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Cwm Taf Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse, Sexual Violence Strategy Annual Report 2018-2019

Cwm Taf Violence Against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual
Violence Strategy – Annual Report 2108-2019

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Welcome to the First Annual Report of the Cwm Taf Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Steering Group

In 2015 the Welsh Government passed the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Act (Wales) - VAWDASV

(1) The purpose of this Act is to improve:

- a) arrangements for the prevention of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- b) arrangements for the protection of victims of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence;
- c) support for people affected by gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence.

The Act specified that Local Authorities and Local Health Boards (plus relevant authorities) are required to develop a joint local VAWDASV Strategy and provide an annual update report against this strategy. In Cwm Taf the responsibility for developing and monitoring the VAWDASV strategy has been delegated to the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group which is a partnership of relevant authorities and local service providers.

In accordance with the ACT, the Cwm Taf VAWDASV strategy must:

- a) specify objectives which the Local Authority and the Local Health Board consider will, if achieved, contribute to the pursuit of the purpose of this Act;
- b) specify the periods of time within which the Local Authority and the Local Health Board propose to achieve the specified objectives;
- c) identify the actions that the Local Authority and the Local Health Board propose to take to achieve the specified objectives;
- d) A Local Authority and a Local Health Board may specify objectives.

For ease of monitoring in Cwm Taf, the objectives, actions and timescales have been incorporated into an implementation plan that is reported upon on a quarterly basis. Any issues or risks that are raised in relation to delivering the plan are elevated to the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) for their decision and/or action. This supports the CSP to take ownership of VAWDASV at a strategic level and provide leadership to the VAWDASV Steering Group on the delivery of the plan.

This report highlights the work that the VAWDASV Steering Group has undertaken during 2018/19, in pursuit of the aim to ensure that the people of Cwm Taf are safe from all the harms associated with VAWDASV. The Steering Group are acutely aware that this can only be achieved through strong partnership, with all steering group agencies working together proactively and productively.

Members of the VAWDASV Steering Group continue to seek opportunities to further develop and improve safeguarding in relation to VAWDASV in Cwm Taf and recognise

that this can only be achieved through effective collaboration. Therefore, collaboration with partner agencies, Welsh Government and Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board will continue into the future, in order to enhance practice and to share learning.

Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group will also endeavour to engage with users of services, whether they are children or adults and offer them opportunities to participate in the VAWDASV agenda.



Signed: Paul Mee, Chair of Cwm Taf CSP, Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group

Membership of VAWDASV steering group

See Appendix A

Governance structure

See Appendix B

Cwm Taf VAWDASV Strategic Aims

The Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 required Local Authorities and their relevant partners to develop a local VAWDASV strategy. The Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group complied with this requirement and developed its aims to be consistent with the VAWDASV National Strategy and to meet local need.

During 2018-19 the Cwm Taf aims were as follows:

Aim 1: Increase awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the Cwm Taf population.

Aim 2: Enhance education provision in relation to healthy relationships and gender equality.

Aim 3: Hold perpetrators to account for their actions and support them to change their behaviour.

Aim 4: Enable professionals to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors.

Aim 5: Increase the number of specialist services that are of high quality across the Cwm Taf region.

Aim 6: Strengthen collaborative working across the sector to understand and meet the needs of our communities, increasing the sustainability and capacity of the sector.

What have we achieved? - Aim 1

Increase awareness of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across the Cwm Taf population .

Through the course of the year the Cwm Taf region has undertaken or participated in several events to raise the profile of VAWDASV amongst the general population.

To raise awareness across a broad range of professionals and the public, Mercury Theatre Cymru were commissioned to perform their play about domestic abuse entitled "35 times" at a range of venues across Cwm Taf.

In July, Safer Merthyr Tydfil (SMT), a domestic abuse service provider from the region used the White Ribbon Campaign to reach a predominantly male audience at the Aberdare Motorcycle Races. SMT were able to promote awareness of the White Ribbon message but were also able to market local service provisions. There were additional opportunities to discuss men as victims of domestic abuse. At the event over 300 men signed the pledge

<https://www.facebook.com/SMTCYMRU/> see July 21st, 2018

From White Ribbon Day on 25th of November, through the 16 days of action there was multi agency activity raising awareness of domestic abuse across the region. This included:

- Pledge signing events;
- Discussions with Council members;
- Some council vehicles displayed white ribbon logos on their fleet vehicles;
- Service providers tweeted the 16 tweets provided by SafeLives;
- Service providers also used Facebook to promote their events.

Throughout the year the organisations associated with Violence against Women Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence have promoted the Live Fear Free campaigns across Cwm Taf including 'This is Me' and 'Don't be a Bystander'. Dissemination of national campaigns has utilised several mediums including Email, Twitter and Facebook. Additionally, Cwm Taf service providers have participated in the development of national campaigns.

In respect of raising awareness around sexual violence, New Pathways have participated in numerous events including stands at the Big Welsh Bite and the Freshers Fair in Coleg Y Cymoedd.

New Pathways were active during Sexual Violence Awareness week in February 2019, using both digital and physical media to promote awareness within Cwm Taf. They also participated in Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) Awareness Day in March

2019, the White Ribbon Campaign in November 2018 and Anti-Slavery Day in October 2018.

To give partner agencies a better understanding of services and the processes of sexual violence, New Pathways arranged for partner agencies, Victim Focus Team and Women's Aid the opportunity to visit the SARC.

What have we achieved? - Aim 2

Enhance education provision in relation to healthy relationships and gender equality

Each school in Cwm Taf currently has its own unique approach to providing education around healthy relationships and VAWDASV but all are working to achieve the nine elements of the Whole School Approach. All schools in Cwm Taf have been offered the Spectrum programme, commissioned by Welsh Government and delivered by Hafan Cymru. Many schools also commission local VAWDASV services to deliver aspects of healthy relationships often in relation to issues affecting that school. In the Merthyr area of the region, Safer Merthyr Tydfil delivered a healthy relationship programme to

Number of individuals worked with	1407
Number of group sessions	106

As mentioned above, Hafan Cymru have been delivering the Spectrum programme across the region in 2018-19 and delivered the following sessions:

Merthyr

- Total Number of sessions = 21
- Total number of pupils in sessions = 278
- Total number of staff in pupil sessions = 21

Rhondda Cynon Taf

- Total Number of sessions = 114
- Total number of pupils in sessions = 1344
- Total number of staff in pupil sessions = 87
- Total number of staff in staff Training = 30

What have we achieved? - Aim 3

Hold perpetrators to account for their actions and support them to change their behaviour

There is an acknowledgement in Cwm Taf that support for perpetrators is in its infancy and to truly offer perpetrators support, there needs to be significant investment in service provision. Consequently, the mapping of need and development of service provision has become a part of the wider VAWDASV commissioning task (see aim 5).

In Cwm Taf there are some existing provisions for perpetrators. The DRIVE project works with perpetrators of domestic abuse whose victims have been deemed high risk. DRIVE targets the perpetrators of domestic abuse in order to improve outcomes for victims and children. The key objectives are to:

- reduce the number of serial perpetrators of domestic abuse;
- reduce the number of repeat and new victims;
- reduce the harm caused to victims and children;
- intervene earlier to safeguard families living with high-harm domestic abuse.

The DRIVE service has two strands for working with perpetrators:

- I. To support perpetrators to change their behaviour;
- II. To disrupt the perpetrators opportunities for abusive behaviour.

Drive started as a pilot project for 2 years and has recently completed its second year evaluation. Please see attached link for 2 year evaluation executive summary.

<http://driveproject.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Drive-Year-2-UoB-Evaluation-Executive-Summary.pdf>

The Oasis Centre (IDVA service), which is funded and managed by Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council also provides a Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme. This DVPP is offered to those perpetrators who wish to change their behaviour, access to the programme is on a voluntary basis.

Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programmes are behaviour-change programmes for people who use violence and abuse towards their ex partners/partner. The primary aim of the DVPP is to increase the safety and wellbeing of survivors and their children;

In Cwm Taf these are usually run as small groups, however in recent years the programme has evolved to include intervention work with perpetrators in a 1-2-1 setting and on occasions, couples work.

Perpetrator work must offer perpetrators a realistic opportunity to achieve sustainable change by:

- helping them to stop being violent and abusive;
- helping them learn how to relate to their partners in a respectful and equal way;
- helping them develop non-abusive ways of dealing with difficulties in their relationships and cope with their anger.

The intervention with domestic violence and abuse perpetrators is accompanied by support from the IDVA service. The purpose of the IDVA support is to ensure that the safety of those at risk is not compromised by the intervention and that they are offered assistance to establish lives free from abuse.

During 2018–19 the DVPP

- Offered support to 29 perpetrators;
- Offered support to 11 victims;
- 16 offered one to one work;
- 13 offered one to one work and group work;
- 21 entered the programme on a voluntary basis;
- 8 completed with a planned closure;
- 6 felt that they understood the impact of their behaviour;
- 6 felt that their negative behaviour had reduced.

In Cwm Taf, as in other regions, there is a Specialist Domestic Violence Court (SDVC) that convenes weekly and it is one of the mechanisms that is utilised to hold perpetrators of domestic abuse to account.

Specialist Domestic Violence Courts form part of a collaborative approach to tackling the complexities of domestic abuse. The approach situates the Court and the Criminal Justice System as part of a co-ordinated community response to domestic abuse and refers to a whole system, rather than simply a Court building or jurisdiction.

Working together, specialist Courts help to ensure the safety of the victim by identifying, tracking and risk-assessing domestic abuse, supporting victims and sharing information effectively. The approach has been shown to increase safe outcomes for survivors, help increase convictions and reduce attrition and withdrawal rates for these cases.

In Cwm Taf in 2018-2019, the SDVC finalised 920 cases; of these 729 had a successful outcome. This equates to 79% of cases finalised.

What have we achieved? - Aim 4

Enable professionals to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors

In the Cwm Taf region, one of the main methods of ensuring that staff provide effective and timely interventions has been through the rollout of the VAWDASV National Training Framework (NTF) groups 1–6; group 1 being the largest group as it encompasses all staff of the relevant authorities.

Since implementation **13,645** staff members from Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council and Cwm Taf Morgannwg University Health Board have completed group 1 training, despite considerable difficulties with implementation. The main issues being that large numbers of employees do not have access to computers, e-mail or internet so cannot undertake e-learning. Figures are not available locally for the Welsh Ambulance Service Trust or the South Wales Fire and Rescue Service as they report directly to Welsh Government.

In 2018-19, Cwm Taf became the second pilot area for the implementation of Ask and Act groups 2 and 3 of the NTF. In the early months of the year, the primary focus was on the training of the trainers who would deliver the Ask and Act courses and in November we commenced delivery of the group 2 Ask and Act training.

In total 22 individuals undertook the Train the Trainer (TTT) group 2 course. Of these, 17 received the accreditation required to deliver Ask and Act (group 2). There are currently 14 trainers available to deliver the programme. Since November 2018, 343 professionals have been trained.

In respect of group 3, Ask and Act Champions. We only succeeded in recruiting 1 individual to the group 3 TTT course; this individual has not yet received accreditation therefore no group 3 champions courses have been delivered.

Delivering the model of training as required by Welsh Government has proved to be challenging and potentially unsustainable.

In respect of group 4 and 5, each service provider has been ensuring that their staff receive appropriate training. See below table for 2018-19.

Organisation	Group 4	Group 5
Women's Aid	5	2
Safer Merthyr Tydfil	3	1
New Pathways	14	
LLamau		
Oasis – Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council		1

Upskilling professionals in primary health care is a role for the Identification and Referral to Improve Safety (IRIS) project

Working closely with primary care, the IRIS project aims to increase the identification of victims and perpetrators of abuse and improve the support they receive. This service is commissioned by Cwm Taf University Health Board and provides training and support to the 38 G.P practices throughout Cwm Taf.

Each practice receives specialist clinical training for G.Ps and practice staff including additional training for frontline staff, including administrators. The training focuses on providing information on how to identify domestic abuse through clinical enquiry and how to respond in terms of assessing immediate risk, referral, recording and confidentiality.

Once each practice has received the full training, they become a domestic abuse aware practice. This is recognised and promoted to patients by the displaying of posters and information cards, identifying them as domestic abuse aware. Practices also receive referral forms and information on care pathways for female survivors, male survivors and perpetrators. **35/38** practices are fully IRIS aware i.e. have completed all 3 training sessions. **495** practice staff have completed IRIS training across Cwm Taf.

Awareness raising around Domestic Homicide Reviews (DHRs) has also helped to bring VAWDASV issues to the forefront of everyday practice. In March 2019, Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group and the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board held a joint event to disseminate the findings of the first publicised Cwm Taf DHR. The event was attended by 40 practitioners from many organisations. Some of the feedback from the day included the following: -

- Organisations are still working in isolation so are not able to see the bigger picture;
- There is insufficient collaborative working between Safeguarding Adults and Domestic Abuse services;
- There is a lack of understanding of how 'capacity' may be affected by coercive control or dependence upon drugs or alcohol;
- There is a lack of knowledge in respect of how to safeguard individuals who do not want to engage with service provision;
- There is a lack of clarity around information sharing and when it is acceptable to share without consent.

When developing the strategy, the VAWDASV Steering Group considered compiling a local set of core performance indicators that all service providers could report against. However, as service providers are already providing numerous performance reports to funders and commissioners, it felt onerous to add in another layer of performance monitoring. Consequently, the VAWDASV group decided to wait for the introduction of the National VAWDASV indicators.

What have we achieved? - Aim 5

Increase the number of specialist services that are of high quality across the Cwm Taf region

Consistently throughout this year, the VAWDASV Steering Group has worked on its approach to commissioning, building on the work it had commenced with the population needs assessment the previous year. The overall intention was to ensure that services are;

- Available to meet identified need;
- Consistent across the region;
- Not duplicating provisions that are already available;
- Effective and offer good value for money.

In 2018-2019 work commenced and completed around service mapping. The mapping work included the identification of funding and funding organisations, an analysis of service deficits and the identification of best practice models. Whilst undertaking these tasks, the VAWDASV Commissioning Group has referred to the Welsh Government's Commissioning Guidance.

The Cwm Taf VAWDASV Commissioning Group came to a position where they understood what services were required and what services were not available but

found it difficult to develop a model of service that they could commission, given the constraints being experienced. These constraints include multiple pots of small short-term funding provided by commissioners utilising different criteria or differing outcomes. Significant additional funding is brought in by the third sector providers, however this resource is attached to the organisation being funded and is provided for a specific reason. These additional resources cannot be moved to meet identified local need.

In order to attempt to resolve these issues, the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group utilised a Welsh Government Regional Development Grant to employ an independent consultant to make recommendations for a way forward. During January and March 2019, the consultant worked to complete the commissioned tasks, with a report required by April 2019.

It is the intention of the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group to use this report and its recommendations as the starting point for commissioning work in 2019-2020.

As part of the activity under this aim, all VAWDASV services in Cwm Taf were asked to adopt a recognised set of core standards. To date, RCT Women's Aid have achieved Welsh Women's Aid National Quality Standards, RCT - Oasis Centre became re-accredited as a SafeLives Leading Light, SMT are engaged in obtaining both Welsh Women's Aid National Quality Standards and Respect Service Standards and Llamau have achieved the following:

- The ISO9001 certificate for our Quality Assurance standards;
- CHAS (Contractors Health and Safety Assessment Scheme) certification for our Health and Safety Standards;
- Cyber Essential Plus Certificate for cyber safety/IT;
- Agored Cymru approved centre status.

New Pathways are working to achieve two sector specific standards - The Survivors Trust National Service Standards and the Quality Standards for ISVA services (through LimeCulture). In addition, they are working towards completing the Trusted Charity Quality Mark (formerly PQASSO) and re-accreditation of our Investors in Volunteers award.

Whilst participating in the development of a commissioning approach, upskilling their staff and undertaking core standards programmes, local providers have continued to provide the keystone services of Cwm Taf including the refuges, IDVA, ISVA teams and floating support.

In 2018-19 refuges in Merthyr and Rhondda Cynon Taf supported a total of 208 service users.

RCT = 146

Merthyr = 62

Positive outcomes = 194

Floating Support supported 234 individuals
 RCT = 76
 Merthyr = 158
 Positive outcomes = 192

IDVA services combined RCT and Merthyr

People accessing the service directly - NB Oasis only deals with high risk		
Target Group	Breakdown by high/medium/low risk	Total number of beneficiaries in this reporting period
Women	High	1042
	Medium	228
Men	High	128
	Medium	12
TOTALS		1410

People reporting that they have been provided with the information and advice they need to access services and support and are able to make informed choices		
Target Group	Breakdown by high/medium/low risk	Total anticipated number of beneficiaries in 2018 - 2019
Women	High	795
	Medium	339
Men	High	130
	Medium	63
TOTALS		1327

During 2018-19, New Pathways provided counselling for 187 adults and 18 children and young people in the Cwm Taf area. However, also in this same period the service received counselling referrals for 532 adults and 88 children and young people.

New Pathways ISVAs supported 463 clients during this period (342 adults/121 CYP) and received a total of 298 new referrals (217 adults/81 CYP).

Outcome measures demonstrated that:

- 90% of ISVA clients felt well supported while at SARC;
- 99% of adult counselling clients felt that the support they received was beneficial;
- 90% of adult counselling clients felt more able to cope;
- 95% of adult counselling clients felt less isolated;
- 81% of adult counselling clients felt less depressed;
- 81% of adult counselling clients felt an increase in confidence.

What have we achieved? - Aim 6

Strengthen collaborative working across the sector to understand and meet the needs of our communities, increasing the sustainability and capacity of the sector.

As part of the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group and collaborative working, all service providers have access to the commissioning work undertaken including the population needs assessment and gap analysis. Therefore, all are aware of where the region needs to strengthen its service provision.

Consequently, RCT Women's Aid have helped to increase the accessibility of support services to female and male victims of domestic and sexual abuse through the provision of the new Safer Rhondda Centre.

The need for the service was demonstrated by the fact that out of the 3070 referrals that RCT Women's Aid received in 2017-2018, 1198 lived in the Rhondda Valleys. 48% of these referrals were only able to access telephone support due to existing housing related funding restrictions or geographical limitations.

The closest accessible provision for victims was located an average of 8 miles away which created a considerable barrier for victims with limited or no access to transport or childcare.

Following consultation with local and regional strategic partners, RCT Women's Aid applied to the Welsh Government VAWDASV Capital Grant Scheme to secure funding to purchase a facility in the heart of the Rhondda Valleys, thus enabling specialist services to be available for everyone affected by VAWDASV, regardless of postcode.

The sharing of the needs assessment etc. led Safer Merthyr Tydfil (SMT) to be aware of the gap in services provided to children experiencing/witnessing domestic abuse plus a lack of interventions that brought together the family as a unit to access support.

SMT were successful in securing grant funding from the Police and Crime Commissioners Office to provide the Family Programme.

The Family Programme is provided across the Cwm Taf region and offers specialist support for families experiencing domestic abuse who wish to remain together. Adopting a whole family approach, the service will provide therapeutic interventions and programmes, focusing on safety, risk management, behavioural change, impact of domestic abuse on children, ACEs, respectful communication, attachment and emotional resilience. The aim of the service is to enable the family to live together safely or be supported to separate amicably.

In respect of existing grant funding, commissioners and providers have been tasked to creatively find ways to utilise the grants. Consequently, the Supporting Peoples funding, with the support of Welsh Government, has been used innovatively in RCT to provide the SAFE project.

The project delivered by RCT Women's Aid aims to increase the opportunities available to victims of domestic violence by implementing early intervention and prevention strategies. The project delivers this in a variety of ways including:

- One to one support/advocacy (short term);
- Life skills sessions including domestic abuse awareness programme and confidence building;
- Direct referral pathways to other support agencies;
- Access to legal advice and debt management surgeries.

In 2018-19 the Safe project received 867 referrals. The women who engaged with the project undertook the following interventions:

Referrals	867
Support provided	792
Risk assessment and safety planning	226
Healthy relationships programmes	398
Freedom programme	139
Recovery toolkit	27
Aces toolkit	22
Confidence building	42
Steps to excellence	21
Assertiveness course	47
Art therapy	100

Service user evaluation of the programmes demonstrates that:

- 100% feel more informed of local domestic abuse services;
- 86% felt increased confidence and self esteem;
- 96% said they would be able to recognise the early warning signs of abusive behaviour in future relationships.

New Pathways concern about the welfare of clients who were waiting lengthy times for counselling appointments led the organisation to invest considerable resources and new approaches into a 'Waiting List Project' between January and March 2019.

The Waiting List Project involved a number of initiatives including contacting every client on the waiting list to assess risk and identify any immediate needs, employing Sessional Counsellors to offer time limited counselling to an increased number of

clients and offering clients the opportunity to attend a psychoeducational group whilst waiting for their allocation to one-to-one counselling. As a result of these initiatives, the waiting list at the end of the 2018-19 period had decreased from 270 clients to 99 clients.

New Pathways have also been a part of the multi-agency collaboration between Health, Police, Police & Crime Commissioners working towards a more sustainable, regional service for Sexual Assault Referral Centres. The initial stage, developing a regional model and agreeing a financial model, is nearing completion and it is proposed that it will then move into a phased implementation stage.

For the Cwm Taf region, this will mean the loss of forensic medical facilities in the area, with examinations for all people who have experienced rape or serious sexual assault going to Cardiff SARC, potentially from April 2020. Cardiff SARC will be the only SARC in the South Wales region that is able to offer paediatric examinations for children after sexual assault, although there is planning proposed to agree a paediatric model that will include child examinations at Swansea too. The Cwm Taf population will therefore have access to either Cardiff or Swansea for child forensic examinations.

The Merthyr SARC will become a 'spoke' under the new model, with only interviews and follow-up support services offered at that location.

Throughout 2018-19, sub-groups of the Cwm Taf Safeguarding Board and the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group worked in partnership to strengthen the alignment between MARAC & Adult Safeguarding processes. As a result of the need for closer alignment, the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) now considers whether every victim referred to MARAC is also an adult at risk and whether every adult at risk should also be subject to MARAC. The MASH has become more consistent in its recording processes so the team now identify, not only the specific form of abuse the person has experienced/is at risk of experiencing but also whether that abuse would meet the definition of domestic abuse. Due to this work, the MASH Team is better able to respond to the complex needs of adults at risk who experience domestic abuse.

To quality assure the work of the MASH in relation to Domestic abuse, an audit was undertaken of 15 sample cases. This audit identified that, for adults at risk (in this sample), 20% of victims were male and whilst over a third of victims were abuses by intimate partners, two thirds were abused by other family members, including a third being abused by adult children. More than 50% of the sample were over 70 years of age.

The more complete and accurate recording of domestic abuse, coupled with audit findings means that the data captured can be utilised to identify those most at risk and resources targeted appropriately.

Throughout this year the MARAC Quality Assurance Group have worked on a task set by the Cwm Taf Community Safety Partnership. Members of the group wanted to know if the MASH daily domestic violence discussion and the MARAC are effective. To determine whether the processes were effective the group undertook the following tasks:

- Asked SafeLives to do observations of both processes;
- Commissioned SafeLives to undertake MARAC reps training;

- Held a workshop to ascertain participants views;
- Carried out an audit of MASH to MARAC processes.

After these tasks were completed, it was felt that neither process was as effective as they could be. Both processes could be more effective if they:

- Focussed more on the 4 aims of the MARAC;
 - Safeguarding victims;
 - Safeguarding children;
 - Safeguarding professionals; **and**
 - Managing perpetrator behaviour.
- Identify and articulate the risks more clearly;
- Generate actions to mitigate each risk identified;
- Share only information that is relevant and proportionate;
- Reduced the volume of cases discussed at MARAC;
- Created greater consistency of process in MASH daily discussions and MARAC (MASH DA dailies to also focus on points above);
- Ensured that the appropriate and necessary were present to contribute to the safety actions.

Consequently, the QA group was tasked to develop the changes required to increase effectiveness. This work will be taken forward in 2019-20.

Implementation Plan 2019-20

Through the delivery of the 2018-19 VAWDASV implementation plan, a number of new actions have emerged. These will be carried forward into the 2019-20 implementation plan. These include the following:

- Establish an engagement, participation and communication subgroup of the Cwm Taf VAWDASV steering group to deliver planned and co-ordinated local campaigning activity;
- Work towards consistency of approach to delivering VAWDASV awareness raising across Cwm Taf schools. The starting point to this action will be to baseline existing awareness raising activity;
- Raise the profile of the Domestic Violence Perpetrator Programme to encourage greater access to the programme, particularly amongst children's services and the National Probation Service;
- Build on the progress achieved through the rollout of the Ask and Act training, through encouraging enrolment on the group 3 Ask and Act Train the Trainers course;
- Utilise the feedback from the DHR learning event to develop mechanisms to address the knowledge gaps identified;
- Adopt and implement the National Core Performance Indicators once they are published;
- Utilise the report and recommendations of the independent consultant to take forward the commissioning approach;

- Deliver services from the newly established Safer Rhondda Centre;
- Deliver the newly commissioned Early Intervention Family Project and share learning;
- Strengthen the support offered and provided to those identified as particularly vulnerable by the safeguarding system;
- Develop actions to strengthen the MASH daily domestic violence discussions and the MARAC so that they become more effective and deliver greater positive outcomes.

Appendix A

VAWDASV Steering Group Membership

The following organisations are represented on the Cwm Taf VAWDASV Steering Group (for some organisations several departments are represented).

Organisation	Departments
Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council	Public Health Protection
	Supporting People
	Housing
	Education
	Community Safety
	Safeguarding
Rhondda Cynon Taf County Borough Council	Public Health, Protection & Community Services
	Supporting People
	Education
	Community Safety
	Housing
	Adult Services & Safeguarding
Cwm Taf University Health Board	Children Services
	Safeguarding
South Wales Police	
Welsh Ambulance Service Trust	
South Wales Fire and Rescue	
National Probation Service	
New Pathways	
Safer Merthyr Tydfil	
BAWSO	
RCT Women's Aid	
Llamau	
Police and Crime Commissioners Office	

