



**To: Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board**

**On: 26<sup>th</sup> November 2015**

Joint Report by:

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**Gender Based Violence Strategy Group & MARAC Update**

**1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report provides an update for the Safer & Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board on the changes to the coordination and chairing of the Renfrewshire Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) which will now be chaired by Police Scotland and Coordinated by the Renfrewshire Community Safety Partnership.

**2. Recommendations**

It is recommended that the Board notes the proposed changes to the operational roles and procedures of the Renfrewshire Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference.

**3. Gender Based Violence Strategy Group & MARAC Update**

- 3.1 The overarching aim of the Renfrewshire Gender Based Violence (GBV) Strategy Group is working together for the elimination of all forms of violence and abuse against women and children. This includes protection, prevention, provision, participation and partnership working.
- 3.2 A Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference (MARAC) is a multi agency victim-focussed meeting where information is shared on the highest risk cases of domestic abuse between different statutory and voluntary sector agencies. The role of the MARAC is to facilitate, monitor and evaluate effective information sharing to enable appropriate actions to be taken to increase public safety.
- 3.3 These meetings are 4 weekly and up until August this year have been chaired by ASSIST, a specialist domestic abuse advocacy and support service focused on reducing risk and



improving the safety of victims of domestic abuse. ASSIST is managed by Community Safety Glasgow (CSG) a charitable partnership between Glasgow City Council and The Scottish Police Authority. At the last MARAC meeting in August, ASSIST notified all relevant members that they were no longer in a position to continue resourcing and convening MARAC meetings and partners would need to make their own arrangements for MARAC processes in future if they want the meetings to continue.

- 3.4 The Renfrewshire Safer and Stronger Action Plan highlights Renfrewshire Council's commitment to supporting the roll out of ASSIST and to establishing an active and effective Renfrewshire MARAC. The meetings in Renfrewshire have been particularly successful, well attended by all key representative organisations and delivering effective oversight and support on this agenda.
- 3.5 A meeting was arranged on 15 September attended by Dorothy Hawthorn (Head of Child Care and Criminal Justice) and Oliver Reid (Head of Public Protection), the coordinators for MARAC and DCI Fil Capaldi to discuss a solution to continue the provision and resourcing of MARAC within Renfrewshire – and ideally to develop and build on the MARAC approach in future as part of the wider public protection agenda. Following this meeting a report was submitted to the Community Safety and Public Protection Steering Group on the next steps and it was agreed that MARAC would form part of the Public Protection agenda and continue to feed into the Gender Based Violence Steering group.
- 3.6 Maxine Hendry, within Community Resources will take on the role as Coordinator, with additional administrative support being identified to assist her in the role, and Police Scotland will Chair the meetings, starting from the next scheduled meeting in November. ASSIST will offer a transitional support to Maxine in taking on the MARAC co-ordination processes starting from the beginning of October and additional training for relevant officers will be sourced. Woman's Aid have also agreed to continue with the support they currently provide around accommodating the monthly MARAC meetings.
- 3.7 Once these transitional arrangements are in place, it is proposed that the future of MARAC will be included in the review of public protection arrangements being taken forward within Community Resources to ensure that the appropriate linkages are being made across the wider public protection agenda.
- 3.8 There is also still some work to be done to ensure that the service is handling all of the cases that might be expected within Renfrewshire. Current estimates are that the required level of service within Renfrewshire would indicate that around 310 cases per year would be handled by the MARAC. At present around 260 cases per year are being referred.



- 3.9 Additional briefings will be provided as the service transitions across to the Community Safety Partnership.

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 Within Renfrewshire the Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Thematic Board leads on the delivery of the outcomes and targets in the Community Plan and Single Outcome Agreement to tackle violence against women.
- 4.2 Locally the multi-agency partnership is represented at the Gender Based Violence Strategy Group. The group's work plan has been refreshed to ensure the community planning priorities are the focus for the group and a number of key actions are being taken forward with the aim of ensuring that all forms of violence and abuse against women and children are eliminated.

#### **5. Resources**

The Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Action Plan identifies the resources requirements for each individual action.

#### **6. Prevention**

The Action Plan framework allows the Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Board to plan resources and direct investment towards prevention and early intervention.

#### **7. Community Involvement/Engagement**

The Action Plan has been developed through the Safer and Stronger Renfrewshire Board and sub groups whereby the third sector is widely represented.

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