

Mainstreaming the Commissioning of Local Services to **Address Violence Against Women and Girls**

December 2009

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This guidance has been produced to help commissioners of services including local authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Police; and local partnerships such as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Children's Trust Boards, Health and Well-being Partnerships and, where appropriate, Local Strategic Partnerships to develop the best approach to commissioning services to preventing violence against women girls, on protecting victims and potential victims and on providing services to victims and perpetrators.

Our aims for the consultation are:

- To secure a shared definition of good commissioning covering planning, strategy and governance;
- To learn useful lessons from other relevant and comparable sectors;
- To identify the support that Commissioners need to develop and sustain better practice consistently across the country; and
- To promote joint commissioning within local partnerships and across areas so that services are commissioned and provided at the right level.

You can reply to the questions raised in this document by e-mailing VAWG@homeoffice.gov.uk

For further information please visit the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy homepage at: <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

SCOPE OF THE CONSULTATION	
Topic of this consultation	Consultation on guidance to improve commissioning of services for victims of violence against women and girls.
Scope of this consultation	Guidance to local commissioners and commissioning partnerships on preventing violence against women and girls, on protecting victims and potential victims and on providing services to victims and perpetrators.
Geographical scope	England.

BASIC INFORMATION	
To	<p>This is a public consultation and anyone who wishes to do so may comment. However we would particularly like to invite views from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Councillors and Chief Officers from Local Authorities▪ Local Strategic Partnership Boards▪ Children's Trust Boards and Directors of Children's Services

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ NHS Trusts and Chief Executives▪ Police Authorities and Chief Constables▪ Strategic Housing Authorities and Registered Social Landlords▪ Organisations providing services for victims of violence against women and girls▪ Organisations representing women who are vulnerable to violence▪ Active voluntary sector organisations
Duration	The consultation will run for 12 weeks from Tuesday 22 December 2009 to Monday 15 March 2010.
Enquiries	<p>A copy of this consultation document and further information is available on the Home Office website at http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/</p> <p>Any specific queries can be raised by e-mailing VAWG@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk</p> <p>You should also contact the Violence Against Women and Girls Team should you require a copy of this consultation paper in any other format e.g. Braille, large font or audio</p>
How to respond	<p>Any comments may be sent to VAWG@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or by post to:</p> <p>Violence Against Women and Girls Team, Violent Crime Unit, 4th Floor, Fry Building, 2 Marsham Street London SW1P 4DF</p> <p>Please include the words 'consultation response' in the subject line of your e-mail/on your envelope</p>
After the consultation	A final version of the guidance will be published in 2010.

Consultation Questions

We would like to invite comment on the entire content of the guidance. Please let us know which areas are fit for purpose and which need further improvement.

We would also welcome responses to the following questions:

- What is the best way to build a joint commissioning platform across areas such as adult social services, children and young people services, housing, community safety, health and crime, upon which a coherent response to violence against women and girls (VAWG) can be marshalled?
- What is the best way to engage victims affected by VAWG?
- What can be done to influence and encourage mainstream services to work together to provide the most effective mix of services to support victims of VAWG?
- Which community based interventions and services are effective in preventing violence and providing support to those affected by violence? How should they be best nurtured, supported and commissioned?
- What can be done at the local area level to build multi-agency efforts to prevent VAWG from happening in the first place?
- A key recommendation from the strategy is to 'encourage every local authority to have a co-ordinated VAWG strategy with a director-level champion working across partnership structures to encourage areas to make arrangements that best suit the local circumstances to drive this forward'. Who do you propose to nominate as your lead and why?
- Do you know of examples of best practice in your local area around preventing VAWG and providing a service to those affected by violence?
- We are keen to provide practical support to local areas on implementing actions to address VAWG. For example, we have produced the 'ready reckoner' to enable local areas to estimate the need for local services in their area. What further practical support/guidance do local areas need to ensure they reflect preventing VAWG and providing services for people affected by VAWG as a local priority?
- Considering the refresh of the National Indicator Set and data sources available locally and nationally, how best can a national indicator be framed to ensure local bodies and local commissioners work together; drive delivery of services and measure performance; prevent violence against women and provide services for those affected?

Introduction

“Violence against women and girls is an obscenity. That is why we are taking action to bring perpetrators to justice and protect and support victims, but also to challenge the attitude that attacks on women and girls are in any way acceptable. A fair and responsible Britain has no place for violence of any sort.”

Prime Minister Gordon Brown (November, 2009)

“Violence against women and girls ruins lives, breaks up families and has a lasting impact across the generations.

Much has been done over recent years to increase protection for women and to prosecute their attackers. However, this is a complex problem which demands an even broader response to stop violence from happening in the first place.

Changing attitudes that tolerate violence against women and girls will take time but is essential if we are to eradicate this blight on women’s lives.”

Home Secretary Alan Johnson (November, 2009)

Our ambition is to create a society where women and girls live freely, prosper in their daily lives and contribute to society. Violence against women and girls (VAWG) is an enduring societal issue and is unacceptable. On 25 November 2009, we launched the cross-government document: *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy*¹. The theme of the strategy is to mobilise people and harness energy across Government and in our communities to prevent violence from happening in the first place and provide support and protection for women and girls who have been affected.

VAWG affects around half of all women in their lifetime². It is present in every community and every locality. While every community needs services to prevent violence, protect women and provide services for victims, some groups and places need specific responses. For example, women and girls at risk from traffickers, or who are involved in prostitution, or who may be victims of genital mutilation or at risk from so-called ‘honour’ crimes need a special response from public services to ensure that they are equally protected.

The law enshrines women's right to equal protection through public services. The Human Rights Act 1998³, the UK's ratification of the UN Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) 1993⁴, the Equality Act 2006 and the Gender Equality Duty introduced in 2007 all require public authorities to promote gender equality. These duties support the provision of single-sex services which act to protect women such as women-only refuges, single-sex rape counselling or men-only perpetrator programmes⁵.

Preventing violence, protecting victims and providing support requires a combined effort from all the main statutory public services alongside the voluntary sector. The police promote safety, respond to incidents, collect evidence and arrest offenders. Local councils provide or procure safer housing, safer streets, support for children and families and leadership to create safe and cohesive communities. The NHS treats victims in emergencies and deals with the longer-term effects on women's health and wellbeing and the damage done to children's physical and mental health. The courts, probation and prisons prosecute, punish and rehabilitate offenders. Local voluntary agencies provide most of the specialist services for victims: advice, counselling, refuges, support groups, help to maintain a home, a job and relationships with family and friends. Local specialist services also work with perpetrators of violence against women and girls through community-based programmes and those who are not brought into the criminal justice system.

What is Violence Against Women and Girls?

We have adopted the CEDAW definition of violence against women:

“Violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman, or that affects women disproportionately.”

In addition, as the 1993 Declaration on the Elimination of Violence Against Women states, this includes:

“...any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual psychological harm or suffering to women including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or private life.”

Such violence includes:

- domestic violence;
- sexual violence and abuse;
- sexual exploitation;
- stalking;
- female genital mutilation;
- so-called 'honour'-based violence;
- forced marriage; and
- trafficking.

A comprehensive picture of the extent of VAWG remains a challenge. This is often (but not always) a hidden crime and estimates in some areas are more robust than others. The 'snapshot' data we have from individual studies reveals a shocking picture of the levels of violence against women. For example:

- More than one in four women in England and Wales since the age of 16 have experienced at least one incident of domestic abuse⁶;
- 3.7 million women in England and Wales have been sexually assaulted since the age of 16, and around 10,000 women are sexually assaulted and 2,000 women raped every week⁷;
- An estimated 66,000 women and girls in England and Wales in 2001 had been subjected to genital mutilation⁸;
- 20% of all women say that they have experienced stalking at some point since the age of 16⁹;
- 34% of all rapes recorded by the police are committed against children under 16 years of age.

What is the impact of violence against women and girls?

While it is challenging to get accurate statistics on the scale of VAWG we know that these crimes transcend community borders and racial, religious, ethnic and socioeconomic lines. VAWG is a cause and consequence of gender inequality. The 'ready reckoner'¹⁰ tool developed by the Home Office for local practitioners can assist you in providing an estimate for the levels of domestic abuse, sexual assault and stalking in your area using British Crime Survey (BCS) data¹¹. An example of output from the ready reckoner is shown below.

EXAMPLE OF READY RECKONER OUTPUT:

For a total population of 110,000 people in the West Midlands region the ready reckoner estimates that:

3,865 women and girls between the age of 16-59 may have been a victim of domestic abuse in the past year

1,540 women and girls between the age of 16-59 may have been a victim of sexual assault in the past year

4,382 women and girls between the age of 16-59 may have been a victim of stalking in the past year

The ready reckoner also estimates the impact and costs to services of domestic violence and sexual violence. Again, taking a population of 110,000 people in the West Midlands the costs are estimated to be:

<u>Total Costs</u>	Physical and Mental Health Costs	Criminal Justice Costs	Social Services costs	Other costs (inc housing and legal costs)	Human and Emotional Costs
£10, 506, 540	£2, 264, 010	£1, 426, 022	£268, 548	£6, 547, 960	£33, 545, 248

Please note: the ready reckoner uses information from the British Crime Survey and does not cover all forms of VAWG. The number of women and girls affected by VAWG in your area and the total costs to services will therefore be higher.

What can we do *together* to end violence against women and girls?

Traditionally, Government effort has been concentrated on providing support services once women have been victimised. *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girl: A Strategy (2009)* outlined plans to prevent violence by:

- campaigning actively to challenge attitudes around violence;
- promoting healthy relationships by working with adults and with young people in schools;
- supporting training in the early identification of abuse.

Our ideal remains to prevent VAWG but we must ensure that women and girls have access to the right help if they have been subjected to violence.

Services for victims of VAWG have developed differently across the country reflecting the different priorities of local funders and the initiatives undertaken by charities, campaigns and social enterprises. The largest consultation in the country on this subject¹² emphasised the important role of local partners and the local commissioning process in providing support to women and girls to prevent violence and provide appropriate services to those affected by violence. The consultation also highlighted the inadequate and patchy provision of services especially for some specific forms of VAWG such as rape and sexual assault.

The Home Office asked the Women's National Commission to hold 24 focus groups with 300 women to gather their views on local services, their experience of violence, what would make them feel safer and to suggest proposals to prevent VAWG. The report *Still We Rise* summarises these findings – the lessons learnt section is particularly relevant.¹³ One of its key findings was that women most valued women-only specialist support services. Careful consideration should be given to the benefits of small dedicated specialist service providers versus larger, generic organisations, and the different options for funding these.

Local information gathering is key to informing and developing strategies and plans to commission the right mix of services in local areas. However, much of the information on all forms of VAWG is likely to come through statutory needs assessments, as well as local and national research. This document provides advice about the challenges around data and possible solutions to them.

Good commissioning requires intelligent leadership of the process and is a shared responsibility of a number of local statutory agencies and partnerships. There are various different models of commissioning, reflecting different local circumstances that bring together process and behaviours. Regardless of what model is adopted, it is important that local commissioners and partnerships adopt a common process that all partners can recognise and in which they can participate.

The basic stages in any commissioning process can be summarised as:

- **Understand** – assessing the local needs, resources and priorities and agree the desired outcomes that commissioning is seeking to achieve;
- **Plan** – mapping out and considering the different ways in which outcomes might be achieved through both formal services and other interventions;
- **Do** – putting in place the necessary investments to support delivery through procurement, grant funding and other means; and
- **Review** – reporting and monitoring performance against expected outcomes and considering further improvements that can be made¹⁴.

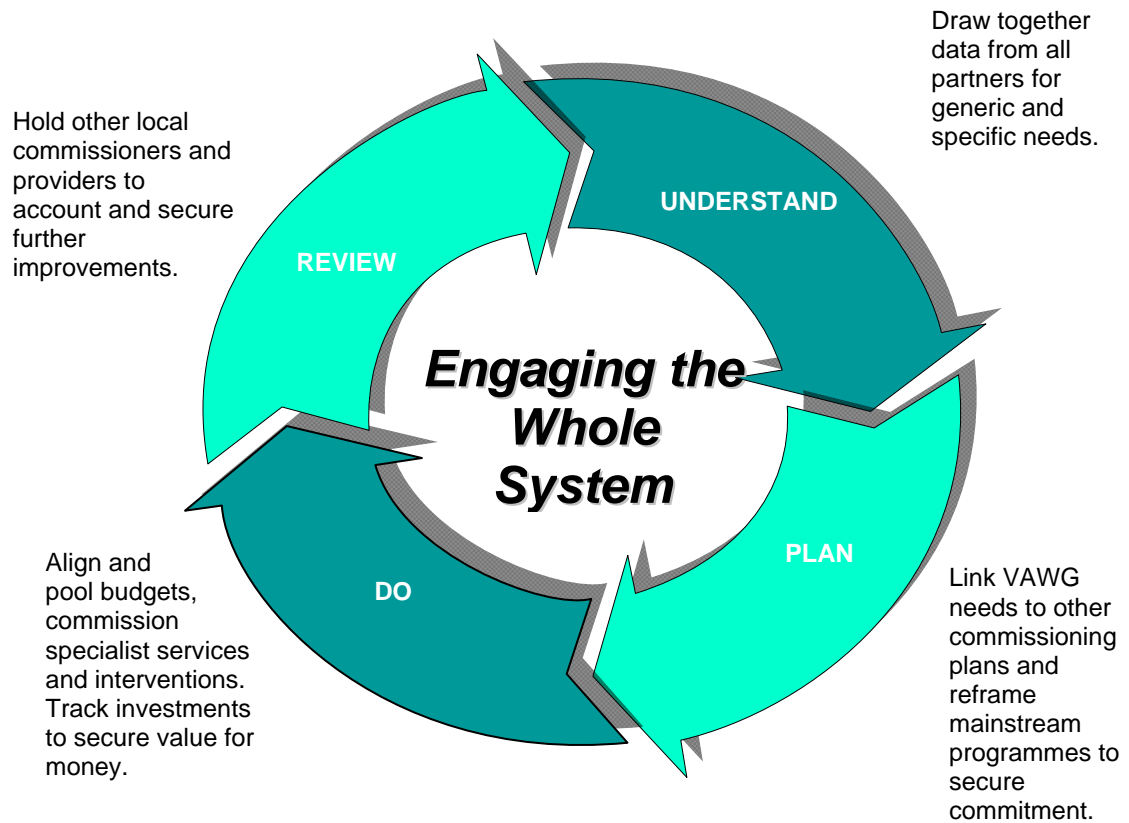
None of these activities alone constitute commissioning. Commissioning is not something done by public authorities to their suppliers through contracts – rather it is the co-production of a range of services that lead to better outcomes at a cost that can be sustained.

We have produced this guide to help local commissioners including local authorities, Primary Care Trusts, Police (to whom we refer collectively as ‘local commissioners’), and local partnerships such as Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships, Children’s Trusts Boards, Health & Well-being partnerships and, where appropriate, Local Strategic Partnerships to develop the best approach to commissioning services in this new arrangement. It draws on good practice in existing services, on the guidance offered by other government departments and the latest thinking about the strategic role of local councils in leading commissioning for their localities. This guide will also help Local Partnerships deliver value for money. With so many agencies and budgets contributing to provide services there are real risks of lack of ownership, duplication and poor links between services leading to an ineffective allocation of resources with money being spent on expensive interventions when simpler joint preventive and protective strategies could reduce future needs and costs.

This guide is organised into five sections:

1. Getting the right people involved through a ‘whole system approach’.
2. Using intelligence to understand needs and set priorities.
3. Staying in the mainstream by reframing service priorities.
4. Getting good value by following the money and working with providers.
5. Holding services and commissioning to account.

Violence Against Women and Girls Commissioning Stages



1. Getting the right people involved

A 'whole system' approach

An understanding of the services which are required at a local level should be the starting point of the commissioning service. Many organisations and people need to contribute to understanding local needs and developing the best services to respond. Getting the right mix of services requires leadership of the whole system reflecting the wide range of needs and possible interventions (see Figure 1 below) required, not only to effectively support victims of violence against women and girls (VAWG) but also to put in place preventative measures to protect those individuals and families who might be considered at risk.

Figure 1 – A Wide Range of Services is Vital
Please see Annex B for further information.

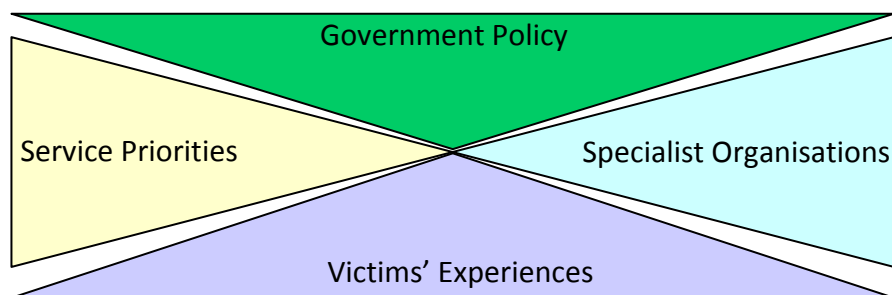


The most effective mix of services required should be based upon a robust assessment of need, however overall levels of VAWG are not sensitive to changes in demographics and place – every area will need to make provision.

Commissioning such services cannot be left to a single, statutory body or local partnership alone. Rather a more strategic and joint approach is needed, bringing together the contributions of different statutory and non-statutory partners within the Local Strategic Partnership's (LSP) family of thematic partnerships covering support for vulnerable adults, children and families. This should include housing-related support as well as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and should offer a coherent range of services and interventions across, for example, specialist children's services, health services, housing, benefits and community support services to fully address the needs of women and girls who have experienced or are at risk of violence.

Commissioning goes well beyond setting service aims and allocating specific funds to local projects – it is a strategic activity to make sure that individual and wider

community needs can be met by the right mix of services, and that there is efficient use of available resources. So local commissioners and partnerships must understand, balance and influence four drivers:



Each of these perspectives provides Commissioners with a different challenge:

■ Government Policy

Government policy sets out high level strategic aspirations while resources and delivery are now delegated to the responsible partners, often brought together through local area agreements. This recognises that:

- needs vary in different localities;
- there is a different optimal mix of services in each locality; and
- some areas experience higher costs than others.

However, Government still expects all localities to have a clear approach that offers consistent assistance to those affected by victims of violence against women and girls and that underpins the delivery of national targets.

■ Service Priorities

Service priorities for the main public services (for example as set out in the *NHS Operating Framework; Putting People First; Every Child Matters* and *Delivering Safer Communities: A guide to effective partnership working*) reflect many competing priorities for attention and resources. It is vital that victims approaching the Police, Courts, Hospitals, Schools, Children's Services, Benefit Offices and Housing Agencies receive appropriate and consistent responses. Best practice points to mainstreaming - building services for victims into the everyday delivery of services, rather than seeing them as an additional burden.

■ Specialist Organisations

Specialist organisations are dedicated to delivering focussed services. They devote their energy and resources to delivering these tailored services, which range from Rape Crisis Centres, local refuges, dedicated help lines, drop-in services or working with specific communities. Specialist organisations do not have the capacity to engage with the whole system, yet their services will be more effective when complemented by the right support from mainstream and other services. The challenges are to engage service providers strategically and find simple connections between services and people to enable better outcomes.

Effective engagement is important. Figure 2 on the next page shows how Bradford has embedded an effective governance structure which brings together statutory and voluntary agencies into the decision making process for one aspect of VAWG (domestic violence). It formalises partnership working and the engagement of the voluntary sector in making commissioning decisions.

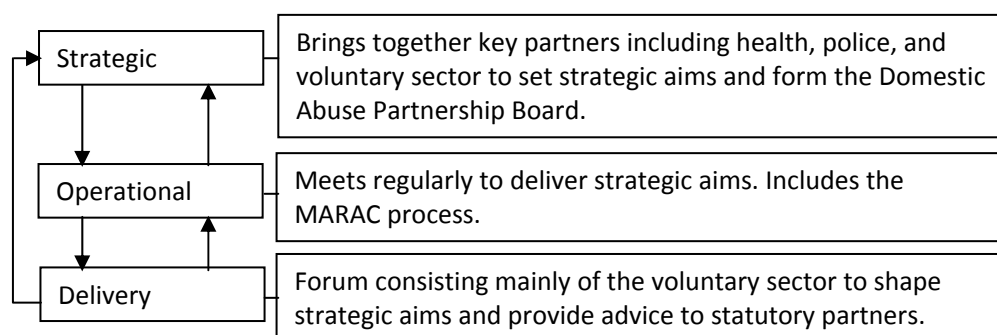
■ Victims' Experience

Victims themselves have great expertise in how services do or could work, and what would most make a difference to their lives, yet they have the least opportunity to share this with commissioners. In fact, many are at risk of failing to access services. The challenge is to listen carefully and engage with the messages coming back from people who have used services and from those who have tried but have not been able to benefit from them. The Home Office commissioned the Women's National Commission to hold 24 focus groups with 300 women to gather women's views on local services, their experience of violence, what would make them feel safer and to suggest proposals to prevent VAWG. The report *Still We Rise* summarises these findings – the lessons learnt section is particularly relevant. In addition, the Department of Health approached the National Children's Bureau to hold focus groups with young people to elicit their views on VAWG and the Home Secretary asked Sara Payne to conduct a Victim's Experience Review in order to make recommendations on how the criminal justice system could improve its response to rape victims¹⁵.

As part of the Department of Health taskforce on the health aspects of VAWG, a further report will be made available in early 2010 detailing the experiences of women and girls subject to VAWG who access health services for support.

Figure 2: Local Area Best Practice: Bradford

Bradford is one of the only areas in the country which has seen an expansion in the provision of VAWG services over the last 12 months. It takes a strategic approach to the delivery of domestic violence services by embedding an effective governance structure which brings together statutory partners and formalises engagement of the voluntary sector in making commissioning decisions:



Key Actions:

Established the *Local Domestic Abuse Monitoring Project* which collects information from a range of agencies.

A directory of VAW services in the local area.

Bradford also has a high level of provision of services for BME women. This includes:

- A specialist BME refuge
- Tailored outreach services
- Specific provision for BME women in generic services
- BME specific rape crisis centre



Making the whole system work requires clarity about who does what:

Government Policy

➡ Sets policy and national objectives to ensure that services for victims of VAWG are **mainstreamed priorities**;¹⁶

Service Priorities

➡ **Local Strategic Partnerships** are non-statutory and are a collection of organisations and representatives often led by the local authority which identify and articulate local needs and aspirations through Sustainable Community Strategies and priorities through Local Area Agreements¹⁷. A number of **statutory services** such as housing, adult social care and children's services have duties to respond to the needs of the whole population but also specifically in the cases of vulnerable children, adults and families.

Specialist Organisations

➡ Specialist organisations in the voluntary sector have the expertise and the knowledge about needs. Effective support from mainstream and other services will ensure effective service provision.

Victim Feedback

➡ **Victims** themselves offer **feedback** on what they need and how current services are working.

First Principle of Effective Service Provision: Establish clear lines of responsibility

Ensure that every service needed by victims of violence against women and girls plays a full role by establishing clear lines of responsibility and accountability between various statutory services and partnerships across children and adult services, housing, health and crime and disorder.

It is for the LSP and for individual services to take into account existing statutory duties of both partnerships and individual services. An LSP will “develop clear and transparent lines of accountability and responsibility between its partners” not only in terms of local area agreements but also the delivery of its wider Sustainable Community Strategy, where necessary, “reconciling or arbitrating between competing interests”¹⁸.

Many areas of local commissioning focused upon the needs of specific client groups are increasingly provided through joint commissioning arrangements which span different targeted and universal services and support the LSP and its thematic partnerships. These arrangements are built around a combination of different joint commissioning mechanisms such as:

- joint appointments and commissioning teams;
- shared commissioning frameworks and strategies;
- aligned and pooled budgets;
- the delegation of operational commissioning and/or procurement responsibilities to a lead statutory partner; and
- multi-agency front-line teams¹⁹.

Second Principle of Effective Service Provision: Map out the local system for support

Map out the local system for supporting victims of violence against women and girls and agree who does what – interprets policy, reframes priorities, funds local specialist services and ensures that victims’ feedback is heard.

Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy

The Violence Against Women and Girls strategy has a strong emphasis on partnership working between central Government and local areas to encourage “a locally-driven co-ordinated approach to VAWG services in every local authority, with the aim of encouraging every area to have a co-ordinated VAWG strategy in place for April 2011” and appoint “a senior local champion who is able to work across the partnership structures of the local area (e.g. LSPs, Housing, Children’s Trusts, and CDRPs) in a way that best meets local circumstances”²⁰. This role should also include careful and strategic management of current Domestic Violence and Violent Crime co-ordinators.

This is an opportunity for local commissioners and partnerships to:

- review and strengthen existing local joint commissioning arrangements;
- ensure that there are clear lines of responsibility between different statutory partners and local partnerships; and
- build commissioning around the holistic needs of women and young girls, ensuring that these interventions are embedded into mainstream services and budgets.

Where these do not exist local areas should seek to provide a common platform for the effective commissioning and provision of services.

Such commissioning activity should seek to influence the design and shape of mainstream universal services such as benefits and housing as well as the commissioning of targeted responses from mainstream public services (for example in social care). Local commissioners should also recognise the value of more “community-based” services, for example, those provided by third sector organisations that have been found to be efficient and effective and which provide vital access and support to victims who are not well served by mainstream services. This can be achieved through a variety of mechanisms which might use a combination of service contracts, funding grants and grant in aid. These finances can procure specific targeted services, fund (in part or in full) specific projects or provide strategic funding to support the core costs of such organisations. At the same time local commissioners should encourage such community providers to access simple accreditation system to assure victims and commissioners that they provide high quality services. For example, the Home Office is working with Women’s Aid with advice from the Audit Commission to take forward service standards for domestic violence and sexual violence providers. This will be piloted with areas before deciding the best way to roll-out nationally.

Third Principle of Effective Service Provision: Allocate the Right Management Capacity

Allocate the right management capacity to commissioning services for victims of violence against women and girls, for example by designating a senior manager who sits on the Local Strategic Partnership Board to:

- **programme manage services;**
- **provide strategic leadership;**
- **oversee performance and resource allocation across all participating commissioners;**
- **strengthen programme management to bring together budgets and staff.**

2. Understanding Needs

Needs assessment and setting priorities: what everyone should know

Local commissioners and partnerships should seek to build a common understanding of needs and potential priorities to serve all parts of the local commissioning system. In the case of VAWG these should primarily come together through:

- the Joint Strategic Needs Assessments (JSNAs), which are a statutory requirement on local authorities and primary care trusts to assess the health and well being needs of their areas²¹; and
- the statutory requirement for an annual strategic (needs) assessment from Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnerships (and Community Safety Partnerships) to develop a better understanding of local crime, disorder and substance misuse issues²².

Both these assessments should reinforce each other and reflect the needs of those affected by VAWG and help shape (along with other strategic needs assessments) the priorities of the LSP and the Sustainable Community Strategy. They will also be the first step in the development of specific commissioning strategies and plans at both strategic and operational levels.

Collecting reliable data on the local prevalence of VAWG has been a serious issue for commissioners. It is difficult to make the case for services, and to determine the right mix of services for each locality, without some clear data. Many Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships rely on data from recorded crime. This information can be well recorded and categorised and can be mapped by postcode and time of day to identify hotspots. However recorded crime only tells part of the story on the prevalence of VAWG and has significant drawbacks due to under-reporting and under-recording:

- Many crimes against women and girls, especially when they take place in the home, are under-reported. They are either not reported at all, or are reported only after multiple offences. Offence statistics therefore underestimate the prevalence in all areas;
- Crimes are reported in areas where services are responding to need – so the presence of ‘hot-spots’ may reflect good practice not the need for additional resources or services in those specific localities or at those times; and
- Where offences take place in public places they may be incorrectly recorded because the relationship between the perpetrator and the victim is unclear or concealed.

The BCS²³ provides the most robust data on prevalence of domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking in people aged 16-59.

What does the BCS show?

In overall terms, at least half of all women and girls are a victim of VAWG over their lifetime. When looking at individual types of offences as reported by the BCS, a shocking picture of prevalence is revealed:

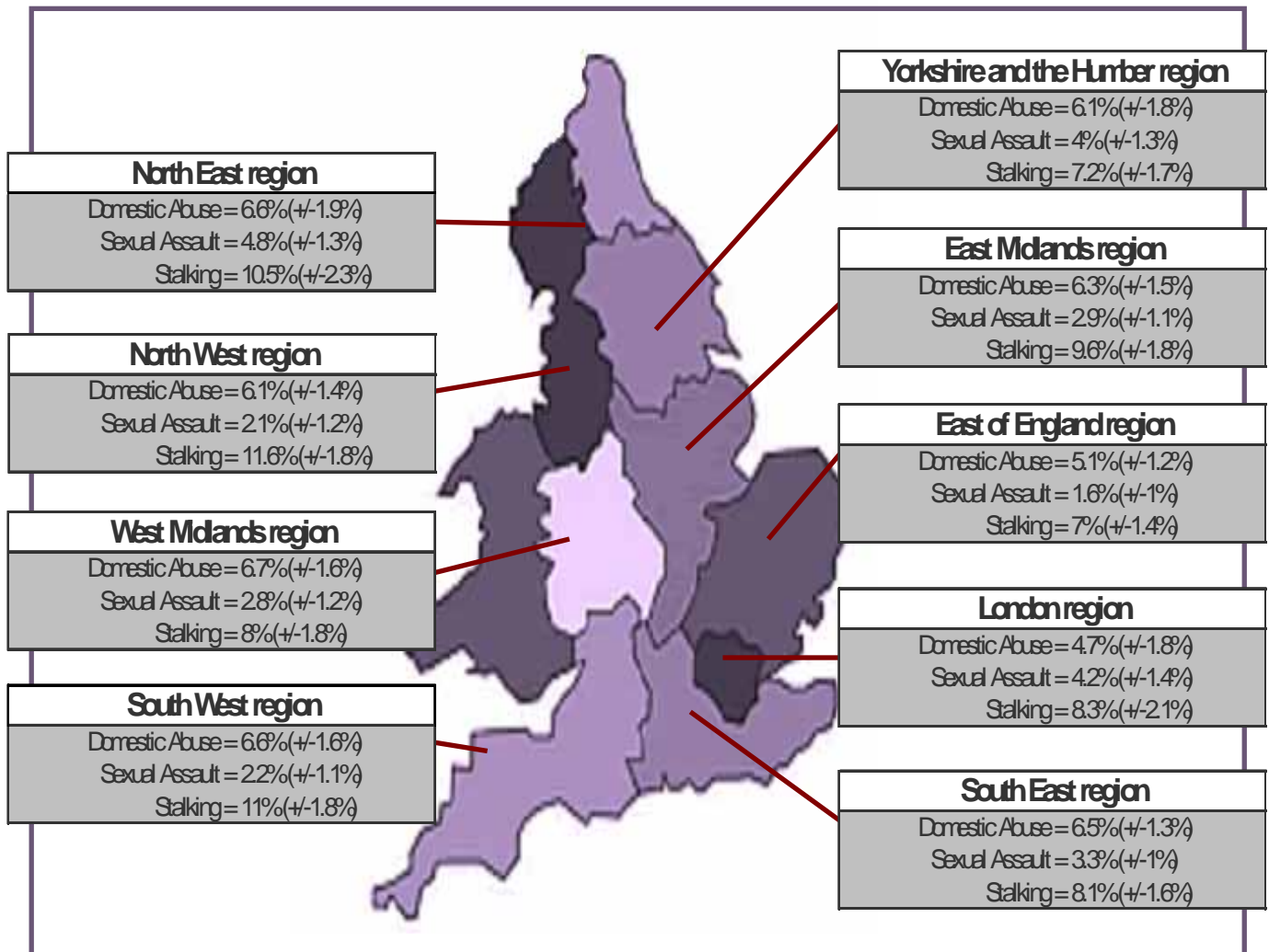
Domestic Abuse	More than one in four women in England and Wales since the age of 16 have experienced at least one incident of domestic abuse. ²⁴ Every year 1 million women experience at least one incident of domestic abuse – which is nearly 20,000 women a week. Of the 88% of young people in an intimate partner relationship, 33% of girls reported some form of sexual partner violence ²⁵ .
Sexual Violence	3.7 million women in England and Wales have been sexually assaulted since the age of 16. Around 10,000 women are sexually assaulted and 2,000 women are raped every week ²⁶ . 34% of all rapes recorded by the police are committed against children under 16 years of age ²⁷ .
Stalking	20% of all women say that they have experienced stalking at some point since the age of 16 ²⁸ .

There are no statistically significant regional variations between domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking across the country (See Figure 3). These types of VAWG are universal needs that require addressing, and every locality will need to respond.

Fourth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Respond to Universal Needs

At least 45% of women and girls across all communities experience some form of violence. Every locality will need to respond to the universal need to prevent, protect and provide for these women and girls.

Figure 3: Universal prevalence of Violence Against Women and Girls (% Prevalence and +/- % Confidence Interval), Source: BCS



What else does the BCS report?

It should be emphasised that all communities experience significant risk from VAWG. However, the BCS does show that there are differences between the respective risks of different sub-populations. This is reflected in a 'ready reckoner tool' developed to enable local commissioners and partnerships to use the findings from the BCS to develop their own estimate of need. See the section below.

What about all the other forms of VAWG?

Although the BCS is the best single measure for domestic violence, sexual violence and stalking it does not report on the prevalence of these forms of VAWG for victims aged under 16 or over 59 or for other types of VAWG: forced marriage, so-called 'honour' based violence, female genital mutilation (FGM), trafficking and prostitution.

Estimating the prevalence of offences that affect specific groups and communities is much more difficult and cannot be done on the basis of national or regional data. The prevalence of these forms of violence is disputed among professional commentators and contested in local communities. The following table provides information on the prevalence of these forms of violence:

Forced Marriage	In 2008, the Forced Marriage Unit received more than 1600 calls to its helpline on suspected incidences of forced marriage ²⁹ .
'Honour'-based violence	There are no published statistics on the numbers of 'honour' crimes in the UK. However, in 2008/09, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) recorded 256 incidents (a combination of crime and non-crimes) and 132 offences of so-called 'honour' based violence ³⁰ .
Female Genital Mutilation	An estimated 66,000 women and girls in England and Wales in 2001 had been subjected to genital mutilation ³¹ .
Trafficking	In 2003 there were up to 4,000 women trafficked for sexual exploitation.
Prostitution	An estimated 80,000 people are involved in prostitution in the UK. As well as being at risk of exploitation they are particularly likely to be victims of violent or sexual crime.
Women in Prison	Over half of women in prison report suffering domestic violence. One in three state that they experience sexual abuse ³² .

While VAWG is prevalent in all communities, there may be types of violence that disproportionately impact particular groups. The available research identifies significant specific risks for women and girls from some African and South-Asian communities of being affected by forced marriage, so-called 'honour'-based violence and female genital mutilation. Commissioners should be mindful of this when mapping needs and commissioning services. It is important that commissioners do not assume that those groups only face those forms of violence. For example, it would be inappropriate to assume that services for South-Asian women should be primarily focussed on forced marriage. A model where a South-Asian women's service is commissioned to respond to VAWG within a culturally appropriate context is likely to provide a more holistic and effective response³³.

Staying smart about needs

Some LSPs have already included VAWG in their JSNA which every upper tier local authority and Primary Care Trust (PCT) has been required to undertake since 2008. JSNAs should be the first step in all local commissioning strategies for health and wellbeing. The processes should establish the overall current and future health and wellbeing needs of local populations, lead to agreed single agency and joint commissioning priorities to improve outcomes and reduce health inequalities, and inform the priorities and targets set by Local Area Agreements.

Commissioners should also look carefully at their duties to promote equalities across the population. This should involve ensuring diversity in provision that is reflective of need as well as the local demographic data. In addition to providing the right mix of services to meet their gender equality duty, local partnerships should also test their understanding of needs against their duties to promote race equality³⁴, eliminate discrimination on the grounds of sexual orientation and promote equality for all including disabled people.

Data relating to VAWG is collected at both national and local level. The challenge remains to better understand the range and quality of data that is available to bring greater consistency and quality when collecting information to assess needs. There are a range of sources of information available to local areas including data from the BCS, the police, health and housing services. Local areas may also gather data from existing services. This may already be available where local authorities are funding refuge, advocacy or children's services. Third sector providers should be encouraged to feed quantitative and qualitative data into local reviews such as Crime and Disorder reviews.

A ready reckoner tool developed by the Home Office enables local commissioners and partnerships to develop their own estimates of need, and to assess the likely impact of the levels of domestic and sexual violence on services, service costs and to the local economy. Findings from the reckoner will allow partnerships to better understand diversity issues which could be relevant to their area and further refine figures for a given sub-population categorised as:

- area characteristics
- age
- socio-economic status
- employment status
- disability

The ready reckoner can be downloaded at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

Another example of ready reckoner output is below:

EXAMPLE OF READY RECKONER OUTPUT:

For a total population of 100,000 people in the South West region the ready reckoner estimates that:

3,300 women and girls between the age of 16-59 may have been a victim of domestic abuse in the past year

1,100 women and girls between the age of 16-59 may have been a victim of sexual assault in the past year

5,523 women and girls between the age of 16-59 may have been a victim of stalking in the past year

The ready reckoner can also estimate the impact and costs to services of domestic violence and sexual violence. Again, taking a population of 100,000 people in the South West the costs are estimated to be:

<u>Total Costs</u>	Physical and Mental Health Costs	Criminal Justice Costs	Social Services costs	Other costs (inc housing and legal costs)	Human and Emotional Costs
£9, 551, 400	£2, 058, 191	£1, 296, 384	£244, 134	£5, 952, 691	£30, 495, 680

As the ready reckoner tool is based on the BCS it only provides information for women and girls aged 16-59 who are affected by domestic abuse, sexual violence and stalking. This makes it all the more important that local commissioners and partnerships assess locally available information, listen to women and girls from all communities within their area and make careful judgements about the appropriate way to respond. Even if only very small numbers of people are involved, the difficulty in identifying and supporting victims makes the potential harm very great and increases the case for specialist services to assist mainstream services in meeting the particular needs of specific communities.

Within regions, and in specific localities or neighbourhoods local commissioners and partnerships will need to refine their assessment of need to:

- Address the specific factors that will increase the risk of forms of violence that are more prevalent in some communities than others including trafficking, female genital mutilation, forced marriages and so-called ‘honour’ based violence. Other diversity strands also raise risk of certain types of VAWG e.g. age, sexuality, gender identity, race and ethnicity.
- Reflect the variations in the way services are provided in response to universal and specific VAWG needs. In other words, the *way* in which services are provided is just as important as *what* services are provided, as women and girls face different barriers to accessing them. For example, women in rural areas will access services in a different way to women in urban areas.

Fifth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Data

Commissioners should start with the British Crime Survey and supplement its findings from a wide range of sources of data about their population – including from public health, children’s information and service providers – to establish specific local needs, the specific needs of different gender groups and how to best effectively respond to them.

3. Reframing Service Priorities

Staying in the mainstream

It will be essential that local partners and key partnerships such as the LSP and Children's Trust Boards understand the priorities already established for the different organisations that work together and can ensure that the commissioning of services for victims of VAWG help them to achieve their objectives. To aid commissioners, this chapter sets out the policy frameworks that drive priorities for each of the major services, and the objectives that are already included in services for victims of VAWG.

Local government

Local authorities are expected to take a strong strategic leadership role within the LSP and the thematic partnerships. They also have specific service responsibilities for children, adult social services, housing, economy, environment and gender equality.

Corporate Responsibilities

The duties of local authorities and their partners on local area agreements and the duty to involve are set out in *Creating strong safe and prosperous communities* issued by HM Government in July 2008³⁵. Also in 2008 Communities and Local Government and the Home Office issued joint advice in *Crime reduction and community safety: the crucial role of the new local performance framework*³⁶ which provides assistance in identifying priorities and selecting performance indicators. 79 areas have selected National Indicator (NI) 32 – 'Repeat Domestic Violence Victimization' and have started collecting data on this in 2009-10, although the Comprehensive Area Assessments will assess areas on the entire National Indicator Set. However, movements in a single indicator can be a poor guide to changes in performance and service effectiveness. Looking ahead to the next Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR), it will be much more valuable for local commissioners and partnerships to assess a 'basket' of indicators setting NI32 alongside information from the British Crime Survey, and other indicators for example from health, housing, social services and the police about the:

- experience of victims and families; and
- evidence about the high cost of violence against women and girls.

A key recommendation in the VAWG strategy ahead of the next CSR is to explore the development of a wide-ranging indicator on VAWG and to mainstream VAWG into other national indicators. This work will be taken forward in time for the next CSR.

To help protect those women at most serious risk of domestic abuse, every partnership should convene local multi-agency risk management procedures such as a Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) or local strategic risk management board and agree actions and accountabilities for protecting vulnerable people. In addition, every partnership should also ensure that VAWG is considered under Multi-Agency Public Protection Arrangements (MAPPA).

Children's Services

34% of all rapes recorded by the police are committed against children under 16 years of age, at least 750,000 children witness domestic violence, including murders, every year, and 30% of forced marriages involve children. Girls and young women may also face violence within their relationships. Domestic violence is a factor in a high proportion of statutory social services investigations into children at risk. Children's services also have specific responsibilities to prevent violence towards children, sexual exploitation of children, sexual abuse of children, domestic violence involving teenagers, so-called 'honour' based violence and female genital mutilation.

The Children Act 2004 requires every Local Council with children's services responsibilities to appoint a lead Councillor and Director for Children's Services and to establish, with a wide range of partner organisations, a Children's Trust to bring local children's services together and a Local Children's Safeguarding Board to oversee the protection of children from risk and harm. Most Local Safeguarding Boards now have independent chairs. In order to ensure that VAWG is addressed appropriately, Safeguarding Boards could include representation from third sector services with a history of working around VAWG and its impact on children, for example local Rape Crisis Centres or local Women's Aid services.

By 2008 every local area had arrangements for joint working in place, but there was considerable variation in the structure as well as the maturity of those arrangements. *The Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures* (2007) envisaged a new leadership role for Children's Trust Boards, and the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning (ASCL) Act 2009 will strengthen Children's Trust co-operation arrangements more generally by standardising what has been shown to be effective practice.

The priorities for children's trusts are set out in *The Children's Plan: Building Brighter Futures* and the accompanying outcomes framework published in April 2008 includes NI32 as a performance measure in the domain 'staying safe'. In the *Staying Safe Action Plan* also published in 2008 the Department for Children Schools and Families pledged to implement the *National Domestic Violence Action Plan* by including domestic violence as it affects children in inspections of children's services (joint area reviews). The plan also commits DCSF to revising the information available to

local Children's Trust Boards and partners on the prevalence of domestic violence and its impact on children.

Ensuring that vulnerable children are protected within a framework of universal services to improve the well-being of every child, requires excellent, integrated services focusing on the needs of each child, young person and/or their family. It also means services being proactive in identifying and addressing situations where children would benefit from extra support and having confidence that appropriate targeted and specialist support is available when needed.

From April 2010, the Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) brought in by the Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning Act 2009 will be the responsibility of the Children's Trust Board. It will be the agreed joint strategy of partners in the Children's Trust on how they will co-operate to improve children's well-being. Children's Trust Boards should ensure that this includes supporting children at risk of violence.

The commissioning process is used to develop and deliver the CYPP although in practice the commissioning needed to implement the CYPP will be done by the partners individually or in partnership.

There are a number of actions to tackle the impact of VAWG that Children's Trust Boards and local strategic partnerships could consider:

- Commissioning an annual report from the Local Children's Safeguarding Board on the prevalence and impact of VAWG, and in particular its role in deaths or serious injuries investigated by the Board;
- Ensuring that heads and governing bodies of pre-schools, schools, special schools and colleges have information and guidance on identifying, reporting and tackling VAWG. All schools have access to statutory guidance on forced marriage issued by DCSF. Where women and children are forced to relocate as a result of violence the authorities should consider priority admissions to schools;
- Child and Adolescent Mental Health Services will be involved with many families where VAWG is an issue. Children's Trust Boards should consider how effectively these services are able to link with other services to families and what costs might be avoided by earlier intervention to prevent or reduce referrals;
- Ensuring every school is clear that all forms of VAWG raise safeguarding issues and to ensure all staff know how to deal with girls they identify as being affected, including when to refer to the school's designated lead for child protection;
- Encourage schools to work with outside organisations including those from the voluntary sector to offer advice and resources to support teaching on VAWG;
- Governors to be supported and trained to address gender equality and VAWG issues;

- Connexions and other services working with schools to be further developed to ensure that they help and support victims.

Adult Social Services

All Councils with Social Services Responsibilities (152 County, Unitary, London and Metropolitan Boroughs) must appoint a Director of Adult Social Services and their responsibilities include overseeing services to vulnerable people and being concerned for the inclusion and wellbeing of all adults. Women who experience domestic violence are included in the care groups for which the Director of Adult Social Services is responsible (see *Best Practice Guidance on the role of the Director of Adult Social Services*³⁷). Adult Social Services also have a duty to work with Children's Services and other agencies to support vulnerable families and to ensure that families with complex needs receive co-ordinated support. Women living in care homes and long-term care settings may be particularly vulnerable to abuse and adult social services should ensure that adequate protection is in place. Women in prison, or leaving prison, also have specific needs that are the responsibility of local social services.

Local commissioners could consider:

- Ensuring the workforce development and professional training for staff working in adult services and for services commissioned by adult social services include awareness of VAWG and how to respond to it;
- Making sure that mental health services for adults are able to link with other services to families and that costs are avoided by earlier intervention to prevent or reduce referrals; and
- Encouraging and supporting local organisations such as local Rape Crisis Centres and/or Women's Aid to develop services for women experiencing VAWG who have additional vulnerabilities.

Housing

Re-housing victims of VAWG is a mainstream activity of every housing service. Between April and June 2009 1500 households were accepted as homeless and in priority need of re-housing by councils in England because of violence by a partner. This represented 14% of the total applications and was the second largest category after parents no longer being able to accommodate family members. Although the range of need and priority will vary between localities this represents an average of 10 applications per local authority per quarter – which amounts to almost 1 application every week. Councils accepted 45% of all applications in all categories, so the number of assessments will be more than double the number of acceptances³⁸. In addition all housing authorities have duties towards tenants to offer advice,

protection and adaptations to ensure that they are safe in their homes and not forced to move. All councils have the option of investing in 'sanctuary schemes' to provide enhanced protection to women in their own homes.

The Supporting People programme invested some £64.5m in support of women made vulnerable by domestic violence in 2007/08: the programme supported 8000 women at risk of violence³⁹. These services are provided by both mainstream and specialist services. The Supporting People Commissioning Board will have reviewed every service that was funded between 2005 and 2008 and assessed their effectiveness and value for money.

Councils also administer housing and council tax benefits, which are vital to maintaining independence for those women whose tenancy or housing is threatened by violence.

Local commissioners and partnerships could consider:

- Ways in which the outcomes from projects sponsored through supporting people or developed through 'sanctuary schemes'⁴⁰ can be built into mainstream assessments of housing need;
- Identifying specialist housing suppliers – for specific localities, minority groups or communities – and working with them to identify how they can build preventive and protective practices into the delivery of housing commissioned by the local authority; and
- Ensuring that their housing strategies address the needs of specific groups – for example people with disabilities or travellers – who may not be able to access a wide range of existing housing stock or tenures.

Local commissioners and partnerships should also address the contribution that a number of other services can make and be held accountable for:

- Customer contact centres will be able to provide advice and links to specialist numbers – calls may be prompted by other issues but provide an opportunity for alert staff to identify women and girls at risk or suffering from violence;
- Libraries, Parks, Leisure Services, Street Wardens, Housing Wardens, Parking Attendants and payments staff all provide public services with eyes and ears, and opportunities to offer information and advice;
- Councils are large employers and can use regular communication with their staff to raise awareness of the need for services and of the services that are available in their localities; and
- Council contractors can be encouraged to work with the public, their staff and one another to increase awareness and to act when they find women or girls who are victims of violence.

- Youth Offending Teams and other services which engage with young people involved in serious youth violence should be mindful of the documented links between these behaviours and VAWG. Services should act appropriately in relation to all areas of practice including assessing risk and managing offending.

Sixth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Priorities

Frame priorities and measure performance around a 'basket' of indicators and understand the links between them – mainstream priorities need to include targets on incidence, on public confidence and on costs.

Seventh Principle of Effective Service Provision: Responsibility and Accountability

An area's response to violence against women and girls is the responsibility of the whole organisation and not of one team or department – all services should be made aware of their role and held to account for delivery.

Health

The Department of Health established a taskforce on the *Health Aspects of Violence Against Women and Girls* in May 2009 chaired by Professor Sir George Alberti. This will report early in 2010. Launching the taskforce the then Secretary of State for the Health Department Alan Johnson MP said: *"Almost one in three women will experience domestic violence at some point during their lives and nearly one in four will experience some form of sexual assault. This Taskforce will bring together health professionals and women's organisations to help tackle Violence Against Women and Girls by responding to its early signs and supporting its victims. Many women who have suffered violence and abuse turn to GPs and A&E for support and treatment - the Taskforce will help us to ensure that all NHS staff are trained to care for women and girls and help prevent further abuse."*⁴¹

Please visit

<http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/ViolenceagainstWomenandGirls/index.htm>

for updates and further information.

Key Issues for the NHS include:

- Use NHS treatment by GPs and A&E as an opportunity to identify and treat abuse;
- The need to raise awareness among NHS clinicians and managers;
- That World Class Commissioning will be a central part of ensuring better outcomes for victims of Violence Against Women and Girls. The importance of addressing violence against women and girls is set out in the NHS Operating Framework;
- The necessity of building up a clear evidence base on how to identify violence and its consequences and make successful interventions to treat victims and their children;
- Giving strong leadership across the NHS so that services get the attention and resources they merit;
- Developing advocacy capability, building on Patient Advice and Liaison Services and specialist women's organisations to make sure that victims' voices are heard throughout the health system;
- Making the most of existing systems by reinforcing the role of Primary Care Trusts in Local Partnerships and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships;
- Encouraging regulators – especially the Care Quality Commission – to consider how they can assist health organisations to commission the right mix of services to meet the needs of victims of VAWG; and
- Promoting better information-sharing while securing patient confidentiality.

To ensure that the NHS develops services that are able to meet the challenge of increased expectations around healthcare within the context of a tighter economic climate, the NHS Operating Framework highlights that violence against women and girls is a priority for 2010/11⁴².

Interventions targeting potentially high need, high cost individuals and families can reduce demand for more intensive services later. The use of the family nurse partnership programme has produced positive results as an early intervention service. Introducing the alcohol high impact changes, such as alcohol screening to provide higher risk individuals with brief advice on alcohol consumption, additional counselling or an alcohol health worker to manage dependent drinkers within an acute setting can deliver benefits. *Together we can end violence against women and girls: A Strategy*, sets out ways in which the NHS, working with partners, can help prevent violence and abuse against women and children and support the victims.

In addition, the operating framework states:

PCTs will continue to work as a member of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership to identify and share information effectively in order to support local action on reducing violent crime – especially, serious youth violence, including knife crime, and violence against women and children. This may include engaging (where these are in place) multi-agency risk assessment conferences (MARACs). PCTs will want to consider how new commissioning guidance and recommendations of the Violence Against Women and Children Health Taskforce findings could help deliver the outcomes agreed with their partners and deliver its obligations on gender equality. PCTs have a crucial role in working with local partners to ensure that a properly resourced sexual assault referral centre can be in place in every area by 2011. The National Support Team on Response to Sexual Violence and additional central funding will be available to help with this process.

The NHS operating framework also states:

- Making VAWG a specific theme in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) – drawn up by the PCT and upper tier local authority in every area;
- Using procedures for safeguarding vulnerable adults; ;
- How mental health services may prioritise victims of VAWG;
- Seeking assurances from NHS Trusts that appropriate pathways and procedures are in place;
- Making sure that their children’s safeguarding arrangements address the full range of risks arising from VAWG including sexual exploitation, genital mutilation and domestic violence involving teenagers; and
- Contributing to the identification and treatment of perpetrators whether referred by the Courts or self-referred.

Police and Criminal Justice

Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships continue to have critical responsibilities for understanding crime, promoting safety and enabling local agencies to work together to tackle violence against women and girls. The National Community Safety Plan 2008-11⁴³ sets out clear priorities for tackling violent crime in Public Service Agreement 23. These include:

- Identification of and early intervention with victims and perpetrators of domestic violence to prevent escalation, including (in many areas) through implementation of MARACs⁴⁴;

- Building on this, developing mechanisms for identifying and intervening early with those **at risk** of involvement in violence, either as a perpetrator or a victim (informed by the work being taken forward nationally under the Tackling Violence Action Plan); and
- Working jointly with Local Criminal Justice Boards and Reducing Re-offending Partnership Boards to develop effective local responses to tackling serious sexual offences, including the provision of effective victim care pathways to minimise harm and action to improve investigation and prosecution of serious sexual offences.

Guidance on developing local policing plans highlight the importance of:

- Engaging with local people to establish specific local needs and priorities including specific efforts to engage with women who have experienced VAWG (this may mean tailored consultation methods)⁴⁵;
- Using intelligence to shape a Force Control Strategy to direct resources to the primary targets; and
- Making risk management and shared risk management central to decision making.

Over 225 areas have a MARAC in place and we are aiming for national roll-out by 2011. There is a commitment to roll out Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs)⁴⁶ in every police force area. Local commissioners and partnerships will need to work together through this period to ensure that all women have access to Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs)⁴⁷, Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs)⁴⁸ and SARCs even when local services are under development, and will need to consider joint ventures to enable all women to have access to sufficient skilled staff and services. Joint agreements to maximise prevention work and, where required, securing access to the relevant specialist criminal justice services should be a priority for relevant statutory local partnerships.

In addition, local areas should consider the extent to which at-risk groups exist within the area, and the specific needs of those within such groups (see Section 2). For example, those involved in prostitution can be particularly at risk of violence, and also present a range of complex needs that need to be addressed by different service providers. Local areas should consider how such needs can be met, including specialist support from those with knowledge of issues faced by women in prostitution, and how easily services can be accessed by those in need. This should include consideration of services aimed at assisting women to leave prostitution, where they are willing to do so.

Eighth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Protecting Individuals
Local risk management systems – safeguarding boards, multi-agency risk assessment conferences and clinical governance are vital for the protection of individuals and provide crucial evidence for commissioners.

Income and Employment

Access to income and employment is essential for victims of violence. In July 2009 the Department for Work and Pensions announced that the conditions for receiving job-seekers allowance and seeking work would be relaxed to reflect the specific circumstances of women affected by domestic violence⁴⁹. Women who become homeless as a result of violence may be doubly dependent on benefits for independence and continuing safety. There may also be situations where an abusive partner deprives women of their only source of income by transferring Child Benefit payments to their name. Local commissioners and partnerships will need to consider how they ensure that victims of VAWG get access to good information about benefits and seeking work and are supported to return to work and independence. The cost to society of work lost through violence against women is very large, and some indication of this is included in the 'ready reckoner' (see above). Many victims of trafficking, sexual exploitation and crime find access to benefits and work major obstacles to rebuilding their lives.

Ninth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Consistent Support
Partnerships with services that cross local boundaries or bring together local groupings are essential to ensure access to consistent support – for example to justice or to work – and should be a priority in multi-area agreements.

4. Getting good value

Following the money and working with providers

Specific centrally supported funding for specialist programmes targeting VAWG amounted to just under £100m in 2007/8. Of this £64.5m was through the Supporting People Programme, which will be now allocated to local authorities through the area-based grant from April 2010. In every locality the area-based grant will amount to less than 1% of the combined spending of the local authority, police, NHS and criminal justice system. To constrain the commissioning activity of partnerships to the area-based grant is to miss the enormous opportunity to achieve higher value through existing spending on mainstream activity. Addressing the wider effectiveness of resource utilisation requires partnerships to:

- Agree the outcomes they are seeking for victims of VAWG and to be clear how each agency contributes to achieving each outcome;
- Identify, from the existing budget books and accounts, what resources are devoted to preventing VAWG, to providing services for victims and to protecting current and potential victims (this will not be in existing budget lines and will require additional work by finance staff);
- Align and/or pool the resources behind the priorities identified and through any joint commissioning arrangements identify how money is flowing through the system and what services or activities it supports.

Individual agencies have pressing efficiency targets and will wish to closely control their own spending. But there is no alternative to sharing this data and looking at the whole system in a service as complex and multi-agency as supporting victims of violence. If a shared approach is not taken there is every probability that one agency's saving is another agency's expense. While partnerships and commissioners may look to reduce the number of specialist agencies funded through the area-based grant to yield real cash savings there are risks that needs will either not be addressed at all or will result in additional costs in policing, health and children's services. An evaluation of the Supporting People programme undertaken in June 2009 estimated net financial benefits of £3.41bn against an overall investment of £1.61bn through the prevention of downstream costs elsewhere⁵⁰. If efficiencies of this order are achievable on a small proportion of total spending, they could be even greater if applied to the mainstream budgets for policing, children, health and criminal justice. To calculate financial benefits in your area visit <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/housing/financialbenefitsguide>

VAWG by its very nature is a cross-authority issue. Women and children very often have to flee their local area in order to access safe accommodation and/or services. It is important that geographical boundaries do not constrain organisations' ability to effectively meet the needs of this client group.

Public expenditure will be more constrained in the coming years than over the past decade – some services will see real reductions in the resources available for them. In these circumstances looking at the whole pot will help but will not prevent the necessity to close down some services that meet lower priority needs, do not meet quality requirements or are poor value for money. It is therefore essential that local commissioners and partnerships work together to agree how services will be 'decommissioned' including bidding rules, notice periods, information to the public, service users, third sector organisations and staff and disposal of assets.

Although the response to VAWG should be mainstreamed into the work of all statutory agencies and be a priority for partnerships, there will always be a need for specialist services (often provided outside the statutory sector) which meets the needs of women. The Government wants to continue to work in partnership with the third sector and we recognise that funding arrangements have remained yearly and ad-hoc. Centrally we will overhaul our funding arrangements to the VAWG voluntary sector in line with the Government's Compact⁵¹. We encourage local commissioners to do the same. All local authorities and relevant statutory partnerships should ensure that their ways of working with the voluntary sector are Compact compliant. Providing funding on a longer-term basis can bring greater stability and increased capacity to smaller organisations.

"Local authorities should be sensitive towards the capacity of both small and medium enterprises and their counterparts in the third sector, and work to establish a range of practical measures which will maximise their capacity to deliver community outcomes. Grants, alongside contracts, have a crucial role and should be used where they are more appropriate, particularly when building the capacity of partners, piloting new approaches to services and outcomes and in investing specific projects led by other partners. While there is a role for short-term grants for example in promoting new community-based organisations the starting point, subject to overall affordability and purpose, should be three years (or more). Though in all cases, the particular conditions attached to payments, incentives or to length of contract or grants should be determined according to the duty to achieve best value." *Paragraph 6.16, Creating Safe, Strong and Prosperous Communities – Statutory Guidance, HM Government, July 2008*

Increasingly local partnerships commission services through market models – inviting tenders to supply services. It is important that local partnerships consider the wider issues of market and supply management rather than simply passing a specification to a local procurement team. This wider consideration should include mapping and providing clear information on the widest possible range of potential suppliers; identifying potential development and investment opportunities; using public service assets to help new suppliers enter the market and ensuring that specifications complement existing mainstream service provision. There is a wide range of new vehicles for diversifying supply of services available to local partnerships including traditional grant making; local authority trading companies; public private partnerships; user co-operatives; employee co-operatives and third sector social businesses.

Tenth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Value for Money

Value for money requires clarity about the outcome required and the contribution of the whole range of services to achieving it – procuring a service from a service provider at a lower price is a tiny piece of this jigsaw and should be done after strategic choices and market management have been established.

5. Holding Services and Commissioning to Account

Services are held to account differently according to how they are funded. While every organisation that is a charity or a registered social landlord will have to comply with national regulations on governance and probity, only some will be subject to closer scrutiny about the effectiveness of the services they offer. Equally, organisations that are funded from several sources can be overburdened by a wide range of quality controls from regulators and from funding agencies – for example national public funders or the National Lottery.

National service standards for support services are important for improving the consistency of provision, monitoring and commissioning of services. They also help to ensure appropriate contracting of effective services. The Home Office is working with Women's Aid with advice from the Audit Commission to take forward service standards for domestic violence and sexual violence providers. This will be piloted with areas before deciding the best way to roll-out nationally.

Related work on standards is already in development. Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse (CAADA) has been developing national service standards for IDVAs. Rape Crisis England and Wales have also developed service standards. Respect has standards in place and we would encourage commissioners of perpetrator programmes to ensure that services they commission meet these standards. See figure 4 for an example of best practice from a local area on provision of perpetrator programmes, which was the first programme to receive accreditation from Respect.

Figure 4 –Local area best practice: East London (Newham, Barking and Dagenham and Waltham Forest)



Actions Taken

Data from all three boroughs shows that domestic violence features in the majority of referrals to children’s services. In response to this the domestic violence leads for each borough worked together to commission a new service providing a domestic violence perpetrator programme with specific focus on referrals from children’s services.

The funding arrangements give each borough access to a high quality service at a lower cost than if there was a single commissioner. The Domestic Violence Intervention Project, which runs the service, has increased referral options for children’s services and assessment reports that provide a comprehensive analysis of risk.

Evaluation of the first 18 months shows significant success across all indicators.

Successes

- Reduction in repeat victimisation of between 87%-89%;
- 70% of partners and ex-partners of men attending the service report no further violence, 78% reported reduction in other abusive behaviours;
- 78% of referring social workers assessed the children safety as “safer” or “much safer” following engagement with the service.

The Mayor of London recognised all three boroughs with an award for excellence in commissioning in 2007.

The government will also work with the Care Quality Commission to explore how their assurance of the service user experience of essential safety and quality can improve regulated health and adult social care services for women and girls in more vulnerable circumstances.

In the interim, local commissioners and partnerships may want to review how the quality of local services (from both the statutory and voluntary sector) is being assured and what information can be offered to the public to assist them in judging how useful a service will be to them and in feeding back their experience of the service to inform future priorities and policy. At a minimum a register of services with a clear note of their legal status, their funding sources and their governance arrangements will be needed by the relevant statutory partnership to ensure that the right organisations are engaged in developing services and that public information is reliable.

Equally, the public has little information about how well local statutory agencies work together to provide the right mix of services for victims of VAWG. Each statutory agency is subject to an inspection and performance reporting regime, and some of these do include reference to services for victims of violence. For example:

- Ofsted will engage with students and staff in inspecting how a school undertakes its equality duties, works to prevent violence against girls and supports girls who are experiencing violence;
- The Equality and Human Rights Commission have been assessing local area responses to gender inequality which includes VAWG as part of a legal requirement for statutory agencies since April 2007;
- A joint thematic inspection of police and Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) areas on rape by Her Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Her Majesty's Crown Prosecution Service Inspectorate is scheduled for Autumn 2010;
- A Rape Monitoring Group will scrutinise local performance and advise on new performance indicators for the police and CPS in investigating and prosecuting sexual offences, particularly rape;
- Police national performance tables will show how well individual areas are responding to the national indicator on domestic violence.

Eleventh Principle of Effective Service Provision: Engaging Organisations

Do not rely on distant regulation: engage directly with services and organisations to understand their governance, funding, performance, quality and risks, and ensure that this information is in the public domain and open to challenge.

From April 2009 the Audit Commission, alongside the main service inspectorates, has introduced Comprehensive Area Assessments (CAA)⁵². These will look at how well public service providers work together in an area to achieve the outcomes that local people are most concerned about – whether that is community safety, better health, more people in work or a better, more sustainable environment. VAWG is a key issue that involves many local services, it will provide a very useful insight into the way local services come together to prevent problems, serve the majority of the local community and protect significant numbers of vulnerable people. From December 2009 the Commission started to report on localities through the new 'Oneplace' web portal and highlight areas where localities are doing well with green flags, and areas of concern with red flags. In this way the local partnerships will be able to learn from each other and the public will be able to hold them to account.

Commissioners are also held to account through assurance programmes. The Care Quality Commission annual assessment of adult social care includes commissioning capabilities and outcomes for vulnerable people. Each PCT is held to account annually for its World Class Commissioning capabilities through a peer inspection regime.

Local partnerships will want to ensure that Councillors understand the issues and their role in responding to them, and are well briefed to contribute to local partnerships; to work with other councils; to advocate for their local interests; to scrutinise the performance of local services and to act as ambassadors for their areas in seeking commitments from national services to deliver the right mix of services locally for victims of VAWG.

Finally, all services are accountable to the public. The Government will commission regular surveys of people who have used services, and perceptions of people who might, to establish how much confidence the public have in these services and what localities need to do to increase public confidence and service effectiveness.

Twelfth Principle of Effective Service Provision: Be Ready

Always be ready to respond to challenges from Councillors, peers, the public and the Comprehensive Area Assessment to learn how to improve the mix of services locally.

Consultation Questions

We would like to invite comment on the entire content of the guidance. Please let us know which areas are fit for purpose and which need further improvement.

We would also welcome responses to the following questions:

- What is the best way to build a joint commissioning platform across areas such as adult social services, children and young people, housing, community safety, health and crime upon which a coherent response to violence against women and girls (VAWG) can be marshalled?
- What is the best way to engage victims affected by VAWG?
- How can be done to influence and encourage mainstream services to work together to provide the most effective mix of services to support victims of VAWG?
- Which community based interventions and services are effective in preventing violence and providing support to those affected by violence? How should they be best nurtured, supported and commissioned?
- What can be done at the local are to build multi-agency effort to prevent VAWG from happening in the first place?
- A key recommendation from the strategy is to 'encourage every local authority to have a co-ordinated VAWG strategy with a director-level champion working across partnership structures to encourage areas to make arrangements that best suit the local circumstances to drive this forward'. Who do you propose to nominate as your lead and why?
- Do you know of examples of best practice in your local area around preventing VAWG and providing a service to those affected by violence?
- We are keen to provide practical support to local areas on implementing actions to address VAWG. For example, we have produced the 'ready reckoner' to enable local areas to estimate the need for local services in their area. What further practical support/guidance do local areas need to ensure they reflect preventing VAWG and providing services for those affected by VAWG as a local priority?
- Considering the refresh of the National Indicator Set and data sources available locally and nationally, how best can a national indicator be framed to ensure local bodies and local commissioners work together; drive delivery of services and measure performance; and prevent violence against women and provide services for those affected?

Index

ASCL - Apprenticeships, Skills, Children and Learning	JSNA – Joint Strategic Needs Assessment
BCS – British Crime Survey	LA – Local Authority
CAADA - Coordinated Action Against Domestic Abuse	LCJB – Local Criminal Justice Board
CAMH – Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service	LSP – Local Strategic Partnership
CEDAW – Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women	MAPPA – Multi-Agency Public Protection Assessment
CYPP – Children and Young People’s Plan	MARAC – Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conference
CAA – Comprehensive Area Assessment	NHS – National Health Service
CSR – Comprehensive Spending Review	NI – National Indicator
CDRP – Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership	SARC – Sexual Assault Referral Centre
CPS – Crown Prosecution Service	SDVC – Special Domestic Violence Court
DCSF – Department for Children, Schools and Families	PCT – Primary Care Trust
FGM – Female Genital Mutilation	VAWG – Violence Against Women and Girls
IDVA – Independent Domestic Violence Adviser	WHFS – Women’s Health and Family Services
ISVA – Independent Sexual Violence Adviser	

Annex A

A list of recommendations included in the strategy *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls* to support local delivery partners:

- Development of a standard local VAWG-data set and data tool to enable every local area to undertake an accurate needs assessment;
- Development of a 'ready reckoner' tool to enable commissioners to estimate the need for local services in their area and ensure VAWG is included in the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment process to establish current and future needs of the population;
- Tackling VAWG through the NHS operating framework;
- Develop an on-line directory of services;
- Publish new guidance for Primary Care Trusts on how best to commission services for victims of VAWG in line with the World Class Commissioning framework;
- Explore the development of a wide-ranging VAWG indicator to include in the National Indicator Set and look at mainstreaming VAWG into other relevant national indicators;
- Improve the way VAWG is included in existing audit and inspection arrangements and in the Comprehensive Area Assessment process;
- Encourage every local authority to have a co-ordinated VAWG strategy with a director-level champion working across partnership structures;
- Inclusion of VAWG in the NHS Operating Framework to encourage NHS trusts to give attention to VAWG;
- Support to local partners to improve the quality of services, including rape crisis centres, starting with the key elements published in the Resource for Developing Sexual Assault Referral Centres in October 2009;
- Celebrating good practice by launching an awards scheme for local areas delivering excellence in VAWG.

For the full report please visit <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime/victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

Annex B

The types of services that women need.

Key VAWG Services	These key services are needed because...	Amongst others, these services can be provided by...
Access to information	Victims of VAWG may feel particularly vulnerable about stepping out into the unknown. All her options need to be clearly and realistically explained, within the context of her specific circumstances.	National Help lines, Victim Support, LA Family Information Centres, Citizen's Advice Bureaux, Law Centre Federation, Libraries, IDVAs, ISVAs GPs, Police.
Accommodation and protection	Victims need to be provided with safety and protection. This can include safe accommodation or support to take out an injunction against their abuser. If victims of VAWG haven't yet decided to leave home, they may need info about how to prevent abuser finding out that they are seeking such help e.g. visited websites.	Police, Women's Aid, Refuge projects, Refuges Online, Local Authority contacts, Voluntary & Community Services, Support groups, Housing Associations, Rape Crisis, Sanctuary Schemes.
Legal Support	Victims of VAWG often need advice on advocacy and support to be aware of their rights and entitlements. This ranges from recourse to justice to housing entitlements.	Police, CPS, Forced Marriage Unit, SARCs, Citizen's Advice Bureau, Legal Aid.
Drug and Alcohol Support	Over half of women with alcohol and substance abuse problems have been victims of VAWG. Problems surrounding drug and alcohol misuse will very often need to be tackled alongside VAWG issues.	Community Drug Teams, GPs ,The Stella Project, Women's Aid, Voluntary Community Service, Focus Group, Local health centres, Rape Crisis Centres.
Children's services	Victims of VAWG will often have family responsibilities which need to be taken into account. At least 750,000 children a year witness domestic violence. Children who live with domestic violence are at increased risk of behavioural problems. Children are also at risk of victimisation themselves for example from domestic abuse, sexual assault, rape and forced marriage.	Schools, Children's' Centres, LA Children's' Services, Barnados, Women's health and Family Services (WHFS), GPs, Rape Crisis Centres.

Key VAWG Services	These key services are needed because...	Amongst others, these services can be provided by...
Emotional and peer support	<p>In order to recover from all forms of VAWG victims need to be offered holistic support which also deals with the long term emotional aspect of recovering from sustained abuse. Contact with other survivors or people in similar situations may help a woman understand more about her situation, heal, not feel isolated, and reduce feelings of shame. This is key to preventing violence in the first place</p>	<p>Women's Aid, Rape Crisis, local support groups, Counsellors, Voluntary and Community Services, Specialist Mentoring Services, IDVAs, ISVAs Mental Health Services, Victim Support, Relate, Improving Access to Mental Health Programme.</p>
Financial Advice	<p>In the majority of cases, victims' access to economic resources is controlled by their abuser. In a refuge sample survey, 49% of woman reported that their abuser had interfered with their education and employment . Many need support and advice on how to 'start again', achieve financial stability and understand the process of attaining financial assistance, training and education.</p>	<p>Citizen's Advice Bureau, Banks, JobCentre Plus, Benefits Agency, Tax Office, Mortgage Advisor.</p>
Health Provision	<p>Victims often have a need to access physical healthcare for injuries sustained, as well as the need for access to sensitive sexual and reproductive health services. There is a significant link between maternal mortality, psychiatric illness and VAWG.</p> <p>It is estimated that as many as 66,000 women in the UK are living with the effects of FGM; clinics that can offer specialist treatment are overwhelmed by demand.</p> <p>Women may require information about how to register for a new GP or advice on which health service to use based on the context of her situation.</p>	<p>Primary Care Trusts, Health Centres, Family Planning, Sexual Health clinics, GPs, Mental Health Trust, FGM clinics, Dentists, Accident & Emergency, Children and Mental Health Services (CAMHs), Rape Crisis, SARCS.</p>
Translation services	<p>Some victims of VAWG do not speak English and others speak to a minimum level which requires a translator. Having access to these services can be the difference between a victim approaching VAWG services, or continuing to experience abuse.</p>	<p>Woman's Aid, Voluntary and Community services, IDVAs, UKBA, Language Line.</p>
Immigration Advice	<p>Some victims of VAWG who also have insecure immigration status do not report their abuse because of fear of deportation or the belief that they will not be helped. They can also be negatively affected by the 'no recourse to public funds' rule and may need extra support and guidance on the options available to them.</p>	<p>Public Funds Network, voluntary and community services, Forced Marriage Unit, Citizen's Advice Bureau.</p>

Annex C

The Twelve Principles of Effective Service Provision are:

1. Ensure that every service needed by victims of violence against women and girls plays a full role by establishing clear lines of responsibility and accountability between various statutory services and partnerships across children's and adult services, housing, health and crime and disorder.
2. Map out the local system for supporting victims of violence against women and girls and agree who does what: interprets policy, reframes priorities, funds local specialist services and ensures that victims' feedback is heard.
3. Allocate the right management capacity to commissioning services for victims of violence against women and girls for example by designating a senior manager who sits on the Local Strategic Partnership Board to:
 - programme manage services;
 - provide strategic leadership;
 - oversee performance and resource allocation across all participating commissioners;
 - strengthen programme management to bring together budgets and staff.
4. At least 45% of women and girls across all communities experience some form of violence. Every locality will need to respond to the universal need to prevent, protect and provide for these women and girls.
5. Commissioners should start with the British Crime Survey and supplement its findings from a wide range of sources of data about their population – including from public health, children's information and service providers – to establish specific local needs, the specific needs of different gender groups and how to respond effectively to them.
6. Frame priorities and measure performance around a 'basket' of indicators and understand the links between them: mainstream priorities need to include targets on incidence, on public confidence and on costs.

7. An area's response to violence against women and girls is the responsibility of the whole organisation and not of one team or department: all services should be made aware of their role and held to account for delivery.
8. Local risk management systems – safeguarding boards, multi-agency risk assessment conferences and clinical - governance are vital for the protection of individuals and provide crucial evidence for commissioners.
9. Partnerships with services that cross local boundaries, or bring together local partnerships are essential to ensure access to consistent support – for example to justice or to work – and should be a priority in multi-area agreements.
10. Value for money requires clarity about the outcome required and the contribution of the whole range of services to achieving it – procuring a service from a service provider at a lower price is a tiny piece of this jigsaw and should be done after strategic choices and market management have been established.
11. Do not rely on distant regulation – engage directly with services and organisations to understand their governance, funding, performance, quality and risks – and ensure that this information is in the public domain and open to challenge.
12. Always be ready to respond to challenges from councillors, peers, the public and the Comprehensive Area Assessment to learn how to improve the mix of services locally.

Annex D

Confidentiality & Disclaimer

The information you send us may be passed to colleagues within the Home Office, the Government or related agencies.

Information provided in response to this consultation, including personal information, may be subject to publication or disclosure in accordance with the access to information regimes (these are primarily the Freedom of Information Act 2000 [FOIA], the Data Protection Act 1998 [DPA] and the Environmental Information Regulations 2004).

If you want other information that you provide to be treated as confidential, please be aware that, under the FOIA, there is a statutory Code of Practice with which public authorities must comply and which deals, amongst other things, with obligations of confidence.

In view of this it would be helpful if you could explain to us why you regard the information you have provided as confidential. If we receive a request for disclosure of the information we will take full account of your explanation, but we cannot give an assurance that confidentiality can be maintained in all circumstances. An automatic confidentiality disclaimer generated by your IT system will not, of itself, be regarded as binding on the Department.

The Department will process your personal data in accordance with the DPA and in the majority of circumstances this will mean that your personal data will not be disclosed to third parties.'

The Consultation follows the Government's Code of Practice on Consultation – the criteria for which are set out below:

Criterion 1 – When to consult – Formal consultation should take place at a stage when there is scope to influence the policy outcome.

Criterion 2 – Duration of consultation exercises – Consultations should normally last for at least 12 weeks with consideration given to longer timescales where feasible and sensible.

Criterion 3 – Clarity of scope and impact – Consultation documents should be clear about the consultation process, what is being proposed, the scope to influence and the expected costs and benefits of the proposals.

Criterion 4 – Accessibility of consultation exercises – Consultation exercises should be designed to be accessible to, and clearly targeted at, those people the exercise is intended to reach.

Criterion 5 – The burden of consultation – Keeping the burden of consultation to a minimum is essential if consultations are to be effective and if consultees' buy-in to the process is to be obtained.

Criterion 6 – Responsiveness of consultation exercises – Consultation responses should be analysed carefully and clear feedback should be provided to participants following the consultation.

Criterion 7 – Capacity to consult – Officials running consultations should seek guidance in how to run an effective consultation exercise and share what they have learned from the experience.

The full Code of Practice on Consultation is available at:
<http://www.berr.gov.uk/whatwedo/bre/consultation-guidance/page44420.html>

If you have a complaint or comment about the Home Office's approach to consultation, you should contact the Home Office Consultation Co-ordinator, Nigel Lawrence. Please DO NOT send your response to this consultation to Nigel Lawrence. The Co-ordinator works to promote best practice standards set by the Government's Code of Practice, advises policy teams on how to conduct consultations and investigates complaints made against the Home Office. He does not process your response to this consultation.

The Co-ordinator can be emailed at: Nigel.Lawrence@homeoffice.gsi.gov.uk or alternatively write to him at:

Nigel Lawrence, Consultation Co-ordinator
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Performance and Delivery Unit
Better Regulation Team
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2 Marsham Street
London
SW1P 4DF

End Notes

¹ *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy*, HMG, 2009
<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/vawg-strategy-2009/index.html>

² British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

³ Human Rights Act 1998, HMSO

⁴ The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), adopted in 1979 by the UN General Assembly, is often described as an international bill of rights for women. Consisting of a preamble and 30 articles, it defines what constitutes discrimination against women and sets up an agenda for national action to end such discrimination.

⁵ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

⁶ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

⁷ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

⁸ FORWARD <http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/>

⁹ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

¹⁰ The ready reckoner can be downloaded at <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

¹¹ <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/domesticviolence/domesticviolence072.htm>

¹² See www.homeoffice.gov.uk/keepwomensafe to access the consultation document. The consultation ran from March 2009 to May 2009 and was used to inform *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy*.

¹³ See <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/> for a copy of the report.

¹⁴ The description of commissioning has been taken from the Statutory Guidance for both Children's Trusts and for Local Government.

¹⁵ All three reports are available on the Home Office website:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

¹⁶ Read the cross-Government strategy *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls* (HM Government, 2009) <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

¹⁷ See paragraph 2.4, *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities, Statutory Guidance* <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeproperous>
[us](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeproperous)

¹⁸ See paragraphs 2.4 and 2.7 *Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities, Statutory Guidance* <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeproperous>
[us](http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeproperous)

¹⁹ See for example, *Clarifying joint financing arrangements A briefing paper for health bodies and local authorities* (Audit Commission, December 2008) http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/nationalstudies/health/financialmanagement/pages/clarifyingjointfinancingarrangements_copy.aspx

²⁰ HM Government *Together We Can End Violence Against Women and Girls: A Strategy 2009*

²¹ See *Guidance on Joint Strategic Needs Assessment* (Department of Health, 2007) http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Publicationsandstatistics/Publications/PublicationsPolicyAndGuidance/dh_081097

²² See *National Support Framework, Delivering Safer & Confident Communities, Strengthening Strategic Assessments – An example-led guide* (Home Office, 2009) <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/regions/regions021.htm>

²³ http://www.statistics.gov.uk/ssd/surveys/british_crime_survey.asp

²⁴ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

²⁵ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

²⁶ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>

²⁷ Walker, A., Kershaw, C. And Nicholas, S. *Crime in England and Wales 2008/09*, Home Office Statistical Bulletin

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- ²⁸ British Crime Survey <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/rds/bcs1.html>
- ²⁹ Forced Marriage Unit <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global-issues/human-rights/forced-marriage-unit/>
- ³⁰ Metropolitan Police Service <http://www.met.police.uk/>
- ³¹ FORWARD <http://www.forwarduk.org.uk/>
- ³² Sexual Exclusion Taskforce *Reducing Re-offending by ex-prisoners* 2002
- ³³ See Forced Marriage multi-agency guidelines <http://www.fco.gov.uk/en/global-issues/human-rights/forced-marriage-unit/>
- ³⁴ See www.southallblacksisters.org.uk for Lord Justice Moses' judgement on the case brought to him by Southall Black Sisters against Ealing council
- ³⁵ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/strongsafeprosperous>
- ³⁶ <http://www.crimereduction.homeoffice.gov.uk/crimereduction023.htm>
- ³⁷ http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/documents/digitalasset/dh_4134944.pdf
- ³⁸ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/corporate/statistics/homelessnessq22009?view=Standard>
- ³⁹ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/1274439>
- ⁴⁰ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/154295.pdf>
- ⁴¹ <http://www.dh.gov.uk/en/Healthcare/ViolenceagainstWomenandGirls/index.htm>
- ⁴² http://www.dh.gov.uk/prod_consum_dh/groups/dh_digitalassets/@dh/@en/@ps/@sta/@perf/documents/digitalasset/dh_110159.pdf
- ⁴³ <http://police.homeoffice.gov.uk/national-policing-plan/national-community-safety-0609?view=Standard>
- ⁴⁴ Multi-Agency Risk Assessment Conferences (MARACs) have become the cornerstone of our approach to identified high risk victims of domestic violence as indicated thorough the use of risk assessment tools. By sharing information, agencies get a better picture of victims' situations and so develop responses that are tailored to the needs and goals of individual victims and their children. Safe information-sharing also allows agencies to manage the perpetrator in ways that reduce risk. We

now have MARAC programmes in over 225 areas and we are aiming for national roll-out by 2011.

⁴⁵ See WNC Report Still We Rise <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/violence-against-women1/>

⁴⁶ Sexual Assault Referral Centres (SARCs), offer victims of sexual crime an integrated service for medical care, sexual health screening and treatment, psychological counselling, access to legal advice and other support, all in one place from professionally trained staff. They can also choose to undergo forensic medical examination for criminal justice purposes. Many centres are located near hospitals, as this allows access to medical staff and equipment. For victims, SARCs help reduce the stress of dealing with what's happening to them particularly in the immediate aftermath of a sexual assault.

⁴⁷ Independent Domestic Violence Advisers (IDVAs) are trained specialists who provide a service to victims who are at high risk of harm. IDVA involvement with victims of domestic violence has been shown to decrease victimization and reduce victim withdrawal. With these systems in place, agencies work together to identify, track and risk assess domestic violence cases and better share information so that more offenders are brought to justice, victims are protected and better supported, and further violence is prevented.

⁴⁸ Based on the IDA model, Independent Sexual Violence Advisers (ISVAs) provide independent support and advocacy to victims of sexual violence and abuse throughout and beyond the criminal justice process. ISVAs are essential in building relationships between local agencies to improve effectiveness of the response to victims of sexual violence.

⁴⁹ <http://research.dwp.gov.uk/asd/asd5/91summ.asp>

⁵⁰ <http://www.communities.gov.uk/documents/housing/pdf/1274439>

⁵¹ http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/third_sector/compact.aspx

⁵² <http://www.auditcommission.gov.uk/localgov/audit/caa/pages/caaframework.asp>

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