

Ymchwiliad ôl-ddeddfwriaethol i Ddeddf Trais yn erbyn Menywod,
Cam-drin Domestig a Thrais Rhywiol (Cymru) 2015

Post legislative inquiry into the Violence against Women,
Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

Ymateb gan: Cyngor Sir y Fflint

Response from: Flintshire County Council

Consultation responses - Flintshire

Post legislative inquiry into the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

1. *To what extent the approach to tackling violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence is improving as a result of the obligations in the Act?*
 - As yet we are unsure as to whether there has been an improvement. We are awaiting the appointment of a Regional Advisor and development of a regional strategic board to oversee the implementation of the Act. There has been insufficient launching and promotion of the Act nationally. Regionally we have developed Information Flyers to raise awareness across partner organisations.
 - Other challenges are due to work arising from a simultaneous release of legislation across a number of work streams such as VAWDASV, Social Services and Wellbeing Act, the Future Generations Act, and the Renting Homes Act, – which all have the capacity to increase existing workloads. Further information/guidance is needed to highlight just how these different legislations are/can be aligned.
 - Local specialist services have reported encountering significant pressures with regard to providing services and are likely to continue to do so in the foreseeable future. The implementation of the Ask and Act policy is also likely to increase demand of local specialist services. Final guidance for the Ask and Act has not been made available for services to know what the full impact of its implementation will be and therefore forward plan.
2. *What are the most effective methods of capturing the views and experiences of survivors? Are arrangements in place to capture these experiences? And to what extent is this information being used to help inform the implementation of the Act's provisions?*
 - o Talking to service users directly, finding out about what their experiences have been during their journey, and doing so at different (but appropriate) stages of the journey to ensure that their needs are continuously being met throughout.

- Service user surveys and focus groups have also been effective ways of capturing their views and experiences.

Despite a number of service user groups being established across the region, currently, there is little evidence of how their contributions are being utilised to develop / improve services.

3. *Whether survivors of abuse are beginning to experience better responses from public authorities as a result of the Act, particularly those needing specialist services?*

There has been a steady improvement in the improvement of responses from public services to victims of domestic abuse and sexual violence. This is due to the role of Domestic Abuse Coordinators in developing a coordinated community response. There is no evidence locally as yet that improved responses are a result of the Act.

4. *Whether the National Adviser has sufficient power and independence from the Welsh Government to ensure implementation of the Act?*

- Don't know.

5. *To what extent the good practice guide to healthy relationships is successfully influencing the development of a whole school approach to challenging violence against women, domestic abuse and sexual violence?*

- Too early to tell if the guidance is making an impact on schools.
- Roll out of guidance was weak and this needs to be revisited.
- It is vital that the Donaldson review of Education is maximised to ensure greater time in the curriculum is given for education on relationships to be delivered as currently time in secondary schools is limited.
- Recommendations within the guidance need to be aligned with the Personal Development section of the Healthy School programme as this would be a way of supporting implementation and monitoring progress.
- The guidance is specific to children and young people that are in schools/college education settings, however some children and YP affected by/at risk of DA may not be in schools/colleges. Further work and resources need to be made available to reach this vulnerable group of young people that are not in education settings.

Please send your views to: SeneddCommunities@assembly.wales by **Friday 16 September 2016**. It may not be possible to take into account responses received after this date.