



Bristol Women's Commission
Committed to achieving real equality for women in Bristol



Bristol Women's Commission

MINUTES

Meeting	Date	Time	Location
Bristol Women's Commission	26.03.21	09.00	Zoom
Attendees			
Penny Gane (PG), Chair Bristol Women's Voice and Bristol Women's Commission Andrea Dell (AD), BCC One City Ann James (AJ), Service Director BCC Helen Mott (HM), Independent consultant Jackie Longworth (JL), Member of The BWC Economy Task Group Diane Bunyan (DB), Economy Task Group Lead Anna Smith (AS), Chair of Women's Safety Task Group, Councillor Carole Johnson (Cllr. CJ), Labour Group Monira Chowdhury (MC), Health Task Group Lead Laura Williams (LW), Comms for BWC Sandra Meadows (SM), CEO Voscur Joanne Kaye (JK), Trade Union Congress Katy Taylor (KT), Director Bristol Women's Voice Sue Cohen (SC), BWC Economy Task Group Sophie Fernandes (SF), UHBW Sarah O'Leary (SO'L), Co chair Health TG Susan Durbin (SD), UWE Bristol Jonathan Downing (JD), Policy Advisor, Mayor's Office Kalpna Woolf (KW), CEO BeOnBoard, Founder 91Ways Laura Beynon (LB), Co chair Education TG Lorna Dallimore (LD), Avon and Somerset Police Zara Nanu (ZN), Chair, Women in Business Task Group			
Apologies	Minutes		
Fiona Jordan (FJ), UWE Bristol Cherene Whitfield (ChW), Equalities Team and Stepping Up Programme Manager Victoria Matthews (VM), Business West Joanne Ward (JW), Chief of Staff and Clerk at City of Bristol College Jude English (JE), Green Party, Bristol City Council	Lucy Ford (LF), ABS Business Support Officer Phoebe Burton (PB), Shadowing Patti Aberhart (PA), Editor		

Agenda

1. [9:00] **Intros & Apologies**
2. [9:05] **Minutes and Actions**
3. [9:15] **IWD Feedback: Penny Gane & Laura Williams**
4. [9:20] **Self-Injury During The Pandemic: Naomi Salisbury**
5. [9:30] **Domestic Violence Commission Report: Jonathan Downing**
6. [9:50] **Progress on Femicides: Anna Smith**
7. [10:00] **SEVs Update: Helen Mott**
8. [10:10] **Comms Update – Laura Williams**
9. [10:20] **Action Plan**
10. [10:20] **Memorandum of Understanding**
11. [10:35] **Budget 2021-22**
12. [10:45] **AOB**
13. [11:00] **Close**

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
1.	<p>Intros & Apologies The Chair welcomed and thanked everyone for coming to the meeting and apologies were presented.</p>	
2.	<p>Minutes and Actions The minutes were reviewed by ChW, however as ChW was in attendance for part of the meeting, she was unable to review the full minutes.</p> <p>Discussed the previous actions (please see action table attached).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AS highlighted that AP15 is still pending as she has not followed up with JT about meeting to discuss AS's upcoming programme. • MC expressed that AP16 is complete as initial contact has been made with JT about linking in with NHS employers. <p>Confirmed that the minutes and actions from the previous meeting will be signed off at the next meeting.</p>	

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
3.	<p>IWD Feedback: Penny Gane and Laura Williams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG: lots of videos produced for IWD and LW worked herself to the ground. <p>A lot has taken place which has impacted women, including the murder of Sarah Everard and the peaceful demonstrations which ended in violence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LW: following on from the video campaign of the 16 Days of Activism, coincided with 8th year anniversary of the Bristol Women's Commission LW confirmed that we hosted 10 videos of our own, which included the Mayor, Youth Mayor and the Chief Executive off CCG; the videos are still available on YouTube. This was also cascaded out to our OneCity partners and had good submissions from a range of organisations and pulled the whole campaign together on Flipboard. PG interviewed Thangam Debbonaire for 20 minutes which is on Vimeo and LW will also be pulling out some quotes. In the run up to IWD highlighted key achievements and she also included some Women History posts. LW confirmed that there has been lots of engagement; we have picked up 40 new followers on LinkedIn and 80 new followers on Twitter, with engagement up 300% and engagement up almost 300% on Instagram. <p>PG incredibly appreciative of the work that LW has done with this campaign.</p> <p>09:08 Chat LW: IWD overview: https://flipboard.com/@bwcommission/iwd21-dj56kk0oy</p> <p>End of Chat</p>	

4. Domestic Violence Commission Report: Jonathan Downing

JD displayed the slides regarding a report from Mayoral Commission on Domestic Abuse.

Feedback/Q&A

- SC agreed the intervention for single mothers as they get rarely discussed and noted that 70% of women go back to the perpetrator if they don't have support to get out of an abusive relationship; JD explained that this was his mother's experience and it strikes a chord with him, which is why a few of the recommendations will give that sector the recognition to continue that work.
- Cllr. CJ highlighted that this is brilliant work and wishes she could be a part of it. There is attention on the victim's children but she strongly feels that there should be a balance, otherwise the perpetrator moves onto another female and another family has the same experience, which can be worse and may end in death. Confirmed that there needs to be fit for purpose perpetrator programmes to stop this behaviour along with preventative measures
- JD explained that victims are so often asked to do the work, but it should be the other way around. JD noted that the final two recommendations are focusing on strategic work on perpetrators, with and without the criminal justice system but it is also about being trauma informed. They are working in the context of being limited with resources.
- Cllr.CJ discussed a culture shift and noted it is about learning about relationships. Confirmed that it is needed to go back to the pipeline to prevent it from happening in the minds first before it happens in reality.
- JK expressed that schools are important, but it is also about having the place for vulnerable people to be able to report this abuse. JK suggested that she hopes that employers sign up to the domestic violence policy. Also confirmed that she is leading an investigation about sexual harassment as when there are coercive control relationships taking place at home; women are then vulnerable in the workplace so want to look at our policies.
- PG highlighted that this is the reason the Zero Tolerance project was set up 5 years ago and that it covered every single point in the business policy, all the major organisations have signed up to Zero Tolerance and every point in the business section has been covered.
- PG expressed that it doesn't seem right to cover old ground, funding is needed for the Zero Tolerance project to happen again and for further improvements to be made.
- JD hopes this work can continue after May.
- LB confirmed that this is part of our safeguarding responsibility, eyes will be peeled on all our students and spot any behaviour changes. Explained that there will be ongoing conversations and support will be provided if possible. Also highlighted that she will check with their PHSE lead whether this is covered at a statutory level and if not, this can be raised in our larger group.
- **PG expressed that it is important that the education group looks at this PG noted that some teachers would not be good at handling this, and it may be better with the specialists.**
- LB confirmed that teachers are able to spot changes in behaviours, but a number of lessons could be drawn up to be delivered across the city.

ACTION 17: LB to check with the Education Task Group whether discussions about domestic abuse is included in PHSE lessons at a statutory level and to feedback at the next meeting.

LB

09:17 Chat

SF: I would like a copy of this too please

PG: Yes

AD: As a former housing officer better understanding and resources for those officers is really critical.

HM: Fire service were identified some years ago as potentially 'trusted' people who go into homes to do fire safety checks - they also should have training, not sure whether this is still the case as the equalities reference group for AFRS stopped meeting a few years ago

AD: There is a new-ish Chief Fire Officer, Mick Crennell, who seems really keen on wanting to step up the civic/wider work by the fire service so might be a good time to approach them.

KT: The council should undertake the DAHA accreditation and lead the way in their commitment to ensuring appropriate responses

<https://www.dahalliance.org.uk/what-we-do/accreditation-for-housing-providers/what-is-accreditation/>

?

HM: Whole school approach including the big independent school sector here - this week's (not surprising) revelations about rape culture in many independent schools illustrate the issues. **Bristol used to have a guide to addressing VAW in schools including reporting sexual harassment but it was presumably shelved at some point**

HM: Andrea this is good news about AFRS, we need capacity, we need women's sector VAW prevention officers to attend all these meetings and join up all this work

AD

AD: Jonathan - happy to chat to you about how we can keep the momentum going on that.

MC: role for major employers especially public sector

PG: yep Zero Tolerance

HM: Yes so much agree on self organising - also it's only with support that women have felt able to report as well (for example recent cases of women experiencing DV who were sexually exploited by police in whom they had placed their trust)

JD: the commission report can be accessed at

www.bristol.gov.uk/domesticabusereport

HM: Bristol university currently researching on coercive control in faith contexts, please share <https://sps.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/faith-and-coercive-control> **Action**

HM: Sorry <https://sps.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/faith-and-coercive-control>

HM: And POTENTIAL perpetrators - prevention needed

AS: If I don't get to say this because we run out of time, I think this is great work, a huge jump forward and love the starting with what is right for the victim. When all this is over, for Bristol to be a leading city, we also need in person perpetrator programmes and work F2F in the community with BAME groups to learn how to work with these groups (as F2F) is the most effective way of doing this. The meeting I am going to is looking at embedding more long-term support for women, not just crisis response and the trauma informed approach Jonathan has just alluded to. Thank you

SM: Really pleased there is such focus on this issue and thanks to Jonathan for the report overview. 5/6 years ago we had The Freedom Prog delivered via Children's Centres right across the city. Agreeing with Sue, programmes that bring diverse groups of women together are critical, particularly for those who become single mothers. I think we've only got 3

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
	<p>FP's left in the city. Can we rebuild citywide, community-based delivery? if not this programme then something similar?</p> <p>KT: Preventative work needs to begin young - with whole-school strategy to tackling sexism and racism. And ensuring 'ACE's' and trauma work is gendered and has a gendered analysis</p> <p>HM: Important to be clear that it's boys who experienced it may perpetrate - girls experience it and tend not to which is why we need gendered approach</p> <p>SM: Important point Helen.</p> <p>Cllr. CJ: please can you that back Jonathan to the commissioners or developers of this programme. Thank you. Carole Johnson Action JD</p> <p>LD: Apologies for my lateness - I had an operational matter to attend to.</p> <p>AD: Jonathan, suggest that we take this take this to the Children and Young People's Board as a priority and also to the all the other boards and also discuss with the new Night Time Economy Advisor - think this was in your plans but happy to support Action JD</p> <p>KW: I agree Penny!</p> <p>Cllr.DLM CJ: How much funding do we need?</p> <p>KW: Thanks Jonathon - very comprehensive report</p> <p>Cllr.DLM CJ: Awww thanks Jonathan!!!!</p> <p>LB: As teachers, it is a key part of our safeguarding responsibility to be aware that DV may be something our students are experiencing and to spot the signs. It is not uncommon for us to pick up the phone and open a conversation with a family in this regard. I will investigate whether DV is included within the statutory PSHE curriculum and will raise this with the Education Task Force when we meet after Easter.</p> <p>SM: Thanks Jonathan!</p> <p>MC: BWC zero tolerance needs picking up again rather than starting new again</p> <p>AJ: I really agree - thanks Jonathan. Want to just highlight the intersectionality with poverty and the pressures this brings to families/relationships - as we come out of covid we need these overt commitments backed by our commissioning and actions more than ever</p> <p>KT: Thank you Jonathan.</p> <p>HM: It is</p> <p>SO'L: I'm very sorry but I have to leave now. Thank you, Jonathon, your passion and work around pulling this all together means we have principles and recommendations that have victim-survivor voice at the centre, and looking forward to the ongoing work to make real change.</p> <p>JD: thanks everyone, I've copied the points in the chat so I've got a record - thank you all for your time :)</p> <p>DB: Ann's point is really important. As representatives of large employers in the City we have a lot of power through commissioning and procurement to ensure that domestic violence and sexual harassment policies are adopted and enforced by our suppliers.</p> <p>End of Chat</p>	

5. **Progress on Femicides: Anna Smith**

- AS fed back that she wanted research completed into femicides and she wanted to address the issues included in a letter.
- AS confirmed that one of the issues was to measure and analyse the nature of femicides in the last few years and whether they have had any contact with services.
- AS explained that she met with Ivan Powell (ex-police now BCC) and he agreed with the content in the letter, so progress is being made and said they will be meet again soon.
- PG agreed that progress has been made even though it is slow, but it did start out as asking for funding. Is this no longer the case?
- AS noted that this is not a huge piece of work, information is being gathered about DHRs and any statistics around this and to also lower the homicide rate in Bristol. PG highlighted that the statistics are quite staggering.
- AS expressed that she is not sure if the deaths has increased during COVID but with the Sarah Everard case, there has been an outpouring of grief.
- Cllr.CJ confirmed that she is also Deputy Bench for Avon and Somerset, charges have been looked at and the numbers have gone down. Cllr.CJ explained that they are hearing from every other organisation and that there is a third in increased cases
- Cllr.CJ queried whether people have dropped from pressing charges that dialogue is continuing with probation. Cllr. CJ expressed the need to make sure people are getting the support they need to report.
- LD highlighted that they have seen an increase of reporting but after lockdown this is expected to grow, historical reporting will also come through.
- Cllr. CJ asked if this is relating to charges and LD confirmed she was not sure.
- PG asked LD to look into why cases were not getting to magistrates' courts. **Action LD**
- AS expressed that many services are operating on a skeleton level but with sexual violence, there is a huge reluctance to report this.
- AS highlighted that there was quite an interesting idea by the Scottish Courts about making reporting more humane.
- LD confirmed that there has been a robust response to domestic abuse, but that the figures will need to be reviewed.

ACTION 18: LD to look at the reporting and the figures of sexual violence and domestic abuse in Avon and Somerset Police and why cases are not getting to the courts

- Cllr.DLM CJ highlighted that her comments are not a criticism, she was just saying that because of COVID it is difficult.
- LD noted that some women may still be living with the perpetrator.
- AJ explained that there is an analysis of domestic reports, there is definitely an increase, but it is not increased by a third in terms of charges.
- AJ expressed that they also are not able to withstand the emotional energy, so the insight team can be approached to see if they can shed any light.

ACTION 19: AJ to feedback to her insight team and ask for any information and statistics from the analysis of domestic reports.

09:59 Chat

LD

AJ

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
	<p>Cllr.DLM CJ: has this increased in covid?</p> <p>KW: Do we know which communities this happens in most?</p> <p>ZN: apologies for being late, I was caught up in some meetings at work</p> <p>LW: I saw some really useful data on this from US at UN Women event - students combining google search data with helpline calls and police stats. Would be great to get this level data for Bristol.</p> <p>AS: I would suggest that people are not reporting as they are not able to access services and there is also a backlog in the courts. There is also very poor confidence in the courts and the system in getting "justice" with 1..4% conviction rate for rape</p> <p>End of Chat</p>	

6.

SEVs Update: Helen Mott

- PG fed back that the SEVs has had a lot of media attention and have reached the national media.
- HM highlighted that both Glasgow and Leeds have been in the news this week about SEVs and she explained that there are listeners but no one is being resourced.
- HM thanked the people who have been supportive, as the narrative has been captured and it could not be more critical. SEVs aren't given the attention deserved so need to further work on gender equality.
- HM expressed that it is clear that this will be won or lost in the next 6 months and it will directly affect the work that is currently being carried out. HM explained that the messaging will be mixed about what is and is not appropriate.
- HM asked PG whether she wants more general feedback from the safety task group.
- PG explained that all these things are well documented, and we have taken them to every hearing.
- PG noted that there has been good representation from universities and TUCs, need to put the message out there to say that it is not about putting women out of work and need to put out Q&As on the website and sent out.
- PG highlighted that there are very few of us in this campaign so if there are other people who are interested in this work, especially younger women, there will be a better representation.
- PG expressed that if the argument can be sorted in a clear way, then that will be important.
- HM noted that there needs to be a city-wide strategic approach, so unless a different stance is taken, it will fall down.
- HM fed back that sexual harassment on public transport has not been taken seriously until this week where there has been an invitation received to the transport board, so there may be questions raised then.

10:14 Chat

AD: Be good to bring in the new Night Time Economy Advisor, Carly Heath, who starts early April and is based in the City Office, if you haven't already connected with her.

AD: * Heath not Health!

LW: Carly is vocally opposed to nil cap.

MC: I need to leave before 10:30, to add to MOU Health Task Group first priority is to refresh health strategy, second priority is likely around mental health but difficult as task group and/or commission have little control on what we can deliver independently so other area could be BHP HIT integration on women's health

AD: Ah, Laura I wasn't aware of that intel. I think it would be good at a point to have a dialogue with her on this topic and also on the wider NTE and Women's safety/empowerment - happy to broker something but only if the Commission if thinks helpful.

KW: Well done Helen - you not alone!

LW: Definitely, Andrea!

MC: can we ensure "honour" based violence is included in domestic abuse & sexual violence work

HM: Andrea, I am the chair of the safety task group of the @Night panel - the policy group including Keith Rundle and others wrote in support of SEVs - it's a very significant problem

SM: Helen, your commitment and dedication to this issue on behalf of us all is very much appreciated, particularly as this has been such a long, frustrating and no doubt exhausting road. Thank you.

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	<p>MC: reminder govt call for evidence to improve health & wellbeing of women in England is currently live</p> <p>LB: I am sorry, I need to go and teach now. Thank you!</p> <p>MC: currently national review of maternity services in relation disproportionate outcomes for BAME women</p> <p>PG: we also have local report</p> <p>End of Chat</p>	

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
7.	<p>Comms Update: Laura Williams</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LW provided a run through of everything she has done in the last five months, as her contract is ending soon. • LW confirmed that she has created a comms handbook with the logins and how different types of comms are handled. • LW explained that she has also updated the contact list and specified who wants to speak to the media and created a stakeholders list. • LW also noted that she has created a WhatsApp group to share media links which has 14 members and she will also finish off the comms toolkit which will be shared by the end of the month. • LW expressed that she has also refreshed the BWC website and has now got separate pages for the task groups, which will also include key achievements but they are thin and need more input • LW highlighted that she is running a monthly blog for Bristol Women’s Commission on Bristol Women’s Voice/BWC page. • LW confirmed that she decided against a Facebook page, but instead launched a LinkedIn page. • An Instagram channel has been launched for the campaign side of things. • LW explained that Twitter has grown from 120 followers to 523 followers which shows people of note are following and talking about the Commission. • LW said she has created a press release template, and she has developed key relationships with journalists as they are asking for the Commission’s input about SEVs. • LW highlighted that a more reactive approach has been taken on SEVs, the resource being one of them but making sure counter-arguments are clear • A more proactive approach will be taken from June, as there will be more noise around this during this time. <p>PG explained that LW does all her work over one day a week at the moment. PG highlighted that on behalf of everyone, she wanted to say how amazing LW has been doing the Comms and it has made a massive impact.</p> <p>PG expressed that with the election videos, the task groups have been asked to send questions to the different candidates for the elections and only one question has been received so far.</p> <p>ACTION 20: Task Groups to send questions to PG to ask the candidates for this year’s elections.</p> <p>10:25 Chat ZN: Laura your work has been brilliant LW: Thank you, Zara! KW: Does that include WECA election too Penny? HM: Yes is that Metro Mayor Penny mentioned it KW: Ah ok. Thank you.</p> <p>End of Chat</p>	<p>Task Groups</p>

Agenda Item	Discussion Points/ Outcomes & Actions	Actions
8.	<p>Action Plan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG confirmed that the full council report will need to be ready for full council in November. PG added that the work is more important than the action plan itself and if groups want to change focus, there is an opportunity to do that. ZN highlighted that her group will shortly submit an update as a meeting has recently taken place. <p>PG expressed that ChW was going to be presenting this but it can be discussed at the next meeting.</p>	
9.	<p>Memorandum of Understanding This item was not discussed in the agenda today.</p>	
10.	<p>Budget 2021-2022</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG confirmed that they have a budget of £5000 and KT has explained that there is an underspend of £1000 equalling £6000. PG noted that she would like to keep LW on, this would cover half a day a week, or whether projects should be funded instead. HM expressed she would fully support in investing in Comms, but that more money is needed. KT agreed to fully support funding of Comms. SC highlighted that to spend that money on a project, it would not go far, but with Comms it is a great way to spend the money. ZN suggested that we really need to fund this. SM asked if another £5000 could be sourced and if this would fund one day a week of work? PG responded that it would. SM stated those conversations can be had to find this extra money. <p>ACTION 21: SM to have a conversation with Voscur about finding extra money to fund the Comms role.</p> <p>10:30 Chat Cllr.DLM CJ: I agree with you Penny KW: Could we crowdfund for this? KW: Try SMV's?? SM: Exactly Kalpna! And yes Andrea! Let's chat...</p> <p>End of Chat</p>	SM
11.	<p>AOB</p> <p>PG</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> PG confirmed that Patti Aberhart is going on maternity leave and thanked her for her support and help with the Bristol Women's Commission. PA highlighted her intention was to return by the middle of next year (2022). <p>PG ended the meeting by thanking everyone for their attendance and said it felt productive.</p>	
12.	<p>Close of Meeting.</p>	

Actions: Please refer to the separate Action Table Document which has been updated to reflect actions from this meeting.