



Violence Against Women Partnership Guidance



Scottish Government
Riaghaltas na h-Alba
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COSLA

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Foreword

Violence Against Women Partnerships (VAW Partnerships) are the multi-agency mechanism to deliver on *Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls* at a local strategic level. No single partner alone has the resource, skills or reach to achieve the aims of Equally Safe. It is only by working between agencies, across every area of Scottish life that we will successfully achieve the vision and aims of Equally Safe.

Violence against women and girls, in any form, has no place in our vision for a safe, strong, successful Scotland. It damages health and wellbeing, limits freedom and potential, and is a violation of the most fundamental human rights. The Scottish Government, COSLA and key partners are committed to preventing and eradicating it once and for all.

As co-chairs of the Equally Safe Joint Strategic Board, the Scottish Government and COSLA expect all local authorities to have a VAW Partnership in place. This guidance provides an invaluable framework on which these local partnerships can base their operations and helps individual partner organisations understand the contribution they can make to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. While the membership of local VAW Partnerships and their governance arrangements will differ from area to area, there are – and should be – common themes to their work. In particular, this guidance recommends a set of minimum standards expected of all VAW Partnerships and recommends a focus on prevention and early intervention.

As Equally Safe sets out, each and every area of government and wider society has an important role to play in tackling this issue, requiring input from specialist organisations as well as local authorities, Police Scotland, the NHS, the justice system, the private sector, third sector, trade unions and others.

It is therefore only through strong partnership working at a local level that we can prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls in all its forms across Scotland.



Cllr Harry McGuigan

Community Wellbeing Spokesperson,
COSLA



Angela Constance MSP

Cabinet Secretary for Communities,
Social Security and Equalities

1. Purpose of this guidance

Violence Against Women Partnerships (VAW Partnerships) are the multi-agency mechanism to deliver on Equally Safe at a local strategic level. This guidance is designed to promote an effective and strategic approach to reducing violence against women and its negative impact on individuals and communities. It will support VAW Partnership chairs and supporting officers to promote this priority and integrate planning into broader multi-agency work at a local level. It will help ensure that partnerships are working in line with the priorities set out in [Equally Safe](#) and help them to develop effective local strategies and activities to tackle violence against women and girls in all its forms.

Specifically, the guidance introduces 6 'minimum standards' that the Scottish Government and COSLA expect VAW Partnerships to work towards and identifies the core activities that all VAW Partners will be expected to undertake.

This guidance clarifies areas of common interest with other strategic partnerships and groups at a local level. These may vary across Scotland but will include child protection; adult protection; offender management; alcohol and drug partnerships, community planning partnerships and community planning thematic groups such as community safety and health and wellbeing.

Small and medium sized, community-based organisations are a key audience for this guidance which will clarify the role of the VAW Partnership for local partner agencies with a contribution to make to their local VAW strategy or plan. VAW Partnerships should be accessible and accountable, delivering for their communities and this guidance should allow all stakeholders and partners to understand what a local VAW Partnership does.

Similarly, national organisations and agencies are expected to engage in local VAW Partnerships and should be aware of the contribution required of their local representatives.

This guidance was developed in collaboration with a wide range of partners. It is the intention of the Scottish Government and COSLA that VAW Partnerships use this document as a key reference point in their local work.

The document should be read alongside the Equally Safe strategy and organisations that have queries about how Equally Safe is being delivered at a local level should get in touch with their local partnership or the National Violence Against Women Network (see 'Further Support and Resources' section).

2. Shared vision and aims

Equally Safe, the Scottish Government and COSLA's joint strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls (VaWG) was launched in 2014 and revised in 2016. It sets out a shared understanding of the causes, risk factors and scale of the problem. It highlights that violence against women and girls is underpinned by gender inequality, and in order to prevent and eradicate it from society we must focus our efforts on delivering greater gender equality, tackling perpetrators, and intervening early and effectively to prevent violence. Throughout this guidance, we use the term 'violence against women' (or VAW) as a convenient and widely used way of referring to an issue which, by its very nature impacts on girls, children and families.

VAW Partnerships are key in helping us to reach the visions and aims as set out in Equally Safe. All VAW Partnerships are expected to use Equally Safe as a reference point in conducting their work. VAW Partnerships should be working in the context of the four Equally Safe priorities:

1. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls.
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically.
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people.
4. Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

It is important that everyone involved has a shared understanding of violence against women and girls which Equally Safe states as being underpinned by gender inequality. By this we mean the violent and abusive behaviour carried out predominantly by men directed at women and girls precisely because of their gender. Behaviour that stems from systemic, deep-rooted women's inequality, and which includes domestic abuse, rape, sexual assault, commercial sexual exploitation (including prostitution), and so called 'honour based' violence like female genital mutilation and forced marriage.

It is also acknowledged that specialist organisations remain key in supporting those affected by violence and abuse, but it is not just an issue for them. It needs the engagement of the full range of interests including; local authorities, Police Scotland, the NHS, the civil and criminal justice systems, social work, housing, media, the business sector, trade unions, third sector organisations, individuals and communities.

3. Policy and legislative context

The National Context

Preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls is essential to achieving the Scottish Government's overarching purpose, which is *"to focus government and public services on creating a more successful country, with opportunities for all of Scotland to flourish, through increasing sustainable economic growth"*¹. It contributes to the Scottish Government's strategic objectives – in particular, Safer and Stronger, Healthier, and Wealthier and Fairer – and to a number of the national outcomes contained in the National Performance Framework.

Equally Safe also provides a strategic framework for the delivery of the Scottish Government's Equality Outcome on tackling violence against women. Finally, it sits at the heart of the strong emphasis the First Minister has placed upon achieving full gender equality.

Tackling violence against women is also essential if we are to deliver on our human rights obligations in Scotland. Scotland's National Action Plan (SNAP) for Human Rights aims to create a Scotland where everyone is able to live with human dignity by focusing and coordinating action by public, private, voluntary bodies and individuals to achieve the realisation of internationally recognised human rights. The eradication of violence against women contributes to SNAP priority 6 to "enhance respect, protection and fulfilment of human rights to achieve justice and safety for all".

Finally, VAW Partnerships contribute to the public service reform agenda, supporting the four pillars set out by the Christie Commission:

- A decisive shift towards **prevention**.
- Greater integration of public services at a local level, driven by better **partnership**, collaboration and effective local delivery.
- Greater investment in the **people** who deliver services through enhanced workforce development and effective leadership.

¹ Scottish Government, *The National Performance Framework (NPF)*, (March 2016)

- A sharp focus on improving **performance**, through greater transparency, innovation and use of digital technology.

For a more comprehensive list of policy and national legislation which is interlinked to tackling and eradicating violence against women and girls please [see Appendix 1](#).

The International Context

Scotland's approach is rooted in the UN's own understanding of violence against women and girls. Not only is it our moral duty to take action concerning violence against women and girls, and to uphold the rights of women, children and young people, it is also our legal duty as set out by several international treaties and human rights obligations. They include:

- The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women and Domestic Violence (sometimes known as the Istanbul Convention)
- The Global Platform for Action calling on Governments to take integrated measures to prevent and eliminate violence against women and girls
- The Human Rights Act, which incorporates the protections set out in the European Convention on Human Rights into Scots law
- The United Nations Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), an agenda for action to end all forms of discrimination against women
- The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC), an international human rights treaty that grants all children and young people aged 17 and under a comprehensive set of rights.

Scotland is committed to meeting the benchmark set by each of these international treaties and obligations – as a modern democratic country, we aspire to the creation of an inclusive Scotland which protects, respects and realises the human rights of everyone.

4. Partnership working

People's lives are complex and they often experience multiple challenges and inequalities which cannot be solved by partners working in isolation. Effective partnership working both within VAW Partnerships and between VAW Partnerships and other local strategic partnerships is therefore essential to ensuring that outcomes for women, girls and children affected by VAW are improved.

At a local level, identifying and strengthening relationships between different planning processes has a number of potential benefits. For example, it may be possible to jointly undertake consultation, needs assessment or progress reporting activity to satisfy requirements for multiple planning systems. While local areas may choose to link planning requirements in different ways, all local planning ultimately has the same aim: to improve the wellbeing of the local population, through the delivery of efficient and effective public services.

Community Planning is a key mechanism for public service reform at a local level, bringing together local public services and the communities they serve. It provides a focus for joint working, directed towards distinctive local circumstances. This offers powerful potential to address often deep-rooted causes of inequalities, and to use preventative approaches to manage future demands on crisis intervention services.

Under the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015, community planning is explicitly about how public bodies work together and with the local community to plan for, resource and provide services which improve local outcomes in the local authority area, with a view to reducing inequalities. Community Planning partners collaboratively agree their strategic priorities (through their [Local Outcome Improvement Plan](#) (LOIP) and localities plans²) and provide appropriate services and resources in support of those priorities. The statutory duty placed upon public bodies to actively address inequalities via the 2015 Act provides added impetus and a major focus for local VAW Partnerships to address one of the most significant areas of inequality in society.

2 Note: LOIP is the term the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 gives to what will be an evolution of the current Single Outcome Agreements (SOAs). One of the major differences between SOAs and LOIPs is an even greater focus on tackling inequalities.

Some Community Planning Partnership (CPP) activities already reflect a strong focus on violence against women and girls and CPPs may wish to link to their VAW Partnership, as the key partnership through which to plan and co-ordinate this work. While the context will not be the same in any two local authority areas, some key partnerships that VAW Partnerships may wish to strengthen links with, include:

- Health and Social Care Integration Joint Boards
- Public Protection Committees (i.e. Adult/Child Protection ³/ Offender Management Committee)
- Community Safety Partnerships
- Community Justice Partnerships
- Alcohol and Drug Partnerships.

The local VAW Partnership may also be expected to play a role in Multi Agency Tasking and Co-ordination (MATAC) and Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) arrangements and have links with Multi Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA) .

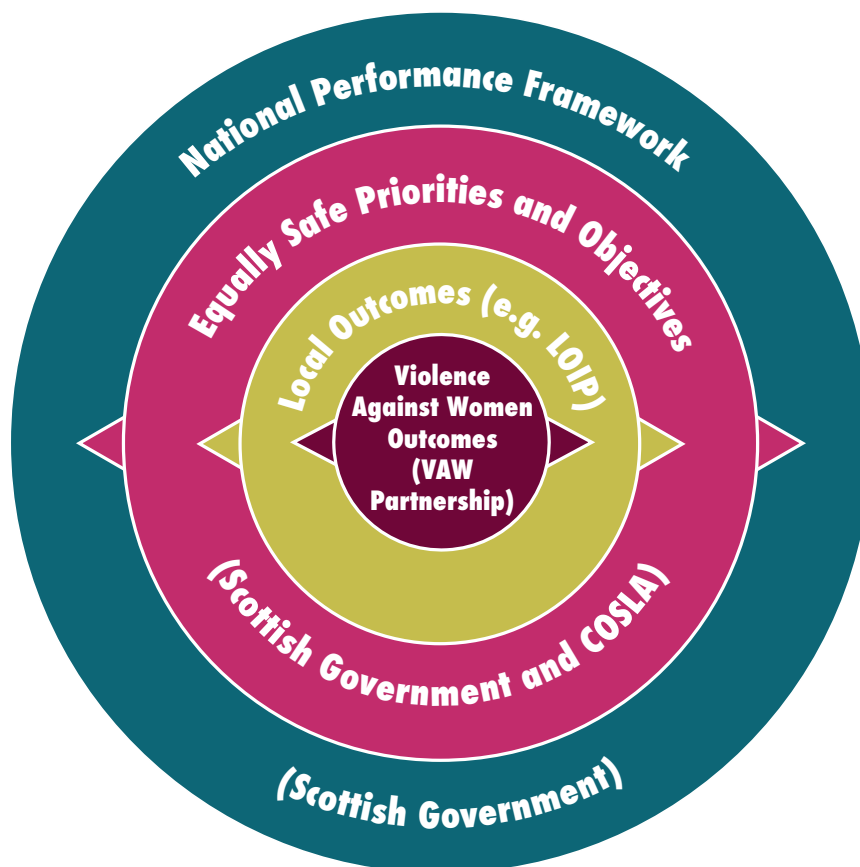
While the landscape will vary in each area, most of these partnerships will involve the same agencies – and, at times, the same individuals. At the very least, there should be an awareness among them of what the VAW Partnership can offer and a mutual awareness of the work done by each partnership. Effective communication mechanisms and a shared understanding of respective roles is critical to ensuring complementarity and avoiding wasteful duplication or overlap.

³ In 2015, WithScotland published an information pack and checklist for VAW Partnerships and Child Protection Committees, highlighting common areas of work and providing practical advice on how they can work together to achieve common goals. The resource can be accessed at <http://withscotland.org/resources/refreshed-information-and-checklist-for-violence-against-women-partnerships-child-protection-committees>

Working to shared outcomes

It is likely that each of these partnerships will have its own strategy and will be working to a set of local (and often national) outcomes relevant to its own area of work. Likewise, all VAW Partnerships should have their own outcomes framework (taking into consideration the national framework being developed as part of Equally Safe).

VAW Partnerships' outcomes should be evidence-based, agreed between partners and should also read across to other local outcomes fitting in with the Local Outcome Improvement Plan of the CPP. There are mutual benefits to having clear links between the VAW Partnership outcomes and the wider Local Outcomes Improvement Plans and a local VAW Partnership will reinforce its value when a clear contribution to the wider picture is demonstrated.



The work of a local VAW Partnership contributes to the Scottish Government's strategic objectives, in particular safer and stronger, healthier, and wealthier and fairer – and to the national outcomes contained in the National Performance Framework. Whilst it is important that the lines of accountability are clear, these will be different in each local authority according to the governance structures of the council, the CPP and other partnerships. Ultimately, the community planning partners are responsible and accountable to the communities they serve.

A performance framework is being developed to support VAW Partnerships to measure, understand and improve the activities that are undertaken at a local level to address violence against women and girls and the impact this work is having. The data included in this framework will be harmonised with other outcome frameworks, performance management systems and local and national strategies as much as possible to enable VAW Partnerships to better demonstrate how their work contributes to other strategic priorities. The framework will be available from 2017.

5. Minimum standards

Minimum Standards

While the specific membership, structure and activities of each VAW Partnership will vary depending on the needs and priorities of the communities in which they are operating, there are a number of minimum standards that are expected of all VAW Partnerships.

- 1. Every local authority area in Scotland should have a VAW Partnership in place that is responsible for working to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls within that local area.**

In some cases, these partnerships may operate along locality boundary lines that have been agreed by partners.⁴

- 2. VAW Partnerships should bring together the key public sector and third sector organisations working to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls within the local area.**

Key members of the VAW Partnership may include (but are not limited to) representatives from Adult and Child Protection Committees; Community Safety Partnerships; Health and Social Care Partnerships; Alcohol and Drugs Partnerships; Education; Housing, Social Work (i.e. children and families and criminal justice); NHS; Police Scotland; Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal; Rape Crisis; Women's Aid and other relevant organisations.

- 3. Every VAW Partnership should have Terms of Reference for their group.**

These should outline the Partnership's vision in relation to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls, the membership of the partnership and each partner's role and responsibilities within the Partnership, the meeting and chairing arrangements for the Partnership, the governance arrangements for the Partnership including reporting lines into the CPP Board.

⁴ For example, East and Midlothian currently have a shared partnership in place that is responsible for undertaking this work across the two local authority areas. The functions and responsibilities of East Lothian and Midlothian Violence Against Women Partnership are incorporated within the wider East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee.

4. Every VAW Partnership should have a Strategic Plan in place that outlines how the Partnership will implement Equally Safe at a local level.

Specifically, the local strategy should identify the outcomes the Partnership is working to in order to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls within their local area and the activities it will prioritise in order to achieve these outcomes. This may be referred to as a delivery plan. It ought to link directly to the LOIP.

5. Every VAW Partnership should have a framework in place for measuring its performance and progress towards achieving its agreed outcomes.

As part of the delivery of Equally Safe, a national performance framework is being developed which VAW Partnerships can use to measure and demonstrate the achievement of outcomes and identify areas where improvements may be required. Clear governance and reporting arrangements should also be in place to ensure that the Partnership is held to account for its progress towards achieving its agreed outcomes, by the CPP Board or an appropriate thematic group within the CPP.

6. Every VAW Partnership should have a designated person who is responsible for coordinating its core activities.

The specific tasks this person will be expected to undertake will depend on the needs, capacity and structure of the Partnership. However, suggested roles and responsibilities have been included in Appendix 2 of this Guide.

6. Core activities

VAW Partnerships are the principal vehicle for implementing Equally Safe at a local level and ensuring a joined-up, evidence informed approach is taken to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. A fundamental principle of any form of partnership is that, by working together, the partners collectively achieve more than they would alone. Ensuring that partnership working is effective, genuinely ‘adds value’ and achieves ‘more than the sum of the parts’ should be a key organising principle for VAW Partnerships, as it should for partnerships more generally.

The primary function of VAW Partnerships is to ensure that best use is made of all available resources in the community and that women and girls affected by violence and abuse receive integrated, relevant and effective services. In order to do this, a well-functioning and resourced VAW Partnership would normally be expected to undertake the following activities:

- **Conduct Needs Assessments**

VAW Partnerships should regularly gather and make use of all relevant information, learning and evidence on the needs and experiences of women and girls affected by violence and abuse in the local community and the extent to which these are currently being addressed by the agencies they interact with. This will include making effective use of the data captured by the individual members of the Partnerships, as well as consulting with women and girls.

- **Strategic Reviews and Annual Planning**

As noted above, every VAW Partnership is expected to have an agreed strategy in place. The Partnership should review this strategy regularly and should also produce an annual workplan, outlining the resource inputs contributed by partners and the specific activities the Partnership will undertake in the coming year to achieve its agreed outcomes. Examples of VAW Partnership strategies and workplans can be found on the [National VAW Network's KHub group](#).

- **Performance Reporting**

As noted above, every VAW Partnership is expected to measure the progress that it is making towards its agreed outcomes. VAW Partnerships should report annually on their performance and a national performance management framework is being

developed to support Partnerships with this task. This will enable partners and commissioning agencies to see the impact of the VAW Partnership's work and will enable Partnerships to identify any areas for improvement at an early stage. As appropriate, aspects of the VAW Partnership's annual report should also be reflected in the LOIP annual report.

- **Quality Assurance**

VAW Partnerships should provide quality assurance for local services and policies ensuring they are evidence informed and contribute to the partnership's local strategy.

- **Disseminating learning and training**

VAW Partnerships should ensure both specialist and non-specialist organisations have the knowledge and skills they need to identify and support women and girls affected in an appropriate way. This may include producing learning resources, sharing best practice and organising training. Where appropriate, training and learning materials should be shared openly in order to encourage best possible use of resources. The National VAW Network provides a range of mechanisms for encouraging such a collaborative approach.

- **Promoting a Preventative Approach**

Equally Safe highlights the need to make a decisive shift towards preventing VAWG by addressing its root causes. VAW Partnerships have a leading role to play in engaging with other partnerships and strategic bodies within their CPP and helping to ensure that they prioritise tackling gender inequality and social attitudes in their own strategies and plans.

- **Identifying Resources**

VAWPs have a responsibility to identify the resources required (e.g. staff, volunteers, budgets, etc) to deliver on their local multi-agency strategy and action plan (see section 7)

- **Informing work being undertaken nationally**

VAW Partnerships have significant knowledge and experience of working to address violence against women and girls and play an important role in identifying challenges and best practice at a local level, which can help to inform policy and practice across Scotland. A key way that VAW Partnerships can do this is through actively contributing to the work of the National VAW Network (see Further Resources). Effective collaboration and information sharing between local VAW partnerships and national partners will avoid duplication and help free up resource for frontline activities.

Additionally, in order to ensure that VAW Partnerships have the necessary knowledge, skills and resources to implement Equally Safe at a local level, it is recommended that all Partnerships should develop effective practices across the following areas:

- Community Engagement and Participation
- Use of Evidence
- Focus on Outcomes
- Leadership
- Governance
- Accountability
- Use of Resources
- Performance Management and Reporting
- Impact.

With reference to these nine areas, the Improvement Service has worked with the National VAW Network and other stakeholders to develop a VAW Partnership Checklist, based on research, evidence and good practice on effective, outcome-focussed

partnership working. This includes the Account Commission's Key Lines of Enquiry in their CPP Audit Framework and, more recently, the Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 and associated guidance.

As part of its current funding from the Scottish Government, the Improvement Service is able to support VAW Partnerships to undertake self-assessments of their partnerships using this Checklist and to develop and implement an improvement plan, based on the strengths and weaknesses identified by the members of each Partnership. The full checklist has been included as an appendix to this guidance and more information on the self-assessment process is available on the [Improvement Service's](#) website.

7. Capacity and Resources

It is estimated that as much as 40 per cent of all spending on public services is accounted for by interventions that could have been avoided by prioritising a preventative approach. In the spirit of the Christie Commission, and recognising the shared outcomes outlined above, the partner agencies should see their contributions to the VAW Partnership as a clear example of preventative spend. As Equally Safe sets out, the cost implications of failing to address the prevalence and implications of violence against women and girls amount to an estimated £1.6 billion for domestic abuse and £4 billion for violence against women in all its forms.

Given the budget pressures that the public sector is currently exposed to, it is essential that all partner agencies within VAW Partnerships are fully committed to working together to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls and pool their collective resources (e.g. budgets, staff, training) to achieve this outcome.

Any consideration of VAW Partnerships resources should distinguish between:

- a) *Administrative activity*: The resources available to the partnership to undertake its planning, reporting and coordinating functions.
- b) *Delivery activity*: The resources available to the Partnership and individual Partner organisations to deliver work ‘on the ground’ such as training and support work.
- c) *Commissioned services*: While VAW Partnerships do not ordinarily commission services, individual CP members will. Moreover, both the local VAW partnership itself – or individual members of it - will often have a role in VAW service design and/or delivery.

It is important for agencies other than just the local authority to recognise that VAW Partnerships need resources to carry out their administrative activities. Good practice is that this central function is funded collaboratively between key agencies rather than relying on one sole source of income. This principle of shared responsibility is now enshrined within the Community Empowerment Act with regard to core community planning partners’ responsibilities for resourcing community planning.

VAW Partnerships should also recognise that resources do not always have to take the form of financial contribution, with staff time, accommodation and other non-financial contributions / in-kind support often proving just as valuable.

Aside from contributions from key agencies, there are a number of funding streams that VAW Partnerships may draw on to support their work. Sources for this may include contributions from the Scottish Government or statutory agencies, European Union funding, Big Lottery funding, etc.

While funding arrangements will be different in each local authority area, COSLA and Scottish Government's aim is to see VAW Partnerships adequately resourced. All partners at the table should work to ensure this happens.

Further support and resources

The National Violence Against Women Network

The National VAW Network aims to improve the capacity and capability of VAW Partnerships to implement the ambitions set out in Equally Safe at a local level and to support Partnerships to engage effectively with community planning processes.

Coordinated by the Improvement Service and funded by the Scottish Government, the Network brings together VAW Partnership Coordinators/Lead Officers across Scotland and other key stakeholders including the Scottish Government and COSLA to share information, learning and resources and ensure that there is meaningful engagement and a coordinated approach taken on relevant issues.

The Network meets six times a year and also has an online [KHub Group](#) where a wider membership can connect to each other on an ongoing basis. For more information about the Network, please visit the [Improvement Service's](#) website.

Appendix 1 – Policy and legislation

Our policy approach to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls links across many different parts of Government policy – ranging through the spheres of health, education and justice to name but a few. These include (but are not limited to):

Policy Connections

[Race Equality Framework](#)

[Disability Delivery Plan](#)

[Programme of work aimed at reducing discrimination against and improving attitudes to Gypsy/Travellers](#)

[Equally Well](#)

[Mental Health Strategy](#)

[Alcohol and drugs partnerships](#)

[Sexual Health and Blood Borne Virus Framework](#)

[The Keys to Life learning disability strategy](#)

[Fair Work Convention](#)

[Fairer Scotland action plan](#)

[Youth Employment](#)

[Tackling Homelessness](#)

[Making Justice Work](#)

[Building Safer Communities](#)

[Reducing Reoffending Programme](#)

[Implementation of the recommendations of the Commission on Women Offenders](#)

[Tackling human trafficking and exploitation](#)

[Curriculum for Excellence](#)

[Positive Behaviours in Schools](#)

[National child protection guidance](#)

[The Getting it Right for Every Child \(GIRFEC\) framework](#)

[The Early Years Framework and Collaborative](#)

[The National Action Plan to tackle Child Sexual Exploitation](#)

[Maternity policy](#)

[Children's Hearings](#)

[Looked After Children](#)

Relevant laws

There are a number of laws which contribute to preventing and tackling violence against women and girls.

These include (but are not limited to):

- The Human Rights Act (1998)²³
- Vulnerable Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2004
- Prohibition of Female Genital Mutilation (Scotland) Act 2005
- Protection of Children and Prevention of Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2005
- Protection of Vulnerable Groups (Scotland) Act 2007
- Sexual Offences (Scotland) Act 2009
- Domestic Abuse (Scotland) Act 2011
- Children's Hearings (Scotland) Act 2011
- Forced Marriage etc. (Protection and Jurisdiction) (Scotland) Act 2011
- Children and Young People (Scotland) Act 2014
- Victims and Witnesses (Scotland) Act 2014
- Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015

Appendix 2 – VAW partnership checklist⁵

1. Community engagement and participation

VAW Partnerships should regularly:



Engage with women and children who are affected by violence and abuse, in order to understand their needs and experiences.	
Communicate with key stakeholders, especially women and children, about the work of the Partnership.	
Use feedback from women, children and communities to inform the partnership's strategic outcomes, the activities it undertakes and the way these activities are delivered.	
Secure the involvement of all relevant organisations and partnerships that are able to contribute to the Partnership's outcomes and ensure they are fully involved in planning processes.	

⁵ This Checklist is regularly reviewed to ensure it reflects best practice in partnership working and aligns with current local and national priorities.

2. Use of evidence

VAW Partnerships should regularly:



Ensure the Partnership has developed and agreed a common understanding of local needs and opportunities.	
Make full use of different partners’ data sources and expertise in data analysis.	
Ensure that the Partnership’s priorities and agreed outcomes respond to the key issues identified through data analysis and community/ stakeholder engagement activity.	
Ensure that all members have a good understanding of the profile and key statistics of the local area, including information relating both to inequalities (e.g. education, income, health) and the range of equalities groupings (e.g. age, race, gender).	
Draw upon research and evaluation evidence to inform the Partnership’s understanding of which activities represent good value for money and make a tangible difference to improving outcomes for women, girls and children.	

3. Focus on outcomes

VAW Partnerships should regularly:



Ensure there is a clear statement in the Partnership's local VAW strategy and other relevant local plans (e.g. the CPP's Local Outcome Improvement Plan) about the specific outcomes that the Partnership is working towards.	
Identify and agree any specific communities and/or client groups the Partnership will prioritise in relation to reducing inequalities in outcomes, and ensure that priority outcomes for these groups are included in the plan.	
Clearly identify the activities that need to be undertaken to achieve the Partnership's intended outcomes and any external factors that are likely to impact on this.	
Encourage innovation and discussion concerning the best ways to achieve the Partnership's outcomes.	
Identify and prioritise those activities which will make the greatest contribution to the Partnership's agreed outcomes.	
Ensure that individual partners understand their respective responsibilities for achieving the Partnership's agreed outcomes.	

4. Leadership

VAW Partnerships should regularly ensure:



They have strong and effective collective leadership.	
All key public sector and third sector organisations who can contribute to achieving the Partnership’s agreed outcomes actively engage with the Partnership, and there are no key organisations missing from the Partnership.	
Individuals involved in the partnership are sufficiently empowered to significantly advance key issues within their own organisation/ networks.	
Partners work effectively together to achieve an agreed, shared purpose.	
Partnership meetings take place within a positive spirit of transparency, openness and trust.	
Where appropriate, elected members and other senior stakeholders are engaged in the leadership of the Partnership and scrutinise its performance.	

5. Governance

VAW Partnerships should ensure:



They have a clear vision for eradicating and preventing violence against women and girls, which all partners are fully committed to achieving.	
Appropriate structures and processes are in place to support effective decision making.	
All partners have discussed and agreed their respective roles and responsibilities in relation to implementing the partnership's activities and outcomes.	
Effective mechanisms for addressing issues that cut across different thematic areas are in place to avoid 'siloed' or duplicated working.	
All partners regularly attend Partnership meetings, ensuring continuity as much as possible.	
Effective mechanisms are in place for managing collective risks, which is regularly reviewed.	
Conflict resolution mechanisms are in place, which have been agreed by all partners.	

6. Accountability

VAW Partnerships should ensure:



Clear accountability arrangements are in place which are understood and implemented by all relevant partners.	
The Partnership is held to account for its progress towards achieving its agreed outcomes, by an appropriate strategic body.	
The Partnerships’ agreed outcomes are reflected in the strategic and operational plans of all its partner organisations.	
All partners play an active role in agreeing, monitoring and taking action to achieve the Partnership’s outcomes.	
All partners effectively communicate Partnership decisions within their own organisation.	
The Partnership holds individual partners to account for their performance and contribution to achieving its agreed outcomes and to improve.	
Individuals involved in the Partnership offer constructive criticism and regularly challenge each other and the Partnership as a whole to ‘do more’ and promote a culture of continued improvement.	
The Partnership ‘adds value’ to the individual contributions made by each partner organisation to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls.	

7. Use of resources

VAW Partnerships should:



Ensure they are aware of all the resources (financial, staff, assets) that are being invested locally to achieve the Partnership's agreed outcomes.	
Undertake an analysis of what is spent locally to tackle violence against women and girls and the impact that these funded services/ activities are having towards achieving the Partnership's agreed outcomes.	
Realign resources, where required, in order to better deliver early intervention and prevention approaches.	
Identify opportunities for partner organisations to pool budgets, training and other resources to help deliver the Partnership's agreed outcomes for tackling violence against women.	

8. Performance Management and Reporting

VAW Partnerships should ensure:



There are clear performance reporting processes in place, between individual partner organisations, the Partnership and the CPP Board or Chief Officers' group.	
The Partnership's long term outcome of preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls is supported by intermediate outcomes and indicators against which progress can be measured and demonstrated in the short and medium term.	
The Partnership actively uses performance information to facilitate constructive strategic discussion and decisions, and to make improvements where any areas of under-performance are identified.	
The Partnership benchmarks performance information with other VAW Partnerships, where appropriate.	
<p>The Partnership publishes a publicly available, easy to understand annual performance report, which demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• progress (including successes and failures) against the Partnership's agreed activities and outcomes• the contribution the Partnership is making towards priorities set out in its Local Outcome Improvement Plans and other relevant strategic plans• the progress the Partnership is making towards the ambitions set out in Equally Safe.	

9. Impact

VAW Partnerships should ensure:



By working together, the partnership has delivered improvements which could not have been delivered by individual organisations.	
The partnership has made demonstrable progress against the Partnership's own agreed outcomes, the relevant outcomes in Local Outcome Improvement Plans and the ambitions set out in Equally Safe.	
The partnership is making progress in closing the gap around inequalities in outcomes related to violence against women and girls.	
The key focus of the partnership's activities is upon addressing the root causes of the issues that it has prioritised.	
There is evidence that the partnership's actions around early intervention and prevention are having an impact.	

Appendix 3 – Key responsibilities and duties of a VAW Partnership Coordinator/Lead Officer

Key duties and responsibilities of this post may include:

- Providing leadership to support the Chair of the VAW Partnership to develop and implement a VAW Strategy and a supporting work plan.
- Ensuring that the strategy and work plans reflect Scottish Government policy and best practice guidance in this area, as well as local CPP priorities.
- Managing the development of effective links between the VAW Partnership and other relevant partnerships and agencies.
- Working with relevant Community Planning Partner agencies to initiate and support the production of agency specific work plans that reflect the key outcomes of the VAW Strategy.
- Monitoring and evaluating the VAW Strategy, ensuring strategic commitment across key partner agencies in line with national and local priorities.
- Working effectively to enhance partnership working arrangements with key public bodies and the voluntary sector to ensure that measures to address VAW are coordinated, efficient, effective and meet the needs of service users.
- Building and maintaining effective communication and consultation mechanisms with all agencies and organisations.
- Actively engaging with the National Violence Against Women Network, to enable information, learning and resources to be shared across Scotland, and where required, represent the Partnership at a national level.
- Assisting partner agencies in the development of policies, practice, staff training programmes, monitoring and evaluation frameworks, participation plans and service user involvement strategies in relation to violence against women/gender based violence.

- Working with service providers to develop consistent and effective approaches to risk assessment and risk management of VAW.
- Researching, planning, developing, implementing, monitoring and evaluating projects in line with the existing best practice demonstrated at national and local level.
- Creating high quality and accessible information materials for public distribution.
- Organising and coordinating special events, where required.

