

Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Board Minutes – 5 December 2022

Attendees:

Diana Luchford – MOPAC - Co-Chair
Andrea Simon – EAW – Co-Chair
Baljit Banga - Imkaan
Cathy Hickey - MOPAC
Chloe Collins - NHS
Chris Thorne – HMCTS
Donna Love - NHS
Georgina Carey - TfL
Hannah Whitehead-Clarke - MOPAC
James Bottomley - MOPAC
Jane Connors – MPS
Jane Garavan - MPS
Joanne Towens - HMCTS
Katie Nash – HMPPS
Lisa Ramsarran – CPS
Lizzie Peters - MOPAC
Louise Capel-Cure – MOPAC
Michael Taylor – MOPAC
Moushami Aktar – MOPAC
Naomi Sterling – MOPAC
Neil Cochlin – MPS
Rachel Buttrick – London Councils
Sangeeta Bhuhi - MOPAC
Tamara Barnett - MOPAC

Apologies:

Diane Egan - London Heads of Community Safety
Jain Lemom – MOPAC
Karina Wane-Henry - VRU
Kevin Southworth - MPS
Mandy McGregor – TfL
Shani Lee – WRC
Siwan Hayward – TfL
Viv Hayes - WRC

1: Welcome and minutes and Actions from previous meeting (05/09/22)

The Board was welcomed to the meeting. The minutes of the last meeting were agreed; all actions have been completed.

2: MOPAC Oversight Framework

The Board was provided with an oversight of the MOPAC Oversight Framework, which is derived from the Police and Crime Plan (PCP) Outcome Framework. VAWG is embedded in all the PCP priority areas and the VAWG Strategy also has its own Outcomes Framework. MOPAC is currently reviewing its Oversight Framework to reflect all partners relationships within the PCP.

3: VAWG Board Disproportionality Outcome

The Board was advised that all sub-boards of the London Criminal Justice Board are now including an outcome on disproportionality into their Outcomes Framework. MOPAC is considering an appropriate outcome looking at disproportionality in Criminal Justice System responses and outcomes, including protected characteristics.

4: MPS updates

The Board was advised that, following a consultation with partners, the MPS VAWG Action Plan will be refreshed in April 2023. The Action Plan will be expanding Domestic Abuse training to be included in basic training for all officers. VAWG remains a priority for the Commissioner and the new Performance Framework includes specific measurements for VAWG offences, including online harm offences. The MPS has considered the findings of the Baroness Casey Review, HMICFRS Inspection and the NPCC report and is taking action to address these; particularly to address sexism and misogyny within the MPS.

5: Focus on Holding Perpetrators to Account, Commitment 59 – building trust and confidence

The MPS utilised Domestic Violence Orders and Stalking Orders to prevent VAWG offending. The MPS has been identifying repeat perpetrators, including outstanding suspects who are charged but have not yet gone at court, to ensure that MPS cases are ready once a court date is set. The CPS has a Joint Improvement Plan with MPS for DA and RASSO crimes. The CPS is focused on progressing charges/case and is increasing the number of VAWG cases being referred to the CPS.

HMCTS is providing magistrates with best practice guidance on progressing Domestic Abuse cases, which includes the use of protective orders. HMCTS is reviewing and the case management of DA cases to effectively progress cases, including providing training for legal advisers. London Probation engages with offenders who are charged. Some London courts are holding a Pre-Sentence Report Pilot until March 2023, which aims to reduce disproportionality in offending. The Westminster Specialist Domestic Abuse Court is working well with IDVAs to support victims.

6: Operation Soteria Bluestone

The Board was advised that the end of year one findings will be published by the Home Office shortly, providing an overview of the key national themes. The MPS will conduct research in year two to test the hypothesis from the year one findings; 14 other police services will be conducting self-assessments and learning is being shared with all 43 police services. A national RASSO policing outcome model is being developed and will be presented to the Home Office in June 2023.

7: Impact of the cost of living increase on VAWG Services

The Board was advised that the VCS ERG is concerned that the increased cost of living has negatively impacted on both VAWG support services and victims of VAWG. City Hall is lobbying the Government to provide additional support.

8: Any Other Business

The MOPAC VAWG Team circulated a report providing an update on MOPAC programmes.

MOPAC is working to issue all payments for the providers commissioned to deliver Domestic Abuse Safe Accommodation services as soon as possible. City Hall is taking learning to streamline future service commissioning.