

**Report for the Mid and West Wales Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group and Safeguarding Executive Board  
January 2018**

**“Safer Individuals, Healthier Relationships – Tackling Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in our Communities”**

This report provides an overview of the draft regional Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy and key considerations for the Strategic Group and Safeguarding Executive.

**Context**

The enactment of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (The Act) requires the public sector in Wales to work together in a consistent and cohesive way to improve the outcomes for individuals and their families subjected to Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse or Sexual Violence.

Section 5 of the Act requires local authorities and Local Health Boards to jointly prepare, publish and implement a Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence strategy.

This is Mid and West Wales’ first joint strategy to tackle Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence and 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 and young people to understand inequality in relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.

The strategy aims to underpin, influence and directly contribute to key regional policy priorities including those set by;

- The four Public Service Boards
- CYSUR Regional Children’s Safeguarding Board
- CWMPAS Regional Adult’s Safeguarding Board
- The two Regional Partnership Boards
- Dyfed Powys Police and Crime Commissioner
- The Supporting People Regional Collaborative Committee

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 address and to shape and improve the delivery of services for those affected.

Subject to a period of consultation and the necessary scrutiny the strategy must be published in May 2018.

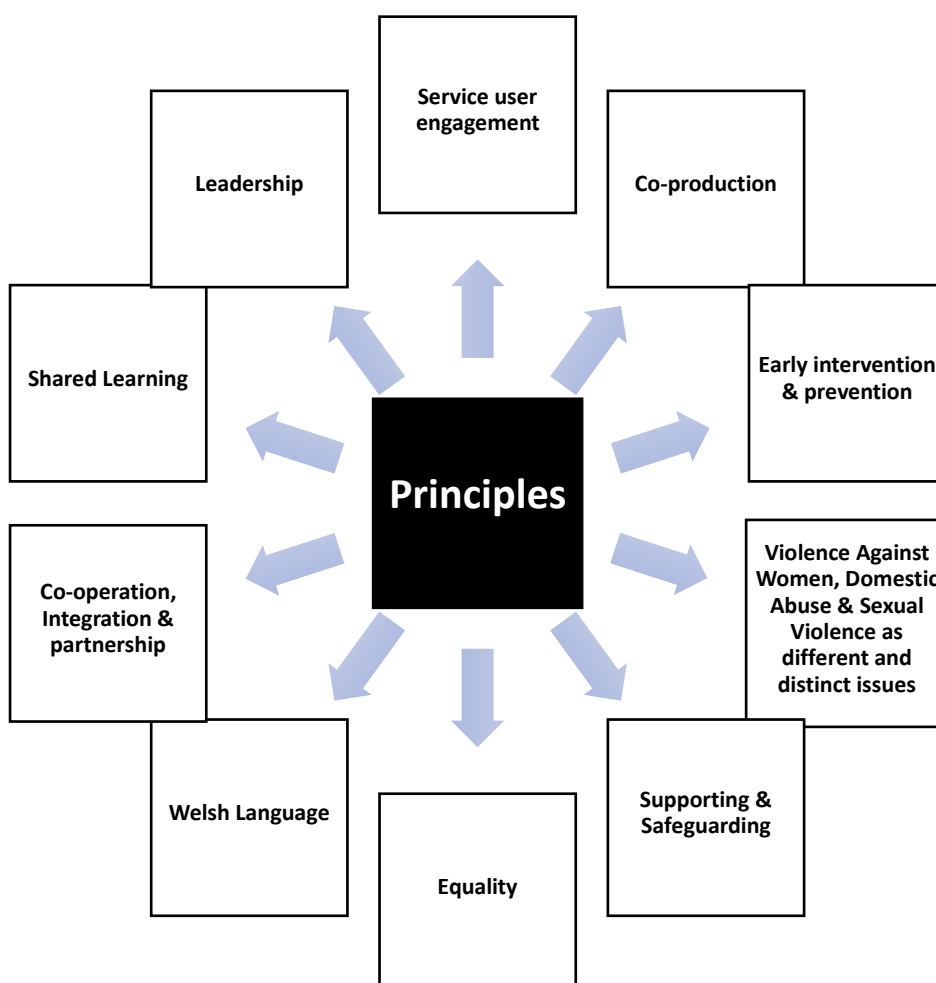
### Engagement and Consultation

Engagement and consultation was carried out with survivors, specialist service providers, generic service providers, commissioners, stakeholders and members of the Mid and West Wales Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategic Group.

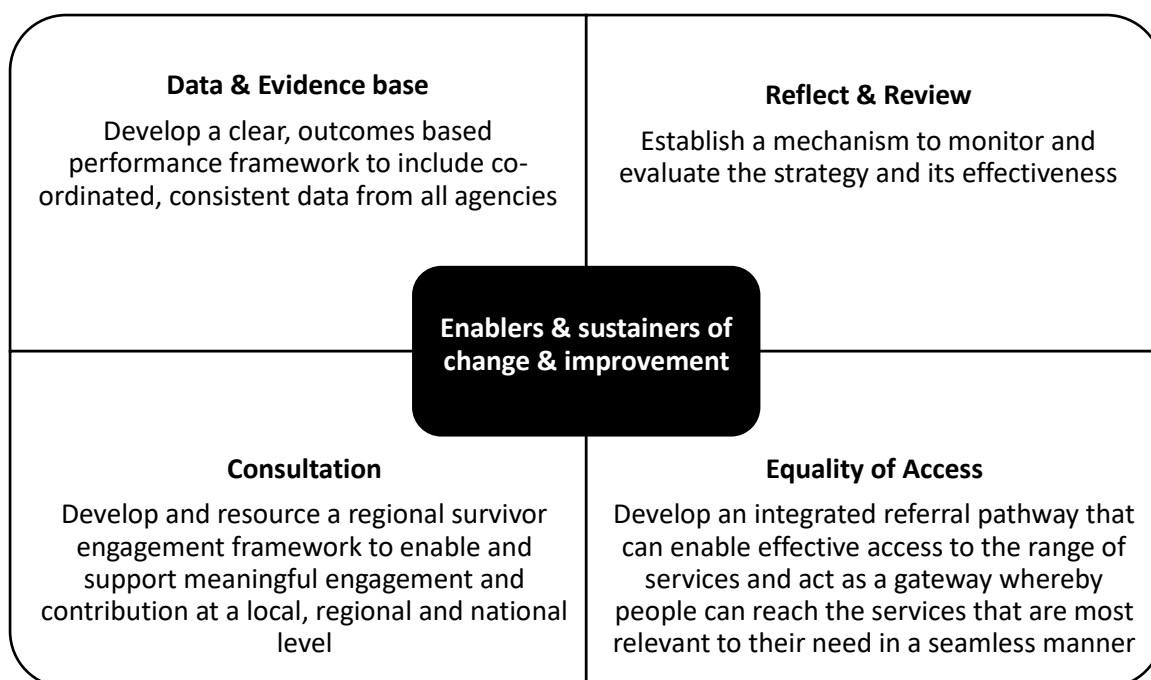
Participants were highly engaged in providing both positive and negative observations of the current and future landscape and the information gathered during this process provided a broad spectrum of opinions which are reflected within the identified strategic priorities.

### Principles

Ten key principles have been identified through consultation and engagement with stakeholders and survivors. These will underpin the priorities set out in the strategy and the approach to implementation and delivery



Four components, which can be seen as **enablers and sustainers of change and improvement** have also been identified. They involve improving and integrating core processes to facilitate the development of consistent and cohesive ways to improve outcomes for individuals and their families subjected to Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse or Sexual Violence.



### Strategic Priorities

In developing the strategic priorities consideration has been given to the requirements of the Act and wider Welsh Government legislation and policy, the result of the needs assessments and key priorities already identified in the region and the experiences of survivors and stakeholders.

Based on the rationale detailed in the document the six strategic aims of the National Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy have been adopted as the framework for this regional strategy;

**Strategic Priority 1:** Increase awareness and challenge attitudes of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Mid and West Wales

**Strategic Priority 2:** Increased awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong

**Strategic Priority 3:** Increased focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety

**Strategic Priority 4:** Make early intervention and prevention a priority

**Strategic Priority 5:** Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors

**Strategic Priority 6:** Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services across Wales

Actions are identified that will enable the region to make the necessary improvements against each of these strategic priorities.

Additional actions are identified in relation to the Governance and Leadership of VAWDASV in the region and those required to deliver the enablers and sustainers of change and improvement critical to the effectiveness of the strategy.

Actions to deliver the strategic priorities, when agreed, will be embedded into an overarching Strategic Delivery Plan which will sit alongside the Strategy. It is envisaged that annual priorities from the Strategic Delivery Plan will be identified by the Strategic Group and reported to the Regional Safeguarding Executive and other key local and regional partnerships to ensure effective discharge of statutory responsibilities under the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015.

### **Discussion points**

- Do you agree with the strategic priorities and key actions set out in the strategy? If not, what alternatives would you suggest?
- Do you agree with the proposed plans for measuring and monitoring progress?
- Are there any key issues missing and how would you suggest addressing these?
- Any other observations / comments?

### **Draft Strategy feedback**

To enable me to make any amendments required prior to translation and public consultation please could I ask for written feedback by 9<sup>th</sup> February 2018. In consultation with the Chair of the Strategic Group I will then make any required amendments for consideration of the Strategic Group / Executive Board.

Feedback can be emailed to me [rbowendavies@outlook.com](mailto:rbowendavies@outlook.com)

### **Considerations for the Strategic Group / Executive Board**

As outlined in my report for the Strategic Group in November 2017 the following matters require urgent confirmation to ensure that the joint strategy is published as required by the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) 2015;

- **What scrutiny / sign off process is required within Local Authorities / Health Boards for the joint strategy?** Consideration of Public Service Boards, Safeguarding Executive and Cabinet scrutiny processes for accountability / governance.
- **What period of consultation does the group propose for the strategy?** The Act does not define a set period or the type of consultation. The Act states at Section 6 (6) *“A Local authority and Local Health Board must consult such persons as they consider appropriate”*. As an example, Gwent, who have recently published their strategy for consultation agreed an eight- week public consultation period.
- **Translation** – allocation of time for translation of documents prior to consultation
- **Consultation Plan** – At the November meeting the Strategic Group agreed that consultation on the draft strategy should be meaningful, inclusive and wider than online consultation. To enable effective consultation with survivors, stakeholders and communities a consultation plan should be developed, a lead person identified, and resources allocated to ensure effective implementation.

Subject to confirmation of the above I would suggest that a timeline is drafted, and discussions had with relevant individuals within Health Boards / Local Authorities and others (PSB's / Safeguarding Executive) to timetable relevant scrutiny / approval processes and intended publication date of the Strategy.

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**January 2018**