

Health, Social Care and Housing Committee

10 am, Tuesday, 21 April 2015

Sex Work in Edinburgh – A Harm Reduction Framework – Year One Progress Report

Item number	7.7
Report number	
Wards	All

Executive Summary

On 21 January 2014, the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee agreed a 'Harm Reduction Framework for Sex Work' in Edinburgh, and that the Health, Social Care and Housing Committee should receive a year one progress report in early 2015.

The Committee also agreed to enter into discussion with the Scottish Government on related national policy and legislative matters, and to ensure that sex workers were engaged and involved in the development and implementation of the Framework.

This report updates members on these matters and indicates key improvement actions to be addressed in year two.

Links

Coalition pledges	TBC
Council outcomes	CO10 , CO15 , CO21
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 , SO2 , SO3 , SO4
Appendices	None

Sex Work in Edinburgh – A Harm Reduction Framework – Year One Progress Report

Recommendations

- 1.1 It is recommended that Committee:
- (i) note the innovative partnership working, improved service interventions and improving knowledge of issues facing sex workers that have taken place during year one of the Framework; and
 - (ii) agree that responsibility to address the key improvement actions identified at paragraph 3.3 be remitted to the multi-agency group, with a reporting line to Edinburgh's Chief Officers' Group – Public Protection.

Background

- 2.1 On 15 November 2013, the Council's Regulatory Committee approved a period of consultation on a proposal to remove licensing arrangements for saunas and massage parlours from the Council's Public Entertainment Resolution. A decision not to license saunas was approved by the Regulatory Committee on 3 February 2014.
- 2.2 At the 15 November 2013 meeting, a motion was also approved to develop a harm reduction approach at saunas and massage parlours, and for the Director of Health and Social Care to provide a further report on progress in January 2014 to the Corporate Policy and Strategy Committee.
- 2.3 Subsequently, and after a period of intensive partner engagement, on 21 January 2014, that Committee approved a 'Harm Reduction Framework for Sex Work' in the city. It was agreed that whilst saunas and massage parlours were a focus of the Framework, engagement with partners had indicated that a more holistic approach was required, which would also include work to address issues arising from both 'street' and 'on line' sex work.
- 2.4 Further development and implementation of the Framework was remitted to a multi-agency group, which involved a range of public and third sector partners delivering key services to sex workers. It was also agreed to remit the engagement and involvement of sex workers in the development and implementation of the Framework to this group.
- 2.5 This group has subsequently coordinated a wide variety of improvements in service interventions, information sharing, and monitoring and evaluation systems. It has also produced this report, which confirms that the set of principles underpinning the

Framework are still fit for purpose. In addition, the report indicates progress against key themes and objectives, and identifies priority improvement actions for the year ahead.

Main report

Review of Framework Principles

- 3.1 A review of the guiding principles carried out by the multi-agency group has indicated they are still fit for purpose, and have been very useful in guiding the work of the group. These are described below.
- a) Effective engagement with those who buy or sell sex has to be based on a pragmatic approach, which does not align itself with any particular ideological or sociological perspective or value judgements about sex work.
 - b) A key feature of that pragmatic approach is harm reduction, to ensure people are safe, that vulnerable people are supported, that risky behaviours are challenged, and the impacts of these behaviours are minimised.
 - c) Attempts must be made to try and find common ground and cooperative action between organisations with differing views on these matters.
 - d) A multi-agency approach, firmly linked to community planning and public and third sector governance arrangements, provides for better opportunities for success.
 - e) A person-centred approach, which enables people who sell or buy sex to make informed choices, is more likely to succeed.
 - f) Active and ongoing intelligence and information gathering, collation and analysis are key components. This activity will improve understanding of needs and lead to better multi-agency responses.
 - g) Where intelligence or information indicates criminality, this will be addressed through appropriate investigation, based on agreed inter-agency procedures.
 - h) Any approach to developing harm reduction in this area needs to be holistic and take into account the different environments in which sex is bought and sold (e.g. activity on the streets, in saunas and massage parlours, through the internet, in flats and through escort agencies).

Year One Progress

- 3.2 Described in the table below is a detailed account of progress in year one, against key themes and objectives agreed as part of the Framework. This information has been provided and approved by members of the multi-agency group and other agencies involved in the delivery of the Framework. Whilst some of the data is quantitative, much is more qualitative, due to the nature of the client group and the resultant difficulties in obtaining reliable and accurate quantitative data.

<p>1.Risks relating to sexually transmitted diseases and blood borne viruses</p>	<p>NHS Women’s Clinic reports that during the last year, it has become apparent that condom use among sex workers in Lothian is less than the previous year, for vaginal, oral and anal intercourse. There has also been a slight increase in rates of sexually transmitted infection in the last year (Chlamydia increased by 2%, blood borne viruses hepatitis B increased by 0.7% and hepatitis C increased by 0.5%). In addition, the number of women attending the clinic service has decreased for the first time in 8 years. Consultations are down 9.8% compared to 2013. There is no evidence that the number of women selling sex in Lothian has reduced, but they are not attending for support from NHS Lothian in the same volumes as in previous years. Anecdotally, we hear of women now selling sex in other venues (such as lap-dancing bars), and more women are informing us that they are working from flats and advertising on the internet.</p> <p>NHS Women’s Clinic also indicates that the problem of unprotected intercourse may have been precipitated by fear of being found by the police to be in possession of condoms (which can be used as evidence to indicate the selling of sex). NHS Lothian supplies condoms to saunas, but since Operation Windermere, many managers of these premises are reluctant to have condoms stored there. Women who are present when NHS Lothian’s outreach service attends can take condoms, but others working on other days have no supplies provided at their place of work, and may therefore have to source supplies themselves. This could lead to increased risks of unprotected sex. Compounding this risk is the problem that these venues are quieter, and some reports have indicated that women are consequently competing for work and will practice unprotected intercourse in order to generate a larger income. According to NHS Lothian statistics, around 50% of women selling sex in Lothian are not from the UK and tend to be young and lacking in knowledge of risks of infection. They are therefore very vulnerable and at greater risk.</p> <p>The Another Way Service project worker has a weekly presence at the Women’s Clinic. This criminal justice worker provides an additional resource at the clinic and can take direct referrals from professionals or self-referrals from women who have additional support needs. There is an identifiable link between the sauna visits undertaken by this worker, and the attendance at the Clinic, with more women appearing for immunisation, contraception, sexual health services and referral to the Another Way Service for support to exit prostitution.</p> <p>Streetwork Women’s Project delivered a needle exchange service and supplied other resources within its outreach activities which seek to reduce risk and harm. Opportunities are also taken during the delivery of this service to begin dialogue about other services that may provide longer term or additional support to address substance use and sexual health issues.</p> <p>For men working in public sex environments, the ROAM outreach team works two nights a week engaging on a one-to-one basis, offering free safer sex supplies, advice on testing and sign posting to other services, as and when required.</p>
<p>2.Risks relating to social isolation, marginalisation, safety and poor health and wellbeing</p>	<p>The Another Way Service was set up in 2005 as a one year pilot. A part-time worker was employed to work with drug using street sex workers. In 2007, the service expanded and funding was made available to employ a full-time worker. In 2010, the service became a standalone service and continues to work with any woman who is at risk of, or is involved in sex work. The primary aims of the service are to (i) provide a supportive service to women who have been involved in sex work or who are at risk of sex work and to gain access to drug, alcohol and other appropriate services; (ii) to improve the health, safety and welfare of the women concerned, by reducing the pressure of women to engage in sex work; (iii) to improve choice and access to services; and (iv) to reduce the number of prosecutions for street sex-work related offences. Women are offered an initial appointment and a full assessment is carried</p>

out. Women complete a HOMES Matrix assessment and are supported to construct their own individual support and care plan. This allows women to identify areas they would like to change, prioritise their needs and plan how they will achieve their goals. This process puts women at the centre and empowers women to make their own decisions. Typically the service will involve regular meetings at the office or at home. Recently, support has been provided at a local café or other place chosen by service users. By providing more accessible outreach support, engagement has increased for those who are unable to attend meetings at the office. Women can be offered mentoring support and assistance to medical, training and other appointments. The service is not time-limited and can work with women for as long or as short a period as they require. **SACRO** has received positive feedback from women who know that if they move on from the service, they can return for support in the future, if required. This allows our service users to move on confidently, knowing a support base exists if they need to return to the service. A significant number of women are informally supported in saunas and at the **Women's Clinic** in Edinburgh. These women are not formally referred to the service; however, they are offered short-term support, typically concerning safety, health promotion, emotional health and promotion of harm reduction services.

In 2013, weekly visits to the saunas in Edinburgh were established with the **Another Way Service** and **NHS Lothian's Harm Reduction Team**. Women are met and encouraged to attend services, and if necessary, can be supported one-to-one within the sauna. These tend to be short support interventions due to the working environment and women are encouraged to attend the **Women's clinic** or the **SACRO** office for a more appropriate setting. Women who work in the saunas are encouraged to attend the **Women's Clinic** as this is a specialist service for drug users and sex workers. This is a unique service and in collaboration with NHS Lothian, Another Way is the only service able to access this difficult to reach client group.

Over the period 1st January 2014 – 31st December 2014, **Another Way** received a total of 25 new referrals for formal one-to-one support. These referrals came from a range of partners, stakeholders and self-referrals. Increasingly, referrals are received from a wide range of sources compared to previous years, reflected in the increased outreach the service provides and improved profile of the service among women who are working. The service also receives a number of re-referrals (for example, if a woman is charged more than once on the street the service will receive a range of referrals for the same woman). The service had contact with additional women during the sauna outreach visits between January and December 2015. Due to the sensitive nature of this work, it is not possible to report on the exact support provided to women who are not formally referred to the service. At the **Women's Clinic** the **Another Way Service** worker supported 87 women on a one to one basis; 37 contacts were had with women regarding safety; and 37 contacts related to harm reduction, e.g. condom pick up and 'Ugly Mug' promotion. Over the same period, the worker in partnership with the **NHS Lothian** nurse visited the saunas on 86 occasions, met with 263 women to promote our services, had 141 contacts regarding health promotion, and an additional 78 1:1s within the saunas.

The **Another Way** outreach initiative operates each Wednesday evening and sees on average 3 women per week. This support is typically focused on harm reduction and ensuring women are safe. These women are not formally referred into the service, but are provided with periodic support and care, vital for this group of women who are at higher risk of assault, rape and abuse. This contact with women is not on a referral basis, but it is extremely important and effective in reducing risk and helping women remain safe.

Another Way staff are now trained and able to take remote reports for Police Scotland, so that women who are reluctant to contact the police can make anonymous reports of physical and sexual violence through the service. This outreach is vital for the service and allows us to reach women who are not ready to engage fully in support. This enables us to introduce safety procedures and harm reduction practices at an early stage, while providing women with the time to build trust with workers before agreeing to a formal referral.

In response to the increased number of referrals received over the year, **SACRO** has developed a Volunteer Mentors service to provide longer term support for women. The service has now recruited 4 volunteers who will work across **Another Way** and the **Shine Women's Mentoring Service** in Edinburgh. Our volunteers operate as mentors, supporting women to make links with their community, providing additional outreach, and focusing on long-term support.

The **Streetwork Women's Project** contributed to the national **Ugly Mugs Scheme** (www.uknswp.org/ugly-mugs/). This is a scheme encouraging women selling sex to report any crimes or unacceptable behaviour committed against them by any individuals. The scheme aims to improve the safety of women involved in prostitution, but also promotes liaison between sex workers and the police, and the sharing of information between sex work projects. During the reporting period, there were 24 Ugly Mug reports (compared to 11 in the previous year), shared between **Streetwork Women's Project, SACRO, NHS Neon/HRT, Salvation Army** and the **Police Scotland Prostitution Liaison Officer** in Edinburgh. The increase in reports in 2014 could indicate that women involved in selling sex are more comfortable to report incidents. It could also indicate an increase in violent and abusive behaviours. Within the reporting period there were three major incidents, which compromised women's safety, and on one occasion the worker's safety. Information regarding these incidents was shared between agencies delivering outreach services, and women service users were also kept up-to-date with information and potential risks via the Ugly Mug scheme, and through direct contact.

From 1 January 2014 to 31 December 2014, the **Streetwork Women's Project** delivered 101 late night outreach sessions, which resulted in 144 direct contacts and 39 indirect contacts. The majority of women reached during late night outreach reported they had experienced, or were experiencing, domestic abuse, addiction issues, mental health issues, benefits issues, sexual assault or sexual abuse. The outreach activities enabled the **Streetwork Women's Project** to take services directly to women who are vulnerable and often excluded and isolated. During this period, 202 referrals/sign postings were made to various supporting agencies, including **general practitioners; NHS24; Department of Work and Pensions; AURORA counselling; NHS Women's Clinic** and **the City of Edinburgh Council services – The Access Point, Housing Options Team, and Out of Hours duty team.**

The **Women's Clinic** reports that with increasing numbers of women moving away from saunas and working alone or with one other person in flats, there is a potential increased risk of social isolation. It is far more difficult for services to find and establish a relationship of trust with these women, compared to those who are working in saunas. There are anecdotal reports of women who are being subjected to abuse from neighbours, including threats and violence. Risks of worsening mental health and greater risk-taking behaviours are assessed to be higher in this group.

A large portion of clinical time within the **Women's Clinic** is taken up with discussions of how to keep safe, use of the Ugly Mugs website and provision of rape alarms. Women are encouraged to report harassment and assaults to the police, but

	<p>many are fearful of doing this in case they are criminalised for selling sex. Police Scotland E Division has continued to provide support and engage with the multi-agency group to ensure personal safety and matters of alleged criminality are reported into the police and are dealt with appropriately.</p> <p>SACRO employees and volunteers also encourage sex workers to sign up to the Ugly Mug Scheme to improve their personal safety strategies.</p> <p>To encourage improved health and wellbeing, as well as engagement in primary health care services, Another Way refers women into appropriate health services when required. Outward referrals were made for drug and alcohol treatment (23), sexual health treatment (27), and other physical health care/treatment (39), between January and December 2014.</p> <p>Another Way reports that many service users suffer a wide range of mental health problems, such as low moods, post-traumatic stress disorder, self-esteem issues, depression and anxiety. 21 women were referred for mental health treatment. By referring women to specialist services, Another Way has observed a decrease in the use of un-prescribed drugs and alcohol, and a reduction in problems related to substance misuse. 112 contacts were made with women who engaged with in-house cognitive behaviour therapy sessions and support over the 12 month reporting period.</p> <p>Another Way reports women are supported with various housing issues at the service or by referral to a specialist service. In total, there have been 84 instances of housing support provided by means of referral or in-house support.</p> <p>Another Way reports that a number of service users were supported to deal with finances, or were referred to another financial agency, as financial problems can be a barrier to women moving on from sex work. There were a total of 38 referrals made to other financial support agencies.</p> <p>Another Way is signed up to National Ugly Mugs (NUM), a tool developed by the UK National Sex Workers project (UKNSWP) to help sex workers anonymously report offences against them. The service offers safety advice, useful contact information and email alerts if any dangerous individuals are reported to be in the region. In March 2013, the service was awarded the National Ugly Mug Star Project Accreditation, for meeting the Six Pillars of Good Practice. For more information, visit www.uknswp.org/ugly-mugs/.</p> <p>The ROAM team has a dedicated support service for men who sell sex. Whilst most of the male sex work has moved online, we are still able to provide effective support and guidance with those who wish to engage. Mental health and well being within this group are our primary concern and we will increase our contact time over the next year when recruitment and training is complete.</p>
<p>3.Evidence to indicate those involved in sex work want to explore routes out of sex work</p>	<p>The sex workers who come to the Salvation Army Van have indicated that they only do this work to fund either their addiction (drug or alcohol) or when an event, i.e. Christmas, funeral, birthday is approaching, and they need presents, clothes, etc., for the occasion. No sex worker has indicated they 'enjoy' the work they do, it is out of necessity and they would exit if they could.</p> <p>The Women's Clinic, working in partnership with the Another Way Project, Making it Work and CHAI, has been successful in supporting an increasing number of women to progress towards exiting. On average, of those women who engage in these services, one in four manage to move onto volunteering, training or other work, and this includes some of the most vulnerable women, particularly those involved in 'street' work.</p> <p>Another Way encourages women to engage actively in creating their own care plan, focusing on their needs and any issues they are facing. To assist women to meet</p>

	<p>their objectives, we accept that there are women who want to exit or decrease sex work, and women who are unable to do so. If women want to move on to employment or training, the service will explore options and support them to engage in specialist services. 34 referrals were made into training agencies over the reporting period:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 referral made to Edinburgh Volunteer Centre • 4 referrals made to Access to Industry • 4 referrals made to Transitions • 9 referrals were made to the Willow service • 19 referrals made to other external agencies. <p>17 women entered either paid or voluntary employment over the year. 12 women entered paid employment and additional 5 women entered voluntary employment.</p> <p>Since March 2014, both CHAI (Community Health and Advice Initiative) and Making it Work (Employability) have been attending the Women's Clinic one evening per week. The advice is provided on a drop-in basis, but many women are referred by NHS Lothian or Another Way staff for help with welfare or employment and training advice. The numbers of women seen each evening is not high, reflecting the highly complex and often time-consuming nature of the cases.</p> <p>There are challenges to staff from these agencies as the women seen are often involved in unregulated work, which generates undeclared income. Advice workers have to tread a careful line between providing the person with relevant and useful advice, whilst not opening themselves up to charges of being complicit in fraudulent benefit claims, or non declarations of income.</p> <p>Both of these services have supported women in exiting prostitution, and the uptake of women engaging has risen since staff from CHAI and Making it Work have started to attend the clinic. Previously, women were advised of these services and consented to being contacted. Few, however, arranged to meet up or speak to staff. With these services now provided in the clinic, 3 or 4 women each week are being supported.</p> <p>One person supported by CHAI required a total of 2.5 days for the member of staff to investigate all the details and legal situation to give accurate information. The woman was subsequently supported with adequate benefits to allow her to seek alternative employment instead of sex work.</p> <p>As a result of resource reductions since March 2015, the services have had move to fortnightly visits.</p>
<p>4. Health and safety risks at business premises in which sex work takes place</p>	<p>The Council's Community Safety Services undertook a series of visits to saunas to assess any relevant risks which may require to be addressed. These were carried out jointly by Environmental Health and Trading Standards Officers. No significant issues were identified and the visits were a worthwhile exercise. Liaison with NHS Lothian took place before and after the visits.</p>
<p>5. Specific risks associated with street sex workers</p>	<p>Police Scotland works in partnership with Another Way and refers women who are working on the street into the service. There are two Police Scotland Prostitution Liaison Officers who are in regular contact with the criminal justice worker, in order to facilitate referrals and engagement from those women who have additional needs. The Another Way worker was also invited to attend the National Police Scotland Prostitution Working Group to present on best practice when working with this group.</p> <p>The Streetwork Women's Project delivers a number of activities, including street based outreach targeting women who are leading a street based life; street based outreach targeting those involved in street based prostitution and individually tailored</p>

	<p>one-to-one support. The outreach activities are held on two evening shifts in Edinburgh city centre and two late night shifts from 22.00 to 01.00, based in known areas of the city used by women involved in street based prostitution.</p> <p>The Women’s Clinic reports that women working on the streets have specific risks related to alcohol and substance use. Women are known to multiple agencies providing services on 5 nights a week. These include NHS Lothian, Another Way, Salvation Army, Streetwork. Needle exchange, condom supplies and signposting to other services are provided by all these agencies. An excellent system of confidential exchange about those women who have raised concerns has been established between these agencies.</p> <p>The Salvation Army reports that there have been attacks on women who work on the ‘street’, but that victims are reluctant to report them due to the affect this may have on their work. They have met with girls who have obvious marks on their body, faces, etc., who admit they have been attacked, but are reluctant to inform the police. In addition, many women report that the visibility of the Salvation Army Van enables them to feel ‘safer’, and many use the van as a place to chat and receive support. The van operates two nights in the week (Sunday and Monday), and between January and December 2014 there were 84 direct contacts with 18 indirect contacts.</p> <p>Another Way is formally linked with NHS Lothian and works in partnership with the Harm Reduction Team. The service provides a weekly presence in areas of the city of high activity, between 21.00 and midnight. The team’s van is used to meet women who are referred by the procurator fiscal service. This provides women with the opportunity to build trust with Council criminal justice social workers before engaging in a working relationship.</p>
<p>6.Improved intelligence and information gathering and sharing</p>	<p>The Women’s Clinic reports ongoing concerns regarding groups of young Romanian women being moved between venues in Edinburgh, elsewhere in Scotland and abroad. These matters have been reported to Police Scotland.</p> <p>To deliver outreach, Streetwork Women’s Project works in partnership with SACRO, NHS Neon/HRT, Salvation Army, AURORA and the Police Scotland Prostitution Liaison Officer in Edinburgh to ensure that the best service is provided to those involved in street-based prostitution. All the agencies develop and implement harm reduction strategies. To ensure that service delivery is consistent, an information sharing agreement has been established and an outreach shift log is completed at the end of each shift and shared among agencies. The outreach log details each agency’s contact with women and an observation of how the women presented. It is an important tool to highlight observations on sources of potential risks and to identify whether any new Ugly Mug reports were made.</p> <p>Police Scotland undertook specific analysis of the scale and extent of ‘on line’ sex work in Edinburgh and shared this with the Council and NHS Lothian to improve understanding and service interventions.</p> <p>The partners on the multi-agency group engaged with a number of academic studies over the year to share knowledge and information regarding the issues facing sex workers, and learning from service interventions.</p>
<p>7.Improved Sex Worker liaison in flats and escort agencies</p>	<p>NHS Lothian has undertaken a large piece of work collating the mobile phone numbers of all women advertising on four internet sites. A text message with information about services and how to contact them via email, mobile or text, as well as the times of the Women’s Clinic was sent out on 21 January 2015 to a total of 184 women. This has resulted in one additional recorded attendance at the clinic. There have been several calls to the phone (although many of these occur out of hours and</p>

	no message is left), and it is expected that these will increase. It is hoped to repeat this exercise on a regular basis.
8. History of sexual, physical or domestic abuse amongst sex workers	<p>The Women's Clinic reports that the women who attend the clinic who are involved in selling sex universally report some form of sexual, physical or domestic abuse. Work will continue to expand the range of effective interventions and support available for those affected.</p> <p>The Salvation Army reports some sex workers openly admit they are in an abusive relationship, and state they are forced to engage with prostitution to feed their partners' drug habit, as well as their own.</p>
9. Human trafficking	<p>All agencies involved in the delivery of this framework have been alerted to, and are aware of, the risks of human trafficking, and the need to follow agreed protocols and procedures if trafficking is known or suspected. There are ongoing concerns about EU nationals in this regard, which are being monitored by all agencies, including the police.</p> <p>The Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA) continues to provide support and advice through the Women's Clinic, but as a result of funding difficulties, their presence in the clinic has reduced recently. Edinburgh's multi-agency human trafficking protocol has been revised and is in the final stages of completion.</p>
10. Demand from people buying sex	There has been no work undertaken to tackle this particular matter in year one. However, this is a key priority for year two, in partnership with the new national group, which has been established (see below point 14 below)
11. Growth in those organisations and individuals organising the selling or buying of sex through the internet	The Women's Clinic reports that women working in saunas have also advertised on the internet. There is inadequate data to conclude whether this is increasing. Women tell the service that more of their colleagues are using the internet to generate income and attract business.
12. Lack of awareness of issues facing those involved in sex work	<p>The multi-agency group has enabled a much improved understanding amongst a wider range of partners of the issues facing those involved in sex work, mostly as a result of outreach work and clinic provision. Members of the group have also contributed to a number of academic studies in sex work over the past year.</p> <p>NHS Lothian staff report that they have a lot of experience of the issues facing female sex workers, along with other specialist organisations in Scotland. Outreach visits to saunas by NHS Lothian staff, and promotion of relationships of trust and holistic care within the Women's Clinic have enabled them to hear many women's stories, which provides insight into their lives.</p> <p>Based on this work, key issues identified are (i) mental health, (ii) alcohol and substance use, (iii) sexual ill-health, and (iv) unintended pregnancies. For non-UK women, these are particularly difficult issues, as their lack of English makes it difficult for them to access services. They also tend to be very transient.</p> <p>Women who attend the clinic also regularly report they are 'fearful' of being exposed, and of any consequent investigations and/or criminal charges. In this regard, there is a degree of anxiety regarding the forthcoming criminal cases of the owners of several</p>

	saunas in Lothian.
13. Improve multi-agency partnership governance arrangements and ensure the involvement of sex workers to inform policy and services	<p>NHS Lothian Public Health Division has continued to chair the Men and Women Involved in Sex Work Multi-Agency Group, and there has been continued attendance and participation at the group from Council, Police Scotland and third sector organisations.</p> <p>The involvement of sex workers in co-designing services is a theme in the development and delivery of services throughout the year. Specific good examples include the National Ugly Mugs Scheme, 'street work' services and 'outreach' services.</p> <p>In recognition of these innovative approaches, on 10 June 2014, Another Way was awarded a Care Accolade in the category of 'innovation and redesign' by the Scottish Social Services Council.</p>
14. Improve engagement with the Scottish Government with regards to developing national legislation, policy and improving service interventions	<p>During the reporting period, the Streetwork Women's Project facilitated a survey of women supported by the project on behalf of the Scottish Government. The survey sought to gather the views in relation to Scotland's strategy to address violence against women and girls. Streetwork Women's Project gathered service user's views on their needs, barriers to support and exiting prostitution. This will help to inform practice development as well as the strategic development of services for this vulnerable group.</p> <p>Agencies involved in the approach in Edinburgh have helped establish a National Group on the Health and Wellbeing of Sex Workers to improve policy and services for sex workers in Scotland. This work has been undertaken in partnership with Police Scotland and the Scottish Government. The Council hosted the first meeting on 10 March 2015.</p> <p>Scottish Government legislative and national policy developments, which impact on this area of work are (i) Scotland's National Action Plan to Tackle Child Sexual Exploitation (November 2014), (ii) Equally Safe - Scotland's Strategy to tackle violence against women and girls (June 2014); (iii) The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Bill 2014 and the (iv) Air Weapons and Licensing Bill (2014).</p>

Year Two key Improvement Actions

3.3 A number of improvement actions have been identified as a result of the analysis of year one progress. These are described below. The multi-agency group will work to deliver these during year two.

- (i) Current funding arrangements for many services require to be stabilised in year two to enable momentum and good practice to be sustained, particularly for work related to prevention and exiting.
- (ii) Explore the links between sex work, trafficking and lap dancing bars.
- (iii) Improve approaches to training and awareness-raising across the city, based on improved interventions and improved knowledge of the issues facing sex workers.
- (iv) Improve approaches to ensure the distribution of condoms and information relating to safe sex practices reaches men and women involved in selling sex in all locations.
- (v) Improve responses to men or women who call into services as a result of NHS Lothian text messaging.
- (vi) Improve approaches to referring women into support services for those who have reported suffering sexual, physical or domestic abuse.

- (vii) Improve approaches to service delivery with non-UK nationals engaged in sex work.
- (viii) Work to understand why people buy sex and what can be done to reduce the risks and demand from people who buy sex.
- (ix) Ensure work and service interventions that provide for routes out of sex work are a priority during 2015/16.
- (x) Ensure effective links between Edinburgh partners work to tackle sexual exploitation, including child sexual exploitation and the Harm Reduction Framework.

Measures of success

- 4.1 The table above indicates that the impact of partnership working in the delivery of the Framework is extensive. Specifically, measures relating to third sector service referrals and access indicate extensive contact with a 'hard to reach' group, with many positive outcomes. Data regarding exiting from sex work are also encouraging. Although trends reported in clinic access seem to indicate slight reductions in service access. In summary, many of the objectives set in the Framework area considered to be met for the reporting period.

Financial impact

- 5.1 Many services are delivered through mainstream NHS Lothian, City of Edinburgh Council or Police Scotland budgets. The majority of services are delivered by the third sector and are funded by NHS Lothian and Council budgets. This 'mixed economy' of mainstream service delivery and funded service delivery in the third sector is critical to address the needs of this complex and often 'hard to reach' group.
- 5.2 However, many third sector groups and some mainstream clinic services report that long term-funding instability is a significant issue. Specifically, Another Way, currently funded by the Volant Trust, Robertson Trust and NHS Lothian, is at considerable risk of closure as funds are not yet secured to sustain the service through 2015/2016. This matter is acknowledged as key improvement action for 2015.
- 5.3 This financial fragility is a factor in key related services, such as **Willow**, which is the subject of separate reporting arrangements to Committee.

Risk, policy, compliance and governance impact

- 6.1 The multi-agency group tasked with delivering the Framework manages all matters relating to risks, policy development, police and legislative compliance and provides for robust governance of a complex service delivery and policy area.

Equalities impact

- 7.1 Delivering the objectives of the Framework contribute to the Council and partners' legal responsibilities, as defined in the Equality Act (2010) public sector equality duty. Specifically, this work contributes to the advancing of equality of opportunity for men and

women involved in sex work and in tackling unlawful discrimination, harassment or prejudice.

Sustainability impact

8.1 The duties of the Climate Change (Scotland) Act 2009 have been considered in respect of this report. This assessment concludes that the delivery of objectives described in the Framework contributes to the Council and partners' social sustainability objectives.

Consultation and engagement

9.1 The following key activity has taken place – engagement with:

- all partner agencies involved in the multi-agency group
- sex workers to inform service delivery and improve understanding of the needs of sex workers
- Scottish Government to improve national policy, legislation and service interventions.

Background reading / external references

None

Michelle Miller
Chief Social Work Officer

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Links

Coalition pledges	Reducing poverty, inequality and deprivation Strengthening and supporting our communities and keeping them safe Ensuring Edinburgh, and its residents, are well cared for
Council outcomes	CO10 - Improved health and reduced inequalities CO15 - The public are protected CO21 - Safe – Residents, visitors and businesses feel that Edinburgh is a safe city
Single Outcome Agreement	SO1 - Edinburgh's economy delivers increased investment, jobs and opportunities for all

SO2 - Edinburgh's citizens experience improved health and wellbeing, with reduced inequalities in health

SO3 - Edinburgh's children and young people enjoy their childhood and fulfil their potential

SO4 - Edinburgh's communities are safer and have improved physical and social fabric

Appendices

None