

**NEATH PORT TALBOT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**Policy and Resources Cabinet Board**

**Wednesday, 21 September 2016**

**Report of the Head of Corporate Strategy and  
Democratic Services**

**Matter for Decision**

**Wards Affected: (All Wards);**

**Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and  
Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 - call for evidence**

**Purpose of the Report**

1. To seek authority from the Cabinet Board to submit the attached response to the Welsh Government in response to their call for evidence.

**Executive Summary**

2. The Welsh Government has called for evidence to support a post-legislative enquiry into the implementation of the above legislation.
3. The enquiry is taking place at a very early stage and consequently it is too early to draw firm conclusions on many of the aspects that the enquiry is seeking to explore.
4. However, the call for evidence does provide an opportunity for the Council to re-state the key messages that have previously been communicated in previous consultation exercises and a draft response has therefore been prepared along those lines for the Cabinet Board to consider.

## **Background**

5. The Welsh Government passed legislation in 2015 to improve outcomes for people affected by gender-based violence.
6. The Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence(Wales) Act places a joint statutory duty upon councils and local health boards to prepare a local strategy for each local authority area. The Act provides for Welsh Ministers to issue guidance on a range of topics that the strategies would be expected to embrace.
7. There has been little new funding identified to accompany the implementation of the Act which is a source of concern amongst the wide range of partners who will need to play a part in implementing the Act.

## **Financial Impact**

8. The Act will undoubtedly require new funding to support its delivery but to date little new funding has been made available.
9. The development of the local strategy in particular is not funded.
10. There is concern that many of the initiatives will lead to more people being identified as in need of support, however, the funding that supports core service deliver is provided by way of time-limited specific grant, with some of the key grant funding streams expected to reduce.

## **Equality Impact Assessment**

11. The Act is positive in terms of its intended impact on gender but is likely to also be positive for other people who share other protected characteristics.

## **Workforce Impacts**

12. There is an expectation that the Council will implement the National Training Framework however, there are currently no resources identified to roll out the training to the target audience.

## **Legal Powers**

13. The Act places a specific duty upon the Council and the Health Board to establish a local strategy.

## **Risk Management**

14. There is a risk that the Council will be unable to comply with all of the duties if insufficient funds are established.
15. There is a risk that waiting lists for services will increase if sufficient funds are not made available to support the Act.
16. There is a risk of inappropriate collaborations being formed unless time is taken to work out what is best planned and delivered; locally, regionally and nationally.

## **Consultation**

17. There is no requirements under the Constitution for external consultation on this item.

## **Recommendations**

18. That the Cabinet Board considers the proposed draft response and authorises the Head of Corporate Strategy and Democratic Services to submit the response to the Welsh Government.

## **Reasons for Proposed Decision**

19. To ensure the Council's concerns over implementation arrangements are conveyed to the Welsh Government.

## **Implementation of Decision**

20. The Cabinet Board is asked to authorise immediate implementation of the decision in order to meet Welsh Government deadlines.

## **Appendices**

21. Draft response to the Call for Evidence.

## **List of Background Papers**

22. Violence Against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015

### **Officer Contact**

Karen Jones, Head Of Corporate Strategy And Democratic Services,

Tel: 01639 763284

k.jones3@npt.gov.uk