



Subject:	Draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan/Council's Reaccreditation of the Safe Employer and Safe Place Awards
Date:	15th December, 2023
Reporting Officer:	Christine Sheridan, Director of Human Resources
Contact Officer:	Catherine Christy HR Manager - Development

Restricted Reports

Is this report restricted? Yes No

Please indicate the description, as listed in Schedule 6, of the exempt information by virtue of which the council has deemed this report restricted.

Insert number

1. Information relating to any individual
2. Information likely to reveal the identity of an individual
3. Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the council holding that information)
4. Information in connection with any labour relations matter
5. Information in relation to which a claim to legal professional privilege could be maintained
6. Information showing that the council proposes to (a) to give a notice imposing restrictions on a person; or (b) to make an order or direction
7. Information on any action in relation to the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime

If Yes, when will the report become unrestricted?

After Committee Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
After Council Decision	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sometime in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>
Never	<input type="checkbox"/>

Call-in

Is the decision eligible for Call-in? Yes No

1.0	Purpose of Report/Summary of Main Issues
1.1	The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on the Women's Steering Group's response to the Executive Office's consultation on Ending Violence against Women and Girls

	and the Council's recent reaccreditation of the Onus employer Safe Place and Safe City Awards.
2.0	Recommendation
2.1	The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report and the Council's reaccreditation of the ONUS Safe Place Platinum employers' award and the Onus Safe City award.
3.0	Main Report
3.1	<p>TEO Consultation</p> <p>The consultation ran for 13 weeks from 4th July to 3rd October, 2023 and sought views on the new draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls and Foundational Action Plan, being led by the Executive Office (TEO). The seven-year (2023-2030) Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls has been co-designed with over 50 partners from across government, community and voluntary sectors and organisations, as well as wider society. Importantly, these partners also include those with lived experience. It sets the agenda for all of government and society here to end violence against women and girls. (A summary of the TEO consultation is attached).</p> <p>Strategic Framework Content</p>
3.2	The Vision of the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is a changed society where women and girls are free from all forms of gender-based violence, abuse and harm including the attitudes, systems and structural inequalities that cause them.
3.3	<p>The aim of the Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls is to work together as partners across every sector of society to prevent and eradicate all forms of violence against women and girls with a focus on root causes with four broad themes identified:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Prevention; 2. Protection and Provision; 3. Justice System; and 4. Working Better Together <p>Outcomes</p> <p>Six big changes were identified and grouped into outcomes, namely:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Changed attitudes, behaviours, and social norms; 2. Healthy, respectful relationships;

3. Women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere;
4. Quality frontline services, protection, and provision for victims and survivors of violence against women and girls;
5. A justice system which has the confidence of victims, survivors and the public in its ability to address violence against women and girls; and
6. All of government and society working better together to end violence against women and girls.

Women's Steering Group Response

3.4 The Women's Steering Group (WSG) was established in 2006 to develop and the deliver the Council's Gender Action Plan, aimed at promoting gender equality both within the Council and across the city of Belfast. WSG proactively supports programmes aimed at ensuring women and girls are safe and feel safe everywhere and is keen to explore how the council, and local government in general, can support the prevention of violence against women and girls. A response to the consultation has been sent to TEO on behalf of Women's Steering Group, (please see Appendix 2.) The response emphasises the important role that local government has to play in delivering the framework and achieving the outcomes.

3.5 On 21st November, the WSG hosted a delegation from The Executive Office who presented on the Ending Violence Against Women and Girls, Draft Strategic Framework and Foundational Action Plan. The Executive Office has subsequently been asked to present to the Corporate Management Team and this will be followed by a workshop with council officers in relevant departments to consider how council can help deliver the action plan.

ONUS Safe Place Platinum Employers' award and the Onus Safe City award.

3.6 An important element of the Gender Action plan is ongoing work to raise awareness around domestic violence and abuse, promote a zero-tolerance approach and provide support for those experiencing domestic abuse. Our workplace policy and activities and our work with partners across the city to raise awareness and provide support has been recognised again this year at the Onus Annual Awards with the Council being reaccredited with the Platinum Employers award and the Safe City award.

Financial and Resource Implications

3.7 There are no additional financial or human resource implications in this report.

3.8	<p><u>Equality or Good Relations Implications/Rural Needs Assessment</u></p> <p>An EQIA and Rural Needs Impact assessment on the Draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls has been carried out by TEO.</p>
4.0	<p>Documents Attached</p>
	<p>Appendix 1 - Summary of TEO consultation on draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) and Foundational Action Plan</p> <p>Appendix 2 – Women’s Steering Group response to TEO consultation on draft Strategic Framework to End Violence Against Women and Girls (EVAWG) and Foundational Action Plan</p>