Considering the outcome of Lady Dorrian's review of the management of sexual offences and how they can be better conducted through the courts
- Supporting the development of trauma training packages for justice organisations who come into contact with victims
- Developing an online resource about gender based violence for children and young people, to provide better access to information and support
- Legislating in this Parliament to provide the police and courts with new powers to bar a suspected perpetrator of domestic abuse from returning to the home of the person at risk of abuse. This will reduce the threat of homelessness for victims who seek safety for themselves and often for their children. Protective orders will allow our justice system to safeguard people who, for example, are being controlled to such an extent that they do not have the means to initiate court action themselves.

Highlights and Moving Forward:

Priority Four

Priority Four

Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

Objectives

- Justice responses are robust, swift, consistent and coordinated.
- Men who carry out violence against women and girls are identified early and held to account by the criminal and civil justice system.
- Relevant links are made between the experience of women, children and young people in the criminal and civil system.

We recognise the importance of holding perpetrators of gender based violence to account and that our legislation reflects the reality of gender based violence. A range of activity has been undertaken in the past year across Scotland to help us achieve our objectives under this priority. Much of this activity has also provided a foundation to build upon over the coming year. Actions have included:

Highlights

Commencement of the Domestic Abuse (Scotland) 2018

The Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2018 came into force on 1st April 2019. Implementation of this legislation marks a watershed moment in which the destructive impact of coercive and controlling behaviour can be addressed by criminal law. The Act creates a specific offence covering abusive behaviour amounting to a “course of conduct” – enabling physical, psychological and controlling behaviour

to be prosecuted within the same offence. It also reflects the fact that children are harmed by domestic abuse by providing for a statutory aggravation in relation to children and places a duty on courts in all domestic abuse cases to consider imposing a non-harassment order to protect the victim.

“I am proud Scotland is leading the way with this ground-breaking legislation which uniquely recognises the effect of domestic abuse on child victims as well as adults.”

Humza Yousaf, Cabinet Secretary for Justice



In order to ensure maximum impact, the Scottish Government undertook a public awareness campaign to coincide with the legislation coming into effect in April 2019. The campaign sought to ensure that the public was aware that the law has changed and that victims understood how they can report abuse. It was intended to reinforce the message that coercive and controlling behaviour is domestic abuse, and that this new legislation will help to hold perpetrators to account.

The campaign ran across multiple platforms, including television, radio, online and print over a period of six weeks. It was supported by PR, social media content and stakeholder / partner engagement. It was developed in partnership with relevant 3rd sector groups such as Scottish Women's Aid, ASSIST and Shakti Women's Aid.

As well as efforts to raise awareness of the impact of the legislation and increase understanding of coercive and controlling behaviour among the general public, we also recognise that the devastating impact of domestic abuse and its impact on victims must be fully understood by those on the frontline who are responding directly to this violence and/or abuse. The Scottish Government has provided £825,000 in funding to Police Scotland to develop training which is being delivered collaboratively with Safe Lives. Since December 2018 over 7,000 of the 14,000 staff identified to attend the training have done so and 20,000 officers and staff have completed the online learning. Police Scotland are also training around 750 domestic abuse 'Champions', to provide that vital link between those officers and staff on the frontline of policing and proper practice.

Although it is crucial that frontline staff and responders are trained in the new legislation, we realise that the wider criminal justice system must also be equipped to make decisions and hold perpetrators to account. The Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service, who prosecute criminal cases, has developed an in house package of training for our prosecutors, including workshop training and self-completion e-learning on the new legislation to help prosecutors understand and appreciate the dynamics of controlling relationships. The Judicial Institute for Scotland has also launched interactive blended training for all sheriffs and judges to support the implementation of Act and all judges in Scotland will also be allocated to one of eight face-to-face domestic abuse courses taking place in the Institute's purpose-built judicial learning suite over the course of 2019.



**Number of incidents
or crimes of domestic
abuse with a female
victim recorded by police**

2014/15: 41,564

2017/18: 44,265



**Number of men
convicted of
domestic abuse⁶**

2014/15: 10,796

2017/18: 8,618

⁶ Data on Domestic Abuse Recorded by the Police in Scotland available at <https://www.gov.scot/news/domestic-abuse-recorded-by-the-police-in-scotland-2017-18/>. Data on Criminal Proceedings in Scotland available at <https://www.gov.scot/publications/criminal-proceedings-scotland-2017-18/>.

Between April and June 2019:



414

new crimes of domestic abuse have been reported (94% had a female victim)



190

DASA cases reported to COPFS being progressed for prosecution



13

convictions under the new Act with a significant number of other cases proceeding through the courts

Successful roll out of the innovative Caledonian Programme, a court mandated male perpetrator programme with integrated women and children's services

The Caledonian System has been rolled out to a further six local authorities: Glasgow, Dundee, Perth and Kinross, Highland, Fife and South Lanarkshire. It is now available in 19 local authorities, and 75% of the population of Scotland live in local authority areas which deliver the Caledonian. The successful bids included partnership arrangements with Women's Aid, Assist, Action for Children and Circle to deliver the women's and children's service aspects of the system.

Training and briefing on the Caledonian System has been delivered to key workers, sheriffs, and judges, and Caledonian has contributed to the design of the Domestic Abuse Matters training being delivered to Police Scotland personnel.

“The benefits of being co-located with the Caledonian team have been considerable. We have processes in place to discuss any victim whose partner/ex-partner has been referred for assessment. This means from the earliest stage we are working together to encourage engagement with the assessment process undertaken by the men's and women's workers and the support that can be offered once an order is imposed. For the victim there is no duplication and it is clear who is doing what. Importantly there can be ongoing discussions about risk management. Caledonian Women's Services Workers are also referring victims to MARAC who may be “invisible” to other agencies as there is no longer any police involvement or court process.”



Assist

Promoting the principles of the Safe and Together model™.

As set out in the 2019-20 Programme for Government, the Scottish Government remains committed to promoting the principles of the Safe and Together model™ which seeks to keep children who have experienced domestic abuse safe and together with their non-abusive parent, while supporting and acknowledging non abusive parents' protective efforts and ensuring perpetrators are held accountable for their abuse.

The Scottish Government provided funding for Social Work Scotland to commission work with stakeholders to look at how best to deliver the model in Scotland. This has formed the basis for the development of new proposals to promote Safe and Together at a local and national level. This work has been underpinned by the US Safe and Together Institute's appointment this year of a new UK Lead. We will continue to work with the UK Lead and stakeholders to support work to roll out the model in Scotland.

Key Learning from the 2018/19 Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework Data Returns



66% of local authority areas across Scotland report meeting or partly meeting the Quality Standards for Equally Safe Priority 4 in 2018/19.



84% of local authority areas report delivering some level of training for public sector staff who come into contact with members of the public, to enable them to identify and respond to perpetrators.



100% of local authority areas report that Multi-Agency Tasking and Coordination (MATAC) groups are in place locally, to support a multi-agency approach to be taken to identifying high risk perpetrators of domestic abuse and ensure they are held to account for their behaviours.



83% of local authority areas report that court-mandated programmes are in place at a local level that work with perpetrators of VAWG to hold them to account for, and support them to change, their behaviours.

The following examples of good practice identified through the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework provide a snapshot of work taking place in local authority areas across Scotland to progress Priority Area 4:

» **Court Mandated Programmes for Perpetrators of VAWG – East Lothian and Midlothian**

East Lothian and Midlothian operate the Caledonian System for domestic abuse offenders and have a shared children’s worker. Additionally, they jointly operate an accredited programme of work with Registered Sex Offenders. Work is also ongoing to embed the Safe & Together model in services across East Lothian and Midlothian, with 2 cohorts of training taking place in 2018/19 and a further 3 cohorts planned in the year ahead.

» **Non court mandated work with perpetrators - Edinburgh**

The Safer Families project in Edinburgh works with domestically abusive men who have not been convicted. It uses the Caledonian men’s programme and has an integrated women’s service, taking most of its referrals from Children and Families social work. Safer Families also includes Respekt which delivers the Caledonian men’s programme and women’s service in Polish in a culturally informed way.

» **Non-court mandated perpetrator interventions - Dundee**

Dundee has appointed a dedicated Domestic Abuse Resource Worker who engages with perpetrators of domestic abuse on a voluntary basis. While this is currently only one post within the Council, an evaluation of the programme has been undertaken and demonstrated positive outcomes.

» **1-1 work with Perpetrators – Western Isles**

Due to geography and the low volume of cases spread throughout the islands, delivering group work programmes for perpetrators of domestic abuse has not proved possible. However, Criminal Justice Social Work in the Western Isles report routinely engaging with perpetrators through 1:1 work using accredited or approved tools and programmes where available. A mandated Court requirement to undertake ‘offence focused work’ is made by the Courts locally to ensure compliance.

Moving forward

We intend to build on our achievements and successes and will take forward a range of initiatives in the coming year.

These will include:

- » We will continue to work with those in housing, social work, health and schools to ensure that professionals have resources available to them to support a shared understanding of domestic abuse

- Exploring policy options to increase access to positive behaviour change programmes for domestically abusive men
- Exploring what more can be done to address prostitution in Scotland, including consulting on approaches to challenges men's demand for prostitution.

Next Steps

Next Steps

This is the second annual report on progress against the Equally Safe Delivery Plan. Over the next year the Scottish Government will continue to coordinate the implementation of the actions in the Delivery Plan.

Members of the Joint Strategic Board and Joint Delivery Group will play an important role in driving progress and holding partners to account.

A third and final progress report will be published by the end of 2020.



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