



Consultation briefing

'The Way Forward – A call for action to end violence against women'

Consultation by the Mayor Of London and Greater London Authority

11 June 2009

Understanding and supporting women and their organisations

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Introduction

In early May 2009, the Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, and the Greater London Authority (GLA), launched a consultation on a programme of action to tackle violence against women (VAW) in London which is outlined in The Way Forward Strategy document. This follows the launch of a consultation on a national VAW Strategy and there are many similarities in the approaches but also important differences. (See our response to the National VAW Strategy consultation at www.wrc.org.uk).

The consultation is open until 20 July 2009 and can be responded to through an online survey, by post or by e-mail.

See <http://www.london.gov.uk/mayor/crime/vaw/> for more information.

If you would like to feed into WRC's response please contact charlotte@wrc.org.uk **by 13 July 2009** and if you submit your own response please also send us a copy.

WRC have prepared this briefing to summarise the proposals and highlight the aspects which may be the most relevant and will have the most impact on women's voluntary and community sector organisations (VCOs) in terms of support for service provision and funding. This briefing aims to:

- Summarise the key points from The Way Forward
- Suggest key issues and ideas to include in your response

Overarching comments

We are very pleased that the Strategy has a gendered analysis of VAW from a human rights perspective. We are also very pleased that there is an acknowledgement of the expertise of (and the need to support) specialist women's VAW organisations, including women-only services. This Strategy acknowledges that they are key in providing services and challenging VAW. There is also an acknowledgement that specialist women's services are facing a funding crisis. The Strategy has an understanding of the diversity of women in London, although this could be built upon. We are encouraged by the awareness of the issues facing rape crisis provision in the capital and the impact of the 'no recourse to public funds' rule on women, and also the focus on prevention and educational campaigns. Prevention is the key to ending violence against women, and we warmly welcome the commitment made to an ongoing public awareness and education campaign. The Way Forward represents a good starting point for developing a truly integrated strategy. However, more work needs to be done on how this will be implemented to effectively prevent and protect women from violence and provide adequate services.

It is disappointing that this understanding of VAW is not supported by enough concrete actions. There are few specific plans for implementation and much of the action is deferred to the Government and the voluntary and community sector rather than responsibility taken by the GLA. As well as lobbying the Government for wider change, leaders in London should show innovation by putting in place clear outcomes, targets and guidance that will ensure effective

implementation. We are very keen to know how this work will be resourced, and taken forward. We would like to see a commitment to this Strategy through development of specific actions; a clear remit about who is responsible for different areas of the Strategy, and how they will be supported to implement it.

Even though the importance and value of the women's voluntary and community sector is acknowledged, women's groups cannot take full responsibility for implementing the Strategy and must be supported financially to continue the work they are already doing and increase their services which will advance the Strategy. Women's specialist organisations are facing a funding crisis.¹ For them to be key partners in this Strategy, there needs to be ring-fenced VAW money to ensure sustainable funding.

¹ See 'Not Just Bread, but Roses, Too: Funding to the Women's Voluntary and Community Sector 2004-2007' (2009) Women's Resource Centre and 'The Crisis in Rape Crisis' (2008) Rape Crisis (England and Wales) and Women's Resource Centre

Summary of key points

The key themes throughout the Strategy are *prevention, provision* and *protection* and the five key objectives of the Strategy are:

1. London taking a global lead to end violence against women
2. Improving access to support
3. Addressing health, social and economic consequences of violence
4. Protecting women at risk
5. Getting tough with perpetrators.

This briefing outlines each objective and what recommendations and actions are made in the Strategy, along with WRC comments / suggestions for your response. In the original document, the actions listed are unconnected with the objectives and recommendations. To make it easier for groups to answer the GLA consultation questions, which are focused around each objective, we have listed the actions where they fit under each objective's recommendations. As a result, some of these actions may apply across different recommendations – this is our interpretation of where they fit best.

PREVENTION

Objective 1: London taking a global lead to end violence against women.

We will develop a range of measures to reduce the prevalence of violence against women over time with a strong emphasis on cultural change. Our approach will address violence against women as a whole and its roots in gender inequality. We will promote an ambitious approach within which London will continue to develop innovative policy and practice. London will contribute to the United Nation's UNite campaign (<http://endviolence.un.org/>) and share our learning and knowledge with other cities and countries.

Recommendations:

1. *Adopt the UN definition of VAW*
2. *Make London a leader in preventing VAW*
3. *Improve our understanding of VAW*
4. *Cracking down on trafficking*
5. *Place prevention at the heart of tackling VAW*
6. *Working with young people*

	Action	WRC comments
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt the UN definition of VAW 	<p>This definition² has a gendered analysis and incorporates a human rights approach, both of which are a crucial foundation for challenging VAW.</p>
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that violence against women is integrated into the Mayor's plans to tackle youth crime, and strategies on transport, housing, health inequalities and refugees. 	<p>A commitment for an integrated strategy is to be commended. However, true integration requires ring-fenced budget lines, including for prevention. At a policy level, the specialist women's sector must be safeguarded and strengthened including recognition of its social, political and economic contributions.</p> <p>Local MPs and councillors also need to commit to the Strategy and implementing it locally. The Strategy needs to be mainstreamed and integrated across all London boroughs and it is crucial that all local authorities are committed to this Strategy.</p>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on the Domestic Homicide Review Group to conduct reviews of suicides occurring in the context of domestic violence and to expand its work to include homicides and suicides in the context of 'honour' based violence. • Explore ways of undertaking a study on the extent of violence linked to 'harmful traditional practices' in London and the number of women and girls 'at risk'. 	<p>We commend this work. Research should also be commissioned to identify the level of need across different forms of VAW and suggest a pattern of provision for services. The Map of Gaps³ should be used as a starting point for this work.</p> <p>In order to successfully address issues of equality and diversity, this Strategy needs to contain specific targets (as well as guidance and training) on disaggregation of data. Without measuring the baseline, there will be insufficient knowledge of where the starting point is, and what needs to change.</p>
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Undertake an ongoing public awareness and education campaign over the course aimed at ending the tolerance of violence against women, making particular use of advertising 	<p>Prevention is the key to ending violence against women, and we warmly welcome the commitment made to an ongoing public awareness and education campaign</p>

² United Nations, 2006, Secretary General's Report on Violence against women, Para 28 and 104

³ <http://www.mapofgaps.org/>

	<p>on the public transport network.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider in consultation and partnership with relevant bodies and organisations developing a public awareness campaign aimed at deterring paying for sex and will work with police, local authorities and other London partners in clamping down on paying for sex and on the proliferation of lap dancing clubs across London. 	<p>It is important to encourage schools, local authorities and other funders to provide a comprehensive prevention programme, including work in the curriculum and self-defence training for women and girls. Self-defence is a cost effective way of supporting women and girls to resist violence and overcome its legacies.⁴</p>
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that any youth mentoring schemes that are developed through Time For Action (the Mayor's plans to tackle youth crime) address the specific needs of young women and girls. Ensure that the issue of girls being removed from schools and forced into marriage or subjected to FGM is addressed through the work being done around keeping young people in education in Time For Action. 	<p>The diversity of women in London is recognised but the Strategy must incorporate an intersectional equalities framework, to address the impact of VAW on all women. Little has been said about the needs of older women, lesbian and bisexual women, transgender women, gypsy and traveler women and disabled women.</p> <p>There is also a particular need for minority women who experience intersectional discrimination to run their own specific services. Services led by and for minority women are necessary in addressing social exclusion and community cohesion.</p>

In the section on Governance and Leadership, the Strategy includes acknowledgement of academic excellence and the innovation and knowledge of the voluntary and public sectors as well as a commitment that the voices of survivors inform the implementation and the development of services. This is seen as happening through a London Violence Against Women Steering Group which will be established to work with relevant bodies and voluntary organisations and be responsible for the delivery of the Strategy. We hope that this group is representative of the sector and of the diversity of women in London. We would like to see a transparent process for membership and support for groups to be involved. We hope there will be other ways for groups to feed in to the Strategy and on-going reflection and consultation.

⁴ See London Centre for Personal Safety response to National VAW Strategy consultation. <http://www.londoncentreforpersonalsafety.org.uk/>

It may be useful for there to be smaller sub-groups/forums on particular issues and for particular groups (e.g. Survivors Forum/Experts Forum) or a funded working group to bring together different sectors to generate new ideas, develop and pilot innovative responses, and identify and deliver best practice.

PROVISION

<p>Objective 2: Improving access to support <i>We will improve the safety, wellbeing and freedom of women and children through improving access to better services that meet the needs of London’s diverse communities. Our goal is to build capacity across the statutory and specialist women’s voluntary sectors, including expanding rape crisis provision and to help friends and family of victims, to whom women often turn first, to provide informed support.</i></p> <p><i>Recommendations:</i></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. <i>Ensure equitable access to high quality support services across London</i> 2. <i>Expanding rape crisis provision in London</i> 3. <i>Respond to needs of children and young people experiencing violence</i> 4. <i>VAW training for relevant professionals across London and improved information and resources for the public</i> 5. <i>Information for friends and family</i> 6. <i>Meet the needs of London’s diverse communities</i>

	Action	WRC comments
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult London boroughs to consider how local structures can be put in place that take an integrated approach to violence against women. • Collaborate with the voluntary sector, local authorities, the criminal justice system, NHS London, and funders as well as draw on recent government research on the stability and sustainability of the violence against women sector to identify sustainable funding strategies to meet the levels of need identified for the core support services across London. 	<p>Many local authority areas are not identifying VAW as an issue to address through their local targets, despite the extent and impact of this form of gendered discrimination and their obligations under the Gender Equality Duty. The statutory sector needs to work in partnership with the specialised women’s sector to offer the range of provision that is necessary.</p> <p>The need to build capacity across the specialist women’s VAW sector is highlighted and there is an awareness of the need for</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on key agencies, local authorities and government to respond to the needs of women experiencing violence through the provision of high quality core support services with equitable access across London. • Call on statutory services to introduce funding and commissioning criteria that address the needs of marginalised women including through funding specialist women-only services. 	<p>essential sustainable funding, which we warmly support. We would like to see more concrete targets on how this will be implemented across the capital, for example learning from the lessons of Scotland where ring-fenced funding led to services being secured and expanded. We commend the Scottish model of ensuring baseline funding is provided to the third sector specialised women’s organisations through a dedicated budget line. We would like to see the Mayor become a champion of specialist women’s VAW services (including women-only services) as key to ensuring high quality support services to meet the needs of all women.</p> <p>It is encouraging to see that the Strategy is aware of the importance of women-only and specialist women’s services and we hope that this understanding is supported by a commitment to funding these services. Clear guidance needs to be provided for local government and primary care trust commissioners about the value and legality of women-only specialist services.</p>
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Mayor has allocated funding from his budget to increase the provision of specialist women-only rape and sexual abuse support services across the capital by working with London boroughs. • Continue to engage in discussions with London Councils and to lobby government to secure sustainable funding for rape crisis provision across London. 	<p>We are encouraged by the awareness of the issues facing rape crisis provision in the capital and nationally, and welcome the support pledged by the Mayor. We look forward to seeing this implemented and hope that it will provide further support as soon as possible. This could include commissioning existing women-only sexual violence services to expand provision to provide a network of accessible independent specialist rape and sexual abuse support services.</p> <p>We are aware that the Mayor and the Mayor’s office has already had discussions about this issue with representatives from Rape Crisis (England and Wales) which included the only London Rape Crisis centre, Croydon Rape and Sexual Abuse Support Centre (RASASC).</p>

		<p>We strongly recommend that the Mayor and the GLA implements the proposal set out by Rape Crisis (England and Wales), namely that current women’s voluntary and community sector organisations, which already have expertise and are supporting survivors of sexual violence, are funded.</p> <p>We strongly welcome that the Mayor has identified that women-only rape and sexual abuse support services are needed.</p>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the voluntary sector, local authorities (individually and collectively), the criminal justice system, the health service, the Mayor’s Fund and funders to identify sustainable funding strategies to meet the levels of need identified for support services for children across London. • Consult with the London Safeguarding Children Board and other relevant London agencies to consider how support for the parents of sexually abused children can be enhanced, including improving responses to the non-abusing parent in situations of sexual abuse within the family and how children’s services, particularly within schools, can be developed to help limit the long-term damage of child sexual abuse. 	<p>We welcome the commitment to provide the support that children who experience sexual abuse need and deserve, as well as support for non-abusing parents. This work needs to be done in collaboration with the specialist women’s sector.</p> <p>It is encouraging to see that the report acknowledges the link between childhood sexual abuse and abuse in later life and we hope that this link is highlighted. Adult women survivors of child sexual abuse are a ‘hidden’ and therefore often ‘ignored’ group with complex needs and we hope that they will be targeted through the Strategy.</p>
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on government to meet its UN obligations to develop and fund violence against women training programmes for judicial, legal, medical, social, educational and police and immigration personnel. • Consider, in consultation with partners, developing a training consortium to improve the training of professionals on violence against women across London. Such training should include information about addressing the needs of London’s 	<p>We support this call for the government to meet its UN obligations. The Beijing Platform for Action (BPfA) requires governments to develop and fund training⁵ on all forms of VAW as a core element of professional qualification and in-service learning, presently sadly lacking. This training should be delivered by the specialist women’s VAW sector, and should also extend to funders.</p>

⁵ <http://www.un.org/womenwatch/daw/beijing/platform/> (1995)

	diverse population.	
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with voluntary and statutory agencies to improve the availability of information and resources to members of the public so that they are able to support women more effectively. 	We commend this aspect of the Strategy. However, providing information to the public also requires the availability of specialist women’s services that are able to respond to women’s diverse support needs. We need sustainably funded services for the public to refer women onto, and specialist women’s services need to be involved in the development of this work.
6.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with the Foundation for Women’s Health, Research and Development (FORWARD) to develop a comprehensive response to FGM. 	We commend this work, which will go some way to meeting the 2008 CEDAW concluding observations on increasing efforts to design and implement targeted FGM prevention strategies and education and awareness-raising programmes.

Local structures such as Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) are an appropriate place to take an integrated approach to VAW. Yet we know women’s groups are already underrepresented on LSPs⁶. Local authorities need to provide effective engagement and support programmes to improve the representation of women’s organisations on local decision making bodies. The Duty to involve is also now live. Under it’s obligation to “engage a diverse range of groups...including those who can often be marginalised or vulnerable people”, local government should be seen as negligent in meeting this duty if they are not involving and consulting with women’s organisations, as well as women survivors of violence.

⁶ See ‘Where are women in LSPs’ (2007) Oxfam, Urban Forum and Women’s Resource Centre

Objective 3: Addressing health, social and economic consequences of violence

We will support measures that reduce the long-term consequences of violence for women who experience it, improve their life chances and support them in rebuilding their lives. We want to make violence against woman a priority for all providers. We will champion integrated support services for the most marginalised and at risk women. We will give a voice to survivors in shaping policy and delivery.

Recommendations:

1. *Petition and collaborate with the health sector to ensure that policies incorporate all forms of VAW and that they are effectively implemented*
2. *Addressing the financial impacts of VAW*
3. *Integrate VAW into the London Housing Strategy*
4. *Respond to the needs of at risk and marginalised women*
5. *Address the needs of children who have witnessed or experienced violence*

	Action	WRC comments
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrate violence against women prevention into the London Health Inequalities Strategy. • Work with the London Health Commission to convene a roundtable event in order to facilitate engagement of the health sector in the new violence against women strategy. • Call on the NHS in London to develop and implement a comprehensive approach to violence against women as a matter of priority and to introduce routine enquiry around violence against women and appropriate support and referral mechanisms into the following services: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - mental health - sexual health services, including those aimed at teenagers - maternity and post-natal provision - accident and emergency - and to develop a strategy for increasing access to appropriate 	<p>The health implications of VAW are acknowledged and the role of the NHS in referring women on to other services and commissioning specialist support services is also highlighted. However, there is no action on then providing funding to specialist services for health services to refer to. For example, in the Rape Crisis sector, centres receive a very large number of referrals from health agencies, yet receive barely any funding from these agencies.⁷</p> <p>We need adequate and sustainable resourcing of specialist VAW services, in order to cope with demand. There is no point in introducing routine screening where professionals have nowhere to refer on those who disclose to them about VAW.</p> <p>We are pleased to see recognition that substance misuse is linked</p>

⁷ 'The Crisis in Rape Crisis' (2008) Rape Crisis (England and Wales) and Women's Resource Centre

	<p>interpreting services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaborate with the Stella Project, the Greater London Alcohol and Drug Alliance (GLADA), the health service and substance misuse services to increase awareness of the links between violence against women and substance misuse and improve responses. 	<p>to VAW, however, recently the only women-only alcohol service in London was lost when it had to merge with a larger generic organisation. We hope that the Strategy will ensure that specialist provision is supported and increased, for example by promoting specialist women-only services over generic provision in commissioning guidelines.</p>
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on government to help victims to improve their skills and tackle unemployment of women and look to the London Skills and Employment Board to support this ambition as they aim to promote equality through the delivery of their strategy. • Call on government to ensure that the advice sector receives increased funding so that they can offer better support to women who require financial and legal aid as a consequence of the violence and financial abuse they have experienced. • Ask ESF co-financing agencies⁸ to explore the possibility of making women who have experienced violence one of their key target groups for their employment and training programmes so that funding is allocated to projects that support women who are victims of violence. • Call upon government to introduce a new resettlement grant for women escaping violent relationships. 	<p>We welcome the integrated approach which includes the advice sector as this may be the first point of contact for some women experiencing VAW. We hope that this would also include comprehensive training for staff in this sector to ensure that they have an understanding of the issues affecting women and are able to refer them on to other services. Again it is important to make sure that funding is provided for these referrals.</p> <p>We are interested to see how VAW will be prioritised in employment and training programmes and hope this will be implemented at a local level.</p> <p>We welcome the commitment to developing ways to financially support women who are escaping violence or have experienced historic violence.</p>
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through his London Housing Strategy, the Mayor will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - encourage social landlords to offer holistic sanctuary schemes to victims of violence preferring to stay in their homes and he will encourage social landlords to ensure that timely 	<p>We are interested to see how this will be enforced and hope that the issue of generic housing associations taking over refuge provision will be addressed as well as the obligations of local authorities under the GED in these cases. Research conducted into London women's</p>

⁸ The ESF co-financing agencies for London are: Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) - London, London Councils, London Development Agency, Learning and Skills Council (LSC) – London

	<p>moves are available for women escaping violence both across and within boroughs</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - ensure that the London Delivery Board to end rough sleeping considers the specific needs of women -encourage social landlords to ensure their housing policies and monitoring in relation to violence against women are comprehensive and appropriate. 	<p>refuges in 2007 found that at least seven independent refuges run by women’s organisations had been taken over by housing associations since the introduction of competitive tendering under Supporting People.⁹ We hope specialist and women-only refuge provision is ring-fenced and increased.</p> <p>Homeless services are also asked in the Strategy to develop ways to reach homeless women, but existing women’s services that work with homeless women and woman at risk of homelessness should also be supported, funded and developed.</p>
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on the UK Border Agency to ensure consistent implementation of their gender guidelines. • Call on government to guarantee the right of women with uncertain immigration status who are fleeing or threatened by violence to have access to crisis, temporary and permanent accommodation, specialist support services and essential financial support. • Ask the Ministry of Justice to ensure that the national implementation plan for the Corston Report meets the needs of London. 	<p>We warmly welcome the commitment to address the needs of women with insecure immigration status. However, more could be done here. CEDAW clearly says that states must respect, protect and fulfill women’s human rights, regardless of immigration or other factor. The No Recourse to Public Funds (NRFP) campaign calls on the UK Government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow refuges to access adequate funding to protect women who are suffering abuse • Provide an exemption to the ‘no recourse’ ruling to ensure women are not forced to remain with a violent partner • Ensure that domestic policies do not contradict each other to undermine women’s rights, as part of an integrated strategy. <p>We hope that the London VAW Strategy will include lobbying for a change in the law and that specific ring-fenced funding will be provided to local authorities to finance services that support women with NRPF. We would also like to see this issue considered in the Refugee and Migrants Forum.</p>

⁹ Funding to London Women’s Refuges: A Report to London Councils, WRC, 2007

		The implementation of the Corston Report (2007) recommendations for specialised community-based women's centres as an alternative to prison for vulnerable women is supported. We are pleased that the Ministry of Justice have recently announced funding to take forward the Corston report recommendations and we hope that specialist women's services in London are able to access this support and benefit from this funding.
5.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • See previous actions under objective 2, recommendation 3 	

PROTECTION

Objective 4: Protecting women at risk

We will ensure that the whole criminal justice system provides protection to women who need it

Recommendations:

1. *Make significant improvements to protection and support at a local level*
2. *Increase public confidence, victim support and satisfaction*

	Action	WRC comments
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult London boroughs to consider how local structures can be put in place that take an integrated approach to violence against women. 	The Steering Group should be mirrored at borough level by Violence Against Women Forums or other local inter-agency coordination mechanisms that are already working effectively, including the expertise of the specialist women's VAW sector.
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call on government to review the impact of legal aid reforms on the ability of women to access civil protection. • The Mayor, through the MPA will consider a number of specific areas of work aimed at improving the police's response to violence against women including: 	In order for women to feel confident, they need to be treated with respect and dignity through each step of the criminal justice process. Women going through the criminal justice system deserve access to appropriate support, including being given the choice of support by specialist women's services. Police training to challenge the widespread myths that women lie

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - receiving regular reporting across violence against women - auditing recording and reporting practices - quarterly monitoring of the Home Office minimum standards for reporting sexual offences at borough level¹⁵⁸ - monitoring withdrawals and no-criming across violence against women - monitoring disproportionality - monitoring responses to honour based violence, forced and child marriage and FGM - improving front desk delivery in relation to violence against women - police training on violence against women. • Ensure that the Parenting strand of Time For Action addresses the needs of mothers whose authority is undermined by domestic violence. 	<p>about sexual assault and other fallacies that serve to shift the blame from the perpetrator to the victim is urgently needed, alongside tougher penalties for police who discourage women from reporting, or do not adequately support and investigate cases of women who do.</p>
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Objective 5: Getting tough with perpetrators
We want perpetrators to stop the violence and be held to account. Our approach will champion the effectiveness of the criminal justice system and call for tougher sanctions and consequences. Perpetrators must be deterred from violence against women.

Recommendations:

1. *Addressing VAW through Joint Engagement Meetings (JEM) between the Deputy Mayor and boroughs*
2. *Clamping down on traffickers*
3. *Proactive policing to stop the use of rape within gangs*
4. *Enhancing the effectiveness of community-based interventions with perpetrators*
5. *Confronting perpetrators about the impact of their abuse*

	Action	WRC comments
1.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Addressing violence against women through joint engagement meetings. • Ensure that the safety issues presented by lap-dancing clubs come under local authority and police scrutiny through joint engagement meetings and support boroughs in ensuring that the proliferation of lap dancing clubs is controlled. 	
2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Demand that the Government improve intelligence gathering and information sharing about how traffickers operate in order to more effectively stop and prosecute them and identify women and girls who have been trafficked and work with the Met to get tough on trafficking. • Work in partnership with the Equality and Human Rights Commission to convene a trafficking roundtable event that will bring experts together to examine how to combat trafficking, prostitution and sexual assault during the Olympics and major sporting events. • Champion a more sustained anti-trafficking operation for London that would require the Metropolitan Police to work in partnership with national and regional law enforcement agencies such as the Serious Organised Crime Agency, the UK Human Trafficking Centre, British Transport Police and the police forces who police airports that serve London (Sussex, Essex and Bedfordshire) to ensure that the successes achieved since the inception of Operation Pentameter continue with rigour. 	We support the work on challenging trafficking.
3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Host a summit involving key London agencies and leading experts to investigate the links between violence against women and youth crime particularly on the issue of rape within gangs and identify appropriate responses. 	Much work on gangs has focused on young men. We would like to see more support and awareness of young women in gangs and funding for programmes and specialist women’s organisations which support them.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with the Metropolitan Police to ensure that as part of their youth gang strategy the issue of Violence against women within gangs is given top priority. 	
4.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Call upon government to undertake an independent evaluation of the Integrated Domestic Abuse Programme to assess its effectiveness in reducing re-offending and to gauge their value for money. 	<p>Despite international consensus that programmes addressing perpetrators should be part of a co-ordinated response, across the UK provision remains patchy and focused on domestic violence. There is a need for professional training from a gendered analysis, endorsed by the RESPECT network, for perpetrators of all forms of VAW.</p>
5.	There are no specific actions on this.	

Monitoring and evaluation

There is little on how the Strategy will be evaluated and how any targets will be monitored to ensure that they are effective. The UN recommendation for VAW surveys every 10 years to measure prevalence and the risk and forms of VAW is suggested, but this is not set as a target or action. How will the progress of the Strategy be measured? We would like to see the GLA working with other agencies to undertake a prevalence study and encourage commitment to funding a repeat survey every 10 years.

All statutory agencies should be encouraged to evaluate and review their performance on responding to VAW including establishing appropriate indicators and recording systems as already exist for the police and criminal justice system.

Actions and ways to engage at a local level

The Strategy is committed to:

- **Setting up a London VAW Steering Group.** Can you become a member of the Steering Group or can you feed your points through another member? Could you be involved in the training consortium or any other forums which may come from the Strategy?
- **A Sapphire Team in every borough.** Check that there is now a Sapphire Team which specialises in investigating rape and sexual assault cases in your borough (they should have been in place by April 2009) – were you contacted about this? Do you know what they do, how to contact them and how the process works?
- **Expanding local forums.** Will your local Domestic Violence Forum be expanding to include all forms of VAW? Are there other local forums which should be integrating VAW into their work and how can you get involved?

Other things you can do:

- Find out what your local authority has in their gender equality scheme. Do they acknowledge VAW? Are they doing enough work on it? There are resources developed by EHRD and EAW on challenging your local area if they are not doing enough on VAW.
- Find out how to get involved in your Local Strategic Partnership and contact them to see how you can input into local priorities.

About the Women's Resource Centre

WRC is a charity which supports women's organisations to be more effective and sustainable. We provide training, information, resources and one-to-one support on a range of organisational development issues. We also lobby decision makers on behalf of the women's not-for-profit sector for improved representation and funding.

Our members work in a wide range of fields including health, violence against women, employment, education, rights and equality, the criminal justice system and the environment. They deliver services to and campaign on behalf of some of the most marginalised communities of women.

There are over ten thousand people working or volunteering for our members who support almost half a million individuals each year.

For more information about this briefing, contact:

Charlotte Gage
Policy Assistant
Email: charlotte@wrc.org.uk
Tel: 020 7324 3042

Women's Resource Centre
Ground Floor East, 33-41 Dallington Street
London EC1V 0BB
www.wrc.org.uk