**YOUTH JUSTICE PRACTICE DEVELOPMENT GROUP**

**VULNERABLE GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN**

**Reporting to**

* The Vulnerable Girls and Young Women Champions Group

**Remit**

* To share and improve policy and practice in working with vulnerable girls and young women involved in offending and other high risk behaviours. The group will work towards developing more effective responses to girls and young women’s needs across the range of agencies who work with those identified as being a risk to themselves or others.

Key Tasks will include:

* Influencing policy and practice development at a local and national level
* Examining current research and supporting additional and up to date research on what works for girls and young women
* Capturing, extracting and disseminating good practice and supporting practitioners in service development and delivery
* Examining the need for gender sensitive training in approaches to working with girls and young women and in delivering gender specific evidence based programmes
* Promoting interventions and practice to prevent girls and young women becoming involved in the adult criminal justice system
* Promoting interventions to divert from prosecution and as alternatives to secure care or custody
* Raising awareness of the particular needs of vulnerable girls and young women through good practice guidance, conferences and networks

**Note of the meeting held on Thursday 1st August 2013 at 11am in Strathclyde University**

**Present**

Linda Robb, CYCJ (chair)

Linda Grant, Aberdeen City Council

David Cotterell, Scottish Government

Liz Pinkett, Glasgow City Council

Helen Jones, Barnardos

Olive Arens, Up-2-Us

Melanie McLeod, Dundee City Council

Grace Lyndsay, Edinburgh City Council

Julie Philp, Dundee City Council

**Apologies**

Karen Bowie, Dundee City Council

Maureen McGuire, Renfrewshire Council

Carole Dearie, Good Shepherd

Jen Copley, Kibble

Lisa Merone, Glasgow City Council

**Notes of Previous Meeting and Matters Arising**

There were no matters arising

**Member Update**

LR apologized for the cancellation of the previous meeting and informed the group that this was due to the “knock on” effect of the cancellation of the VGYW Champions Group because of lack of attendance. The Champions Group has been rescheduled and the next meeting will review membership and reconsider priorities identified in the action plan.

LR reported that the application for funding for the Lifelines media project has now been submitted and we are awaiting a decision. It is hoped that the project could begin in October/November of this year.

SASO are due to publish the latest journal and an article on girls and young women is to be included. LR agreed to send this to the group when it becomes available.

DC reported on the secure contract and a forthcoming practitioners event on 14th August looking at outcomes. DC will send details to LR for circulation.

OA reported that an information/research worker linked to Time for Change has been appointed for 3 years. OA has recently completed the 3 year evaluation of TfC and will forward the report to LR for circulation and discussion at the next meeting.

MMcL reported that Dundee City has secured a 2 year SG funded CJ pilot. Dundee have evidenced a reduction in remands, custody and compliance and have received a commendation from SSSC. There will be three new posts attached to the pilot – a development post, mental health nurse and welfare rights.

GL reported that Edinburgh is currently looking at diversion from prosecution and the use of pre-referral screening for 16 and 17 year olds. Services are being reviewed including partner agency involvement.

LG reported an increase in car crime by young women in Aberdeen particularly the theft of high range models. A possible programme to address this is being considered. A pilot diversionary group for girls is currently running over the summer break.

HJ informed the group that Plan B@s three year funding finishes in November of this year but it is hoped that a six month extension will be secured to embed through care for short term prisoners within the remit of SPS and to engage with community partners.HJ also reported that there continues to be an issue regarding 72 hour reviews for young people in custody. LR will convey this to the chair of the transitions group.

LP reported that the Glasgow Young Women’s Centre is currently working with approximately 30 young women, including several returning to the community from custody. The service is currently looking at long term educational aims and outcomes. At present Glasgow has three young women in secure care.

**Practice Network Events**

LR informed the group that the practice networks with the theme of girls and young women, originally scheduled for September 2013, will now be held in March/April 2014. The plan is to host three separate events in Dundee, Glasgow and Ayrshire. LR requested ideas/suggestions as to what shape the events might take and possible keynote speakers.

**Trauma Event**

Dr Richard Greenwald from the Trauma Institute/ Child Trauma Institute bases in the USA, is coming to Scotland to undertake some trauma training within the secure estate. DC reported that this is part of an SG funded pilot within Rossie and is being supported by Dr Ian Barron from Dundee University. It is proposed to invite Dr Greenwald to present some of his work to a wider audience and a date has been set for 26th November. Details have yet to be finalized.

**Zero Tolerance Pilot**

LR Met with Liz Ely from Zero Tolerance and it was agreed that the pilot “Under Pressure” programme would go ahead with a group of young women and staff who are in receipt of high risk services. It is anticipated that this will take place November/December this year and LR will arrange a planning meeting with all parties. LR requested comments on the programme content and suggestions for any amendments or additions.

**Case Studies**

The VGYW Champions Group has identified a need for a scoping exercise around the need for an alternative to secure care which addresses social, emotional and mental health needs for high risk girls and young women who have experienced trauma. LR requested that group members complete a questionnaire in respect of one young woman they have had contact with recently to support this process. Responses will be anonymous and no individual will be identified by geography or any other means. The purpose is to have some “live” examples of issues faced by young women whose only option at present is secure care. LR requested that the questionnaires be returned by Friday 23rd August.

**Locality Practitioner Groups**

LR/LG gave an overview and brief update on the Aberdeen VGYW Practitioners Group. It is hoped that this could be replicated in other localities to look at current services and practice and to assist in the development of current best practice. MMcL and GL agreed to discuss this with colleagues in respect of Dundee and Edinburgh. LR will contact other local authorities who have previously expressed an interest in this.

**Membership of Group**

The group is in need of additional membership to reflect the range of work and to take forward the priorities identified by the VGYW Champions Group. A request has been included in the latest CYCJ bulletin and the group were also asked to consider anyone who is interested and committed to this area of work.

**AOCB**

There was no other business

**Date of Next Meeting**

Future dates will be circulated following the VGYW Champions Group meeting on 29th August