



# **MORAY VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN PARTNERSHIP**

## **Terms of Reference**

## **Introduction**

The name of the partnership shall be the Moray Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership (MVAWGP). The MVAWGP is dedicated to tackling violence against women in all its forms and coordinating services from voluntary and statutory agencies to ensure appropriate support is provided to those affected by it.

The forum recognises that partnership working is essential for providing a comprehensive response to violence against women, and that by working together agencies can intervene more effectively with the men who perpetrate violence, therefore safeguard the women and children affected by it and take steps to prevent it happening in the first place.

## **Violence Against Women and Girls**

The Moray Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership (MVAWGP) has adopted the Scottish Government definition which identifies violence against women as follows:

*“Gender based violence is a function of gender inequality, and an abuse of male power and privilege. It takes the form of actions that result in physical, sexual and psychological harm or suffering to women and children, or affront to their human dignity, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of their liberty, whether occurring in public or private life. It is men who predominantly carry out such violence, and women who are predominantly the victims of such violence. By referring to violence as ‘gender based’ this definition highlights the need to understand violence within the context of women’s and girls’ subordinate status in society. Such violence cannot be understood, therefore, in isolation from the norms, social structure and gender roles within the community, which greatly influence women’s vulnerability to violence”*

MVAWGP will develop an outcomes based approach to its work, in line with the national ‘Equally Safe’ Strategy.

It is recognised that the abuse perpetrated against women is much wider than physical violence so the word “violence” referred to in the business of the MVAWGP encompasses, but is not limited to:

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- Physical, sexual and psychological abuse occurring in the family, within the general community or institutions, including: domestic violence, coercive and controlling behaviours, rape, incest and child sexual abuse.
- Sexual harassment and intimidation at work and in the public sphere; commercial sexual exploitation, including prostitution, pornography and trafficking
- Dowry related violence
- Female genital mutilation
- Forced and child marriages
- Honour crimes
- Child Sexual Exploitation
- Other sexual crime including cyber enabled crime

This does not deny that women use violence and coercive control against a male or female partner. It also does not deny that men use violence and control against other men, including male partners. It simply recognises that women are disadvantaged disproportionately because of the abuse they experience.

The terms 'women' and 'girls' will be used in the context of business relating to the MVAWGPP. It is acknowledged that a person's internal sense of gender may differ from the sex assigned at birth. The terms therefore refer not only to cisgender women and girls (whose gender identity reflects the sex assigned at birth) but also includes sexual/gender minorities – terms that refer to individuals whose sexual orientation is outside the heterosexual mainstream and whose gender identity/expression does not fit into the distinct categories of male or female, or cisgender. This encompasses transgender identities, as well as those exhibiting a non-conforming expression of gender.

We are developing our intersectional approach by increasing recognition of the particular experience of different groups of women and girls, better understanding the additional vulnerabilities and barriers that exist for those with intersectional identities, and through engagement with different groups and stakeholders to understand these issues better.

### **Role and Remit**

Violence against women is a major societal and public health issue, which is recognised at both national and international levels. The MVAWGP recognises that partnership working is essential for providing a comprehensive response to violence against women.

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By working together agencies can intervene more effectively with the men who perpetrate abuse, with women, children and young people harmed, and with the wider community in order to promote prevention and earlier intervention.

Working collaboratively with key partners across all sectors, the MVAWGP aims to eradicate violence against women in Moray and make it a place where women and children can, with support when necessary, live free from the inequalities and harm associated with gender based violence in accordance with: the Human Rights Act 1998; the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child 1989; the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention); and the Scottish Government Equally Safe Strategy.

The MVAWGP aims to:

- Ensure that gender inequality is integrated into the planning processes of partner agencies
- Raise public awareness of violence/abuse against women and ensure that its related harms are better understood
- Work with children and young people to challenge attitudes towards violence/ abuse against women
- Influence public attitudes so that people are no longer prepared to tolerate violence/abuse against women
- Encourage and support all partner agencies to take into account the views of women and children in families affected by violence/abuse against women when developing services
- Strive to achieve a policy of co-operation and co-ordination of services between agencies
- Identify gaps in service provision and make recommendations for the development of future services in Moray
- Ensure that identified appropriate training is provided to staff from all agencies so that they can recognise violence/abuse against women and give appropriate support to those affected
- Reduce the extent and impact of violence/abuse against women and on those affected in the family and wider community
- Identify mechanisms whereby perpetrators can be held accountable for their behaviour
- Develop and monitor the delivery of an Action Plan and Strategy in line with the Scottish Government Equally Safe Strategy

## **Requirements for Membership**

Members are required to operate at a sufficiently high level within their organisation to:

- contribute to strategic planning and decision making
- contribute or allocate resources in the delivery of the work of the MVAWGP

## **Responsibilities of Members**

Members will be expected to:

- attend or, where possible, send a deputy to the MVAWGP meetings
- contribute to the meetings and to work of the MVAWGP outwith the meetings
- work strategically and in partnership with other members to 'add value' to addressing violence against women in Moray
- share in the resourcing of the work of the MVAWGP

## **Composition of the Partnership**

Each of the organisations and individuals listed are entitled to representation on the MVAWGP. Additional identified agencies can be added to the partnership with the consent of current members.

The Moray Council	Mike Whelan
Police Scotland	DCI David Howieson
Police Scotland, Partnership Coordination	PI Claire Smith
NHS Grampian	Tracey Gervaise
Health & Social Care Partnership	Laura Sutherland
Moray Women's Aid	Melanie Wood
Action for Children	Sheila Erskine
Ministry of Defence	Trace McDermott
Moray Rape Crisis	Caroline Burrell
Justice Social Work	Tish Richford
Children and Families Social Work	Bethany Cunningham

### **Chairperson and Vice Chairperson**

A chairperson and vice chairperson shall be elected from the MVAWGP membership. The appointment of the chairperson and vice chairperson shall be limited to a maximum of 2 years, with the option of being re-elected beyond this time period.

In the event that the chairperson or vice chairperson stands down, all members of the MVAWGP will be invited to nominate existing members for appointment to either of the posts. All nominations must have a proposer and a seconder. In the event that more than one nomination is received for either of the posts then a vote will be taken at the next scheduled MVAWGP meeting. Only full members present will be entitled to cast a single vote. The nomination with the highest number of votes will be elected to the vacant post.

### **Co-ordinator/ Lead Officer**

The activities of the MVAWGP shall be promoted by a co-ordinator or lead officer, as detailed in the job profile for this role.

### **Meetings**

The MVAWGP shall meet at least every three months with additional meetings called as necessary. Meetings of the Partnership shall be quorate when at least 5 members are present. If unable to attend, members shall be permitted to send nominated deputies.

Meetings will be chaired by the chairperson or vice chairperson.

Members are required to send any updates to the co-ordinator/lead officer no less than 8 working days prior to meetings.

Agenda and supporting papers shall be circulated at least 5 working days prior to meetings.

The business of all meetings shall be recorded in the form of a minute.

### **Decision Making**

Within the ethos and principles of true partnership working, decisions shall be made democratically with the consensus carrying any decision forward. In the event of conflict, the chair will determine further steps towards resolution.

### **Working Groups**

Where a project or funding is identified by the MVAWGP for progress or access, then a working group composed of members of the MVAWGP or any identified organisation will be established to progress the work expediently. Any working group will be chaired by a nominated member of the MVAWGPP in order to report on progress to the MVAWGP meeting.

### **Monitoring and Governance**

The Moray Violence Against Women and Girls Partnership will report to the Moray Chief Officer's Group.

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