

Evidence session on the VAWDASV (Wales) Act 2015 - 13 October 2016, action point

- *Details of the Neath Port Talbot County Borough Council VAWDA Leadership Group Board, including its Terms of Reference and details of what, and how, the Board has learned*

The introduction of the VAWDA&SV (Wales) Act 2015 was very timely for Neath Port Talbot as they were about to review their Domestic Abuse Strategy and Action Plan. The Domestic Abuse Strategic Group (DASG) was losing momentum following a number of senior officers leaving the authority and it was not holding partners and providers to account effectively for their service delivery.

In January 2016 NPT commissioned an independent consultant to review all the Domestic Abuse structures, services and funding streams and as part of this review numerous consultation workshops took place with:-

- NPT staff
- Partners
- South Wales Police
- ABMU Health Board
- Third sector providers
- Third sector agencies
- DA survivors and
- DA victims

Early indicators of the review made it clear that this was going to be a much bigger piece of work than had been anticipated and also highlighted that the current DASG was not fit for purpose and no longer fulfilled its function.

Once the review was completed in April 2016 all the partners and agencies who took part were invited to attend a consultation meeting looking at the way forward and the new obligations under the Act. At this meeting it was decided to set up a VAWDASV Leadership Group which people of a senior level would sit on to steer the new work forward.

The Terms of Reference (see attached) of the group reflect the membership as outlined in the VAWDASV Act and sub groups and task and finish groups were set up to undertake the necessary work to tackle the priorities that the review and consultation highlighted. (VAWDASV Leadership group work plan attached,)

The new Leadership group also identified the linked partners that they would want to receive update reports from and Planning Frameworks that the group would report to; to make sure that governance conditions were met and there was a cohesive communication strategy in place to ensure good flow of information.

To date the NPT VAWDASV Leadership group has met three times and is making good progress. There are still some partners who are yet to make a full commitment to the group but the attendance is improving and steps are being taken to ensure all the right partners at a senior officer level are signed up to the group.

Neath Port Talbot has already made a start on the local strategy using the findings of the review to inform it and the draft National Strategy to shape it. We are currently undertaking a gap analysis to identify what further research and data collection is required to produce the draft document and we are hoping to meet with a representative of the ABMU Health Board shortly to further develop the draft strategy.