

Violence Against Women and Girls Delivery Group Terms of Reference



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1. Introduction

East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee (EMPPC) provides leadership and oversight of the governance arrangements for Public Protection across East Lothian and Midlothian local authority areas on behalf of East Lothian and Midlothian Critical Services Oversight Group (CSOG).

The Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) Delivery Group has been established to support the consideration of specific topics of current or future importance relevant to gender-based violence.

Violence Against Women Partnerships are the principal vehicle for implementing [Equally Safe: Scotland's Strategy for Preventing and Eradicating Violence Against Women and Girls](#) at a local level and ensuring a joined-up, evidence informed approach is taken to preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls. A fundamental principle of any form of partnership is that, by working together, the partners collectively achieve more than they would alone. Our VAWG Delivery Group provides the opportunity for statutory and voluntary partners to come together to ensure that best use is made of all available resources in the community and that women and girls affected by violence and abuse receive integrated, relevant and effective services.

The VAWG Delivery Group will be guided by the national [Violence Against Women Partnership Guidance](#) published by the Scottish Government and COSLA.

2. Purpose of document

This document outlines the delivery and reporting framework for the East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Committee VAWG Delivery Group.

3. Functions and Responsibilities

It has been agreed that East Lothian and Midlothian develop their own local Equally Safe strategies. These will progress the implementation of Equally Safe on an area basis. The work of the VAWG DG should therefore not duplicate, but complement, the work that is done on a local level by providing the opportunity to bring partners together across the two geographical areas to share information, ideas and resources to support the delivery of Equally Safe in East Lothian and Midlothian.

The VAWG Delivery Group's responsibilities include:

- Providing a forum for maintaining oversight of the service provision and activities to effectively address VAWG across East Lothian and Midlothian - including trends and patterns in need and demand, operational service context, gaps in services and review of what is working well.
- Analysing gaps and make recommendations as appropriate in relation to local VAWG services and developments.

- Working with the Midlothian Equally Safe Leadership Group to support implementation of Midlothian’s [Equally Safe in Midlothian Strategy 2023-2027](#).¹
- Sharing learning from the national VAWG network and consider the local implications of updates and developments in national policy, strategy and legislation. To share information about the local context to help inform national developments in policy and practice across Scotland.
- Considering the local implications for the implementation of [vawpartnershipguidance-aug-2016.pdf \(cosla.gov.uk\)](#) and associated delivery plan²
- Undertaking horizon scanning to identify risks and opportunities, and consider how emerging developments might affect local policy, plans and practice in VAWG services.
- Maintaining oversight of and ensure the full and effective implementation of Marac³ across East Lothian and Midlothian.
- Identifying gaps in learning and training needs about VAWG and ways to address those on a multi-agency basis.
- Supporting the uptake of funding opportunities in relation to VAWG and fostering positive relationships with stakeholder groups.
- Ensuring information is available for the public about supports and services for people experiencing and perpetrating gender-based violence.
- Whilst the VAWG Delivery Group shall have an interest in the operational context of service delivery, and workforce development needs, it should not replicate discussions that are more appropriately dealt with in another Sub-group. Matters relating to learning and development can be referred to (and from) the Learning and Development Sub-group, and matters relating to performance and data can be referred to (and from) the Performance and Quality Improvement Sub-group.

4. Membership of the Sub-group

Membership of the Sub-group will be agreed by EMPPC. Representation at the Sub-group will come from the main agencies with direct responsibilities or interest in gender-based violence and equalities, across East Lothian and Midlothian, with equal representation across both areas. Representatives will be drawn from staff with sufficient knowledge and expertise to contribute to the functioning of the Sub-group, and who can make decisions and where necessary, staff resource commitments on behalf of their agency in the course of the work of the Sub-group.

Membership will include the following or their equivalent:

- Education Support Officer, Child and Public Protection, East Lothian Council
- Equalities Officer, Police, Improvement and Partnerships, East Lothian Council
- Team Leader, Children’s Services, East Lothian Council
- Team Manager, Housing Strategy, East Lothian Council
- Team Leader, Justice Social Work Services, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership

¹ East Lothian has not yet developed a local strategy – update will be required when this is in place.

² Update with link to delivery plan when published (awaiting publication – July 2024)

³ Multi-agency Risk Assessment Conference (East Lothian and Midlothian’s multi-agency response to victims at high risk of death of serious harm due to domestic abuse).

- Marac Co-ordinator, East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Office
- Public Protection Manager, East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Office
- Co-ordinator for Protecting Women and Girls Against Violence, East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Office
- Clinical Nurse Manager, East Lothian Health and Social Care Partnership
- Chief Operations Officer or Chief Executive Officer, Edinburgh Rape Crisis Centre
- Equalities Officer, Midlothian Council
- Education Support Officer Professional Learning and Development or Lead – Child Protection and Safeguarding Midlothian Education, Midlothian Council
- Team Leader, Children’s Services, Midlothian Council
- Team Leader, Homelessness, Midlothian Council
- Clinical Nurse Manager, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership
- Team Leader, Justice Services, Midlothian Health and Social Care Partnership
- Detective Inspector, Police Scotland
- Head of Student Services, Queen Margaret University
- Chief Executive Officer, Women’s Aid East and Midlothian

5. Quorum

The VAWG Delivery Group is primarily focused on providing opportunities for more in-depth reflection of some key areas around gender-based violence and does not require to be quorate. The expectation of the Sub-group is that members who cannot attend delegate a suitable substitute.

6. Chair

The Chair will be a member of EMPPC.

7. Roles and Responsibilities of Agency Representatives

- To represent their agency at meetings of the Sub-group and contribute to discussion and decision-making with the full authority of their agency as delegated by its Chief Executive/Executive Lead/Officer.
- To collate the views of agency staff/officers on issues as necessary and ensure that these are made available to the Sub-group.
- To prepare for meetings of the Sub-group by submitting reports on time, reading papers and consulting with key staff in their respective agency as necessary.
- To participate fully in the business life of the Sub-group between meetings.
- To ensure that feedback of the business of the Sub-group is communicated to and understood by staff within their agency.
- To ensure, in partnership with others, that agreed standards of practice in Public Protection are met and sustained.
- To be aware of issues for their own agency and their relevance to the work of the Sub-group, raising those with the Chair and Committee as required.
- To arrange, with the approval of the Chair of the Committee, for an appropriate substitute to attend meetings of the Committee when the representative is unable to attend.

8. Frequency of Meetings

The Sub-group will meet twice a year, in August and February. This will be reviewed after 18 months in operation.

9. Administration of Meetings

The Chair will be responsible for the development of the agenda and will consult with members as required. The agenda and papers for any meetings will be circulated to members one week before the meeting.

East Lothian and Midlothian Public Protection Office will be responsible for completing a note and action log from the meeting.

10. Mechanism for Contributing to the Agenda

Members will be asked to complete a report on behalf of their agency or service for any VAWG Delivery Group Meeting. Members can place an item on the agenda for the Sub-group by contacting the Chair or the Co-ordinator – Protecting Women and Girls Against Violence at emppo@eastlothian.gov.uk, with an accompanying report. Alternatively, a brief item can be raised under any other business.

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