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**Swansea Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence Strategy**  
**(DRAFT, 2023-2026)**

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## 1. Introduction

An estimated 2.4 million adults experience some form of domestic abuse in one year, 1.7 million of them women. On average every week 2 women are murdered by their current or former partner and 30 men per year. It will affect 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men in their lifetime and has more repeat victims than any other crime (on average there will have been 35 assaults before a victim calls the police). Nearly half a million adults are sexually assaulted each year and around 85,000 women and 12,000 men are raped each year in England and Wales. In relation to 'so-called' honour based abuse, statistics indicate that there were 2,024 honour-based offences in England and Wales in 2019/2020, this includes FGM offences, forced marriage, and other honour-based abuse offences.

Additionally, the cost to the economy is considerable. In terms of services, costs to the health services are estimated at £2.3 billion, the police, £1.3 billion and housing costs, £550 million. A Home Office report estimating the economic and social costs of domestic abuse, placed the annual cost at £66 billion suggesting that the costs of all forms of VAWDASV are considerably higher.

Swansea, along with the Welsh Government, recognises that Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (VAWDASV) is a violation of human rights. It destroys lives and affects the well-being of our whole society. It is both a cause and a consequence of gender inequality and disproportionately affects women and girls, as recognised internationally by the Council of Europe (Convention on Preventing and Combatting Violence against Women and Domestic Violence) and the United Nations (Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women). Whilst it is important to acknowledge the disproportionate effect on women and girls, we recognise that abuse can also be directed towards men and boys, so our

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mission is to deliver a coordinated approach to prevention, protecting and supporting **all** groups and individuals affected by these forms of violence.

This strategy is an overarching plan which outlines the priority areas and strategic direction around healthy relationships and the implementation of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 within Swansea. We will build on our existing achievements and the progress that we have made, continuing to work across the Western Bay Region in areas of the strategy that will strengthen our approach to tackling VAWDASV.

In reflection of the Act, Swansea Council want to ensure this agenda is acknowledged as ‘everyone’s business’ and is a cross cutting theme that requires all areas of public policy to address the issues. Swansea Council and SBUHB, via the VAWDASV Leadership Group, has worked with our partner agencies/survivors of abuse to develop this strategy and will continue to work with partner agencies to deliver on the implementation.

## 2.Vision

***“All citizens in Swansea to be safe, happy and healthy and live fear free from violence, exploitation, harassment and abuse, in all its forms”***

***This will help us achieve.....***

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A Swansea that is a place which is more prosperous with a **skilled and well-educated** population, less characterised by the contrast and extremes of poverty across the city. We want to **improve well-being** so that communities are **safer, healthier, more cohesive and adaptable** to change so that everyone can be **enabled to reach their potential**.

**Our aspirations** for addressing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence in Swansea are to;

- Ensure the voice of the service user is heard and listened to.
- Ensure the right support is offered in the right place at the right time.
- Enable early identification of need and early intervention.
- Target services working with a whole family approach to empower families to problem solve, build resilience and sustain change.
- Deliver services through collaborative multi-service and multi-agency working.
- Provide services in a proactive, timely way to prevent escalation of need.
- Increase referrals to DV specialist agencies and Police.
- **All** victims to have equal access to appropriate services.
- Negative attitudes are challenged, and communities are educated and better informed of the issues around VAWDASV.
- Victims and perpetrators are offered support at the earliest opportunity.
- There is a regional and national collaborative approach to VAWDASV.
- Perpetrators are held accountable.
- Professionals and communities are more informed around VAWDASV and confident in reporting incidents/concerns of abuse.

### 3. Definitions

#### Violence Against Women (VAW)

The United Nations defines Violence Against Women as:

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

This encompasses but is not limited to:

- a) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practises harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation;
- b) Physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced prostitution
- c) Physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the state, wherever it occurs.

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## **Domestic Abuse (DA)**

The Domestic Abuse Act (2021) defines Domestic Abuse as:

“Domestic abuse is any single incident, course of conduct or pattern of abusive behaviour between individuals aged 16 or over who are “personally connected” to each other as a result of being, or having been, intimate partners or family members, regardless of gender or sexuality. Children who see, hear or experience the effects of the abuse and are related to either of the parties are also considered victims of domestic abuse”. Behaviour is “abusive” if it consists of any of the following:

- Physical
- Sexual
- Violent or threatening behaviour;
- Controlling behaviour (an act designed to make a person subordinate and/ or dependent on the abuser)
- Coercive behaviour (an act or pattern of acts of assaults, threats, humiliation and intimidation or other abuse that is used to harm, punish or frighten the victim)
- Economic abuse;
- Psychological, Emotional or other abuse.

This includes incidences where the abusive party directs their behaviour at another person (e.g. a child). Economic abuse means any behaviour that has a substantial adverse effect on someone’s ability to acquire, use or maintain money or other property, or obtain goods or services.

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## **Sexual Violence (SV)**

Sexual violence and abuse is any behaviour thought to be of a sexual nature which is unwanted and takes place without consent. Sexual violence and abuse can be physical, psychological, verbal or online. Any behaviour of a sexual nature that causes a person distress is considered sexual violence or abuse. Sexual violence can include but is not limited to;

- Rape
- Sexual assault
- Child sexual abuse
- Sexual harassment
- Sexual exploitation
- Ritual abuse
- Forced to watch pornography

Anyone can be a victim of sexual violence at any stage in their life. Although, the vast majority of sexual violence is perpetrated against women and girls, sexual violence against men and boys is a significant problem.



## 4.Context and Legislation

### Welsh Context

In Wales, the cost of Domestic Abuse is estimated to be £303.5m annually: £202.6m in service costs and £100.9m to lost economic output. These figures do not include any element of human and emotional costs, which research estimates costs Wales an additional £522.9m. Taking the costs of sexual violence and other forms of abuse into account would significantly increase this amount.

Over the last few years in Wales, significant progress has been made in improving services for those who experience Violence within their relationships. This culminated in the enactment of the **Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act in 2015** Section 5 (1) of the Act places a duty on Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to jointly prepare and publish a Local Strategy which aims to end VAWDASV and ensure consistent consideration of preventative, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services.

Following the introduction of the VAWDASV Act, Welsh Government introduced the National Strategy on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (2016-2021) revised (2022-2026). Delivery of the strategy will be through a **Blueprint** approach which brings together devolved and non-devolved organisations.

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### **The VAWDASV Act (2015)**

Section 5 (1) of the Act places a duty on Local Authorities and Local Health Boards to jointly prepare and publish a Local Strategy which aims to end and ensure consistent consideration of preventative, protective and supportive mechanisms in the delivery of services.

### **The Blueprint**

The Blueprint will create a new shared governance structure which reflects the joint ownership across devolved and non-devolved bodies and the partnership between the public, private and specialist sectors. The blueprint approach secures the multi-agency co-operation and commitment we seek. It seeks to bring together the resources controlled by partners within the blueprint and contribute to an end VAWDASV by facilitating shared understanding and common direction.

A new, co-chaired Ministerial-led National Partnership Board will have oversight of delivery of the Strategy. The National Partnership Board will provide a forum in which to broker shared decisions and commitments. The Partnership Board will sit at the top of a structure, which is served by a number of work-streams focusing on specific areas. It will also oversee the work of regional boards to ensure they deliver the all-Wales approach whilst still reflecting regional difference. Membership of the Board will reflect those bodies who have key duties in tackling VAWDASV.

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Priority Work Streams - These groups may change over time as progress is made and priorities develop. However, initially these groups will address:

1. Street harassment and safety in public place
2. Workplace harassment
3. Tackling perpetration
4. Sustainable commissioning
5. Older people and children and young people's needs
6. Survivor voice.

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**The National Training Framework (NTF)** is a duty placed on local authorities by the Act, and has two main functions:

- Consistent, proportionately disseminated training for relevant authorities to fundamentally improve the understanding of the general workforce and, therefore the response to those who experience violence.
- Alignment of existing specialist training to further professionalise the specialist sector, to improve consistency of specialist subject training provision nationally and to set core requirements of specialist service provision.

**'Ask and Act'** sits within the NTF and is a process of targeted enquiry to be practiced across the Public Service to identify people affected by this agenda. The purpose is to;

- Increase identification of those experiencing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence;
- Offer referrals and interventions for those identified, which provide specialist support based on the risk and needs of the client;
- Begin to create a culture across the Public Service where addressing Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence is an accepted area of business and where disclosure is expected, supported, accepted and facilitated.

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### **The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014**

The Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act emphasises the importance of a coherent approach to preventative work within our communities and defines what these services are expected to achieve:

- Helping families stay together safely
- A key focus for all services and begins with early identification of need and effective early intervention

The fundamental principles of the Act are:

- Voice and control- putting the individual and their needs at the centre of their care, and giving them a voice in, and control overreaching the outcomes that help them achieve well-being
- Prevention and early intervention- increasing preventative services within the community to minimise the escalation of critical need
- Well-being- supporting people to achieve their own well-being and measuring the success of care and support
- Co-production- encouraging individuals to become more involved in the design and delivery of services

The Act provides a legal framework for improving the well-being of people who need care and support and the principles will be reflected throughout this strategy.

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### **The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015**

The Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act places requirements on Welsh Government along with 43 other public bodies across Wales to focus on 5 ways of working:

- Prevention: How acting to prevent problems occurring or getting worse may help public bodies meet their objectives
- Integration: Considering how the public body's objectives may impact upon each of the well-being goals, or on the objectives of other public bodies
- Collaboration: Acting in collaboration with any other person (or different parts of the body itself) that could help the body to meet its well-being objectives
- Involvement: The importance of involving people with an interest in achieving the well-being goals and ensuring that those people reflect the diversity of the area which the body serves.
- Long Term: The importance of balancing short term needs with the need to safeguard the ability to meet long term needs.

### **The Housing (Wales) Act 2014;**

Enshrines in legislation the role of the local authority in preventing and alleviating homelessness, this will change the way that services are delivered to survivors of violence who flee their home seeking a safe place to live. The Welsh Government guidance which supports the practical delivery of the legislation advises local authorities and their partners, as follows:

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“Local authorities should be led by the wishes and feelings of the victim of domestic abuse when determining accommodation arrangements. The first option, where appropriate, should be for the perpetrator to be removed from the property to enable the victim to remain in their home. The Local Authority must also consider improving the security of the applicant’s home to enable them to continue living there safely. Alternatively, the Local Authority must assist the victim in sourcing alternative accommodation, whether on a permanent or temporary basis”.

This reinforces the need for local authorities need to work in partnership to ensure that prevention of homelessness is at the forefront of thinking. This will require an alternative approach to the provision of temporary, crisis accommodation and support.

### **The Renting Homes (Wales) Act 2016**

### **Renting Homes (Amendment) (Wales) Act 2021**

This sets out an approach to joint contracts/ tenancies, which will help survivors by enabling perpetrators to be targeted for eviction

[Renting Homes Act and regulations | GOV.WALES](#)

## **UK and EU**

Welsh Government has framed its legislation and guidance on Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence alongside the UK and EU legislation;

- Ending Violence Against Women and Girls (2016-2020)
- European Union (EU) Directive on Victims' Rights
- The Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence against Women, and Domestic Violence (Istanbul Convention)
- Welfare Reform

## **5.Resources and Service Mapping**

Swansea has a range of services that provide support and assistance to those affected by VAWDASV. The support can be categorised across the continuum of need as follows:

- Prevention,
- Protection and Support (victim safety)
- Protection (perpetrator intervention)
- Support (recovery and reintegration)



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## Prevention

**Domestic Abuse Hub** offers a whole family approach which aims to prevent escalation and limits referrals into statutory children's services

Domestic Abuse Hub 2020-2021	
PPNs received	<b>2658</b>
Provided with information, advice and assistance	<b>2590</b>
No allocated to lead worker	<b>2619</b>
Passed to SCP for assistance	<b>11</b>
Referred directly from police to IIA & A	<b>1996</b>
<b>TOTAL</b> receiving information, advice or assistance	<b>1655</b>

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**Equilibrium:** A whole family approach for perpetrators, victims and children/young people consisting of assessment, intervention (12 week course) and outcomes monitoring.

Equilibrium	2021-2022
On waiting list	<b>14</b>
Failed to engage	<b>47</b>
Started programme but dropped out	<b>14</b>
Assessed as no longer suitable – <b>28</b> closed	
Reasons: -	
- Open to Drive	
- Too complex/high risk	
- Receiving support from probation In Prison	
- Moved out of area.	
In service or completed Programme	<b>80</b>
Total Referrals	<b>183</b>

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### ***Spectrum Project:***

As part of the drive by the Welsh Government to tackle Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence, the Hafan Cymru's Spectrum Project is fully funded by the Welsh Government to deliver sessions on Healthy Relationships and VAWDASV topics in all secondary and primary schools in Wales, including Swansea.

### **All Spectrum sessions:**

- Promote the importance of **healthy relationships** and raise the awareness of children, young people and adults about the issues of Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.
- Are delivered by **qualified** and experienced **teachers**, sessions can be delivered in Welsh or English and all resources are **bilingual**.
- Are **cross curricular** and are designed to promote peer discussion, using a range of techniques.
- Use material that are **thought provoking** but are not designed to be so emotive as to cause distress.
- Are designed to **promote discussion not disclosure**.
- Conclude with information for young people on where they can access **help** and **support** both inside and outside the school.
- Deliver training for school **staff/parents/guardians and governors** on:
  - raising awareness of domestic abuse
  - understanding the implications of domestic abuse on a child
  - looking at a whole school approach to tackling Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence.

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### Protection and Support (Victim Safety)

**MARAC:** meet once every fortnight to discuss high risk victims of domestic abuse. Key statutory agencies, such as the Local Authority, the police and health work alongside relevant third sector agencies to form this partnership.

Swansea MARAC 2016-21	2019-20	2020-21	2021-22
Number discussed	<b>804</b>	<b>736</b>	<b>901</b>
Repeat cases	<b>221</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>247</b>
Percentage of repeat referrals	<b>27%</b>	<b>28%</b>	<b>27%</b>
Children in the household	<b>629</b>	<b>506</b>	<b>618</b>

**IDVA:** Swansea Council has 7 full time IDVAs including one regional court IDVA and one Drive IDVA working across Western Bay. The IDVAs sit within the Domestic Abuse Hub working with high-risk victims of domestic abuse. The referral pathway is through the Police and external MARAC's.

Swansea IDVA 2021-22	Female	Male	TOTAL
Number of Referrals	<b>1399</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>1542</b>

**Swansea Women's Aid** is a feminist women-only specialist provider of services for women and children experiencing violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence (VAWDASV). We offer strength based, needs-led, trauma-

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informed support with a focus on enabling families to move forward positively with their lives, free from abuse. Services consist of:

**Supported housing** – 2 refuges and 3 safe houses offering 16 units of accommodation. Women (with/without children) can access for a few nights, weeks or stay until they are re-housed. We offer practical and emotional support, specialist group work (Freedom Programme/Bridging the Gap) and activities

**Domestic Abuse Information Support and Empowerment (DAISE) project** – offers one-to-one support face-to-face, by telephone or virtually via appointment or drop-in sessions. The support can be one-off or ongoing. We also offer specialist group work (Freedom Programme/Recovery Toolkit) at the SWA office and other venues across Swansea, including the Swansea Domestic Abuse One Stop Shop.

**Children and Young People's service (CHYPS)** – offers one-to-one support face-to-face, by telephone and virtually and specialist group work (STAR programmes) for children and young people aged 5 to 17 years. We also provide play and activities programmes, parenting workshops and healthy relationship workshops in schools and colleges.

**Forest School** – taking place in a local woodland, this allows children to develop skills, interest and understanding through a range of activities which provide practical, hands-on experiences in a natural environment

**Support, Wellbeing, Advocacy, eNablement (SWAN) project** – offers an evening outreach service 4 nights a week to women exploited by the sex industry, providing food and drinks, clothing, contraception, crisis support and access to outreach substance misuse support. This acts as the front door into the daytime support service where the women can receive ongoing practical and emotional support, safety advice and signposting to other agencies to best address their needs. Fortnightly visits are made to local brothel's and we also offer support to women sex working online.

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**Ask Me** - providing free training and ongoing support that helps community members to start conversations about abuse, know where help is available, share their knowledge with others and to know how to give a supportive, helpful response to anyone who shares their experience of abuse.

In addition, SWA offers bespoke training and raising awareness sessions to other organisations and community groups regarding VAWDASV.

SWA 2020-21	Refuges	DAISE	CHYPS	SWAN	Total
Number of Referrals	81	877	190	141	1289

SWA 2021-22	Refuges	DAISE	CHYPS	SWAN	Total
Number of Referrals	109	1336	172	407	2024

**BAWSO** is the lead specialist provider of services to people from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) backgrounds affected by domestic abuse and other forms of abuse, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), human trafficking, prostitution and forced marriage.

BAWSO offer purpose-built refuges that are specially adapted to meet the cultural and religious needs of service users. They offer outreach support; information and advice, floating support as well as a FGM Health and Safeguarding community-based project.

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In Swansea, there is refuge and safe house provision offering accommodation for up to 13 families. Both can accommodate either families (women and children) or single females. The project has 3 family support workers and one children and young person's worker.

BAWSO 2021	Floating Support	Refuge	Safe houses	Advice Service
Total Supported	<b>51</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>235</b>

**New Pathways/SARC:** is the largest provider of specialist sexual violence support services in Wales, providing a range of support for people of all genders and ages, who have been affected by rape, sexual assault, sexual abuse and sexual exploitation.

### Services in Swansea include:

- 24/7 crisis support at our Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) including out of hours phone line.
- ISVAs (Independent Sexual Violence Advisors) who offer advocacy, advice and ongoing support if you are thinking of reporting to the police.
- Specialist counselling, and 1:1 and group support, for adults and children. Via phone, video call, or face to face in our Swansea Trauma Recovery Centre.
- Training, research and consultancy.

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New Pathways Services 2019 - 2022	Number of Referrals 2019/20	Number of Referrals 2020/21
Counselling (female)	<b>288</b>	<b>237</b>
Counselling (male)	<b>96</b>	<b>55</b>
SARC	<b>244</b>	<b>276</b>

## 6. Consultation and Engagement

Service User voices are crucial to the planning and delivery of VAWDASV services. Those that have the experience of VAWDASV are the experts in what services need to deliver to be effective. Service user engagement is about more than consultation; it is about listening to what is being said and using the skills and expertise of service users in partnership work. The

- *Are you Listening and Am I Being Heard? Report*  
Survivor Consultation: A report of the recommendations made by survivors of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, to inform the National Strategy in Wales.



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Understanding how survivors of domestic abuse, sexual violence and other forms of violence against women use and experience public services is key to improving the effectiveness of prevention, protection and support services and systems in Wales.

Survivors' voices and experiences must also be central to informing the development and delivery of legislation, policy and strategy in order to ensure systems and services best meet survivors' needs and action is taken to prevent violence and abuse in the short and longer term.

### **Co-Production Project**

The Co-Production Project at Swansea Women's Aid assists survivors to take ownership of the set-up and development of the Co-Production Centre, and its programme of activities. The aim of post-crisis activities and groups being improved wellbeing and increased ability to self-manage the long-term impacts of domestic abuse for women in the area engaged with specialist VAWDASV services, and other public and third sector organisations.

Focus is placed heavily on gathering regular feedback and directly asking attendees what they want or need, giving all survivors an active role in shaping the future of the Centre, but also encouraging each woman to actively adopt an empowering lifelong self-help approach in managing her wellbeing and the long-term effects of abuse. Activities have placed focus on learning coping mechanisms, reducing anxiety, and increasing energy but also bonding, movement, self-

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expression through creativity and laughter. This approach along with peer support has proven uplifting and to reduce debilitating feelings of shame, self-blame, and isolation.

The project actively encourages independence and take-up of training to empower survivors to succeed, have their voices heard, engage with decision-makers and build mutual trust and respect. Through empowerment the project encourages survivors to engage with public bodies with VAWDASV survivor involvement duties/commitments and positively influence services and strategy in the area.

“The activities I’ve attended have been really uplifting, lately I’m in a much better mood. I have been having a really difficult time and they have been a lifeline. They get me out of the house.”

***Activity Attendee (began attending Co-Production activities in December 2022)***

“I have been thinking about the amazing, compassionate, and understanding support. I will always remember your support. Activities have helped me to find different ways to help me manage my stress related to post-traumatic stress disorder.”

***Activity Attendee (began attending Co-Production activities in December 2022)***

“I feel the involvement alone will be hugely empowering and confidence-boosting for women who have experienced abuse. Some women and their children may feel they are finally being believed for the first time and finally experiencing

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their truth being not only respected, but encouraged. Also, how empowering and confidence-building would it be for children who have been affected by abuse to lead, run, and make their own decisions when involved in their own branch of the Co-Production Project?”

### ***Co-Production Volunteer***

- **Your Opinion Matters Project**

This was a 3-year project, which ran between 2013-16 as part of the Big Lottery funded Community Voice Programme and managed by Swansea Women’s Aid.

The Project:

- ✓ Developed a coherent voice for survivors of domestic abuse that was informed and could inform service delivery
- ✓ Encouraged enablement and skills enhancement of disadvantaged women, young people and children
- ✓ Promoted and established the enablement of service users to review and inform service provision of public services
- ✓ Gave an increased value to and recognition of survivors of domestic abuse and the invaluable insight they possess on services and what they need

The project was successful and led into a Service User Forum to further support the voice of the survivors.

The Swansea VAWDASV Partnership will continue to work towards a co-produced approach to VAWDASV services and identify opportunities to involve survivor groups or representatives in existing partnerships and structure.

## 7. Aims & Key Principles

In line with the requirements of the Well-Being of Future Generations (Wales) Act 2015, our aims and key principles within this strategy have been developed to meet the following 5 ways of working which will help us to work together better, avoid repeating any past mistakes and tackle some of the long-term challenges we are facing.

### Long Term

- To ensure there is a strong focus on education and work with young people with the aim of eradicating violence and abuse over the long term
- To work with communities and employers to bring about a cultural shift in attitudes towards violence and abuse so that it is no longer tolerated or considered acceptable
- To provide services that offer best value for money

### Early Intervention & Prevention

- To continue to develop services so that victims and perpetrators can access help and support at the earliest possible time and to prevent cases reaching a point of crisis

### Involvement

- To ensure our service delivery is person centred
- To ensure the voices of people affected by violence and abuse are heard and that more opportunity is created to develop services that are evidence based and include survivor involvement

### Integration

- To adopt a holistic approach, so that the wellbeing of people affected by violence and abuse is considered in service responses

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- To ensure this work is recognised as everyone's business

### **Collaboration**

- Continue to build and develop a confident, strong partnership
- To develop regional and national collaborative approaches where this is more effective than a local response
- To work towards collaborative commissioning for all VAWDASV services in Swansea

## 8. Overarching Framework & Strategic Objectives

The aims of the Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 is to:

- Improve arrangements for the **Prevention** of VAWDASV;
- Improve arrangements for the **Protection of** victims of VAWDASV and;
- To improve **support** for people affected by VAWDASV.

### Prevention

We are committed to preventing VAWDASV from happening, by challenging the attitude and behaviours which foster it and intervening early, where possible, to prevent its recurrence.

The prevention of violence is central to agendas on public health; reducing crime and the harm caused by serious violent crime; safeguarding children and adults with support needs; promoting education, learning and skills development; and promoting equality.

Prevention involves education to change attitudes and perceptions (to reduce the incidence of a problem among a population before it occurs) and can be targeted, at broad population groups, such as school-age children or members of a particular community.

### Protection

We are committed to ensuring those who experience any form of violence are appropriately protected, eliminating the risk of further harm to victims and their children.

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We want **anyone** experiencing these issues to be aware of the support that is available locally and we want to be confident that all professionals within our area are equipped with the knowledge to effectively respond to any disclosures.

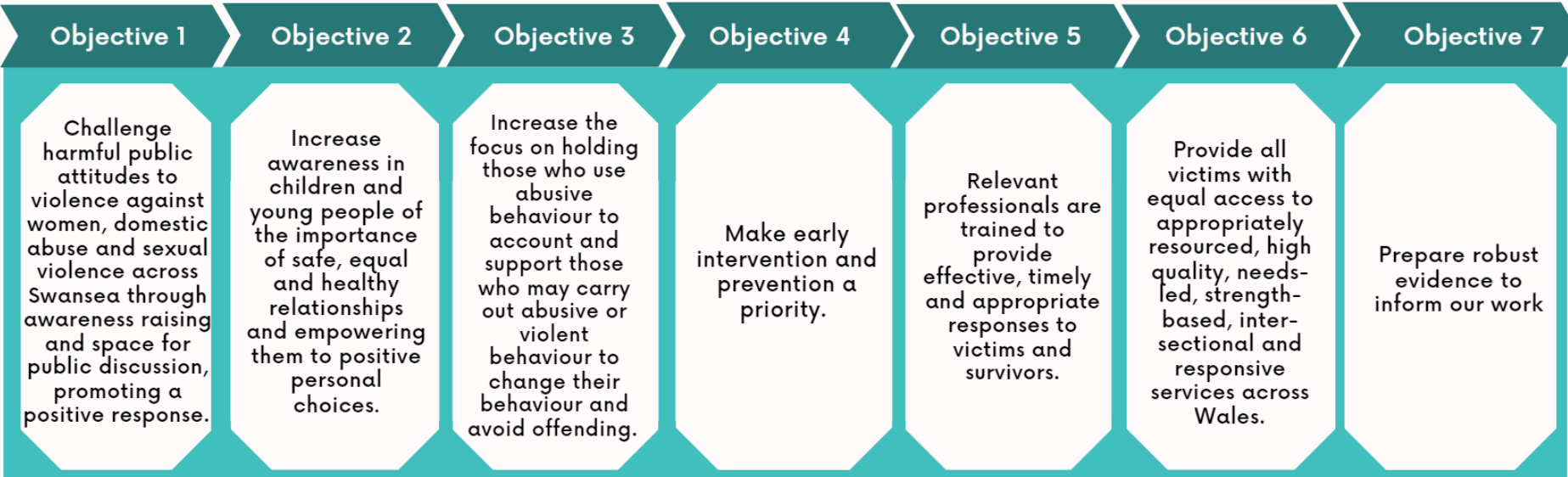
### **Support**

We are committed to providing high-quality support for survivors and their families, ensuring services meet their needs and prioritise their safety, to enable them to achieve independence and freedom from abuse.

It is vital that survivors receive the right support, at the right time, to enable them to take action that is right for them.

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**Strategic Objectives**



The objectives within this strategy are derived from those of the published National Strategy and will feed into the Blueprint framework. Having similar objectives within Swansea will enable us to demonstrate how we will support the Welsh Government in achieving its policy objectives regarding Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence. Although the overarching objectives remain the same, some changes have been made to the areas for development since the original publication of the strategy to reflect work completed and the change in climate i.e. funding streams and restructure.



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**Objective 1** - Challenge harmful public attitudes to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Swansea through awareness raising and space for public discussion, promoting a positive response.

**Objective 2** - Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and empowering them to positive personal choices.

**Objective 3** – Increase the focus on holding those who use abusive behaviour to account and support those who may carry out abusive or violent behaviour to change their behaviour and avoid offending.

**Objective 4** – Make early intervention and prevention a priority.

**Objective 5** – Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors.

**Objective 6** – Provide all victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs-led, strength-based, inter-sectional and responsive services across Wales.

**Objective 7** – Prepare robust evidence to inform our work.

### **Objective 1**

**Challenge harmful public attitudes to violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence across Swansea through awareness raising and space for public discussion, promoting a positive response.**

### ***Current position:***

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It is essential that we deliver universal awareness campaigns, to raise awareness, challenge negative attitudes and increase peoples understanding about VAWDASV issues, including the help and support that is available locally, regionally and nationally.

We need to consider survivors' feedback when shaping future awareness raising campaigns, taking into account any situations where they sought help but faced adversity and felt misunderstood or not listened to.

Raising awareness in the community in general is vital. Communities need to recognise domestic abuse and the harm it causes, be supportive of survivors and be able to provide information about the help that is available. This is critical since much support to victims comes from these sources, not from service providers. A positive and knowledgeable response from the immediate network surrounding victims and their children is critical to increasing the likelihood of early intervention.

### ***What we will do:***

- Utilise local media and social media platforms to increase awareness and positive information through National and local campaigns.
- Promote and provide healthy relationships programmes across multiagency service provisions and sectors.
- Ensure service users voices are captured throughout development of services and influencing the development, driving change.
- Continue to deliver and promote the WG National training Framework and VAWDASV Training Courses.
- Raise awareness of the Specialist Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence services available.

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- Continue to work with NPT to ensure regional approach, promoting campaigns and raising awareness, via the Communication and Engagement Sub- Group.
- Increase awareness and service provision raising the profile and public understanding of violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence, among vulnerable groups such as Black and Ethnic Minorities, disabled people, the LGBT community, older people, refugees and migrants.
- Be proactive in reaching all services with specialist providers sharing expertise and specialist training to agencies that support victims.
- Co-construct a training programme with DV and sexual violence specialist agencies for the public and professionals in relation to adult sexual exploitation to enhance understanding of the issues involved and the and services available.
- Promote 'Ask Me' and 'Change that Lasts' as part of the community based preventative package.
- Ensure VAWDASV priorities are integrated within the Safer Swansea Community Partnership Strategy.
- Support and promote the growth of the 'your opinion matters' group.
- Raise awareness of the SWAN project which supports women who are Sexual exploitation and Trafficked.
- Promote and support the development of the SWA Co- Production Centre, ensuring that survivor's voice is embedded across all services.
- Ensure a broad coverage of VAW – Exploitation, street harassment, workplace harassment, perpetrator focused comms, CYP comms with an understanding exposure to violent and misogynistic media and lifestyles can impact VAWDASV.
- Advocate for sustainable funding to ensure consistency and continuous improvement of services across all areas.
- Work in partnership with Safer Swansea Partnership to address Street Harassment and Safety in Public Places.
- Challenge attitudes and culture around workplace harassment.

## **Objective 2**

**Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and empowering them to positive personal choices.**

### ***Current Position***

Within Swansea, there are multiple approaches towards prevention, protection and support to children and young people to raise awareness of abusive behaviours and their impact, as well as highlighting healthy and equal relationships across health, education, child & family social services and wider.

### ***What we will do:***

Increase awareness in children and young people of the importance of safe, equal and healthy relationships and that abusive behaviour is always wrong.

- Promote and support the WG Whole Education Approach to VAWDASV within all school settings and young people's community settings, e.g., youth clubs', temporary accommodation.
- Promote and support the CMET training for schools around the 'corridor culture', sexual harassment in schools, promoting healthy relationships.

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- Ensure children and young people's voices are heard through development of a Framework co-produced with young people
- Support the development of the working groups for children and young people with disabilities, LGBTQ+ and BAME, ensuring services have a CYP perspective.
- Support and promote the Co-Production Centre to establish a cohort of young people, ensuring their voices are heard.  
Strengthen links with all tiers of education including University and FEI, through their involvement in the Leadership Group and subgroups.
- Ensure a VAWDASV lens is considered at early help hub implementation.
- Develop a document mapping the services that provide educative support to children and young people around healthy relationships.
- Educate staff in schools around CSE, grooming, online safety to ensure children and young people are identified at risk and supported to make positive choices.
- Support the Open Access Youth Service/Evolve to this who engage with around 4000/5000 young people through a blended approach of outreach, youth clubs and targeted work.
- Emotional Health and Wellbeing workers from EHH are aligned to comprehensive schools and deliver the (Ob
- (Undertake 1-2-1 targeting work with young people who have experienced or witnessed violence in the home through specialist support services or open access services such as youth work, play, early years, early help.
- Specialist support – DA Hub, Equilibrium, NVR, SWA – CHYPS, Daise counselling.

### **Objective 3**

**Increase the focus on holding those who use abusive behaviour to account and support those who may carry out abusive or violent behaviour to change their behaviour and avoid offending.**

#### ***Current position***

We are committed to taking action to reduce the risk to victims, ensuring that perpetrators are provided with opportunities for change in a way that maximises safety. Swansea currently delivers the Equilibrium Programme, which is a whole family, solution focused approach to preventing escalation of abuse and maximising safety for victims and families. The programme has gained Respect accreditation and work is ongoing with academic partners in Swansea University to conduct an independent evaluation, which will inform future commissioning.

An additional strand to the Equilibrium there is a perpetrator housing worker who offers support with housing, benefits employment. This primary focus is stabilising their lives and reduce the risks of domestic abuse for victims.

The Drive programme is delivered across the Region working with high-harm, high-risk and serial perpetrators of domestic abuse to prevent their abusive behaviour and protect victims. Drive challenges and supports perpetrators to change and works with partner agencies – like the police and social services – to disrupt abuse. A Regional Drive IDVA supports the victims ensuring their safety while working alongside the Drive case managers. The Drive pilot is being launched in Swansea prison 2023 and with an additional part time Drive IDVA we will be able to monitor the safety and offer support their victims.

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### ***What we will do:***

Increase the focus on holding perpetrators to account and provide opportunities to change their behaviour based around victim safety

- Expand existing services to include a range of perpetrator interventions for specific groups of people such as women-only, BAME, older people and additional learning needs.
- Promote the Equilibrium Programme across services and expand the service across the Region and develop for the minority groups.
- Ensure mandated perpetrator groups as part of the court process continue to be promoted and delivered through increased promotion to all court staff.
- Engage with Community based programmes.
- Awareness raising and advocating for perpetrator interventions to be considered at all opportunities.
- Strengthen partnerships with the Police and probation to ensure a consistent approach to holding perpetrators to account.
- Consider training needs for specialists and wider partners around perpetrators of VAWDASV
- Explore options and interventions for perpetrators of all forms of VAWDASV, including **sexual violence** and exploitation.
- Engage with the PPC South Wales Whole Systems Approach to Domestic Abuse perpetrators.
- CMET will prioritise the disruption of exploitation by using the Home Office disruption tool kit.
- Engage and support national and regional governance structures.
- Support statutory functions such as MPPPP and increase understanding and awareness.
- Domestic Abuse Act (2021) have an awareness and support of new measures, particularly perpetrator strategies.

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- Support HMP Swansea DRIVE pilot.
- Monitor the demand and impact of housing for perpetrators via specific posts.



## **Objective 4**

### **Make early intervention and prevention a priority.**

#### ***Current Position***

Preventing violence and intervening at the earliest possible stage to prevent its occurrence is the fundamental building block to an effective strategy.

The need to minimise reactive interventions once a crisis has occurred is pivotal to the ambition to end violence. There is evidence to show that early identification in healthcare and social care settings, leading to referral routes to specialist services, improves disclosures and referrals to support amongst survivors. In recognition of this, Swansea implemented the Domestic Abuse Hub, which is a preventative team within Child & Family delivering a whole family approach to victims, perpetrators and children where there are concerns around domestic abuse.

#### ***What we will do:***

Make early intervention and prevention a priority

- Ensure our work and vision aligns with the Family Support Continuum.
- Raise awareness and promote early intervention, across all professionals ensuring opportunities at the earliest stage.

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- Raise awareness of ‘Calming the Waves’ program for victims of Sexual Violence, part of New Pathways SV service provision.
- Implement the MANTA system, monitoring the rollout of the new system ensuring earlier trauma informed services for victims and their family.
- Promote the DA One Stop Shop, Swansea SARC recovery Centre and Swansea’s sexual violence and trauma recovery services for professional to refer to for advice and support.
- Promote and support the IRIS project and support sustainable funding.
- Raise awareness of the specialist provision provided by the Domestic Abuse Hub.
- Support and raise awareness of the efficacy of the Cwmtawe Pathway Service.
- Engage with regional and national groups such as collaborative board for information sharing/ good practice. Blueprint
- Change that lasts programme, monitor and promote ‘Ask Me’.
- VAWDASV research network – understanding emerging research.
- Stalking and harassment/ exploitation awareness raising.
- DA Hub, importance of a specialist team.
- Ensuring front door services like Housing, CYP and SPOC recognise their role and have relevant training and information.
- Referred pathways for non-high risk PPN/referrals solidified and supported.
- Ensure funding is ring-fenced for prevention services.
- Ensure specialist providers can train their staff effectively in all forms of VAWDASV.
- Equilibrium healthy relationships programme for young people
- Raise awareness to address older people and young people’s needs.

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### **Objective 5**

**Relevant professionals are trained to provide effective, timely and appropriate responses to victims and survivors.**

#### ***Current Position***

A Regional National Training Framework Subgroup has been developed involving representatives from Training & Development and the Ask & Act Project Lead from SBUHB. The group is responsible for the development of the training plan for roll out across the authority – identifying those who require varying levels of the training and how this will be rolled out, whilst learning from the experiences of the SBUHB pilot and sharing best practice.

With the roll out of the National Training Framework it will undoubtedly increase referrals into local services and we need to be clear of a referral pathway for all professionals to follow. The VAWDASV Leadership Group will have an important role to play in how we overcome any issues that may arise as a result of this.

#### ***What we will do:***

- Continue to deliver on a regional basis the WG National Training Framework, including the 'Ask & Act' training requirements, to ensure all relevant staff are trained.
- Ensure joint delivery of Ask and Act with specialist providers.
- To implement a trainer to co- ordinate and lead on a targeted, time limited Ask & Act training plan to support delivery across West Glamorgan Safeguarding Board ensuring consistency.

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- To promote any training opportunities to staff to ensure victims have the appropriate response.
- Ensure all training, including refresher training is timetabled and published
- Ensure training is recorded, evaluated, and reported back to WG
- Promote Group 6 of the National Training Framework to all local members and senior leaders and evidence completion.
- Utilise staff expertise in specialist areas, share knowledge and hold awareness raising sessions across all services.
- Continue to monitor training, identify gaps and any challenges. These will be addressed in the Leadership Group.
- Promote training opportunities for staff across all services.
- Develop Adult Sexual Exploitation Training for delivery.
- Extend training to offer to other customer facing or public facing roles e.g., pharmacies, retail assistants etc. SVSR – Learning is disseminated and shared through relevant channels
- Coercive Control – ensure consistent and wide training
- Focus on ensuring VAWDASV training covers perpetrators.
- Support schools with the Peer-on-peer report
- Proactive approach to disseminate information in WG/HO reports e.g., providing oversight at Leadership Groups.
- Training on DA Act and Impact
- Incorporate local pathways into training.
- Training with IRIS programme for GP's all primary care.
- Sexual exploitation training based on IICSA which can be written into training plans.

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### **Objective 6**

**Provide all victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs-led, strength- based, inter-sectional and responsive services across Wales.**

#### ***Current Position***

Current services within Swansea are detailed in Chapter 5 of this strategy. We have 4 specialist VAWDASV providers in Swansea, offering a range of services including refuge accommodation, move on accommodation, floating support, community outreach, children and young people's services, advocacy and advice and specialist BAME support. The DA One Stop Shop in Swansea offers a walk -in service, operated by Swansea Women's Aid and Hafan Cymru. The Domestic Abuse Hub was developed as a response to those needing a preventative, whole family approach with the aim of reducing escalation into statutory services. The IDVA project offers support to ALL high-risk victims of domestic abuse, and the regional Court IDVA supports any victim involved in the criminal court process. SARC and New Pathways provide specialist intervention for victims of sexual violence. The SWAN Project sits within Swansea Women's Aid and offers outreach support to women exploited by the sex industry. The Council's Housing Options Service offers a walk- in service for anyone in housing difficulty, including those experiencing Domestic Abuse.

#### ***What we will do:***

Provide victims with equal access to appropriately resourced, high quality, needs led, strength based, gender responsive services across Swansea

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- Continue to monitor across services to ensure understanding of client groups and client need and ensure services are accessible to all
- Ensure compliance of Equalities Act 2010 recognising all protected characteristics
- Develop partnerships between the 3 key service delivery areas of VAWDASV, MH & SM through the Cwmtawe pathway project.
- Ensuring engagement from the 3 key partners in the Leadership and Sub- Groups.
- Support the development of services focusing of the safety and well-being of people exploited by the sex industry.
- A commitment by all VAWDASV support services that we can all do more to meet the need of victims.
- Raise awareness of services for the harder to reach communities.
- Multiagency response to safeguarding victims with no recourse to public funds.
- Consider publicity and promotion of services in various formats language to increase accessibility
- Individuals with protected characteristics to have access to safe, supported accommodation that meets their needs.
- Agencies to refer to specialist services where there are unable to meet the needs of all their services users.
- Increase in outreach provision for services, ensuring equal access to support, this is particularly limited with victims of sexual violence
- Implement an Equality Action Plan – Needs assessment for each protected characteristic. Map of each service option by protected mapping characteristic.

## **Objective 7**

**Prepare robust evidence to inform our work.**

### ***Current position***

A regional VAWDASV Western Bay Needs assessment was completed to provide an overview of service provision, needs and gaps across the region and ensure that the voice of the victim, service provider and commissioners was heard.

### ***What we will do***

- Ensure robust governance arrangements are in place to facilitate regional working and link to National networks.
- Collect robust data through partnerships, monitoring information to identify trends and gaps in service.
- Pool partnership resources to support joint working and achieve objectives
- Prepare evidence, based on current needs mapping and services
- Develop and embed a Commissioning Framework
- Embed the Performance Framework based on the WG National Indicators
- Ensure strategic links with the development of the Wellbeing Plan.
- Monitoring of partnership services to identify gaps and monitor outcomes and trends to inform work through the Seren Mor network.

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## 9. Leadership & Governance

The strategic direction and oversight of the Swansea VAWDASV Strategy is held by the VAWDASV Leadership Group, which is accountable to the Safer Swansea Community Safety Partnership (CSP).

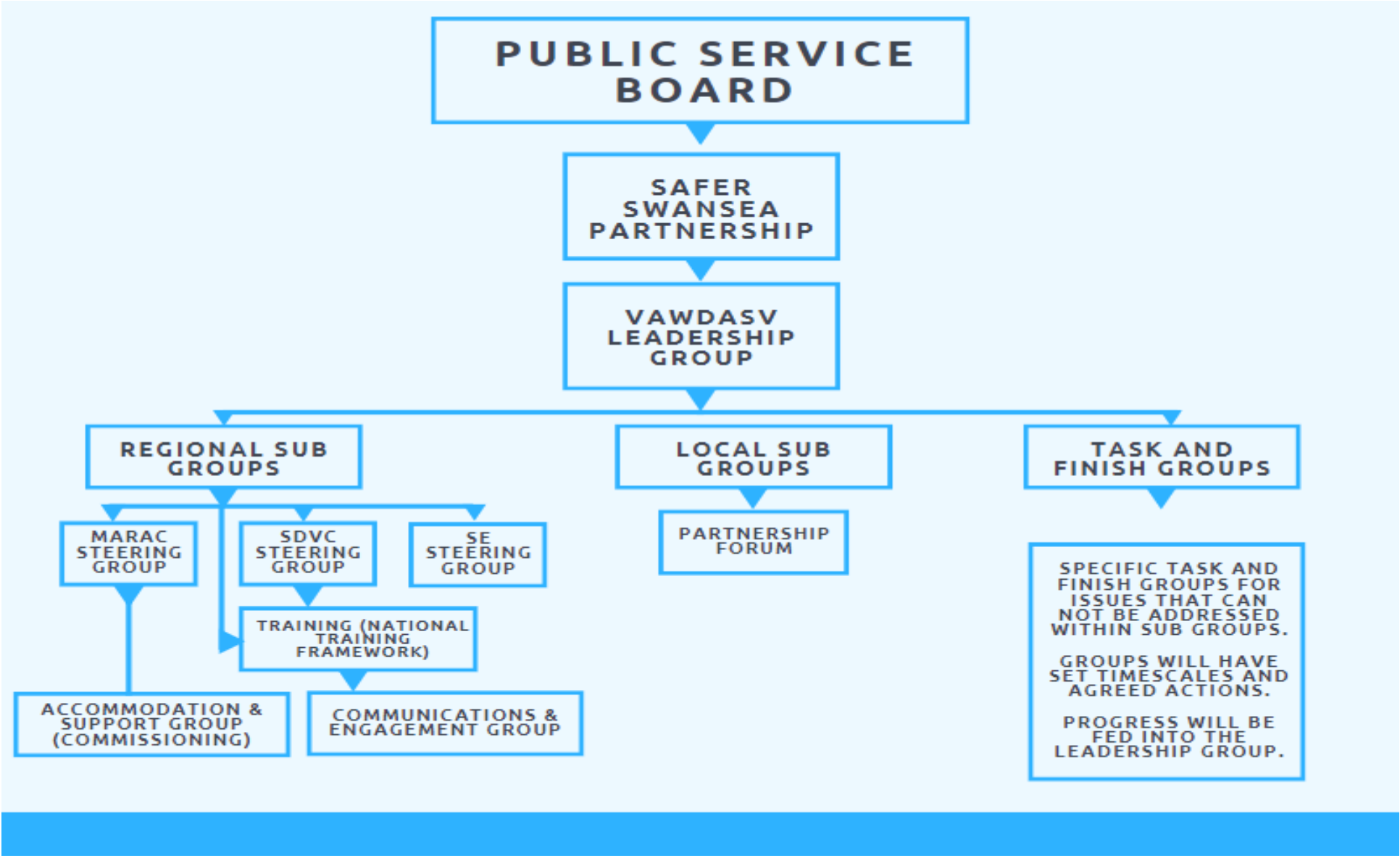
The Public Services Board will provide challenge and support to the Community Safety Partnership in progressing this Strategy.

The Leadership Group will drive and support delivery of the objectives within the Strategy and an annual report highlighting progress made and next steps.

The diagram overleaf illustrates the governance structure around this strategy;



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<b>Membership of the VAWDASV Leadership Group</b>	
Swansea Council	Supporting People
Community Safety	SBUHB
Children's Services	Safeguarding
Commissioning	Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
Adult Safeguarding	South Wales Police
Housing	Swansea Women's Aid
Education	Mental Health and Learning Disabilities
South Wales Police	Swansea Women's Aid
Hafan Cymru	New Pathways
BAWSO	Police & Crime Commissioner
Probation	Citizen's Advice Service
Welsh Ambulance Service	Mid and West Wales Fire and Rescue Service
Area Planning Board	BAROD

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