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## **SCOTTISH BORDERS EQUALLY SAFE STRATEGY 2016 - 21**

### **Report by Chief Social Work Officer**

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## **COMMUNITY PLANNING STRATEGIC BOARD**

**22 June 2017**

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### **1 PURPOSE AND SUMMARY**

- 1.1 **This report proposes that representatives of the Community Planning Partnership publicly endorse the Scottish Borders Equally Safe Strategy 2016 – 2021 for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls.**
- 1.2 Equally Safe is also the title of Scotland’s Strategy to eradicate and prevent Violence Against Women and Girls, launched by the Scottish Government in 2014, (revised in 2015). It details the direction of travel to tackle gender based violence and wider gender inequalities in Scotland.
- 1.3 The Equally Safe vision is “a strong and flourishing Scotland where all individuals are equally safe and respected, and where women and girls live free from all forms of violence and abuse – and the attitudes that help perpetuate it. Specifically, the Scottish Borders Equally Safe strategy aims to “work together to ensure that all women and girls in the Scottish Borders are equally safe at home, at work and in the community”.

The Strategy has four priorities underpinned by partnership activity designed to achieve the change required, namely:

1. Scottish society embraces equality and mutual respect, and rejects all forms of violence against women and girls
2. Women and girls thrive as equal citizens – socially, culturally, economically and politically
3. Interventions are early and effective, preventing violence and maximizing the safety and wellbeing of women, children and young people
4. Men desist from all forms of violence against women and girls and perpetrators of such violence receive a robust and effective response.

### **2 RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 **I recommend that the Community Planning Partnership endorses “Equally Safe 2016 - 21” - the Scottish Borders Strategy for preventing and eradicating violence against women and girls – for implementation.**

### **3 Scottish Borders Equally Safe Strategy 2016-21**

- 3.1 Scottish Borders Violence Against Women (VAW) Partnership is a tasking group of Safer Communities and takes a partnership approach to addressing all forms of gender based violence. Members include: Scottish Borders Council, NHS Borders, Police Scotland, Crown Office, Border Women's Aid, Scottish Borders LGBT Equality, Alcohol and Drugs Partnership, Safer Communities, Children1st, Scottish Borders Rape Crisis Service, Adult Protection. The VAW Partnership is chaired by a volunteer independent chair, and reports to the Police, Fire and Rescue and Safer Communities Board.
- 3.2 The Scottish Borders VAW Partnership is delivering the Scottish Government priorities on gender based violence and have developed the Scottish Borders Equally Safe strategy to reflect the Scottish Borders situation.
- 3.3 The strategy has been developed in partnership with key stakeholders including service users, and victims of gender based violence. There was a public consultation July- Sept 2016 and responses have been considered and reflected in the final version. A gender based violence strategic assessment conducted by Safer Communities in 2015 provided the baseline for the Equally Safe Delivery Plan, the tool by which action and progress of Equally Safe is managed.
- 3.4 There will be an annual report published by the VAW Partnership detailing progress of Equally Safe and priorities for the forthcoming year.

## **4 IMPLICATIONS**

### **4.1 Financial**

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report.

### **4.2 Risk and Mitigations**

Feedback from partner agencies and victims of gender based violence suggested that a public endorsement of the strategy would increase confidence as to the success of the Strategy and demonstrate commitment to working in partnership to achieve the aims of Equally Safe.

### **4.3 Equalities**

- (a) An Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on this proposal and it is anticipated that there are no adverse equality implications.
- (b) It is anticipated that there are no adverse impact due to race, disability, gender, age, sexual orientation or religion/belief arising from the proposals in this report.

### **4.4 Acting Sustainably**

There are no significant impacts on the economy, community or environment arising from the proposals contained in this report.

### **4.5 Carbon Management**

There are no significant effects on carbon emissions arising from the proposals contained in this report.

