

The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls

Minutes Wednesday 14 September 2011

Violence against Women and Girls (VAWG) Panel Meeting

Attendees

Valerie Brasse (VB)	VAWG Panel Vice Chair and MPA Independent
Sarah Green (SG)	EVAW Coalition
Petrina Cribb (PC)	MPS
Simon Foy (SF)	MPS
Mick McNally (MMc)	MPS
Lynne Abrams (LA)	MPA
Anastasia Lungu Mulenga (AM)	London Councils
Katy Makepeace (KM)	London Councils
Miriam Merkova (MM)	Toynbee Hall
Anastasia Lungu Mulenga (AM)	London Councils
Carlene Firmin (CF)	Children's Commissioner
Karen Ingala- Smith (KIS)	Nia Project
Anthony Gunter (AG)	University of East London
Marai Larasi (ML)	Imkaan
Roger Hadwen (RG)	GLA
Jeremy Alford (JA)	GLA
Janette Roker (JR)	GLA
Jain Lemom (JL)	GLA
Yeliz Osman (YO)	GLA
Pathumal Ali (PA)	GLA (Minutes)

1. Welcome and introductions – Valerie Brasse

VB Vice Chair welcomed members and apologies were noted from Kit Malthouse, Jo Todd, George Alberti and Caroline Bates

2. Update on actions from previous meeting - Valerie Brasse

Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed for accuracy. Actions were updated from the previous meeting of 18 May.

Matters arising

Action Panel member to provide comments to the Annual Report by the following week as this report was pending a sign off.

Members were informed that there were no further developments to the Alcohol Sobriety scheme.

3. The Mayor's Mentoring Scheme – Anthony Gunter, Project Director

Roger Hadwen, lead officer for the Mayor's Mentoring Scheme, introduced this item, which is part of Project Titan. This project aims to build character of young black boys aged 10-16 through mentoring. The scheme operates in ten London boroughs. The

University of East London (UEL) has been awarded to the contract deliver the mentoring project.

AG from UEL provided a brief overview on how the scheme would be delivered, however he explained that it is in its very early stages.

The scheme plans to train up to 1,000 mentors on challenging young men's ability to deal with peer pressure and serious youth violence. The programme also addresses young men's attitude to women and girls. The training is ongoing and a practitioner's forum is available as a support mechanism to mentors who seek advice.

VB questioned the training packages being offered and whether it was available in a written format to read and provide input.

AG explained that the first part had been written and the training material was available but the second part has yet to be written up.

VB suggested that it would be useful to see a copy of the document.

ML questioned who was involved and who was bringing the VAWG expertise into the programme.

AG informed members there was no one at present

ML suggested that this was a concern and it's very important to have mentors brought up to speed on VAWG and to challenge negative attitudes towards young women.

Training materials need to be gendered and more importantly to have the skills and knowledge to ask the right questions.

AG agreed that these points were all valid and would feedback to the Programme managers.

CF agreed that the mentoring programme did seek to raise awareness around prevention and reduce serious youth violence. However CF recognizes the difficulties in having those conversations with young men about VAWG issues without understanding the issues from someone with a full understanding and expertise. CF acknowledges that this programme may reduce knife crime but not address VAWG issues.

AG informed members that it does not just focus on gun and knives but includes wider issues such as education, home life, health and sexual health.

Actions

- Mentoring programme – Facilitate a meeting between the UEL and interested VAWG Panel members.
- UEL to share the training programme with VAWG Panel members
- Coordinate attendance of VAWG Panel members during the training sessions.

4. MASH model – Commander Simon Foy

SF provided an overview of the MASH model and its functions

MASH brings together statutory and non-statutory safeguarding professionals from across a partnership into a hub, to join up information and identify where vulnerable people may be at risk. It will deliver an information product on an individual or family based on the entire safeguarding partnership's knowledge at that time.

This full picture allows risks to be identified early, which may not be highlighted by agencies individually. Necessary, proportionate and effective interventions can then be made by the most appropriate agency.

Through better understanding of the problem, a joined up, sensitive and streamlined solution can be implemented.

The secure room allows all the information on a vulnerable person to be seen and assessed, but not passed outside without the consent of the agency that owns the information. This gives partners' confidence to engage.

Harrow will be first borough operating a MASH model. The other boroughs include, Sutton, Haringey, Lewisham, Islington, Lambeth and Waltham Forest. Evaluation is ongoing.

ML asked whether two London boroughs being piloted MASH could include Harmful Practices and how were the boroughs chosen to be MASH pilots. SF agreed to explore.

Actions

- SF to look into the possibility of including harmful practices into two or three of the MASH pilots.
- SF to bring the VAWG performance metrics to the next VAWG Panel meeting

5. The London riots – implications for VAWG –

This was an opportunity for Panel members to discuss and raise VAWG issues in relation to the civil disturbances in August.

MMc provided a brief overview to the Panel:

A small percentage of women and girls were caught up in the riots and subsequently arrested.

Of those arrested only 18% were gang related this suggesting this civil disturbance was due to criminality and opportunity rather than gangs.

Substantial CCTV footage needs to be reviewed.

CF raised concerns that the sentencing does not reflect or take into consideration first time offenders. For women and girls with no previous convictions are handed the sentence as someone who has a criminal record.

VB queried how the data was being reviewed and whether it will at look at VAWG issues and if not how can we ensure VAWG issues are covered.

MMc informed the panel that the review included women and health issues.

VB-asked how to get involved in this review to ensure VAWG issues are covered.

MMc the review is being lead by Iain Duncan Smith.

Action:

- Write to Chairs Theresa May & Iain Duncan Smith of the gangs' taskforce to ensure right people involved in the panel reviewing the data.

ML questioned whether the panel reviewing the data would be talking to young people to find out what makes them want to riot.

CF raised concerns around the two sexual assault incidents that took place during the riots and whether we had any update on this matter from the MPS.

Action:

- SCD2 to provide an update on the two sexual assaults which took place during the riots

6. Women's safety and the London 2012 Games – Sarah Green, EVAW Coalition

SG spoke briefly about the EVAW coalition and their recent campaign, which raises awareness around VAWG issues during and after the Olympics. The EVAW Coalition produced a report on violence against women and sports this year in July 2011.

Key findings from the report

During the major sporting events the following crimes may see an increase:

- Domestic violence and sexual violence
- Prostitution
- The number of people trafficked internally and globally
- The increase of assaults on and off the sites.

EVAW want to ensure that the UK laws on VAWG crimes and information on support and women's rights are made widely available to all athletes, coaches, entourage and security. SG informed the Panel that Lord Coe had agreed to the information on UK laws on VAWG and health issues to be included into packs for athletes.

YO raised concerns about security not having the expertise around VAWG issues and asked whether there would be training in place.

Action: SF to speak to Olympic colleagues about ensuring information on laws on sexual violence, domestic violence, prostitution in the UK are widely publicised to visitors, athletes etc.

Action: SF to find out what training is being offered to security guards and if possible to include VAWG.

EVAW coalition wants to set a standard for all future events. A women's audit is to be carried out. The report is in the public domain and there are clear commitments from LOCOG.

Action:

- EVAW to feedback to panel on progress in implementing their work plan at December meeting.

7. London Councils Grants Scheme – Katy Makepeace-Gray

KM informed the Panel of the London Councils grants programme review. A total of 35 projects will continue to receive grant funding through London Councils. The total funding for these projects is £2.9m. KM agreed a discussion with the panel on future priorities in respect of VAWG issues.

VB suggested that due to time restrictions that a separate meeting was needed to discuss fully the implications of the cuts to funding for boroughs around VAWG.

Action:

Arrange a separate meeting to look at London Councils Grant scheme consultation.

8. HEART – DCI Petrina Cribb

PC provided a PowerPoint presentation on the MPS HEART Programme, which is being piloted in three boroughs Lewisham, Waltham Forest and Newham. This programme focuses on healthy relationships by offering training, mentoring and a helpline service. CF raised concerns around the lack of exit strategies being offered on the programme to girls. CF would like to see boroughs encouraged to offer exit strategies was made available otherwise it defeats the object.

PC explained that the programme is linked to support services in the borough. The programme is not about disclosures and there is VAWG specific training, the MPS are working with Little Miss Raw who also look at serious youth violence. CF raised concerns because of the nature of the programme disclosure would be made and concerned that there were no exit strategies in those boroughs.

VB suggested that there was a real need to look at the training for this programme and the evaluation.

ML raised concerns that the programme facilitators were not VAWG experts were not engaging with VAWG issues.

Action: PC to share: training package, Referral pathways/safeguarding procedures and evaluation plan with VAWG Panel.

Action:

- GLA and PC to facilitate a training sessions to panel attendees. GLA to coordinate a meeting between VAWG Panel and PC/Heart facilitators.

9. Action plan delivery update – Yeliz Osman

YO informed members that the action plan monitoring form had been circulated and some members had provided input. The gaps in the forms require input from agencies.

Action:

- VAWGP- to provide update on action plan.

YO informed the Panel that the GLA Marketing have advised CSU that due to low budget and no successful prosecution that a campaign on publicising section 53a would not take place.

Action:

- Set up a small working group with the MPS/MPA/CPS, VAWGP members and Rights of Women to look at the barriers to enforcing the section 14A offence in the Sexual Offences Act.

10. National developments – All

VB informed members that the Home Office update paper was available and that if members had comments then to send them through.

Action:

- Provide comments on the Home Office Paper

VB suggested an events calendar would be useful to Panel members to share and input key events taking place within their organization or agency.

Action:

- Produce a monthly events calendar to be circulated.

11. Refuge provision study – Jain Lemom

JL provided a brief update about the study, which was conducted by York University

Key findings from the report included:

Strong evidence that showed women seek refuge outside their home boroughs. Overall, the report suggested that the system is not broke but that in order to improve efficiency, it recommended additional coordination between services across London.

Specifically it proposes a central 'clearing house' to be used to process requests for bed space.

One benefit of the clearing house would be to provide feedback to boroughs on actual commissioning needs to inform future planning of bed spaces, year on year, including specialist need and any imbalances in supply and demand between boroughs.

Further developments are timetabled for six months.

12 Update from Health Subgroup – Jain Lemom

The Health sub group action plan had been circulated to members at the meeting.

Panel members to forward comments on the health action plan to Janette Roker.

Action:

- Members to provide comments on VAWG Health Sub Group Action plan.
- The health sub group to give an update at the next meeting

13. A.O.B.

- **Forthcoming events**

- 11th October the film- The GLA has partnered with Unchosen, an anti-trafficking charity promoting human trafficking film campaigns nationwide. Through film, documentaries, interviews and Q&As, Unchosen raises awareness about labour, child and sex trafficking. The film I am slave is being viewed at City Hall.
- 31st October – The Harmful Practices report is being launched at the House of Lords
- 9th November – Harmful Practices report launched at City Hall for practitioners
- 25 November – Mosaic fashion and children art exhibition to mark the 16 days of action for the elimination of violence against women and girls.

- **VAWG Communications activity**

The communications update was circulated to the Panel and members and to forward comments to Yeliz Osman.

New Commissioner

SF informed the Panel that he had his first meeting with the Commissioner:

His key focuses include:

- Cutting crime, costs
- Developing Met Culture
- Total policing

- Integrity, transparency
- Interest on prevention sobriety and drugs
- The Commissioner remains committed to addressing rape and sexual offences.

Next meeting is on 14 December 2011 2pm- 4pm

Actions from VAWGP Meeting of 14 September 2011

Action	Date Raised	Deadline	Lead/individual/org
Comments on the VAWG Annual Report and the local VAWG guidance	14 September	21 September	All
<p>Mentoring programme – Facilitate a meeting between the UEL and interested VAWG Panel members.</p> <p>UEL to share the training programme with VAWG Panel members</p> <p>Coordinate attendance of VAWG Panel members during the training sessions.</p>	14 September		GLA
Write to Chairs Theresa May & Iain Duncan Smith of the gangs' taskforce to ensure right people involved in the panel reviewing the data.			GLA
SCD2 to provide an update on the two sexual assaults which took place during the riots			
SF to look into the possibility of including harmful practices into two or three of the MASH pilots.			MPS
SF to bring the VAWG performance metrics to the next VAWG Panel meeting.			MPS
<p>VAWG and the London 2012 Games:</p> <p>SF to speak to Olympic colleagues about ensuring information on laws on sexual violence, domestic violence, prostitution in the UK are</p>			GLA

<p>widely publicised to visitors, athletes etc.</p> <p>SF to find out what training is being offered to security guards and if possible to include VAWG</p> <p>EVAW to feedback to panel on progress in implementing their work plan at December meeting.</p>			
<p>London Councils Grants Scheme</p> <p>Arrange a separate meeting to look at London Councils Grant scheme consultation</p>			GLA
<p>HEART:</p> <p>PC to share: training package, Referral pathways/safeguarding procedures and evaluation plan with VAWG Panel.</p> <p>GLA and PC to facilitate a training sessions to panel attendees. GLA to coordinate a meeting between VAWG Panel and PC/Heart facilitators.</p>			<p>MPS</p> <p>GLA</p>
<p>Set up a small working group with the MPS/MPA/CPS, VAWGP members and Rights of Women to look at the barriers to enforcing the section 14A offence in the Sexual Offences Act</p>			GLA
<p>VAWGP- to provide comments to action plan delivery update</p>		21 September 2011	All
<p>Provide comments on the Home Office Paper</p>		21 September	All
<p>Produce a monthly events calendar to be circulated</p>			GLA
<p>Members to provide</p>			

comments to VAWG Health Sub Group Action plan			
The health sub group to give an update at the next meeting			GLA