



Highland VAW Partnership Meeting 6th February 2025

PRESENT:

Peter Mackenzie - **Chair**
 Alev Taylor, RASASH
 Catherine Russell, HVAWP
 Chrstine MacKenzie, The Highland Council
 Gavin Letford, COPFS
 James Martin, Highlife Highland
 Karen Peteranna, HVAWP
 Leanne Maxwell, RWA
 Lorraine Revitt, Lochaber Women's Aid
 Maria Cano, CJSW, THC
 Mhairi MacDonald, NHSH
 Mike Mawby, S&T
 Myra Ross, NHSH
 Susan Birse, Public Health, NHSH
 Susan Laidlaw, **Associate Lead Nurse, The Highland Council**

APOLOGIES:

Chistopher MacLeod, Police Scotland
 Elaine Lyall, VAWP
 Fiona Wilson, VAWP
 Gillian Hassock, CASWA,
 Isla Barton, Midwifery, NHSH
 Jennifer Baughan WFWP
 Lyndsay Sutherland UHI
 Margaret McIntyre The Highland Council, (resigned)
 Meghan Munro, (RASASH)

		ACTIONS
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>Introductions were made and new members welcomed. The Chair reported that MM had resigned as she is taking up a new post in Inverclyde. An email was sent thanking MM for her participation and her membership within the group. The Chair wished her well.</p>	

	The Chair has taken the decision not to have the chat function available during all HVAWP meetings going forward as this was becoming the norm at national meetings.	
2	<p>Minutes of previous meeting</p> <p>a) Note changes & Approval Amendments noted: Page 2, item 4 should read: There were some other things such as IDAA training, this was agreed to be booked for 2025 for training in 2026</p> <p>Safe & Together project funding is also not secure going forward and comments were made that as a partnership this could be given consideration</p> <p>All other minutes were agreed and approved.</p> <p>b) Review of Action Tracker – if not elsewhere on agenda Outstanding Actions:</p> <p>The Action Tracker was displayed on screen for members to see. <i>LDP Group – Mapping exercise</i>, this was discussed at the last LDP meeting. The group would like some clarity about what the requirement is and to understand the general approach so there is no duplication, and a plan can be put together.</p> <p>CR reported that at one stage they were linking up with JB in the whole family wellbeing as she has a remit to look at this across the Highlands, she suggested pointing the LD&P group in her direction. CR will contact JB to progress this matter so JB and the LD&P group can move forward with the training for 2025/26 and to clarify exactly what is going on and where it is going on.</p> <p><i>Strategic plan update</i> - This was circulated to the HVAWP Strategic Group to ratify. Updates have been done and circulated to everyone at the meeting. CR asked if everyone was happy with the final version of this plan. A discussion was held regarding the content of the strategic plan.</p> <p>MR reported that the LD&P Delivery Group would like to contribute to the Strategic Plan and offer something more in an operational delivery to what they were hoping to achieve themselves.</p>	CR

	<p>SB stated the Strategic Plan needs to be more localised.</p> <p>An explanation was given regarding this document in that it was required to reflect the Scottish Government Strategy and reporting requirements. Although some flexibility was catered for. The delivery groups input their thoughts and updates every quarter and the plan was regularly reviewed by all. As it was continuously being updated with delivery group input, it needed an annual ratification of major changes, as in this meeting today for the record, but in fact it also operated as a fluid document and provided the partnership with quarter delivery group updates on actions in a focused format. Again this was at the request of previous strategic meetings.</p> <p>The Chair suggested getting the Strategic Plan circulated to all the Delivery Groups for comment and input with a 3 week turn-around so it can be ratified before the next COG meeting on the 19th March.</p> <p>JM proposed that the Strategic Plan be ratified at this meeting pending any amendments or additions from the Delivery Groups, members agreed to this.</p> <p>CR confirmed the Strategic Plan was circulated with the papers for this meeting, but she will send this Strategic Plan out again after this meeting with the minutes as normal.</p> <p><i>Scotland's Prisoner Early Release Programme</i> – JSW confirmed that prisoners early daily release Scotland Bill was agreed in Parliament on 26th November. The change will come into effect from February 2025. It was confirmed that those serving a sentence for sexual assault or domestic offences are excluded from the change and they will continue to be released following 50% of their sentence.</p> <p>MC reported that this liberation is different to the one that took place last year and discussions were being held with various partners regarding this matter in the Highlands.</p> <p><i>Safe & Together Funding</i> – DES funding has been confirmed this month.</p> <p><i>Women's Champion</i> - LR contacted all the Women's Aid groups in Scotland regarding this matter and produced a blank. She has contacted the Cadet Champion to see if they have a term of</p>	CR
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	<p>reference so they could help set one out. This matter will be ongoing so progress can be made.</p> <p>Meeting with the COSLA Councillor – MM has resigned but arrangements are in place for us to progress this. The Chair will be in contact with them when an update is available.</p>	PM
3	<p>Financial (CR) Financial Expenditure against income for quarter 3, 2024/25 Draft 25/26 investment plan proposals</p> <p>The financial reports were presented to the group and it was confirmed it had been approved by the NHH Financial accountant. A brief report was given on all income and expenditure and input invited.</p> <p>The Chair of the LD&P Group asked for clarification on spending money not spent. This was given by CR and the Chair.</p> <p>CR summarised requests on any other monies to be considered at the financial working group at the year end.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Delivery Groups/General VAWP Groups would like to ask for an extension of the temporary fixed term administration post for an additional year out of the funding. 2. Request from MARAC Delivery Group monies to be ringfenced for a trial for the MARAC minutes in case it reverts back to full minutes at the end of the trial period. 3. Request from Service Provision Group for safe accommodation and video doorbells. 4. Safe Transport campaign. <p>CR asked if there were any questions and for confirmation on the process now going forward on the additions to what is already there. All agreed to process and no further questions asked.</p> <p>SB supported extending the temporary fixed term post for an additional year. She stated it would be good to know if anything has changed with the VAWP admin since this temporary post started. CR confirmed this would be included in the proposal to the working group.</p>	

	<p>SB also stated there was a vacancy for a training post but was not sure in what format that will look like. She said it would be good to get that into the financial forecast for next year. SB suggested other members of the group have a think about this post and give any ideas to the Chair to be discussed at a separate meeting with SB. PM stated options need to be discussed as a partnership decision to take this forward and then brought back as a managerial decision.</p> <p>A brief discussion was held regarding the way forward for training and how it is going to be delivered and by whom.</p> <p>The Chair and SB will have a further meeting off table to discuss this matter and then bring it back to the group.</p>	SB, PM
4.	<p>Current Key Issues</p> <p>a) HVAWP Data Reporting – update and presentation</p> <p>CR shared information on this matter and showed what it would look like. The data was used to provide a usable table on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance • Research • Data • General trends <p>This Data report can be used for further in depth analysis to take back to Delivery Groups and the report to VAWP to help influence and inform the decision making.</p> <p>This data could be built into a spreadsheet with a refresh button and can be updated each quarter. Support staff will be trained to do this. There will be a continuous learning feedback loop ongoing.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <p>SB commented that a lot of work had been done regarding the data capture and it was just the very start of it. She thought the data needed to be investigated more and it be worked on as a full partnership rather than separate organisations.</p> <p>Training was discussed and a question was asked as to whether other training could be included in the data capture to report to COG. A brief discussion was held. CR stated if anyone had figures they could be included in the data to submit before the quarter meetings.</p>	

	<p>SB suggested creating a post for a year to conduct some research around the data in much more detail.</p> <p>The Chair commented that LR was going to assist with data capture as Depute via the Service Delivery group.</p> <p>b) National Strategic Commissioning and Funding Review of VAWG services update</p> <p>The Chair attended these meetings. In the interim there has been a letter from all the Chairs in Scotland to the First Minister and the Government Minister in relation to the lack of progress. There was a motion that this group be disbanded as no progress could ever be made.</p> <p>It was suggested that all the Chairs pull together a Terms of Reference so it is done properly so progression could be made. There has been no further meeting since that date and another meeting is awaited.</p> <p>c) Annual Report – update</p> <p>The chair and JM have this in progress. No further replies have been received in relation to individual partners. This will continue to be progressed.</p> <p>The Chair asked members of the group to put some statistics in the document that was circulated by EL so this can move forward, and the aim would be to have it by the summer.</p> <p>The Chair requested that EL circulate the document once more.</p> <p>d) Marketing – update</p> <p>JM is new to this post and has had very brief conversations with CR. He reported this has not been progressed much further at present.</p> <p>JM is keen to look at the partnership and what the wider partnership is bringing to the Highlands effectively and not what the individuals or organisations are doing.</p> <p>Further conversations will be conducted between PM, CR and JM. He will report back at a further meeting.</p> <p>The Chair reported that there has been progression regarding social media and the website. Social media accounts are up and running. Premier Digital have made an excellent job and are</p>	<p>LR</p> <p>PM, JM</p> <p>EL</p> <p>PM, CR, JM</p>
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5.	<p>quick to respond to requests. The Chair stated that if there was anything official that must come out via a press release, the partnership will go to the three individual media departments to get guidance and assistance and work on their policies until a specific one is compiled for the partnership.</p> <p>Comments: MR reported that after the LD&P Group meeting it was decided that everyone would take whatever materials they were looking at creating back to their own organisations and have them approved beforehand. They would then be put to the vote, and have them approved by VAWP, so they do not end up with people finding themselves in a situation where they have approved something that someone else in that organisation does not agree with.</p> <p>JM suggested having some sort of comms approval process from the partner agencies. JM will have a conversation with all three comms teams in terms of approval process and work with CR on this.</p> <p>e) Highland VAWP Strategic Plan 24-27 Highland VAWP Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Chair reported that he mentioned the issue being experienced at various groups regarding membership. The Chair, with the assistance of JM and LR is going to conduct a systematic review of all delivery groups regarding membership and if any change is required and to identify what members are needed in the group and invite them onto the groups.</p> <p>Delivery Group updates (Not already mentioned previously)</p> <p>To highlight recommendations to COG. All reports are deemed read; this section is for Chairs to answer any pertinent questions.</p> <p>a) Addressing Perpetrator Delivery Group The report was circulated to members of the group and assumed to have been read.</p> <p>All questions were addressed regarding the items below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Note update on Early Release Programme 	<p>JM</p> <p>PM,JM,LR</p>
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<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support from VAWP in going forward as a delivery group with limited attendance and priorities that may need looking at further. <p>Comments: The Chair commented that when he came into post the Addressing Perpetrators Group was well attended.</p> <p>GL asked if he could be a part of this group and asked to be invited to the next meeting. FW will put him on the distribution list so he can attend the next meeting.</p> <p>A brief discussion was held on how to achieve better attendance.</p>	<p>FW</p>
<p>b) Learning, Development & Prevention Delivery Group</p> <p>i. ¼ review of trial GBV level 1 training delivery by PH – report</p> <p>The report was circulated to members of the group and assumed to have been read. MM reported a remarkable success regarding attendance.</p> <p>All questions were addressed regarding the items below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A copy of the Strategic Plan. A copy of this is being circulated to all Delivery Groups. • A Safe & Together update. An update will be given by MM during this meeting. • The group would like to ask for £3800 not used during the 16 days campaign so it can be used for awareness raising materials <p>The Chair stated the Police have money to be used before the end of March and he asked MR to link in with them to see if this can be used for promotional leaflets.</p> <p>MR stated planning had already started for the 16 days, and she is in talks with Women’s Aid to look at new material. One of the topics will be “Commercial Sexual Exploitation” MR is hoping to go back to the LD&P Group with this topic for discussion. MR asked for feedback from the group.</p>	<p>MR</p>

<p>CR is having a meeting with RASASH on Monday as she is required by Government to implement the national CSE programme/pilots across Highlands once it is progressed. She will continue to update members after that meeting regarding this matter.</p> <p>FOI was discussed briefly, and it was suggested replies needed to be done as a partnership as it is asking about organisation specific policies. FOIs are very time limited so it would need to be done via email rather than the strategic group.</p>	<p>CR</p>
<p>c) MARAC delivery Group</p> <p>The report was circulated to members of the group and assumed to have been read.</p> <p>LR stated there was good attendance at this meeting.</p> <p>All questions/statements were addressed regarding the items below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of the significant increase (43%) in referrals for Q4 2024. • Approve the continuation of Police Scotland using professional judgement on MARAC repeat cases which keeps referral level manageable for all MARAC partners. <p>The Chair took this matter to COG, and they agree that progressional judgement should be used. Members of the group agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approve a proposal to trial a reduction of MARAC minute taking for Highland MARACs only for 3 months. 	<p>CR</p>
<p>It was confirmed a full risk assessment had been prepared and circulated by the MARAC Coordinator both at the delivery group and for this meeting.</p> <p>Members of the group had a discussion and the matter was approved.</p> <p>MM wanted to bring the fact that due to GDPR recordings may be stopped for all meetings. SB will take this matter forward for clarity.</p>	<p>SB</p>

	<p>MR suggested the use of a risks checklist at MARAC meetings. KP advised this is being considered.</p> <p>The trial will be reviewed and an update on this review will be provided to COG.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be aware of consultation with Island MARACs re reduced minutes trial. • Ring-fence money for MARAC admin minute taking if the trial is unsuccessful and to do minutes after trial period for 3 months to bring the minutes up to full sets again. If the trial does result in reverting back to full minutes the capacity within the VAWP support team to manage this would need urgently reviewed. • Be aware that MARAC are unable to implement admin reducing functions due to an outstanding information request with NHS I.T since Sept 2024. • Highlight the importance of MARAC to staff teams through senior management via COG <p>d) Service Provision Delivery Group</p> <p>The report was circulated to members of the group and assumed to have been read.</p> <p>LR updated members regarding Highland Council publishing the PIN for funding for domestic abuse services in Highland, this means people can register interest on Public Contract Scotland. This update from this morning.</p> <p>All questions were addressed regarding the items below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To note the updates and decisions made in the report <p>e) S&T Joint Project with CPC</p> <p>MM reported he updated the LD&P Group with the information they required through CR.</p> <p>MM reported funding has been approved for 2025/26. He is currently working on the training programme for that period.</p>	
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	<p>They will continue to prioritise delivery of the core training programme in person locality based. MM will return to areas visited over the course of the last year but will also be looking at potentially expanding that to other areas. He intimated he would be interested in talking to SL and LM regarding the locations, particularly over on the west coast. MM is also looking at delivering training in Aviemore areas and Sutherland.</p> <p>Northern Collaborate is up and running and going well. All the north of Scotland and the Islands are working together and sharing resources regarding Safe & Together.</p> <p>There is now a working group established by the Scottish Government which includes COSLA and Social Work Scotland, working at looking at options for a Scotland wide approach to Safe & Together. The intention is that it will report later this year with the intention of being able to look at implementations for 2026 and that would pick up on several of the reports and recommendations including one that Safe & Together training be mandatory for all frontline practitioners.</p> <p>The Chair asked if there had been any further talks about funding moving forward with Safe & Together as nothing has been mentioned in COG.</p> <p>MM reported the intention would be to move away from the current DES funding which is only available and only used by around 14 of the 32 local authority areas. They are looking at a national approach, but no further discussions have taken place around funding.</p> <p>Comments: SB and MM had a brief discussion regarding the evaluation forms used and MM confirmed that the evaluation forms show pre and post course information.</p>	
6.	<p>Any other Competent Business</p> <p>Review of items for COG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quarterly data training MARAC • MARAC figures in relation to context, COG will ask why there is an increase in the numbers. <p>The deadline for this information will be early next week.</p>	

	The COG meeting is on the 19 th March.	
7.	<p>HVAWP Risk Register</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key partners not being represented at meetings – discussed today. • MARAC operations – discussed today Do we amend or add the trial to the risk register. • COVID • Funding cuts for front line services. • Key personnel to leave – to discuss a VAWP contingency plan to be put in place should we have any long term sickness. Individuals who leave so that we can continue operations as normal. • Migration of VAWP support staff files – the whole migration is on hold. This still needs to stay on the risk register. <p>VAWP Admin to update</p>	VAWP admin
8.	<p>AOB</p> <p>To be agreed by the Chair prior to the meeting</p> <p>Highland Quality Standards Framework</p> <p>CR will circulate this report and will include some of the figures in the COG report. She asked if anybody had any additions to come back by the end of next week and it can be added. The Chair was happy for this to be circulated.</p> <p>JM requested that in terms of item 5 (Delivery Group Reports), for fairness, could the groups be rotated and not always in the same order. The Chair thought this was a good suggestion.</p>	<p>CR</p> <p>CR/FW</p>
	<p>Dates of 2025 Meetings:</p> <p>Tuesday 20 May, 10am-12noon</p> <p>Tuesday 15 July, 1pm-3pm</p> <p>Tuesday 29 October, 1pm-3pm</p> <p>To be sent out as diary invitations.</p> <p>MS Teams invites, agenda and related papers are sent out approximately 1 week prior to meetings.</p> <p>All meetings are set to pre-record for the year.</p>	



Highland VAW Partnership Meeting

20th May 2025

PRESENT:

Peter MacKenzie – Independent Chair HVAWP
 Adele Newlands, RWA
 Alev Taylor, RASASH
 Catherine Russell, HVAWP
 ADI Christopher MacLeod, Police Scotland
 Donna Munro, The Highland Council
 Fiona Wilson, HVAWP
 Gavin Letford, COPFS
 Gillian Hossack, CASWA
 James Martin, Highlife Highland
 Karen Peteranna, HVAWP
 Leanne Maxwell, IWA
 Lorraine Revitt, Lochaber Women’s Aid
 Mike Mawby, Safe & Together
 Myra Ross, Public Health
 Susan Birse, Public Health
 Susan Laidlaw, The Highland Council

APOLOGIES:

Elaine Lyall, HVAWP
 Maria Cano, JSW
 Meghan Munro, RASASH
 Molly Gilbert, Adult Protection, NHS
 Isabel McLellan, The Highland Council
 DCI Ross Hamill, Police Scotland

		ACTIONS
1.	WELCOME AND APOLOGIES PM Welcomed members to meeting and introductions were made.	

2.	<p>MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING</p> <p>a) Note changes & Approval SL was marked down as being in the wrong organisation, she is the Associate Lead Nurse in The Highland Council. MARAC Delivery Group – minor items around the risk assessment, this was not presented to the group, so the minutes were changed slightly. The copy members had was the final version.</p> <p>b) Review of Action Tracker – if not elsewhere on agenda</p> <p>Mapping Exercise on Public Protection Training across Highland CR and JB have now met and have agreed that joined up working with the WFWP through its Pillar 4 meetings would be a good venue to begin this. The HVAWP Team have started mapping training for HVAWP which will be fed into these meetings and will also be shared at the next LDP meeting. CR would also then feed into the PP Leads meetings. This is a regular item on the LDP meeting agenda which CR updates progress on, so suggest this action complete whilst progress is being made.</p> <p>Women’s champion – itemised priority within service group. LR contacted HC they have to go through a process which will need to be looked at further by the group. Not being followed up at present. To remain on action tracker.</p> <p>Meeting with local Councillor who sits on the National COSLA Wellbeing Committee PM Spoke to Graham MacKenzie, the next COSLA meeting is 6th June. He will arrange a meeting face to face with him to give him an overview of what we do and how we can help him and will link that in with the chairs meeting PM attended. - Complete</p> <p>Tors update, PM has now attended one of the delivery groups (Addressing Perpetrators) and is to remain on action tracker as progress is made.</p> <p>LD&P Group planning for 16 days and request for money promotional leaflets – No update, there was no response from anybody. MR will take this forward.</p>	<p>CR</p> <p>LR</p>
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	<p>Commercial Sexual Exploitation Support- RASASH provide a service but is often through referral from other agencies. On a Government level this is not being progressed at present. CR and RASASH will keep each other updated and as soon as any progress has been made will update members. To be kept on action tracker.</p> <p>All other items were discussed under agenda headings.</p>	
3.	<p>FINANCIAL (CR)</p> <p>a) Financial Expenditure against Income for Quarter 4, 2024/25</p> <p>The financial reports were presented to the group, and they were confirmed they had been approved by the NHSH Financial accountant. A brief report was given on all income and expenditure and input invited.</p> <p>b) Draft 25/26 Investment Plan Proposals – results of financial working group meeting</p> <p>CR gave a brief explanation about the document.</p> <p>There were four proposals put into the financial working group this April, three of them were agreed. One proposal was not agreed which was from the MARAC Delivery Group asking for backup money for the trial of the reduced minutes, as it was felt at that time there was no need because it was going so well. All new items were confirmed as now part of the investment plan going forward as follows.</p> <p>Outline of approved finance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The VAWP one year part time fixed term administration post has been extended for another year. SB is now working on this to progress matters. • Women's Aid groups are being supported with the purchase of ring doorbells, although there were some questions to be answered regarding video capacity of the doorbells and whether the doorbells would remain the property of the service user. It was decided to go with the doorbells that use SD cards that record 180 days of information as this may be used as evidence by police without a subscription. The doorbells will remain the property of the service user. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agreement was made to ringfence £2000 for the Safe Transport Campaign to work towards this project. <p>Comments: PM suggested that if members required funding for particular projects, they submit relevant information in writing (one page document) so it can be discussed through a matrix and it can be looked at through the next financial working group. CR can provide anyone with the proforma.</p> <p>DM stated she would welcome the opportunity to do some cross working around children and young people and the VAWP. She suggested it would be something CR and DM could discuss further at the PP Lead's Group. They are already developing a shared data set and are progressing other areas that they want to work on jointly.</p> <p>MR stated she would appreciate it if funding could be sought to roll out more of 'The Spider in the Glass' training more widely.</p> <p>The partnership is looking at how the finances are calculated. PM met with SB, and she has kindly offered to look into this further with the accountant. At present it looks like there could be a negative balance going forward; however, we do have the underspend at the moment. It was agreed if it is going to move forward with a negative balance PM will go to the COG with a business case to request more funding if appropriate.</p> <p>c) Draft Budget 25/26 CR briefly explained the figures on the draft budget. There is money in the underspend, but it does limit as to what we can do and use that money for, it can only be used on projects and not on recurring costs.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PM stated there was £57000 as the underspend from the draft budget and said the partnership did not want to go and spend this until they can see where they are with the salaries as it would be beneficial to have something in reserve for unexpected circumstances. • MR asked if the Training Officer's post was budgeted for, PM confirmed it was still in the budget. 	<p>CR</p> <p>CR/DM</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The plan would be to keep the vacant job description as it is but to change some elements (up to 10% of the job description can be changed). The proposal would be to add in some data officer functions and put it out for advert to see if any response is received. We could then recruit asap to this vacancy. If nobody applies, then look to bring this back to the HVAWP meeting again for further. <p>SB asked for agreement from the group for this post to go out to advert. All members agreed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> SB reported it was important to keep the training element in the current vacancy that was going out to advert, particularly until an exercise is conducted to look at the VAWP support staff function and to try and reduce the burden of the admin that they have at present. DM stated that the addition of a data function on the vacant post would be a really welcome and would mirror similar Data Analysis posts already in place in the other 3 Public Protection Committee support teams. <p>d) Police SLA</p> <p>The SLA has not been circulated as it is still with RH. The Police are asking for an SLA rather than just the usual invoice for the MARAC contribution. The admin group have discussed this and suggested some changes. The document was sent back to RH for his comments, but he has not had the chance to look at it as yet. There is no change in finances it is more of a formal way of asking for our money at the start of each financial year. CR will circulate the SLA to members for their perusal.</p> <p>PM stated there needed to be a written document in place with each of the partners for the funding and the Police one will be the start.</p>	
4.	<p>CURRENT KEY ISSUES</p> <p>a) National VAWP Needs Assessment – Summer 2025 (CR)</p> <p>Scottish Government VAWP Needs Assessment Tool - CR presented slides on this matter, she went through the background, the five questions and what it means to HVAWP. CR stated that the questions were very broad and need a lot more focus and guidance.</p>	

	<p>The Needs Analysis will be a large task for HVAWP to undertake and the Government is also looking at making some mandatory requirements within the task. They have promised full guidelines. It will involve all of the partners, and they are looking at the possibility of resources as they know all VAWPs are already very overstretched. They will look at using existing sources of local and national data to avoid repetition and also survivor input.</p> <p>Benefits of Assessment could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify gaps in Highland services and needs • Provide comparisons with other VAWP areas in Scotland • Minimise risks in the future by looking at gaps • Increase partnership working and learning • Raise awareness of VAWP across all organisations. • Provide evidence for service requests for funding • Evidences decision making <p>CR stated that the Government Annual Returns did not need to be submitted this year to allow extra time to concentrate on this. However, as with the first year of COVID where a similar thing happened, we may wish to consider submitting the data element later in the year to avoid a gap in our annual return figures.</p> <p>CR asked for comments/questions they would like to feedback.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PM suggested members email CR if they have any input not discussed at this meeting and to keep everyone updated by email in between meetings. • MR asked if they were going to split this up and ask organisations to feedback or are they going to task the VAWP to do it. • CR reported that this was not known yet, but it is anticipated HVAWP would be the central collection point of data and assessment function. Also, this is why they were suggesting they might look at mandatory approaches so there is a mandatory requirement on everyone to produce certain information. • MR stated herself and SB are meeting to look at the strategic plan to see what they could get for the delivery plan for the 	<p>MR/SB</p>
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	<p>Safe & Together Programme – There are plans to look into developing a Scottish version of this programme and to embed that within the Equally Safe Strategy.</p> <p>COSLA – it is there 50th anniversary this year so they are planning on some events, CR will keep members updated on this as they progress.</p> <p>Women Councillors in Scotland – There have been threats to women councillors in some areas of Scotland. It was reported COSLA felt this was in connection with the increase in council tax, however, only women are being targeted. This is being taken seriously and COSLA are collaborating with local authorities to create safe spaces. PM will discuss this with Graham MacKenzie when they meet as he is the COSLA representative.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> MR reported she has had people bring concerns about experiencing violence in the workplace, women particularly who are being assaulted in the workplace, both physically and sexually. This is something as VAWP that should be addressed and what action can be taken and how VAWP can support people to address it. PM asked if this could be taken to one of the groups. MR and PM will discuss this off table. <p>CR stated there are new guidelines out from Government:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> FGM orders Honour based abuse definition Tech related violence against women <p>EL goes to national meetings and keeps us updated with what is happening in these areas.</p> <p>The Government's plans to make misogyny a specific crime have now been shelved; this is on the back of the Supreme Court judgement on the definition of a woman in the Equality Act. They are proposing on putting something within the Hate Crime and Public Order Act. CR will keep members updated and circulate information when it is received.</p> <p>Public Health Scotland have released the following information on TURAS:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> New rape and sexual abuse module GBV e-learning module 	<p>PM</p> <p>MR/PM</p> <p>CR</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Learning disabilities module <p>The Police reported nationally that they are going to be looking at the impact of the new domestic abuse homicide model in Police Scotland so they can undertake a pre planning exercise before it goes live.</p> <p>The Police in Dundee are conducting a trial whereby body cameras are worn by police attending incidents of domestic abuse. The idea being that the police can then provide video evidence of the distress it has caused but it was also mentioned that it could then be used against the survivor whereby quite often when police attend, they deny anything has happened or too frightened to speak. There is further work being done on this at present.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GL stated that the use of body worn video cameras by Police Scotland is something they are looking to roll out in the Highland area in June. COPS are currently in discussion with Police Scotland about it. They are really tapping into the feedback and experiences that been had so far in Dundee to try and discuss how it is going to look in Highland. Discussions are ongoing at present. • CM stated the training for this within the police is ongoing in Highland at present. The expectation is to offer officers training and for them to be used with any engagement with the public. • PM asked if GL was aware of the negativity in relation to what was suggested regarding the survivors who may appear not to be in distress or a state of fear which may be used by the defence against the survivor. • GL reported that colleagues in Policy are heavily involved in looking at this feedback in the roll out of cameras. He is going to pass this information on to Policy today to make them aware this has been discussed in this forum. GL stated there was some desire by Policy to reach out to partners to make them aware of the implications of the body worn video footage and how that is going to look. GL will explore this with Policy to see how much further they have got with this and see tying in with some of the agencies who participate in 	GL
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	<p>the partnership who would be interested in taking part in any way in this session.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MR offered to conduct some training around this topic with any officers to help with more of an understanding of how a survivor reacts. MR said they could contact her if they were interested in taking this matter further. • CM stated it is not a requirement to have the stress alongside a statement for it to be taken further. Bodies around the prosecution side are becoming more aware to the fact that the stress is not an indicator. The lack of distress does not mean the incident has not happened. • GL will contact Jenny Hamilton and put her in contact with CR regarding discussing this matter further. Jenny is keen to reach out to partners and agencies who would need to be aware of this and the potential implications and gather feedback. This will be done off table. <p>d) Draft Annual Report for approval (CR)</p> <p>The VAWP support team have been working hard on this document, (mainly EL) to enable this basic outline to be presented at this meeting. CR thanked JM LR and PM for their input and guidance. It is hoped this report could be circulated as a final version late summer. Medical Illustrations (NHS) will be doing the graphics, and they will need a least Four weeks to produce the final product. CR proposed members take a brief look at the report in this meeting and how it is going to look as it is progressed. The Delivery Groups have already fed in with other information from different partners as well.</p> <p>CR went through the table of contents with members and explained how the graphics/information/stats would work within the document.</p> <p>The document will be sent out for comments, it will then be redrafted and sent out again for another week. It will then be sent to Medical Illustrations.</p> <p>Comments:</p>	<p>MR</p> <p>GL</p> <p>CR</p> <p>CR</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AT stated that all stats needed to be included in the document that give a full picture of GBV not just Domestic Abuse in Highlands. • PM requested people feedback any relevant information to go into this document. • CR also asked anyone to contribute whatever they have as it would make a better product in the end. • MR suggested collaborating between SARC, RASASH and the Police to see what we have in the way of sexual violence because none of us are going to have a clear picture on our own search. Child Protection should be included also. PM asked AT to take MR's comment forward. AT agreed. <p>e) Marketing & Social Media Policies – Update (JM)</p> <p>JM reported that himself and CR had now made some progress into comparing some existing policies etc. JM has been in touch with the Comms people in various partnerships to secure comms input into our media publications. JM is now in a position of knowing who to approach and is hoping to be able to bring something back to the next meeting on the matter. There has been some progression but not as much as JM would have liked. JM expressed his thanks to CR.</p> <p>f) Festival and other large events support (SB)</p> <p>SB reported that there had been a couple of meetings held between Moray Women's Aid and a few other organisations, about some reported incidents at Belladrum. Further work was ongoing as the data was not sufficient to reach any clear conclusions. During the process it had become apparent that people were not aware of the supporting local welfare structures that was in place for these festivals.</p> <p>DM confirmed she chairs the Welfare Group for the festivals-and the multi-agency representatives on this group had been able to make massive headway over the last five years.</p> <p>DM confirmed there are set welfare requirements for licensing for any event that takes place. There is a set of licensing requirements that have to be met in relation to welfare and they focus on drugs,</p>	<p>AT</p> <p>JM</p>
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	<p>alcohol, and safeguarding. DM stated these requirements are due to be reviewed in the next year so there is an opportunity to be able to feed into some of that but the bigger events such as The Gathering and Belladrum need separate additional welfare provision. There are opportunities to offer training. They are reviewing the Public Protection handbook that can be shared with the welfare, medical, security groups, and anybody else that needs it. It will be on the CPC website, and it could also go on the VAWP website. It will cover everything, drugs, alcohol, and gender based violence etc.</p> <p>SB had asked for this to be on the agenda for general discussion on how HVAWP as a group could collectively support all large event functions.</p> <p>Comments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PM thanked DM for her recent work conducted in relation to this and for her work, along with others, over previous years. • DM stated she is going to be the Welfare and Safeguarding lead for Belladrum and she hoped that provided some reassurance as they will be looking at any incident that is brought to her attention and have an opportunity to review and debrief any safeguarding issues that arise. • SB asked if CR could circulate the booklet to members of the group after the meeting so people can input into it if needs be. • PM asked if DM will be the lead on this as a standing item on the main strategic group and if anyone has any ideas or input, please contact DM. She will be our main response in relation to violence against women so there is a single point of contact. DM agreed. <p>g) Next HVAWP Development Day (PM)</p> <p>PM reported that the Development Day last year was a remarkable success.</p> <p>PM suggested conducting it in September again this year and suggested it could be a hybrid event, so we have in person and virtual attendance. He asked members for any ideas for the Development Day.</p>	<p>DM</p>
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	<p>The following ideas were suggested:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CR suggested Human Trafficking. Training Officers from TARA can do an online or can be invited to the Development day for a 60-90 minute session. It would also link into commercial sexual exploitation and the national proposal for a local response to support CSE with Highland being a pilot area. An opportunity to discuss local impact, issues and develop a then informed plan going forward. • SB suggested a Training day – a training day in general, MR could do some GBV training and others - a bite size training day could be useful for all partners. • DM said she would be happy to conduct a session to start discussion about where we might be at and where we could start to develop some of that joint approach being asked of the Public Protection Committees. She suggested cross cutting issues around child sexual exploitation and online safety. Also thinking about the recent NSPCC data around young people, young women experiencing domestic abuse. • SL mentioned they had a development day for school nurses and health visitors. The Police gave a talk on child sexual exploitation. She said it made an enormous impact on the whole audience with everyone not realising it was prevalent in the Highlands. <p>JM stated there was perhaps a stage, or a workshop to be organised, looking at some of the core topics that we are all looking at across the various partnerships to be had before deciding on the training day to identify the key topics that we crossover on as when he was observing the subgroups, he was finding a lot of the same discussions taking place at the different groups and they were doing their own separate and different things.</p> <p>Members were asked to forward any suggestions to CR as to what they think might be a good structure for the Development day. CR will then put a draft agenda together with times, topics etc and circulate to members of the partnership.</p>	CR
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5.	<p>Delivery Group Updates (Not already mentioned previously)</p> <p>All Reports are deemed <u>read</u>; this section is for chairs to answer any pertinent questions. The groups are now rotated each meeting and 10 mins given on the first group to regularly allow for more focus on a particular area in rotation.</p> <p>a) S&T Joint Project with CPC</p> <p>MM circulated papers previously and he then updated members of some of the developments at national level since the papers were distributed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are considerations around a national approach to Safe & Together and there is a working group comprised of Scottish Government, COSLA and Social Work Scotland, they have been meeting to take this forward. An options paper has now been drafted and presented to that group for consideration at their next meeting, thereafter it will be disseminated out to the likes of the partnership here and other key stakeholders for their consideration and feedback. The timescale for this is to have proposals to present to Scottish Government by the end of this financial year for commencement in the financial year 25/26. MM will keep members updated on any news. • There is a Safe & Together MARAC pilot that has been funded by Scottish Government that is moving forward, East Renfrewshire and Dumfries and Galloway have been selected for the pilot, and this was commenced a couple of weeks ago. It is a six month pilot and again outcomes and learning will be shared nationally on conclusion later in the year. • There is now a new National Practitioner Forum that is being established, and it will feature 10 two hour online programmes covering a range of issues in relation to Safe & Together. It includes Safe & Together tools, implementation of the model in practice across services, sector specific issues and multi agency working in relation to work with children affected by domestic abuse. Discussions are ongoing as to the facilitation of that. It is likely that MM and his colleague in Moray will take the lead on this. There has been good uptake, and it goes live tomorrow. 	MM
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A new model of training is being looked at, developed by the Northern Collaborative, whereby information regarding training being provided by S&T is shared nationally and if there are any spare places anyone can apply out with their own areas. The contact for the Highland is MM. With the agreement of the group MM will make sure via this network and the Child Protection Committee networks any availability of training in areas other than Highland is shared appropriately and timeously so people can access training. Currently all future training in Highland is on that programme. The only other program that is available for colleagues from Highland to apply to is an in person Manager and Supervisors training taking place in Dumfries and Galloway. MM can send details out if people would be interested. He will keep people updated through this network and through the CPC network of any other training that becomes available. <p>MM reported that the Domestic Abuse Commissioner for England and Wales published a report: Victims in their own right, babies, children, and young people's experiences of domestic abuse. This was published last month and presented to the Westminster Parliament. It features reflections and feedback from staff here in Highland following a visit to Inverness by staff from the Commissioner's Office last year. It also highlights a case study from Highland regarding our multi agency joint governance approach to the implementation of S&T. MM stated it was nice to receive recognition at the UK level for the good work and particularly the multi agency approach that is being taken about tackling violence against women and girls here in Highland.</p> <p>MM asked the group for some advice and guidance with regard to the training and about appropriate levels of attendees to continue with training. He gave an example of one being done in Fort William next month with eight people in attendance. Members agreed that an attendance of eight would be a respectable number to continue with the training as that is a further eight people trained in Safe & Together.</p> <p>Training dates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fort William – June • Wick – August • Nairn – September 	<p>MM</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Portree – October • Inverness – November • Strathpeffer – December. <p>Actual dates were circulated in the papers MM distributed.</p> <p>MM took the opportunity to thank CR, PM and others from the group who supported him in facilitating that visit by the Commissioner’s Office.</p> <p>b) Addressing Perpetrators Delivery Group</p> <p>PM reported he had sat in on this subgroup meeting and it was concerning the lack of people in attendance. Despite that, there were some good suggestions, and a good discussion took place. All suggestions are listed in the report that was circulated to members prior to this meeting.</p> <p>PM will compile a report in relation to this as part of the review of the delivery groups.</p> <p>c) Learning, Development & Prevention Delivery Group</p> <p>i. Quarterly review of trial GBV level 1 Training Delivery by PH- report</p> <p>MR gave a brief report on how they are going to format the group and what they want to do moving forward. They want to create a delivery plan and then get some actions going forward that are related to what they are hoping to achieve. MR also reported that ‘The Spider the Glass’ training is ongoing. She has trained in excess of 3000 people and feedback has been phenomenal. MM is looking for support to help her roll this out more widely and would hope it would be supported by VAWP going forward.</p> <p>HVAWP to note/action</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Can MR and MM please be sent the current HVAWP Strategic Plan. • Can MR and MM please be sent the biannual questionnaire sent out through education. • Can CR please request details of what VAWG content is included in CP Training Courses. • Can MM and MR please be sent the information gathered so far regarding both VAWG training and Public Protection Training. 	<p>PM</p>
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	<p>PM mentioned the 16 days campaign, as nobody showed any interest, he thought this needed to be put out to a wider group to see if we can get a small working group to progress the 16 days campaign for this year, which could possibly include a march and if timings are in early all the authorisations could be passed. PM said he would be happy to sit on that group with MR. CR confirmed she was attending as a link to the national meetings and would continue to feed in updates. MR and PM will have a discussion off table about this.</p> <p><i>Rearranging agenda, action tracker and tasks</i> - PM stated this will be part of the review that JM, PM and LR will be involved in linking in with all subgroups so there is consistency throughout all the delivery groups. PM said he would like the format of the agendas to be the same throughout all the delivery groups and this had to reflect, as a minimum, the need to progress priorities from the national ES Strategy. Further discussions to be had after all the reviews have taken place with each group. JM, PM and LR will come together with the Chairs and Vice Chairs of each group, and it will be a collaborate effort to move matters forward. It was therefore asked that until this took place for all delivery groups, individual development work within groups was put on hold, but still allowing for the actioning of the delivery of the priorities. This would ensure full participation of everyone, lessen resource wastage, and provide agree consistency across the partnership.</p> <p>d) MARAC Delivery Group</p> <p>LR reported they had a very in depth meeting a lot of discussion took place. MARAC referrals are continuing to rise, they are sometimes impossible to manage at times. KP provided some additional stats to LR before this meeting - between October 2024 and April 2025 there were 323 referrals processed an average of 46 per month and if that trend continues it will be 553 referrals over a 12 month period. There is a 20% increase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AOB has been taken away at MARAC meetings as cases that had not been previously circulated for research and support could not be discussed without risk. • Reduced minute trial is going well and will now continue in Highlands. 	<p>MR/PM</p> <p>JM, PM, LR ALL DELIVERY GROUP CHAIRS & VICE CHAIRS</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Islands have stated a three month trial of reduced minutes as well. • MARAC risk assessment has been updated. • Review group set up for Safe at Home protocol. <p>KP reported that she sought advice from SafeLives about referral criteria. 65% of referrals recently have been on professional judgement. It is quite difficult to deal with.</p> <p>PM asked if some training could be offered to help with this problem. KP agreed to look into a training day or discussion forum for people who participate in submitting referrals.</p> <p>All questions/statements were addressed regarding the items below:</p> <p>Recommendations for HVAWP:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued lack of capacity to progress development work including the review and update of the Operating Protocol and Information Sharing Agreement. (part solution sourced by HVAWP Chair and Deputies since meeting) <p>After the meeting, the VAWP team got together and put a plan in place. In June KP will have time set aside to look at this piece of work and progress it whilst the team and Public Health admin provide additional input into the MARAC process to keep it functioning.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider sourcing funding for dedicated MARAC admin support. It was hoped that reduced minute taking would alleviate this, but referrals are high. <p>It was hoped that reduced minute taking would alleviate this, but referrals are high. PM said he can go back to COG to say we require additional funds to support this if needs be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider sourcing funding for an independent Chair for MARAC meetings (Highland & Islands). <p>PM said he could see the benefits of the consistency and to alleviate the burden on a wide range of senior managers who currently undertake this process. He expressed his thanks for all their work</p>	<p>KP</p>
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	<p>and dedication which was recognised by all. Other funding streams could be looked at to see if a post could be funded for a certain period of time or some kind of grant if one were available.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider a solution to the gap in NHS physical health representation at MARAC. There is no representation for Caithness, Lochaber, Ross-shire and Skye and the INBS and Sutherland representatives do not attend (written updates provided). <p>SB will look into the physical health attendance and take this forward. There does not need to be a separate person for each of DARS, mental health and physical health. The most crucial point would be to get the correct person who has the correct information as a single point of contact.</p> <p>e) Service Provision Delivery Group LR gave a brief update on matters below which were included in the report circulated to members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Good attendance. Data on Badgernet and the Drug and Alcohol system MORSE. Bairns Hoose. Safe & Together update. Safe accommodation and costs related to emergency accommodation. Commissioning Services RASASH's move to new premises Information for annual report – LR to forward information. 	SB
6.	<p>COG items</p> <p>a) Review of items for COG report</p> <p>The next COG meeting is the end of July. There is an Extra ordinary meeting scheduled for tomorrow, but this may not go ahead. A report will be compiled on items in the high risk discussion that have taken place, and this will be in July.</p>	
7.	<p>HVAWP RISK REGISTER</p> <p>Anything from today's meeting to be added or amended – CR to put on register</p> <p>Items from MARAC Delivery Group:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referrals continue to be on an upward trend 	CR

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Physical health gap, but there may be a solution for this. • Overreliance on written updates from attendees and this is reducing attendance, reducing those involved in the risk assessment and action planning. • Information sharing agreement and operating protocol • Further control for referrals – other controls are in place where police are using professional judgement on repeat cases and potential escalation referrals are after five incidents in Highlands rather than three which is nationally. 	
8.	<p>AOB</p> <p><u>To be agreed by the Chair prior to the meeting</u></p> <p>AT reported that RASASH has been nominated for Charity of the Year. They were nominated by two MSPs and are in the finals. The award ceremony is in June in Glasgow. They also get to do the People's Choice Award. AT asked members to vote if they have not already as voting closes today. It is a wonderful opportunity to represent the Highland as they are a local charity.</p> <p>PM wished them well and asked AT to let the group know how they get on.</p>	
	<p>DATES OF 2025 MEETINGS:</p> <p>Tuesday 15 July, 1pm-3pm</p> <p>Tuesday 29 October, 1pm-3pm</p> <p>To be sent out as diary invitations.</p> <p>MS Teams invites, agenda and related papers are sent out approximately 1 week prior to meetings.</p> <p>All meetings are set to pre-record for the year.</p>	

Attachments: (If not separately circulated)

Draft Annual report

Presentation slides for national Needs Assessment requirement