

# GWYNEDD COUNCIL CABINET



## Report to the Cabinet

**Meeting Date:** 16 October 2018  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Nia Jeffreys  
**Contact Officer:** Catherine Roberts  
**Contact Number:** 679047  
**Item Title:** Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence

### 1 DECISION SOUGHT

To formally adopt the North Wales Strategy for Violence against women domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV) as one of the responsible authorities designated under legislation.

### 2 REASON WHY DECISION IS NEEDED

The Act places the duty to enact this legislation on all Local Authorities, Health Board, Welsh Ambulance Trust, and the Fire and Rescue services.

### 3 INTRODUCTION

The Welsh Government have over recent years, implemented a number of Policies and legislative changes with the intention of promoting the Domestic Abuse agenda. Their approach can be said to be radical in this regard, as compared to the rest of the UK.

North Wales VAWDASV strategy has been developed as a result of the requirements of one of these legislative developments, *The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) 2015 Act*.

The main requirements of the Act are -

- » Improve arrangements to promote awareness of, and prevent, protect and support victims of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence
- » Introduce a needs-based approach to developing strategies which will ensure strong strategic direction and strengthened accountability
- » Ensure strategic level ownership, through the appointment of a Ministerial Adviser who will have a role in advising Welsh Ministers and improving joint working amongst agencies across

- this sector
- » Improve consistency, quality and join-up of service provision in Wales.
  - » Establish a local or regional Board, made up of the responsible partners, plus others such as the Police and the third sector –to implement and be accountable for the requirements of the Act.
  - » Adopt and publish a Violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence strategy, locally.

#### **4 REASON AND JUSTIFICATION BEHIND THE DECISION**

This is a statutory requirement – the decision to adopt a regional approach to the requirement was made via the regional Safer Communities Board – where a Local Member (Dyfrig Siencyn –then Mair Rowlands and recently Nia Jeffreys), and Corporate Director, Morwena Edwards, represent the LA

A regional approach is favoured by the Welsh Government as regards these legislative requirements. There have been delays in the process of transferring to a regional support team structure. Therefore, for the time being Gwynedd Council is claiming funds from the Office of the Police and crime Commissioner in order to fund the existing local coordinator post.

The regional board, in preparing the strategy has consulted and given consideration to a range of issues and viewpoints, in line with the requirements of the Act. The results of this work is reflected in the strategy. Their recommendation is that the strategy is adopted. This has included due consideration to the responsibilities placed upon us by the 2010 equalities Act.

In terms of possible financial obligations in the future, the Local Authority has agreed to contribute towards any redundancy costs should the regional grant come to an end. Gwynedd would be expected to contribute about 15% (53% of Gwynedd and Anglesey's contribution - 28%) towards the overall costs of the team being made redundant. Gwynedd and Anglesey's share of the regional grant from Welsh Government is 28%.

The strategy currently does not place any direct financial obligations on the Local Authority, apart from that which is explained above. However, the Act does place upon the Local Authority a statutory duty to take responsible steps to achieve the outcomes of the strategy whilst undertaking their normal duties.

However, the LA must go ahead with certain specific requirements of the Act, such as the implementation of the National Training Framework (NTF). The NTF sets out 6 tiers of training for partners, three of which are pertinent to LA staff. Tier one is an e-learning package, which all employees of the LA must complete, Tiers 2 and 3 is a more targeted and specific intervention called Ask and Act which certain services are planning towards.

#### **6 NEXT STEPS & TIMETABLE**

The Welsh Government have already noted their approval of the regional strategy (attached) and require the strategy to be placed on the Local Authority website following Cabinet approval

## **7 ANY CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN PRIOR TO MAKING THE DECISION**

During the Process of developing the strategy –a regional needs assessment was developed as a basis for the strategy. This needs assessment continues to be developed. During it's development, all partner agencies (including LA Services), Service providers and Service users were consulted and asked to contribute.

The startegy was developed by the Board, and consultation with Welsh Government was maintained throughout it's development.

### **Opinion of the Monitoring officer –**

The statutory requirements are outlined clearly in the report. The recommendation to adopt is in line with the statutory requirements placed on the Local Authority.

### **Opinion of Statutory Finance officer -**

I confirm the accuracy of part 4 of the report, and support the recommendations.