



Item 5

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**Report to:** Police and Crime Panel

**Date:** 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022

**Subject:** West Yorkshire Safety of Women and Girls Strategy

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**Report of:** Tracy Brabin, Mayor of West Yorkshire

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## **1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

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- 1.1 To provide an update and outline of the Mayor's Supporting the Safety of Women and Girls strategy.
- 1.2 To enable the Police and Crime Panel to provide feedback on the themes and actions.
- 1.3 This strategy, following on the Policing and Crime Plan 2021-24, outlines how the Mayor will work with stakeholders in West Yorkshire, as well as at a regional, national and international level, to deliver change, seeking support from third sector, the private sector, local communities and most importantly, listening to the voices of women and girls, to improve the lives of people across our region.

## **2. OVERVIEW**

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- 2.1 The Mayor made ten pledges as part of her election manifesto. One of the Mayor's pledges was to put women and girls at the heart of policing. This pledge was embodied with the publication of the Police and Crime Plan 2021-24 in March 2022.
- 2.2 The focus for the Supporting the Safety of Women and Girls strategy is to deliver long-term societal change to improve the lives of women and girls, and therefore for all people in West Yorkshire. For this reason, the strategy widens the scope to more than violence against women and girls to look to highlight

the broader issues surrounding safety of women and girls, therefore driving change for the future.

- 2.3 The Mayor recognises that other genders are affected by violence and are victims and survivors of crime, however the nature of these often high harm crimes disproportionately affect women and girls.
- 2.4 The strategy looks to garner the support of men and boys as allies, and discusses how men and boys can help to improve the safety of all in West Yorkshire. By incorporating the role of men and boys as a cross cutting theme, the strategy is able to embed their voice and recognise the bigger societal picture, without alienating a section of society who can help us support the safety of women and girls.

### **3. KEY THEMES AND ACTIONS**

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- 3.1 Under each strategy theme the paper also details example actions that the Mayor will take forward and work with stakeholders from across West Yorkshire to support the delivery of these pillars.

### **4. EDUCATION AND PREVENTION – THEME 1**

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- 4.1 Education and prevention should not be limited to educational settings. The strategy encourages all in West Yorkshire to take a public health approach and implement programmes of education and awareness of healthy relationships and consent. To focus on long-term societal change, we must start early and recognise the effectiveness of prevention – ahead of violent or abusive acts.
- 4.2 Education has a critical role in supporting the safety of women and girls. It has the powerful ability to transform behaviours and attitudes and improve lives. We want to encourage teaching staff, support staff, students and other young people to challenge gender stereotypes within and outside education settings.

**Example Action:** Develop a Safety of Women and Girls engagement offer in the education sector through a programme of events. Through an expansion of working with the education sector, the Combined Authority (CA) will strengthen links between universities, colleges and schools to drive an education and prevention approach.

**Example Action:** The Mayor, utilising the Mayor's Safer Communities Fund, will work with theatre companies and art production companies that educate and raise awareness of the safety of women and girls through their creative methodologies in order to create inventions that are heard and make a difference.

**Example Action:** Support West Yorkshire Police to maximise the reach and impact of their young people offer, Pol-Ed. This will include support programmes for young people on cybercrime awareness and education to target and stop exploitation and abuse facilitated online.

## 5. BEHAVIOUR CHANGE – THEME 2

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- 5.1 The strategy seeks to challenge negative attitudes and behaviours through outreach and education to young people as they prepare for, or begin their journey, in the adult world.
- 5.2 Empowering and encouraging progressive views and healthy attitudes towards women and girls, we want to provoke peer to peer conversations amongst boys and young men that begins to create long term shifts in societal behaviour.
- 5.3 The value that behavioural change programmes and initiatives have is powerful. We can make a difference working across West Yorkshire to ensure women and girls are no longer harassed and abused online, in public spaces, at home, or in their work environment.

**Example Action:** Work with partners to evaluate perpetrator programmes to we know what works in West Yorkshire and can invest more.

**Example Action:** Utilise the influence of the Leeds City Region Enterprise Partnership to introduce bespoke women and girls policies and workforce training to address potential misogyny, victim blaming, and understanding of trauma.

**Example Action:** Delivery of a West Yorkshire wide safety of women and girl's media campaign, that puts West Yorkshire at the forefront of driving social change.

**Example Action:** To deliver the UK Shared Prosperity Fund women and girls delivery stream working in partnership with stakeholders.

## 6. SAFE SPACES – THEME 3

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- 6.1 The strategy recognises that there are physical spaces in West Yorkshire that do not always currently feel safe, either because of the way they look, or due to the time of day, or how busy or quiet they are. The strategy also recognises that a sense of safe space extends beyond the physical public space to include the home, the workplace and the digital world.

6.2 The strategy aims to ensure women and girls know of safe environments they can go near their education institution, home, workplace, or an anonymous safe zone online for support, welfare and guidance.

6.3 We want to maximise academic learning in the field of safe spaces. We recognise it goes beyond encouragement and campaigns. We need to support safety through outreach and change, whilst listening and acknowledging the barriers to feeling safe in different types of spaces.

**Example Action:** Take the learning from Safer Streets Fund safety in parks research and the understanding of barriers to feeling safe, and implement in wider public spaces and shared areas, including educational colleges and universities.

**Example Action:** Support opportunities for employers to create anonymised online support platforms and reporting processes should a colleague at work need help. Potential for in-work welfare spaces for those in need and developing corporate Domestic Abuse policies and strategies.

**Example Action:** Working with the CA transport teams and partners to develop best practise across staff to aid the personal safety of women and girls on the transport networks across West Yorkshire. The CA to ensure Metro transport network staff are trauma informed and to be the best possible capable guardians.

**Example Action:** CA to work with the West Yorkshire hospitality sector to amplify the roll out capable guardians and trauma informed approaches both in the night-time economy and the wider hospitality sector.

## 7. SUPPORTING THE SECTOR – THEME 4

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7.1 The strategy will support women and girls' sector to be able to sustainably deliver services in West Yorkshire. This includes lobbying and influencing at national, regional and local level to ensure the women and girl's sector, both statutory, non-statutory and voluntary groups, have the resource, skills and reassurance they need to deliver services in the longer term.

7.2 The Mayor wants to cultivate relationships with businesses as a route to influence employers to understand what more they can do to support women's safety and support industries to be more gender inclusive.

**Example Action:** Use the powers, responsibilities and influence of the Mayor to aid the skills market to support recruitment into the women and girls' sector, including encouraging and upskill workers into more specialist roles.

**Example Action:** Using Mayor voice to lobby government for multi-year funding settlements to support sustainable of women and girls' services.

**Example Action:** Working with partners, deliver focused training on unconscious

bias, privilege, diversity, and intersectionality.

## **8. EQUALITY, DIVERSITY, AND INCLUSION - CROSS CUTTING THEME 1**

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- 8.1 We understand that despite immense positive change, it must be highlighted that toxic behaviours and attitudes still occur, and individuals can be victims irrespective of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation, or socio-economic background.
- 8.2 We are aware of the intersectional issues that women and girls who, for example, have a disability, who are from black or minority ethnic communities or who are LGBTQIA+ can face in respect of being disproportional targeted for violence and abuse.
- 8.3 We are aware that violence, abuse, and harassment violations are deep-rooted in gender inequality, and the subconscious biases which have developed over generations of negative cultural attitudes towards women and girls. Despite the encouraging shift in societal conversations, challenging these behaviours and attitudes can remain problematic in communities and must remain a priority.
- 8.4 When we say communities, we mean groups of people with shared interests. This might be due to a shared location, a shared faith, a shared ethnicity or cultural heritage, a shared characteristic (such as LGBTQIA+ communities), or a shared disability. It may also include people across the region who are united by an interest in the same activity.
- 8.4 We also recognise that these communities contain a diverse range of views, which cannot be represented by a single spokesperson.
- 8.5 We also acknowledge each individual experience of disadvantage, discrimination, abuse and harm can vary, and as a result women and girls who are victims, their family members, friends and/or support groups can also feel they lack the support and confidence to report or feel empowered due to the lack of representation and understanding of their lived experience.

## **9. ROLE OF MEN AND YOUNG BOYS - CROSS CUTTING THEME 2**

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- 9.1 Although the strategy focuses on the safety of women and girls, the strategy aims for men and boys in West Yorkshire to feel empowered allies, not isolated or alienated.
- 9.2 In an increasingly challenging world for younger people, where online

presence is just as relevant as the real world, we understand that gaps have been identified around specific targeting of male behaviours and we want to be teaching, challenging, and encouraging individuals to speak out and recognise when certain behaviours are not acceptable.

- 9.3 The strategy looks to challenge toxic masculinity by changing the narrative and challenge negative harmful views at its root. Equality and empowerment for women and girls is an issue for all. The strategy makes clear that all have a societal role to play to change and educate and call out problematic behaviour.

## 10. EXTERNAL CONSULTATION

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- 10.1 In Autumn 2021, the Mayor and Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime hosted a Women and Girls Call for Evidence. This event set out the Mayor’s intentions to drive forward this agenda, provide the bedrock to fulfil the Mayor’s pledge of putting women and girl’s at the heart of the Police and Crime Plan, and most importantly to listen to partners, women and girl’s groups and residents on what they saw as the issues that were priorities for women and girls safety.
- 10.2 The first strategy co-design event, in May 2022, was with predominantly statutory and third sector organisations. It was an opportunity for all in attendance to have their say on the key themes and priorities within the document following extensive research and surveys.
- 10.3 The below table highlights the key priorities from the first co-design event.

Supporting Women and Girls with Multiple and Complex Needs		56.25%	36
Personal safety		35.94%	23
Vulnerability because of disability		20.31%	13
Night time economy		25.00%	16
Male education and prevention		73.44%	47
Safety in the workplace		6.25%	4
Safe travel		26.56%	17
Role of men and boys		42.19%	27
Domestic and Sexual Violence		73.44%	47
Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation		53.12%	34
Misogyny		43.75%	28
Workforce development - trauma informed services and interventions		34.38%	22
Women and Girls from minority or disadvantaged communities		56.25%	36
Other (please specify): <a href="#">Show</a>		10.94%	7

- 10.4 All the women and girls spoken to as part of the consultation welcomed the Mayor's focus and many women had previously shared their own stories as part of the Mayor's "call for evidence".
- 10.5 Partners and communities have also welcomed the strategy priorities following consultation. We provided actions and examples of the work to support the safety of women and girls, as well as demonstrate the work that has already taken place since the publication of the Policing and Crime Plan 2021-24.
- 10.6 The second co-design event, in September 2022, the Mayor and the Deputy Mayor for Policing and Crime met with partners including the police, local authorities, health, education, third sector and those supporting and advocating for women and girls to hold the second co-design event for the West Yorkshire Safety of Woman and Girls' strategy.
- 10.7 The event focused on the work undertaken to date on the development of the strategy, running through the proposed key themes and suggested actions, developed from the first co-design workshop in May 2022. It also allowed for further discussion with partners, ensuring the areas of focus were covered sufficiently, and the key actions were agreed.

## **11. FUNDING**

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- 11.1 All partners are stakeholders in delivery on the women and girls agenda, both through the Mayor's strategy and their own women and girls strategies, statutory obligations or business plans.
- 11.2 The themes and actions of the Mayor's strategy will be delivered by a variety of funding sources across a variety of organisations. This includes but is not exclusive to the Mayor's Safer Communities Fund, the Community Safety Fund, Violence Reduction Unit funding, core Ministry of Justice victim's funding (open to all victims, regardless of gender) and Home Office Safer Streets Funding.
- 11.2 In addition the West Yorkshire UK Shared Prosperity Fund will include funding allocation of £992,760, over the next three financial years (inclusive of FY 22/23), to support the delivery of the co-designed priorities and actions, as set out in the draft Mayoral Supporting the Safety of Women and Girls strategy.

## **12. BACKGROUND PAPERS AND APPENDICES**

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[Policing and Crime Plan](#)  
[Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls](#)  
[NPCC Framework](#)

### 13. CONTACT INFORMATION

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