**YOUTH JUSTICE CHAMPIONS GROUP**

**VULNERABLE GIRLS AND YOUNG WOMEN**

**Reporting to:**

* Youth Justice Strategic Group

**Objective:**

To give a strong voice to vulnerable girls and young women in the development of policies which affect their lives, and to influence changes in systems, cultures and practices which can

improve their experiences and promote better life chances.

**Note of the Meeting held on Thursday 29th August at 11am in Atlantic Quay**

**Present:**

Karen Nowland, Renfrewshire Council (Chair)

Linda Robb, CYCJ

David Cotterell, Scottish Government

Carole Dearie, Good Shepherd Secure Unit

Olive Arens, Up-2-Us

Helen Jones, Barnardos

Moyra Hawthorn, CELCIS

Stuart Robertson, Scottish Prison Service

Karen Bowie, Dundee City

Wendy Churcher, Aberdeen City

Lyndsay Abrines, SCRA

Angela Morgan, Includem

**Apologies:**

Susan Batchelor, Glasgow University

Dorothy Hawthorn, Renfrewshire Council/ADSW

Amy Copsey, Scottish Throughcare/Aftercare Forum

Chris Wright, Scottish Government

**Feedback from National Youth Justice Strategic Group**

KN gave feedback on the issues relevant to VGYW and noted that the minutes from the Strategic Group can be found on the SG website.

KN Advised that progress had been made on the issue of the need for more robust, evidence based mental health support for high risk and vulnerable girls and young women. A meeting has been scheduled for Monday 2nd September with Linda De Caestecker, Director of Public Health, Greater Glasgow and Clyde, Geoff Huggins, Head of Mental Health Policy, Scottish Government, and other senior health colleagues. KN, DH and Tom Phillibin, SCRA and Chair of the High Risk Champions Group, will attend along with Dr John Marshall, Clinical Lead, Complex Care Pathways for Young People, Greater Glasgow and Clyde. The aim of the meeting is to discuss how partners can work together to better meet the needs of young people who have been exposed to trauma and abuse. The meeting will begin to scope the level and nature of the demand for services for young people with multiple and complex problematic behaviours and the potential for health to support frontline staff in statutory and third sector organisations in delivering services. KN will report back to the VGYW Champions Group the outcome of this meeting.

**VGYW Champions Group Work Plan – Priorities and Actions**

There was a discussion regarding the current membership of the VGYW Champions Group and representation from health and education. KN advised that SG Health colleagues were unable to nominate a suitable representative however support and assistance for workplan has been provided by Penny Curtis. She will continue to be the Health link for the group.

It was suggested that consideration should be given to the role of the Care Inspectorate in respect of information they may bring regarding young women who come into secure care. It was agreed that there is a need for some representation to support the interface with mainstream children’s services specifically the need for sufficient capacity and training in evidence based practice, particularly within residential care. There is also a need to consider the interface with adult services.

There was a view that to avoid this group becoming too large, representation could be requested for particular pieces of work in the action plan.

A discussion took place regarding vulnerable young women and education. Several issues were raised including LAAC responsibilities, psychological assessment and support, returning to education from secure care. It was agreed that a focussed discussion would take place at the next meeting considering exclusions and gender differences, alternatives to mainstream services and employment opportunities.

LA reported that SCRA are unable to progress the proposal for a pro-forma to record secure care decisions. A suggestion was made that there may be a need to briefing/training sessions for workers involved in providing assessments to hearings where secure care is being considered. If there was more comprehensive information contained in assessments regarding alternatives to secure care and consideration given to these alternatives, this may provide the information required to track decision making. It was agreed that LR would discuss with colleagues in CYCJ and also with the VGYW Practitioner Development Group.

Initial feedback from the Scottish Government suggests that the application for funding for the media project with girls in secure care will be supported, however, formal advice is awaited. KN will seek formal agreement from the next National Youth Justice Strategy Group in September.

DC gave an update on the training in trauma work being undertaken with staff in Rossie. This is being led by Dr Ian Barron from Dundee University and Dr Ricky Greenwald from the Trauma Institute and Child Trauma Institute. Dr Greenwald will be in Scotland in November and the intention is to hold a seminar on 26th November in Glasgow to introduce his work to youth justice practitioners. Details will be confirmed.

LR informed the group that the practitioner networks focussing on girls and young women have been rescheduled for March 2014. LR will convene a small working group to plan for these events.

**Presentation and Discussion – Olive Arens, Up-2-Us**

Time for Change – 3 years on

OA presented an overview of the work of Time for Change with vulnerable young women and highlighted some of the key issues and challenges.

(See attached presentation)

**AOCB**

There was no other business

Actions

1. KN to feedback to the group re meeting with Health on 2 September.

2. Care Inspectorate to be invited to join the group.

3. Agreed that dedicated Health representative is not required at this time – good links made between the group and SG Health colleagues who are supporting our workplan.

4. Education issues for vulnerable and high risk girls to be discussed at next meeting and actions agreed as appropriate. Members should come prepared with information relevant to their service to inform this discussion.

5. LR to discuss with colleagues at CYCJ opportunities for training for practitioners re risk assessments and presentations to the Children’s Panel.

6. LR to convene working group to progress planning for network events.

**Date of Next Meeting**

Thursday 28th November at 11am, venue to be confirmed.