

CYNGOR SIR POWYS COUNTY COUNCIL.

CABINET EXECUTIVE

10th April 2018

**REPORT AUTHOR: County Councillor Stephen Hayes
Portfolio Holder for Adult Social Care**

**SUBJECT: Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence (VAWDASV) Local Strategy**

REPORT FOR: Decision

1. Summary

1.1 Under the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015, Powys County Council and Powys Teaching Health Board are required to approve a joint local or regional strategy by May 2018.

2. Proposal

2.1 The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (VAWDASV) sits alongside the Social Services and Well-Being (Wales) Act 2014 and the Well-being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015.

2.2 Sections 3 and 4 of the VAWDASV Act places a duty on Welsh Ministers to prepare, publish and implement a national strategy. A five year strategy was approved in November 2016 and is available here:

<http://gov.wales/docs/dsjlg/publications/commsafety/161104-national-strategy-en.pdf>. A delivery plan was to follow but it has not been published as yet.

2.3 Sections 5 to 8 of the Act requires Local Authorities and Health Boards to prepare, publish and implement a joint local or regional strategy by 31st May 2018.

2.4 Following discussions with the Welsh Government, partners in this area have worked on a regional basis across Mid and West Wales, to pool resources and respond to the challenges of the Act. This has enabled us to build on the strong foundation of our well-established safeguarding procedures and structures, thereby reducing duplication and improving effectiveness. This partnership has included the relevant authorities under VAWDASV (local authorities, health boards and Fire Service) along with Dyfed-Powys

Police, the Police and Crime Commissioner's Office, probation services and representatives of service providers and other agencies who work with victims and survivors.

2.5 The Mid and West Wales VAWDASV Board commissioned the highly experienced and respected Rhian Bowen-Davies (National Adviser on VAWDASV from July 2017 to October 2017) to prepare a local strategy on a Mid and West Wales footprint. The first step in this process was undertaking a needs assessment, which was completed in the winter of 2017/18.

2.6 Ms Bowen-Davies has now produced a draft strategy, enclosed as Appendix A. It is called "Safer Lives, Healthier Families" and it reflects the aspirations and approach of the national strategy. This strategy will now be the subject of public consultation. It is being brought to Cabinet for approval with delegated authority being given for minor amendments following this consultation.

2.7 This is the first joint strategy in the region to tackle Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. It outlines how the region will:

- support victims and survivors;
- tackle perpetrators;
- ensure professionals have the tools and knowledge to act;
- increase awareness of the issues; and
- help children, young people and other vulnerable groups to understand inequality in relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.

2.8 The aim of the strategy is for it to underpin, influence and directly contribute to key regional priorities. Accordingly, there needs to exist formal lines of reporting from the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group to demonstrate the role that this strategy has in contributing to a number of key regional priorities for:

- the four Public Service Boards;
- CYSUR Regional Children's Safeguarding Board;
- CWMPAS Regional Adult's Safeguarding Board;
- the two Regional Partnership Boards;
- the Supporting People Regional Collaborative Committee;
- the two Area Planning Boards (Substance Misuse); and
- Dyfed Powys Criminal Justice Board

2,9 The Strategy aims to embed Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence as "everyone's business"

and a cross-cutting theme that requires all areas of public policy to shape and improve the delivery of services for those affected.

2.10 Appendix A to this report is the draft strategy, with accompanying maps at Appendix B and the author's summary as Appendix C.

2.11 Although there is no prescribed consultation period the regional partnership is allowing ten weeks. This means that the strategy has to be approved as a consultative draft at this meeting. Guidance on producing local strategies was due to have been published by the Welsh Government by July 2017 but has never been issued. This has inevitably delayed the production of this consultative draft.

3. Options Considered / Available

3.1 Given the commitment to partnership working as the most effective and efficient way of producing and delivering the strategy and the need for collaborative working by all the stakeholders to deliver it, adopting an approach specifically for Powys would be problematic.

4. Preferred Choice and Reasons

4.1 This approach is the most effective way of meeting the statutory obligation placed upon of the Council and it helps to strengthen good partnership working across Mid and West Wales.

5. Impact Assessment

5.1 Is an impact assessment required? No

5.2 If yes is it attached? Yes/No

6. Corporate Improvement Plan

6.1 The development of a regional VAWDASV strategy is a key component in safeguarding vulnerable children and adults at risk in Powys.

7. Local Member(s)

7.1 The strategy will operate across the Powys area.

8. Other Front Line Services

Does the recommendation impact on other services run by the Council or on behalf of the Council? Yes, in terms of shared responsibilities for corporate safeguarding, in keeping with the Council's policy. Under the National Training Framework of the VAWDASV Act and statutory guidance, Powys Council as a "relevant authority" is required to train its employees to the Group 1 standard by 31st March 2018. The training is mandatory and the latest figure is 58% compliance.

9. **Communications**

Have Communications seen a copy of this report? No

Have they made a comment? If Yes insert here.

10. **Support Services (Legal, Finance, Corporate Property, HR, ICT, Business Services)**

10.1 Legal: The recommendation can be supported from a legal point of view

10.2 Finance

10.3 Corporate Property (if appropriate)

10.4 HR (if appropriate)

10.5 ICT (if appropriate)

11. **Scrutiny**

Has this report been scrutinised? No

If Yes what version or date of report has been scrutinised?

Please insert the comments.

What changes have been made since the date of Scrutiny and explain why Scrutiny recommendations have been accepted or rejected?

12. **Statutory Officers**

12.1 The Solicitor to the Council (Monitoring Officer) has commented as follows: "I note the legal comment and have nothing to add to the report".

Comments have been sought from the Section 151 Officer and will be reported at the meeting.

13. Members' Interests

The Monitoring Officer is not aware of any specific interests that may arise in relation to this report. If Members have an interest they should declare it at the start of the meeting and complete the relevant notification form.

Recommendation:	Reason for Recommendation:
1. To approve for consultation the “Safer Lives, Healthier Families”, the regional strategy for tackling Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in our communities, enclosed at Appendix A.	To comply with statutory requirements and to shape and improve the delivery of services for those affected by violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence.
2. To give delegated authority to the Portfolio Holder, in consultation with the Director of Social Services as lead Director for Safeguarding, to make minor amendments following a period of public consultation.	To make sure that the Mid and West Wales Region adopts a consistent approach to finalising the strategy.

Relevant Policy (ies):			
Within Policy:	Y	Within Budget:	Y

Relevant Local Member(s):	All
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Person(s) To Implement Decision:	Portfolio Holder for Adult Services
Date By When Decision To Be Implemented:	June 2018

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Background Papers used to prepare Report: