



Highland VAW Partnership Meeting

9 August 2022

10am - 12 noon (MS TEAMS)

PRESENT: Peter Mackenzie – **Chair**
Cathy Steer, Head of Health Improvement, NHSH - **Depute Chair**
Adele Newlands, Manager, Ross-shire Womens Aid
Andrew Garraway, Development Manager, HADP
Angela Echavarren, Children’s Services, The Highland Council
Bev Horton, Interim HOS, Drug & Alcohol Recovery, NHSH
Catherine Russell, Manager, VAWP Team
Debbie Stewart, Coordinator, HADP
Eilidh Moir, MARAC Coordinator, VAWP Team
Emma Fraser, Caithness & Sutherland Womens Aid
Fiona Mackintosh, Training Officer, Child Protection Committee
Hollie Drever, UHI
Lorraine Revitt, Lochaber Women’s Aid
DI Lynne Falconer, Police Scotland
Maria Cano, CJSW Team Manager, The Highland Council
Mike Mawby, Safe & Together Coordinator, The Highland Council
Molly Gilbert, Adult Protection, NHSH
Myra Ross – Training Officer, VAWP Team
Naomi Hyslop, Area Youth Service Officer, Highlife Highland

APOLOGIES: Barry Muirhead, Associate Nurse Director, MH/D, NHSH
DCI Calum Smith, Police Scotland
Emma Holloway, Support Lead, RASASH
Elaine Fetherston, Manager, Inverness Women’s Aid
Gary Goddard, Unit Manager, Scottish Prison Service
Gill Graham, Scottish Fire Service
Jane Park, Health Service, The Highland Council
Jacqui Hutchinson, Children’s Services, The Highland Council
Lyndsey Mateer, Housing Services, The Highland Council
Lyndsay Sutherland, Student Support, UHI
Margaret McIntyre, Head of Social Work Services, The Highland Council
Niall MacLennan, Scottish Fire Service
Romy Rehfeld, Manager, Rape & Sexual Abuse Service Highland
Wendy Van Riet, Lead Psychologist, NHSH

		ACTIONS
1	<p>Welcome and Apologies</p> <p>The Chair thanked the outgoing temporary Chair for all their work and support and wished him well in his retirement.</p>	
2	<p><u>Minutes of previous meeting</u></p> <p>a. The Minutes - approved</p> <p>b. Action Tracker – Following actions added: 1/22 – to be marked as complete as being further evaluated in Jan 2023 7/22 – LF to chase for update 8/22 – PM to write to Sheriff Clerk in Inverness to ascertain if we are able to obtain the information on the number of NHO’s in Highlands issued. 14/22 – Will allocate to relevant subgroup to progress when COG Communications Strategy is available. 15/22 – PM to chase for information.</p>	
3	<p><u>Depute Chair of HVAWP</u></p> <p>Cathy Steer, Head of Health Improvement for NHS Highland volunteered to stand as Depute Chair of the Partnership. This was unanimously approved.</p>	
4	<p><u>Financial</u></p> <p><u>Income/Expenditure – Quarter 1 to 30 June 2022</u></p> <p>The Income and expenditure for the first quarter was reported and noted by the meeting. This had not been verified by the partnership’s accountant and any major changes would be updated and sent with the minutes.</p> <p>The Chair has asked the subgroups to report on any new initiatives that meet the HVAWP Priority Action Plan to be submitted, with costings, to the next meeting in November. They were reminded that funding was only available for non-recurring items.</p> <p>It was suggested that the £1k currently committed for the 16 days of Action be raised to allow for more activities to be planned in late November/Early December. As the next HVAWP meeting isn’t until 7 November the Prevention Subgroup were asked to prepare a 1 sided A4 paper which would outline plans with approximate costings that could be circulated to the Chair and Depute Chair for approval. This would allow for plans to progress in between meetings</p>	<p>Accountant / CR</p> <p>All Subgroups</p> <p>NH/MR</p> <p>CR</p>

<p>6</p>	<p><u>Sub Group Updates</u></p> <p>As most of the subgroups had to be cancelled, and those that did take place did not require a report, the only report for discussion is the MARAC Steering Group report.</p> <p>a. <u>MARAC Steering Group Report</u></p> <p>A report was presented by the Chair of the Steering group which highlighted two main issues:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Long term cover for the MARAC Coordinator post • Outstanding actions requiring resolution <p>No comments from anyone who couldn't attend were received.</p> <p>LF, Chair of the MARAC Steering Group, went through the report, highlighted risks and outlined options. It was agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The current arrangement, using HVAWP monies, to fund an additional 10 weeks of cover for the Coordinator on a permanent basis was working well. It covered for holidays, training and some sickness leave. It was flexible and used when required throughout the year by utilising an annualised monthly pay system and time recording system. The hours had been added to the VAWP administrator hours. As a member of the VAWP support team they could be fully trained and supported. Backup was provided on an ad hoc/emergency basis by the Public Health Administrators. • Long term cover was deemed a high risk for the MARAC operating process. Outside of the 10 weeks currently arrange, MARAC could not be supported as it was not funded, full time and unexpected. Such circumstances would arise from long term sickness absence (longer than 3 weeks pa), resignation, secondments etc. Succession planning was needed. CS suggested the Partnership carried out an Options Appraisal on the proposals within the report, such as increased funding for more MARAC administration hours, more volunteers and other options, to provide an immediate solution to long term cover needs. This was deemed <u>High Risk</u> as this would severely affect MARAC operations long term and could lead to meetings being cancelled. • MARAC admin processes, which are operational 52 weeks a year, cannot be put on hold so it was felt this post should be deemed exceptional. This would involve the introduction of "fast track" support processes to immediately resolve any IT issues, access to restricted systems, recruitment processes, HR issues etc. Delays were deemed <u>High Risk</u> as this would severely and immediately 	<p>CS</p>
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	<p>affect MARAC operations leading to meetings being cancelled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The new Chairs Rota was still in its infancy but appeared to be operating as intended. However, issues around longevity, consistency, training opportunities, training costs and time to run/organise rotas/recruit volunteers was considered very time consuming. Voluntary rotas were subject to constant change, and unexpected issues that could prove a risk to the MARAC process. CS • The meeting agreed that there could potentially be <u>High Risks</u> to victims of Domestic Violence from cancelling the MARAC meetings or not adhering to agreed protocols and operating standards. • Agency representation at MARAC meetings was a long standing issue as sometimes people didn't attend, left early, or were not at the appropriate seniority in their organisations to commit to action planning. There needed to be regular information sent to heads of organisations to inform them of gaps to allow for high level resolution. Not operating within the current SafeLives guidelines and our own signed Operating Protocol were deemed a <u>significant risk</u> to high risk victims of Domestic Abuse and the viability of the operational processes. • MARAC is not a current statutory process. However discussions on whether it should be statutory and improvements in practices across Scotland are currently taking place at Scottish Government. All areas appear to operate slightly differently reflecting local needs. All, however, have high risk implications if meetings are cancelled through lack of supporting structure or not operating within guidelines. There was recognition that the army of volunteers who supported the MARAC process were enthusiastic and committed. It was agreed that this was fundamental in all partnership work. However, the risks to victims of Domestic Abuse were deemed significantly high and potentially life threatening. There was an agreed need for the highest level executive support to actively ensure priority for MARAC in all work commitments. • Training on Gender Based Violence was essential at all levels in all organisations to create a basis for informed decision making and support for MARAC. VAWP training capacity could not meet demand which was deemed a risk to MARAC strategic decision making and access to referral processes of Victims via untrained professionals across Highlands. Last year's needs analysis had received little feedback but this could be looked at again. Evaluation of training and demand was already taking place. • MARAC operations needed expert GDPR evaluation to ensure admin processes were still robust under the new legislation. This was 	CS
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	<p>deemed <u>High Risk</u> due to the significant impact breaches could have on victims and organisations. There was agreement that the new Information Sharing Protocol, which was near to completion and sign of, was important, but every day processes needed to be regularly reviewed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Funding for the MARAC process needed to be protected and further funding sought where HVAWP felt improvements in processes to mitigate deemed risks, needed financial input. Current funding also included The Highland Council support of the essential IDAA service for MARAC. • It was noted that many of the 400 average annual cases discussed at MARAC had a significant child protection element within the family circumstances. <p>Members of the Steering Group, along with the Chair and Depute Chair, would continue to work together to update the current report for re-presentation to the next Steering Group. It would reflect further work required from the discussions above as well as providing a clear evidence based focus on immediate, medium and long term requirements with a variety of solutions, fully costed where required. The report would be agreed at the next HVAWP meeting then submitted to COG for their meeting in November. CR to arrange a series of meetings during Sept/Oct to progress this work to meet the deadline for the COG November meeting.</p>	CR
7	<p><u>COG Reports</u></p> <p><u>Annual COG Report to CPP</u></p> <p>This was circulated before the meeting with a deadline for responses of 7th August. It was submitted for the COG deadline on 8th August.</p> <p><u>Quarterly HVAWP Report to COG</u></p> <p>Will be amended to reflect the discussions from today and agreed by the Chair/Depute Chair for submission to COG by their deadline of 17 August.</p>	

<p>8</p> <p>a.</p> <p>b.</p> <p>c.</p>	<p><u>Equally Safe Annual returns</u></p> <p><u>Draft 21/22 Equally Safe Quality Standards return</u></p> <p>Noted and agreed to submit to Improvement Services/The Scottish Government</p> <p><u>Draft 21/22 Equally Safe Performance Framework return</u></p> <p>Noted and agreed to submit to Improvement Services/The Scottish Government</p> <p><u>Analysis</u></p> <p>It was noted that there had been a 14% increase in referrals to support services in Highlands but a 6% decrease in funding. Referrals from Education had significantly increased, probably a reflection of a return to school after the series of lockdowns. There was a decrease in referrals from Social Work during this year.</p>	
<p>11</p> <p>a.</p> <p>b.</p>	<p><u>Any other Competent Business</u></p> <p><u>Terms of Reference</u></p> <p>There had been several major restructurings within key organisations in the partnership which had resulted in new members and some leaving. The subgroups were asked to identify any gaps in members and to report to the November meeting. The VAWP team would look at potential gaps in the HVAWP membership and also provide a brief update.</p> <p><u>SG Review for VAWG Funding</u></p> <p>A reminder to respond to an email for comments and evidence to inform HVAWP discussions with Lesley Irving from the SG at the meeting on 16 August.</p> <p><u>Safe & Together</u></p> <p>The Coordinator will be submitting quarterly reports to HVAWP and CPC on progress of the project and this item will be included in the regular reporting agenda items.</p>	<p>Subgroups</p>

	<p><u>16 Days of Action Planning</u></p> <p>Planning was well underway and NH had volunteered to chair a series of forthcoming meetings of volunteers who would like to help with the organisations. The VAWP administrator to email for volunteers and set up the meetings in diaries. Additional funding requirements were discussed earlier.</p> <p><u>Development Day Agenda</u></p> <p>Had been set for 10am to 3pm on 31 August 2022. Agenda so far was:</p> <p>10-12 noon - CSE Workshop with Linda Thomson from the WSP 12 – 13:00 - Lunch/break PM - Possible presentation from the DA Task Force - GBV - S&T Overview - HVAWP Self-Assessment Evaluation Introduction</p> <p>LF to contact DA Task Force to ascertain if this can be arranged.</p> <p><u>Membership changes</u></p> <p>The new Manager for Caithness and Sutherland Women’s Aid had been appointed and further details will be forwarded.</p> <p>The Manager for Ross-shire Womens Aid informed the meeting that she is leaving RWA and once recruited to, details will be sent through. The current Manager was thanked for her contribution to the work of HVAWP over the years.</p>	<p>MW</p> <p>LF</p>
<p>12</p>	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p><u>31 August 2022</u> – Development Day 10am to 3pm – agenda to be circulated by 24 August.</p> <p><u>7 November 2022</u> – Quarterly Meeting, 1pm to 3pm 26 October 2022 – Deadline for Agenda Items</p>	