

The delivery of Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls

Summary and Recommendations

Equally Safe is Scotland's Strategy for preventing and eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls. The Strategy and its associated Delivery Plan was developed by COSLA and the Scottish Government in association with a wide range of partners. These included our specialist Violence Against Women support organisations such as Scottish Women's Aid and Rape Crisis Scotland alongside Police Scotland and Health Scotland. COSLA recognises that violence against women and girls damages health and wellbeing, limits freedom and potential, and is a fundamental violation of human rights.

COSLA, the Scottish Government and key partners are committed to preventing and eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls, (alternatively know as 'gender based or gendered violence').

This paper invites the Board to

- i. Consider the progress made to date against actions as outlined in the Equally Safe Delivery Plan 2017 – 2021
- ii. Consider proposing the establishment of an Equally Safe Special Interest Group to establish a COSLA wide focused and connected approach
- iii. Consider the content of the proposed COSLA 12-month project plan to maintain current activity and drive forward progress to prevent and eradicate gendered violence
- iv. Agree the content with any changes to the suggested actions
- v. Approve the 12 month plan (November 2018 – October 2019)

References

Previous reports on [topic]:

- [Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls](#)
- [Equally Safe: delivery plan](#)
- [Scottish Government Programme for Government 2018-19](#)
- [Good Practice in Commissioning Specialist Domestic Abuse Services - COSLA and Scottish Women's Aid](#)
- [Violence Against Women Partnership Guidance – COSLA and Scottish Government](#)
- [Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework](#)
- [IS and COSLA Elected Member Briefing Note, 'Why Adopt a Gendered Analysis of Violence and Abuse](#)
- 'Exceptions to two-child limit for Child Tax Credit/ Universal Credit' – COSLA Community Wellbeing Board, 21 September 2018
- 'Promoting Equality in Local Government: COSLA Action Plan Update' – COSLA Leadership Sounding Board, 9 March 2018
- 'Promoting Equality in Local Government' – COSLA Leaders Meeting, 24 November 2017
- '#GenerationEqual Pledge' – COSLA Leaders Meeting, 26 October 2018

The delivery of Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy to prevent and eradicate violence against women and girls

Purpose

1. This report presents an update on progress and the proposed next steps for COSLA in the implementation of priority actions outlined in the Equally Safe Delivery Plan (2017-21). It invites the Board's views on the proposed next steps, including a 12-month action plan and the establishment of a proposed Equally Safe Special Interest Group. Lastly, it invites the Board to prioritise where and how COSLA will focus additional energies to tackle the Equally Safe Delivery Actions where the collaborative engagement of wide ranging services across local government, working with its partners, will be critical to their achievement

Current COSLA Position

2. COSLA, the Scottish Government and key partners are committed to preventing and eradicating all forms of violence against women and girls, (alternatively know as 'gender based or gendered violence'). For the purposes of The Equally Safe Strategy, violence against women and girls includes, but is not limited to:
 - Domestic Abuse
 - Sexual Violence (including harassment, sexual assault and rape and child sexual abuse)
 - Commercial sexual exploitation
 - Child sexual exploitation
 - So called 'Honour' based violence, including female genital mutilation and forced marriage
3. The Equally Safe Strategy was published in 2014 and updated in 2016. It sets out a vision of a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and protected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse - and the attitudes that help perpetuate them. The aim of the strategy is to foster collaborative working between key partners in the public, private and third sectors to achieve its aims.
4. The strategic approach is drawn from the United Nations definition of gender based violence, which recognises that it is a function of gender inequality, that it is an abuse of male power and privilege and that women and girls experience violence and abuse because they female and they continue to occupy a subordinate position in relation to men.
5. The development of a delivery plan to complement the Equally Safe Strategy was an early commitment. The Delivery Plan for the period 2017 - 2021 was finalised following a consultation and publication of the analysis of responses in November 2017. It contains 118 priority actions across four priority areas. These are;
 - i. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
 - ii. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically.

- iii. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people, and
 - iv. men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.
6. The actions are further grouped under policy themes which are wide ranging and include:
- Raising awareness and changing attitudes
 - Children and Young people
 - Wider society;
 - Understanding gender
 - Parenting and childcare
 - Women's economic equality
 - Women's civic and social inequality
 - Women's spaces
 - Capacity and Collaboration across services
 - Health
 - Justice
 - Housing
 - Social Work
 - Third sector
 - Strengthening legislation
 - Improving system response; and
 - Rehabilitation.
7. Local Government's collaborative engagement across a large number of the priority actions will be critical to their achievement. Those of most relevance to local government are listed and appended to this paper (Appendix 1). To ensure delivery they will require the Board's ongoing scrutiny and attention.
8. In addition, COSLA is named as a lead partner in five action areas. These are;
- 1.26** to 'Develop a pilot Equally Safe employer accreditation programme in order to lever better employment practice in tackling gender based violence experienced by the workforce (working with Close the Gap),
- 2.13** to 'Continue to set out strong opposition to the UK Government's policy of restricting benefits to 2 children and the subsequent requirement on women to disclose they have been raped to access further benefits' (with the Scottish Government and Third Sector organisations)
- 2.14** to 'Develop guidance for professionals who may be asked to act as third party assessors for the exemption where a child is conceived through rape, to ensure that women seeking such an assessment receive the right support' (with the Scottish Government and Health Scotland)
- 3.7** to 'Support local violence against women partnerships in their improvement journey, and work to ensure that every local authority in Scotland has a high performing partnership linked to other local structures' (with the Scottish Government and the Improvement Service)
- 3.52** to 'Review how national and local specialist services for women and children experiencing gender based violence are commissioned and funded, and how we can ensure quality and sustainability of service.' (with the Scottish Government)

Governance and Accountability

9. The joint Equally Safe Joint Strategic Board was established following the publication of the Strategy in 2014 and is chaired by the COSLA Spokesperson and the Scottish Government at Ministerial level. It has recently been refreshed as part of the implementation phase. It has a focus on influencing strategic direction and identifying major emerging issues relevant to gender based violence.
10. COSLA and the Scottish Government also co-chair (at officer level) the Equally Safe Joint Delivery Group, with a focus on ensuring that every agency is delivering its commitments in this Plan and that multi-agency working is embedded nationally and locally.
11. COSLA is also represented on the Stakeholder Advisory Forum that ensures partners receive the best possible advice and an Experience Expert Panel that ensures that women, children and young people who have lived experience of gender based violence, shape and influence the implementation of this plan.
12. Working in partnership with the Scottish Government, the Improvement Service, the Violence Against Women Sector and other key organisations, progress to date includes:

Overall

- The Scottish Government has, in accordance with its commitment under 3.1 of the Plan 'Funded a dedicated post in COSLA with a focus on implementing Equally Safe at a local level'.
- A refreshed Joint Strategic Board co-chaired at Ministerial/Spokesperson level by the Scottish Government and COSLA has been instituted and met in September 2018 for the first time
- A Joint Delivery Group, co-chaired at official level by the Scottish Government and COSLA has been formulated and met in September 2018 for the first time
- A Stakeholder Advisory Group to harness expertise of organisations and academics and an Experience Expert Panel to ensure that lived survivors of gender based violence continue to influence the implementation of the plan, has been created.
- Scottish Women's Aid and COSLA have co-produced and published 'Good Practice in Commissioning Specialist Domestic Abuse Services'

Local Partnerships

- The establishment across all local authorities of a Violence Against Women Partnership through which agencies across every area of Scottish life are expected to work together to tackle violence against women and girls has been achieved. At a local level, Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnerships are recognised as the key driver for this multi-agency work.
- The establishment of a National VAW Network coordinated by the Improvement Service which aims to improve the capacity and capability of VAW Partnerships to implement Equally Safe at a local level and to support partnerships to engage effectively with community planning processes, has been achieved
- Scottish Government and COSLA joint guidance and recommended set of minimum standards expected of all VAW Partnerships, with a focus on prevention and early intervention has been published and recently refreshed
- Working with the Improvement Service, The National Violence Against Women Network and the Scottish Government, COSLA has co-produced and published the Equally Safe Quality Standards and Performance Framework to support VAW Partnerships to measure and demonstrate the progress being made to implement Equally Safe at a local level, and to identify any areas for improvement

Other priority actions

- The joint IS and COSLA Elected Member Briefing Note, 'Why Adopt a Gendered Analysis of Violence and Abuse' has been issued.
- Progress has been made in the development of a pilot Equally Safe employer accreditation programme to lever better employment practice in tackling gender based violence experienced by the workforce. The development of a pilot programme is underway. All 32 Local Authorities have been invited to register their interest in participating and there has been a positive response
- COSLA has and is committed to continuing to set out strong opposition to the UK Government's policy of restricting benefits to 2 children and the subsequent requirement on women to disclose they have been raped to access further benefits
- COSLA has informed the development of guidance for professionals who may be asked to act as third party assessors for the exemption where a child is conceived through rape, to ensure that women seeking such an assessment receive the right support

What is changing?

13. A joint COSLA and Scottish Government Year One Update Draft Report on progress made against the Equally Safe Delivery Actions is currently being finalised with a target for publication in November.
14. Board decisions made now will set the direction for COSLA's progression of Equally Safe into and across the next 12 month period, up to the next reporting period.

Proposed COSLA Position

15. The implementation of the delivery of Equally Safe will require local government in Scotland to pursue the agreed Equally Safe outcomes within and across their own Community Planning Partnership frameworks to ensure a collaborative, cross-sector and multi-agency strategic approach. Therefore, the Community Well-Being Board may wish to consider proposing the establishment of an 'Equally Safe' Special Interest Group to establish a COSLA wide focused and connected approach.
16. The Equally Safe Co-ordinator has mapped the Equally Safe Delivery Plan actions across relevant Boards and Teams, and has considered where related policy commitments to relevant action have already been made, albeit in relation to other policy objectives. The Equally Safe Policy Co-ordinator has utilised this knowledge to create a proposed COSLA Equally Safe Action Plan covering the period November 2018 – October 2019.

Next Steps

17. It is proposed that COSLA now considers the development and implementation of an action plan through which:
 - i. The next 12 months of activity is clearly defined and driven forward
 - ii. COSLA and the Scottish Government's partnership, that underpins the Equally Safe Strategy and Implementation Plan, is reinforced.
 - iii. progress against COSLA's key areas of leadership and activity (as laid out in section 8 of this paper) is planned and taken forward as a matter of priority
 - iv. COSLA actively supports key International Awareness Raising Campaigning action, including the UN Women's International 16 Days of Action for the Elimination of Violence against Women and the White Ribbon Campaign through which volunteer male ambassadors are supported to challenge male cultures that lead to harassment, abuse and violence and to engage with other men and boys to promote a culture of equality and respect

- v. consideration is given to prioritising COSLA's engagement in informing and shaping local government's response to the broad number of priority actions where Local Government's collaborative engagement will be critical to their achievement.
- vi. the involvement in and progress related to policy development engagement across all COSLA Boards (as laid out in Section 5 of this paper) is coordinated and reported on annually to ensure tracking of all linked progress. Each Board will need to consider, own and, where appropriate, represent and promote progress against relevant actions, where they fall within the bounds of that Board's remit
- vii. COSLA develops a greater awareness and understanding of the gendered analysis of violence and abuse to better support its members to inform positively ongoing policy decision making and organisational development
- viii. COSLA informs and supports leaders to engage with and promote International, national and Scottish campaigning bodies and activities that are informed by the United Nations definition of gender based violence and work to deliver a Scottish society that embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
- ix. COSLA continues to work to promote female representation in local decision making and representational politics.

12. The detailed 12-month proposed plan for the Boards consideration is appended to this paper. (See Appendix 2).

Appendix 1

Areas of the Equally Safe Delivery Plan Seen as of Most Relevance To Local Government

1. Overall there are 108 Equally Safe Priority Actions, across 4 Priority areas. Many of these require the support and involvement of Local Government.
2. Political decision making across COSLA may be required to ensure some of the priority actions can progress

Priority Area 1: “Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls”

3. Objectives of PA1 are that:
 - 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
4. The priority actions in this section contribute to Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence and the building of Capability and Capacity to raise awareness of VAW and change attitudes, and to build capacity across organisations to address it. The Scottish social attitudes module published in 2014 on public attitudes to violence against women indicates that progress requires to be made in this area.
5. Commitments to action include some activities already suggested in the proposed COSLA Action plan, in particular, COSLA’s active engagement in raising awareness and understanding and informing and promoting a wide range of campaign development and activity, including the UN Women’s 16 days of Action Against Gendered Violence and the White Ribbon Campaign.
6. In addition actions cover:
 - children and young people and the practitioners and services involved in their learning and development in schools, early years and youthwork settings. These focus on learning about and understanding equality and respect in healthy relationships, consent, sexual health and parenthood information, the young workforce; gender balance across schools and curriculum access; unconscious bias and gender stereotyping, equalities and consent, sexist bullying, the impact of pornography on the wellbeing of young people and prevention of sexual offending/crime involving children and young people and mitigation of the harm it causes.
 - to engage the media in exploring their role in tackling VAW
 - to ‘challenge demand’ actions to reduce the exploitation and abuse of women through commercial sexual exploitation and improve service responses to women affected.
 - further explore what ‘good prevention work’ looks like to inform policy
 - on workplace policy development to support those experiencing gendered violence and to deal robustly with instances of sexual harassment

Priority Area 2: “Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically”

7. Objectives of PA 2 are that:

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

8. The priority actions in this section contribute to Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence and seek to raise awareness and understanding of Gender inequality as a root cause of violence against women and girls. Despite advances there remains persistent inequalities between women and men. These actions seek to bring a stronger gender perspective into policy making.

9. Commitments to action include some activities already suggested in the proposed COSLA Action plan, in particular COSLA's development of greater awareness and understanding of the gendered analysis of violence and abuse to better support its members to positively inform ongoing policy decision making and organisational development

10. In addition, there are actions to:

- improve understanding of gender in policy making, including strategic consideration of gender budgeting and equality impact assessment processes as part of policy making to tackle inequality and discrimination as required by many public authorities by the Equality Act 2010
- address women's economic inequality and to tackle the gender pay gap
- tackle pregnancy and maternity discrimination and pay inequality; promote employment practices and workplace cultures to support gender equality and family friendly workplaces;
- reduce employment inequality for minority ethnic women
- double the number of workers receiving the real Living Wage
- ensure access to justice and embed Fair Work in workplaces throughout Scotland

Priority Area 3: "Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people"

11. Objectives of PA 3 are that:

- 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

12. The priority actions in this section contribute to Capability and Capacity, Justice and Capacity and Collaboration across services. They combine to promote an integrated system of mainstream, specialist and third sector services capable of delivering a coherent and consistent response across a diverse range of needs, that allows for flexibility to reflect local circumstances.

13. Commitments to action include some activities already covered by the proposed COSLA Action plan as core, including the establishment of COSLA's Equally Safe Policy Co-ordinator.

14. In addition there are actions to provide children and young people with better access to information about and support for gender based violence; review how violence against women partnerships are resourced locally and identify how they can ensure a focus on all forms of gender based violence; support the development of individual Delivery Plans and establishment of effective links through Community Planning Partnerships; embed

consistent and effective operation of multi-agency structures to support high risk victims of domestic abuse; develop and publish multi-agency guidance setting out how agencies, individually and together, can protect girls and young women from FGM, and how to respond appropriately to survivors; and ensure that those in housing and social work services coming in to contact with those who have experienced gender based violence can offer an appropriate, safe and consistent response

Priority Area 4: “Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response”

15. Objectives of PA 4 are that

- 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

16. The priority actions in this section contribute to Capability and Capacity and Justice and include and seeks to ensure robust enforcement to address reoffending, while ensuring that men get the support they need to change their behaviour at the earliest opportunity.

17. Actions relevant to local government include the expansion of the Caledonian Project so that more male perpetrators can receive rehabilitation service to address the issues giving rise to their offending behaviour. Readiness for the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Bill also sits in this section.

18. Violence Against Women Local Partnership Co-ordinators views on potential areas of priority for COSLA’s consideration.

The Violence Against Women Partnership Co-ordinators from across Scotland at their national meeting on the 31st October 2018, discussed where COSLA’s additional leadership and scrutiny could enhance progress at a local level.

From those actions across these wide areas of policy in the Equally Safe Delivery Plan they identified the following areas where COSLA’s additional scrutiny would support their work at a local level. These were identified as:

- Primary Prevention work being undertaken across a range of programmes, some driven at national level, in schools, early years environments and the youth sector
- ‘challenge demand’ action to reduce the exploitation and abuse of women through commercial sexual exploitation and improve service responses to women affected
- improved understanding of gender in policy making, with a specific focus on poverty
- more effective links between local Violence Against Women Partnerships and Community Planning Partnerships and with Health and Social Care Partnerships
- the readiness at a local level across sectors. agencies and services supporting those affected by gendered violence, for the impact that the new Domestic Abuse legislation and public awareness raising campaigns and educational programmes, as laid out in the plan, will inevitably have on services

Appendix Two

Proposed COSLA Equally Safe Action Plan November 2018 - October 2019

a) The next 12 months of Equally Safe activity is clearly defined and driven forward at COSLA

- | | |
|----|---|
| 1. | The ES Policy Coordinator will lead and coordinate COSLA's overall response to the Equally Safe Strategy, its Delivery Plan and joint ministerial/spokesperson governance arrangements with the Scottish Government |
| 2. | COSLA's Community Well Being Board will consider a proposed Equally Safe 12-month action plan (November 2018 – October 2019) on Friday 9th November 2018 through which the implementation of Equally Safe at a local level will be further facilitated. |

b) COSLA and the Scottish Government's partnership underpinning the Equally Safe Strategy and Implementation Plan, is reinforced

- | | |
|----|---|
| 3. | The ES Policy Coordinator will work with the Scottish Government to review and refresh shared protocols regarding strategic messaging, branding and public representation |
|----|---|

c) progress against COSLA's key areas of leadership and activity (as laid out in section 7 of the main paper) is planned and taken forward as a matter of priority

- | | |
|-----|---|
| 4. | COSLA will continue to work with Close the Gap to develop a pilot Equally Safe employer accreditation programme in order to lever better employment practice in tackling gender based violence experienced by the workforce |
| 5. | COSLA will continue to set out strong opposition to the UK Government's policy of restricting benefits to 2 children and the subsequent requirement on women to disclose they have been raped to access further benefits |
| 6. | COSLA will continue to express COSLA's fundamental opposition to the two child limit and the 'rape' clause and COSLA's view that both policies should be abolished |
| 7. | COSLA informed guidance for third party assessors* will be reviewed annually.
* for the exemption where a child is conceived through rape, to ensure that women seeking such an assessment receive the right support |
| 8. | COSLA will continue to support local violence against women partnerships in their improvement journey, and work to ensure that every local authority in Scotland has a high performing partnership linked to other local structures |
| 9. | COSLA will review how national and local specialist services for women and children experiencing gender-based violence are commissioned and funded, and how we can ensure quality and sustainability of service |
| 10. | COSLA will work to stabilise VAW multi-agency work and facilitate and support movement towards a preventative approach |

d) consideration is given to prioritising COSLA's engagement in informing and shaping local government's response to the broad number of priority actions where Local Government's collaborative engagement will be critical to their achievement

11.	COSLA's Community Well-Being Board will consider the range of actions in Appendix 3. The Board will identify where it would like COSLA's additional engagement with these actions to be developed across the next 12 months.
12.	Activity will be planned for and progress will be reviewed regularly, with further areas of engagement from these actions considered by the Board where appropriate.
e) Involvement in and progress related to policy development engagement across all COSLA Boards (as laid out in Section 5 of this paper) is coordinated and reported on annually from this point forward, to ensure tracking of all linked progress	
13.	Each Team and Board will be asked to consider, take responsibility for and, where appropriate, represent and promote progress against relevant Equally Safe Implementation actions, where they fall within the bounds of the Board's policy remit
14.	The Equally Safe Co-ordinator will work across team's, and where required to, across Board's, to inform and record action and progress. This will support COSLA's annual assessment and reporting of progress across all the involved policy areas, in partnership with the Scottish Government and with reference to progress in delivery captured by the Improvement Service
f) COSLA develops greater awareness and understanding of the gendered analysis of violence and abuse to better support its members to positively inform ongoing policy decision making and organisational development	
15.	COSLA supports Leaders to engage with the promotion of gender equality and Equally Safe, to deliver a Scottish society that embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
16.	COSLA develops itself as a gender competent organisation, including supporting greater awareness of why a response to gendered violence requires a multi agency response.
17.	COSLA develops itself as an Equally Safe Employer
g) COSLA informs and supports leaders to engage with and promote International, national and Scottish campaigning bodies and activities that are informed by the United Nations definition of gender based violence and work to deliver a Scottish society that embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls	
18.	Coordinated promotion of activity taking place this year across Local Authorities over the UN Women's International 16 Days of Action for the Elimination of Violence against Women to run from 25th November (International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women) to Human Rights Day on 10th December 2018
19.	Establishment of a co-ordinated planning approach across COSLA to the 16 Days of Action 2019, to highlight and promote the role of Local Government activities to prevent and eradicate VAW
20.	Active promotion at COSLA and encouragement of take up of all Local Authorities, of the White Ribbon Campaign through which volunteer male ambassadors are supported to challenge male cultures that lead to harassment, abuse and violence and to engage with other men and boys to promote a culture of equality and respect

21.	Engagement with and promotion of Equally Safe national campaigning activities being developed by the Scottish Government and key stakeholders, named in the Delivery Plan as they develop. These include awareness raising campaigns on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Coercive control and domestic abuse ○ Sexual Violence ○ Sexual Harassment and sexism ○ VAW – with a focus on intersectionality and less well known forms of gendered violence ○ Honour based violence, Female Genital Mutilation and Forced Marriage
h) COSLA continues to work to promote female representation in local decision making and representational politics.	
22.	Following the Achieving Gender Equality in Local Government Politics Conference on Friday 2 nd of November 2018, consider the outcomes in line with current funding ambitions and support any next steps identified.

Appendix 1

19. Overall there are 108 Equally Safe Priority Actions, across 4 Priority areas. Many of these require the support and involvement of Local Government.

20. Political decision making across COSLA may be required to ensure some of the priority actions can progress

Priority Area 1: “Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls”

21. Objectives of PA1 are that:

- 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

22. The priority actions in this section contribute to Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence and the building of Capability and Capacity to raise awareness of VAW and change attitudes, and to build capacity across organisations to address it.

The Scottish social attitudes module published in 2014 on public attitudes to violence against women indicates that progress requires to be made in this area.

23. Commitments to action include some activities already suggested in the proposed COSLA Action plan, in particular, COSLA’s active engagement in raising awareness and understanding and informing and promoting a wide range of campaign development and activity, including the UN Women’s 16 days of Action Against Gendered Violence and the White Ribbon Campaign.

24. In addition actions cover:

- children and young people and the practitioners and services involved in their learning and development in schools, early years and youthwork settings. These focus on

learning about and understanding equality and respect in healthy relationships, consent, sexual health and parenthood information, the young workforce; gender balance across schools and curriculum access; unconscious bias and gender stereotyping, equalities and consent, sexist bullying, the impact of pornography on the wellbeing of young people and prevention of sexual offending/crime involving children and young people and mitigation of the harm it causes.

- to engage the media in exploring their role in tackling VAW
- to 'challenge demand' actions to reduce the exploitation and abuse of women through commercial sexual exploitation and improve service responses to women affected.
- further explore what 'good prevention work' looks like to inform policy
- on workplace policy development to support those experiencing gendered violence and to deal robustly with instances of sexual harassment

Priority Area 2: "Women and girls thrive as equal citizens: socially, culturally, economically and politically"

25. Objectives of PA 2 are that:

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

26. The priority actions in this section contribute to Primary Prevention of Gendered Violence and seek to raise awareness and understanding of Gender inequality as a root cause of violence against women and girls. Despite advances there remains persistent inequalities between women and men. These actions seek to bring a stronger gender perspective into policy making.

27. Commitments to action include some activities already suggested in the proposed COSLA Action plan, in particular COSLA's development of greater awareness and understanding of the gendered analysis of violence and abuse to better support its members to positively inform ongoing policy decision making and organisational development

28. In addition, there are actions to:

- improve understanding of gender in policy making, including strategic consideration of gender budgeting and equality impact assessment processes as part of policy making to tackle inequality and discrimination as required by many public authorities by the Equality Act 2010
- address women's economic inequality and to tackle the gender pay gap
- tackle pregnancy and maternity discrimination and pay inequality; promote employment practices and workplace cultures to support gender equality and family friendly workplaces;
- reduce employment inequality for minority ethnic women
- double the number of workers receiving the real Living Wage
- ensure access to justice and embed Fair Work in workplaces throughout Scotland

Priority Area 3: "Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximising the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people"

29. Objectives of PA 3 are that:

- 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
30. The priority actions in this section contribute to Capability and Capacity, Justice and Capacity and Collaboration across services. They combine to promote an integrated system of mainstream, specialist and third sector services capable of delivering a coherent and consistent response across a diverse range of needs, that allows for flexibility to reflect local circumstances.
31. Commitments to action include some activities already covered by the proposed COSLA Action plan as core, including the establishment of COSLA's Equally Safe Policy Co-ordinator.
32. In addition there are actions to provide children and young people with better access to information about and support for gender based violence; review how violence against women partnerships are resourced locally and identify how they can ensure a focus on all forms of gender based violence; support the development of individual Delivery Plans and establishment of effective links through Community Planning Partnerships; embed consistent and effective operation of multi-agency structures to support high risk victims of domestic abuse; develop and publish multi agency guidance setting out how agencies, individually and together, can protect girls and young women from FGM, and how to respond appropriately to survivors; and ensure that those in housing and social work services coming in to contact with those who have experienced gender based violence can offer an appropriate, safe and consistent response

Priority Area 4: “Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response”

33. Objectives of PA 4 are that

- 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

34. The priority actions in this section contribute to Capability and Capacity and Justice and include and seeks to ensure robust enforcement to address reoffending, while ensuring that men get the support they need to change their behaviour at the earliest opportunity.

35. Actions relevant to local government include the expansion of the Caledonian Project so that more male perpetrators can receive rehabilitation service to address the issues giving rise to their offending behaviour. Readiness for the implementation of the Domestic Abuse Bill also sits in this section.

36. Violence Against Women Local Partnership Co-ordinators views on potential areas of priority for COSLA's consideration.

The Violence Against Women Partnership Co-ordinators from across Scotland at their national meeting on the 31st October 2018, discussed where COSLA's additional leadership and scrutiny could enhance progress at a local level.

From those actions across these wide areas of policy in the Equally Safe Delivery Plan they identified the following areas where COSLA's additional scrutiny would support their work at a local level. These were identified as:

- Primary Prevention work being undertaken across a range of programmes, some driven at national level, in schools, early years environments and the youth sector
- 'challenge demand' action to reduce the exploitation and abuse of women through commercial sexual exploitation and improve service responses to women affected
- improved understanding of gender in policy making, with a specific focus on poverty
- more effective links between local Violence Against Women Partnerships and Community Planning Partnerships and with Health and Social Care Partnerships
- the readiness at a local level across sectors. agencies and services supporting those affected by gendered violence, for the impact that the new Domestic Abuse legislation and public awareness raising campaigns and educational programmes, as laid out in the plan, will inevitably have on services