

Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum

(incorporating Violence Against Women Partnership)

Terms of Reference and Working Structure

1. The Purpose of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnership).

1.1. To contribute to the reduction and prevention of incidents of domestic abuse through effective co-operation between the private, public and voluntary sectors in the provision of high quality appropriate services and the protection of adults and children experiencing, affected by or at risk of suffering domestic abuse.

1.2. To implement Equally Safe at a local level. (Scottish Government and COSLA, Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls, April 2016).

2. The Scope of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating Violence Against Women Partnership).

2.1. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) will incorporate 'Equally Safe: Scotland's strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls' into its mainstream operational activity.

2.2. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) will seek to cover all issues relating to domestic abuse that is defined, by Scottish Government, in the following ways:

"Domestic abuse (as gender based violence) can be perpetrated by partners or ex-partners and can include physical abuse (assault and physical attack involving a range of behaviour), sexual abuse (acts which degrade and humiliate women and are perpetrated against their will, including rape) and mental and emotional abuse (such as threats, verbal abuse, racial abuse, withholding money and other types of controlling behaviours such as isolation from family and friends)."

Gender-based violence (GBV) is a major public health, equality and human rights issue, which cuts across the whole of society. It encompasses a spectrum of abuse including domestic abuse, childhood sexual abuse, rape and sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, commercial sexual exploitation and harmful traditional practices such as female genital mutilation (FGM), forced marriage and so-called 'honour' crimes.

Highlighting that it both stems from and reinforces gender inequality, the United Nations defines GBV as:

"Violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or violence that affects women disproportionately... (and) is a manifestation of historically unequal power relations between men and women."

GBV cuts across all boundaries of age, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, religion and belief and socio-economic inequality. It is also important to recognise that men too can experience abuse whilst women may be perpetrators, and that abuse within same sex relationships has a similar prevalence to heterosexual relationships.

Crucially, issues such as gender, sexuality and ethnicity intersect to shape the experience and impact of gender-based violence.

2.3. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) does recognise that men can be victims and women can be perpetrators, that abuse occurs in same sex relationships and that a family member can be violent towards another family member but that the majority is male against female, where issues locally relating to such abuse arise, they will not be excluded from consideration by members of this forum.

2.4. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) recognises that domestic abuse affects women, men, the elderly, children, ethnic minority groups and people with a disability.

The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) recognises that domestic abuse affects children and young people.

3. Key Activities (this did say Terms of Reference)

3.1. The key activities of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) are to:

- Implement Equally Safe at local level.
- Agree, monitor effectiveness and evaluate the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) action plan.
- Identify and monitor the extent of domestic abuse in Orkney.
- Promote a better understanding of the scale, impact and meaning of domestic abuse.
- Advise on further strategic responses to prevent and reduce the incidence of domestic abuse.
- Work in partnership to develop and share good practice which meets the needs of people affected by domestic abuse.
- Promote the development, production and delivery of awareness raising and multi-agency training programmes.
- Oversee and monitor the work of sub groups as established by the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership).

4. Responsibilities and reporting arrangements

4.1. The progress of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) and its sub groups will be reported to the Community Safety Partnership and the Child Protection Chief Officers Group.

4.2. There is an expectation that members will have the authority within (and across) their agency/organisation to make decisions / commitments on behalf of the agency/organisation (including making firm commitment of resources).

4.3. There is an expectation that all Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) members will ensure that Domestic Abuse information and developments are circulated within their own agency.

4.4. The minutes of meetings and the action plan will be available on the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) website, currently hosted under Orkney Health and Care on the Orkney Islands Council website.

4.5. There is an expectation that Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) members actively take forward actions in the arena where they have the most influence.

5. Membership of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating Violence Against Women Partnership)

- Advocacy Orkney.
- Age Concern Orkney.
- Citizens' Advice Bureau.
- MARAC.
- NHS Orkney.
- Orkney Alcohol Counselling and Support Service.
- Orkney Alcohol and Drug Partnership.
- Orkney Blide Trust.
- Orkney Health and Care.
- Orkney Housing Association Ltd.
- Orkney Islands Council:
 - Education, Leisure and Housing.
- Police Scotland.
- Procurator Fiscal.
- Rape Crisis.
- Relationships Scotland Orkney.
- Victim Support.
- Voluntary Action Orkney.
- Women's Aid Orkney

6. Arrangements of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating Violence Against Women Partnership)

6.1. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) will meet on a quarterly basis; additional meetings will be convened as required.

6.2. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) will be chaired by an individual member of the Forum, elected or chosen by the full membership and the post will be reviewed annually.

6.3. A Vice-Chair will be elected or chosen by the full membership and the post will be reviewed annually.

6.4. The Terms of Reference and membership of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) will be reviewed two yearly.

7. Sub Groups

7.1. A varying number of sub groups will be formed according to the ongoing needs of the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) and its member organisations.

7.2. Sub group membership shall consist of two Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) members, one of whom shall act as chair, and cop-opted members with the skills, experience and contacts required to further the work of the sub group.

7.3. Each sub group will work according to set terms of reference developed with and agreed by the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) and may be time limited.

7.4. Each sub group will be responsible for developing and regularly reviewing an ongoing action plan/work programme that is endorsed, approved and overseen by the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership).

7.5. Each sub group will be accountable to the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership). The chairs of the sub groups must report on progress on their actions/targets on a quarterly basis to the Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership).

8. Equal Opportunities

8.1. The Orkney Domestic Abuse Forum (incorporating VAW Partnership) is committed to promoting equality and will ensure that it considers equalities issues in all its work and service delivery. It is committed to treating everyone fairly and will not discriminate on the basis of gender, gender reassignment status, race or ethnicity, religion or belief, sexual orientation, marriage or civil partnership status, pregnancy or maternity status, disability or age.