

Addressing Violence Against Women and Girls in Jersey

Response to the Taskforce report from the
Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

27 March 2024

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Ministerial Foreword

I am pleased to receive the report of the Taskforce on Violence against Women and Girls, and to accept its recommendations.

The theme of the report is that while we can be rightly proud of our record of public safety, and supportive of Jersey's reputation as a calm and secure community, no special rules apply to the Island in terms of violence against women and girls or domestic abuse. Out of sight of the majority of the public, the same problems exist. Inequality, distrust of institutions, stigmatisation, the reluctance of victims to speak out and resistance to bad news are all features of our society, just as they are in all others.

I do not believe that things have to be this way. Only a few generations ago there was no thought of looking inside the home to challenge harmful or even violent behaviour. As our social understanding has changed, there has been a dawning realisation that women cannot be treated as property, protection has been put in place against overt violence within the family, sexual autonomy has been provided for married women, and most recently, we have recognised in law that persistent levels of coercive behaviour cause life-long harm to the victim and the family.

While we have made heartening progress in the past decades, the work of strengthening rights and eliminating violence against women and girls in Jersey is not complete. Other jurisdictions have gone further and so can we. Nothing in this report is truly a novelty, as all the Taskforce's proposals are drawn from measures being taken elsewhere to meet the same problems in much the same context.

I am sure that the conclusions of this report will make uncomfortable reading for some people. It is always challenging to have the flaws in a system highlighted, especially one in which so many passionate people have devoted themselves to improving lives.

I am committed to implementing the recommendations in this report.

Where a response from the wider government is required, I have committed to engaging with my colleagues to take the recommendations forward.

Where the recommendations are directed at organisations outside government, I hope and expect that they will be accepted, and I will be engaging with all parties individually to press for this.

We as a government are also committed to transparent, timely and accurate reporting of the actions of government and its partners, in the form of an annual progress report and an action plan for each year going forwards. In addition, we have agreed to consider and highlight the implications for equality of all major proposals in each year's government plan.

I would like to thank Kate Wright, the Chair of the Taskforce, and all the members who generously contributed their time and knowledge to completing this landmark report, as well as the victim-survivors who have supported the work of the taskforce by bravely sharing their experiences.



Deputy Mary Le Hegarat

Minister for Justice and Home Affairs

The structure of this response

The majority of the Government recommendations are addressed to me as the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs, and I have responded to those directly. Where recommendations have been made to my colleagues, I have consulted with them to prepare this response.

This is an initial response, which outlines how we will meet each recommendation in general terms. As 58 of the 77 recommendations are directed to Government, we have not yet been able to make detailed plans to meet each one, but we remain committed to doing so.

More detailed reporting on the recommendations will follow as plans are developed, and we have committed to reporting on plans and progress on an annual basis.

This response is in three parts.

The first part is the main body of the response, which details the next steps we will take towards implementing the recommendations directed at the Government of Jersey. For ease of reference, these are grouped into themes.

Annex 1 is an implementation plan, which indicates when I intend to carry out the various actions that have been directed to me as Minister for Justice and Home Affairs. Other Ministers will publish their implementation arrangements as they are developed, and it is my hope that the other organisations to whom recommendations have been directed will also make their intentions public in due course.

Annex 2 is a full list of the Taskforce recommendations, which clearly indicates to which part of government, or to which service outside of government, the relevant recommendation has been directed.

Ratification of the Istanbul Convention

Recommendation 1 – Extension of the Istanbul Convention

The Taskforce recommended that the Government of Jersey should seek extension of the Council of Europe Convention on Preventing and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence 2013 (‘the Istanbul Convention’).

Next Steps

The Government is committed to pursuing the extension of the Istanbul Convention. We will identify and undertake the reform that is needed to ensure that Jersey is in line with the requirements of the Convention. This will include improving data collection on violence against women and girls and introducing emergency barring orders within the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022, alongside other measures.

Legislative reform

Recommendation 8 – Sexual Harassment in Public Spaces

The Taskforce recommended that the Government of Jersey should strengthen legislation to combat sexual harassment and misogynistic behaviour towards women and girls in public spaces.

Next Steps

The Government of Jersey will explore options to strengthen legislation to combat sexual harassment towards women and girls in public spaces, including exploring the viability of developing an offence of sexual harassment in public spaces.

Recommendation 10 – Regulation of Online Platforms

The Taskforce recommended that the Government of Jersey should regulate online platforms to ensure they are protecting their users.

Next Steps

Regulating online spaces controlled by international platforms is always challenging for smaller jurisdictions like Jersey. While we will try to provide Islanders with a level of protection similar to that of the UK or EU, we will also try to offer citizens a quicker remedy through efficient law enforcement than would be possible in larger countries with more complex enforcement structures.

Recommendation 11 – Online and Technology-Facilitated Abuse

The Taskforce recommended that the Government of Jersey reviews and strengthens legislation around forms of online and technology-facilitated abuse.

Next Steps

I will criminalise cyber flashing and the use of deep fakes through amendments to the Sexual Offences (Jersey) Law 2018. I will also amend this piece of legislation so that the offence of voyeurism is reliant on the absence of consent, without the need to prove specific motives.

I will also ensure that cyberstalking is criminalised under the new stalking offence (see next steps for recommendation 28).

Recommendation 24 – Emergency Barring Orders

The Taskforce recommended that emergency barring orders should be introduced into the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 and that an accountability mechanism for their use by the police force should be established in their design.

Next Steps

I will amend the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 to introduce pre-conviction emergency barring orders into this piece of legislation, which is also a requirement of recommendation 1, to fulfil the requirements of the Istanbul Convention.

I will work with the Law Officers' Department and the Courts to understand previous concerns regarding the introduction of emergency barring orders within this piece of legislation and work to ensure these concerns are mitigated.

Recommendation 25 – Non-Fatal Strangulation

The Taskforce recommended that non-fatal strangulation should be named as a standalone offence.

Next Steps

I will amend the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 to include an offence of non-fatal strangulation.

Recommendation 28 – Stalking

The Taskforce recommended stalking should be introduced as a named offence.

Next Steps

Whilst I recognise that stalking is already criminalised under the Crime (Disorderly Conduct and Harassment) (Jersey) Law 2008, I accept that further legislative development in this area may support the successful prosecution of stalking behaviour and offer victims of this behaviour additional protections. For these reasons I will develop legislation to introduce an offence of stalking. I will ensure that stalking behaviours that are facilitated through the use of technology (called 'cyberstalking') are also criminalised under these legislative reforms. I will also consider the option of introducing stalking protection orders to offer better and more immediate protection to victims of stalking behaviour.

Recommendation 70 – Mandatory Post-Custodial Supervision

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should resume efforts to develop a statutory system of post-custodial supervision for offenders who have been sentenced to imprisonment for six months or longer. They also recommended that such arrangement should ensure that offenders are supported to navigate a range of services upon their release and that these services should receive training to better understand their role in supporting offenders to reintegrate into the community.

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to undertake work to develop this system of Post-Custodial Supervision as a matter of priority.

Data Development

Recommendation 3 – Centralised VAWG Data Set

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should review all of the data collected on VAWG in order to establish a measure for the prevalence of this violence on the island. Following this work, they have recommended that work is undertaken to produce a future VAWG data development agenda and a centralised data set on VAWG.

Next Steps

The Government is committed to improving data collection on violence against women and girls in Jersey. We have now recruited a new Justice and Home Affairs Data Analyst who will lead on the VAWG data development agenda, including a review of current data collection and the development of a centralised VAWG dataset (also a requirement of recommendation 2). The Istanbul Convention also sets out a number of data collection requirements which we will endeavour to fulfil under the scope of this piece of work, including the regular collection of VAWG survey data and ensuring that data analysis on VAWG is available to the public.

Recommendation 14 – Online and Technology-Facilitated Abuse (Data Collection)

The Taskforce recommended that Government should work with the States of Jersey Police to collect data on online and technology-facilitated abuse and track trends in the prevalence of this violence.

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to work with States of Jersey Police to review current data collection around online and technology-facilitated abuse as part of the review of current data collection (see recommendation 3 above). They will also ensure that data on these forms of abuse is captured within the centralised VAWG data set that will be developed as part our commitment to fulfilling recommendation 3 (see above).

Recommendation 64 – Harmful Sexual Behaviour (Data Collection)

The Taskforce recommended that an accurate and centralised data set on Harmful Sexual Behaviour should be developed as part of the larger VAWG data development agenda.

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to work with the Children, Young People, Education and Skills Department, Dewberry House Sexual Assault Referral Centre and the Multi-Agency Safeguarding Hub to explore options to bring all the data that is currently collected into one centralised data set. This work will take place as part of the wider work to fulfil recommendation 3 (see above).

Recommendation 52 – Jersey Customs and Immigration Service and Police data arrangements

The taskforce recommended Jersey Customs and Immigration Service and the Police should work together to review their data sharing policies and consider establishing an agreement that data on immigration status will not be shared without a victim-survivors' consent where they are reporting abuse, and that data sharing policies should be publicly accessible and easy to understand.

Next Steps

Officers from both organisations have met and commenced a review of their data sharing policies. Research is ongoing to ensure that any future agreement between them is aligned with UK best practice. I have requested an update from officers in Q2 2024 with an intention to operationalise these recommendations thereafter.

Independent Reviews

Recommendation 15 – Independent Review of the Criminal Justice System

The Taskforce recommended that an independent review of the criminal justice system should be conducted in relation to domestic abuse, rape and serious sexual offences to determine whether current arrangements deliver the best outcomes for victims, defendants and justice.

Next Steps

It is clear from domestic experience and other jurisdictions that independent reporting is the best way to maintain oversight of any system, and I will discuss the best way forward with stakeholders to establish what would work best for Jersey in terms of scope, access to information, confidentiality arrangements etc. I hope to have completed discussions by mid-2024, and to be able to begin an end-to end review of the system by within 2024, to be completed in 2025.

Funding of £50,000 has been allocated to undertake the review in 2024, with an anticipated additional £50,000 to follow in 2025.

Recommendation 29 – Independent Review of the Family Court System

The Taskforce recommended that an independent review of the Family Court system should take place in order to better understand the extent and the prevalence of the issues surfaced by their initial piece of research.

The Taskforce also recommended that the output of the review should include recommendations for areas of improvement and that a follow-up review should take place to monitor the progress of the Family Court system in fulfilling these recommendations.

Next Steps

I feel that it is important to remember that the Family Court judges are dedicated and highly experienced professionals who are required to prioritise the needs of the child in any given case. I have no doubt that they follow the established processes of the Family Court with great care and with the highest integrity.

I am aware that family court systems in other jurisdictions have been found to cause secondary and unintentional harms which result from an incomplete awareness of factors related to VAWG, particularly around issues such as the use of the concept of parental alienation. The most notable example is the UK's Harm Panel report, which identifies potential improvements to a system very similar to that in operation in Jersey.

It is no criticism of the judges to suggest that a review be undertaken, as it has been in comparable jurisdictions, to



determine if the outcomes of the court reflect the most modern understanding of the nature of VAWG.

Although this is outside of the available funding for 2024, I agree that this is desirable, and I will identify funding options for 2025.

Further Research

Recommendation 2 – Research with women from marginalised groups

The Taskforce recommended that Government should undertake further research with women from marginalised groups in Jersey with the purpose of developing specific solutions to improve their safety.

Recommendation 6 – Commercial Sexual Exploitation

The Taskforce recommended that further research into experiences of commercial sexual exploitation on the island should be undertaken.

Recommendation 9 – So called “honour-based” abuse

The Taskforce recommended that further research should be undertaken into the prevalence and experiences of so-called “honour-based” abuse, including female genital mutilation, forced marriage and forced sterilisation.

Recommendation 48 – Experiences of health and social care workers

The Taskforce recommended that further research into the experiences of health and social care workers in Jersey in relation to VAWG behaviours and crimes should be undertaken. The Taskforce also recommended that the findings of this research should be published alongside recommendations to better safeguard these workers from harassment and abuse.

Next Steps

The Government is committed to ensuring that all women in Jersey are free from violence and abuse.

The Building a Safer Community Framework, which was launched last week, is intended to establish a solid evidence base for projects across Government. As noted in that framework, *“Data is a means to an end, not an end in itself. Too often there is a disconnect between performance measurement – collecting data – and performance management – using the data to inform decisions about policy or how to drive performance. If we don’t use the data to make a difference, performance measurement is just a waste of resources.”*

I believe that a significant amount of evidence relevant to these recommendations is already held within systems and organisations on the Island. Government departments, arms-length organisations, charities and community groups will all have critical insight and some degree of evidence base available that can be drawn upon to develop a better picture of the situation.

Engaging with marginalised communities through established and trusted channels is the only way to successfully understand the needs and experiences of these groups. As the Taskforce report itself identifies, levels of trust and engagement between these groups and government are low, and I feel that the chances of new insights appearing from the arrival of an external group representing government are very limited. In relation to the experience of health and social care workers, I will engage with the Minister for Health and Social Services to determine the best way to proceed.

I commit to working through trusted channels to gather, review and synthesise all available data on the effect of VAWG on women from marginalised groups, the prevalence of commercial sexual exploitation and so called “honour-based” abuse and the experiences of health and social care workers.

Once we have collated the information we already hold, we will be in a far better position to determine what additional research needs to be undertaken and how we should go about it.

Internal Reviews

Recommendation 19 – Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors

The Taskforce recommended that the structure and staffing of Independent Domestic and Sexual Violence Advisors service should be reviewed to ensure it is adequately resourced to support victim-survivors in line with best practice.

The Taskforce also recommended that the service offer and publicity of the service should be reviewed to ensure that victim-survivors are aware of the support provisions that are available.

Next Steps

The Jersey Domestic Abuse Service is responsible for the provision of the Independent Domestic Violence Advisors and the Independent Sexual Violence Advisors that operate in Jersey. I understand that the service is already undergoing an assessment into its resourcing and capacity, in recognition of the high levels of demand that it must manage. Once that is complete, we will be able judge the level of resources required to run a more effective and responsive service.

Recommendation 27 – Prosecution of Economic Abuse under the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022

The Taskforce has recommended that the Minister for Justice and Home Affairs should undertake a review of the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 within the first 5 years of its enactment with the objective of assessing whether this piece of legislation has resulted in the effective prosecution of economic abuse.

Next Steps

I recognise that economic abuse is an extremely harmful form of domestic abuse and am committed to ensuring that individuals who perpetrate economic abuse are brought to justice. The Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 came into effect on 14 June 2023. The Government will review the efficacy of this legislation in respect of economic abuse in 2028, at which time it will have been in place for a number of years and officers will be better able to effectively assess the impact it has had before considering further reform.

Recommendation 59 – Follow-on Accommodation

The Taskforce recommended that the Government of Jersey should undertake a review of the follow-on accommodation available to victim-survivors who are moving out of temporary refuge accommodation. Following the results of such a review, the Taskforce recommends that further

Next Steps for recommendation 59

It is not surprising to hear that there are difficulties in finding follow-on accommodation for victims, given the significant pressures on the housing market in Jersey more widely. I recognise that government is required to balance housing priorities between a number of vulnerable groups, but I

investment into the establishment of additional follow-on accommodation should be considered if current provision is found to be insufficient.

Recommendation 60 – Specialist Counselling Provision

The Taskforce recommended that a gap analysis of the current counselling and therapeutic support provision available to victim-survivors should be undertaken. Following the findings of this recommendation, the Taskforce recommends that investment should be made to improve the appropriateness and availability of specialist counselling and therapeutic support provision on the island.

Recommendation 54 – Jersey Customs and Immigration Service immigration decisions

The taskforce recommended that Jersey Customs and Immigration Service should review its process around communicating immigration decisions to ensure they are clear. The Taskforce also recommended that Jersey Customs and Immigration Service should consider options to ensure that individuals are aware of the complaints and appeals process that exist in relation to challenging immigration decisions.

have met with the Minister for Housing and Communities who has accepted this recommendation in principle and been extremely supportive of the Taskforce's work more widely. We will work together to find a way to ensure that the needs of victim-survivors can be met from the resources available.

Next Steps

I will request the Victims and Witnesses sub-group of the Criminal Justice Working Group to consider how this analysis can best be carried out and to provide me with a proposal as soon as possible.

Next Steps

I am aware that Jersey Customs and Immigration Service officers are conducting a review of their decision templates in order to update them and ensure that the rationale of decisions are clearly explained to applicants. In addition, I have requested procedures in this service are updated to ensure that individuals are appropriately signposted to the complaints and appeals processes that exist in relation to immigration decisions.

Support Provision

Recommendation 49 – Concession for migrant victim-survivors

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should introduce a concession for migrant victim-survivors on work visas so that these individuals have recourse to public funds which can improve their safety by removing financial dependency on their abuser.

Next Steps for recommendation 49

I am aware that the UK has a Migrant Victim of Domestic Abuse concession under which victims of domestic violence without an independent immigration status, whose relationship has broken down due to domestic violence, and have no money to support themselves, can claim public funds for up to 3 months. I have met with the Minister for Social Security to understand the full policy and practical context, and we have discussed the potential for introducing similar provisions in Jersey.

We are both fully supportive of introducing a concession in line with arrangements in the UK. The Minister for Social Security will also be working with officers in her department to consider the best way to ensure that people are not prohibited from leaving abusive relationships by financial concerns resulting from their residential status or the length of time they have been in Jersey.

Recommendation 62 – By- and-for Services

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should consider investing into the establishment of services for victim-survivors from marginalised groups, provided by members of those groups.

Next Steps for recommendation 62

The requirements for additional services of this kind will be established by engagement with marginalised groups as part of recommendation 2. Once need is established, proper consideration can be given to the resources that would be required to develop these services.

Recommendation 7 – Women’s safety in St Helier

The Taskforce made a number of recommendations around improving women’s safety in St Helier, including

Next Steps

I am aware that a significant number of the respondents to the heat safety heatmap felt unsafe around Parade Gardens, and it

the provision of dedicated support for rough sleepers in Parade gardens and the introduction of better street lighting in the Snow Hill area.

was suggested that additional provision for rough sleepers might be of benefit.

I am advised that the outreach service operated by the Shelter Trust in Jersey already provides dedicated support to rough sleepers on the island, and at this time the service will encounter one or two rough sleepers every 2-3 weeks. The night outreach service has now been stepped down from 7 nights to 3 nights per week. On the nights they operate, the team visit all of the known rough sleeping 'venues' to be sure no new rough sleepers are overlooked. Thus, the recommendation concerning rough sleeping has been met.

Most reports about problematic behaviour in this area concern groups drinking during the day, rather than rough sleeping at night. Given this, I will engage with outreach services to determine what can be done to improve the situation.

In relation to the street lighting situation, I have instructed officers to engage with the Department for Infrastructure and Environment to establish where the current streetlights are based and where further provision could improve the situation.

Recommendation 12 – Specialist support for online and technology-facilitated abuse

The Taskforce recommended that, whilst work to improve capacity and expertise on the Island is undertaken, the Government should consider working with specialist support services to provide advice and support to victim-survivors of online and technology-facilitated abuse in Jersey in the shorter-term.

Next Steps

I am advised that the best source of advice on this issue would be the UK charity Refuge, which has a dedicated Tech-Facilitated Abuse Team. I have instructed officers to scope and cost a proposal for engaging Refuge for a set period of time, both to provide immediate support to victims and to help develop the necessary capacity in Jersey.

Recommendation 53 – Independent Advocacy Services

The Taskforce recommended that additional and independent advocacy services should be introduced to support individuals from minority communities to navigate public services.

Next Steps

Independent advocacy services provide an essential service to the community, but by their nature they sit outside of government control. I feel that it is better to enhance our current provision before we introduce new services. In order to ensure that we are providing the necessary support, I have instructed officers to review the current advice and online provision in detail, and to engage with Citizen's Advice and other existing support agencies. This will allow us to understand the training needs of these organisations in relation to assisting individuals from minority communities with public services.

Recommendation 63 – Online support provision

The Taskforce has recommended that the Government should consider investing into the establishment of an online support provision for victim-survivors, alongside current 24-hour telephone provision.

Next Steps

It is critically important that victims of domestic abuse, sexual assault and related harms have access to advice and support in their time of need, not just in normal business hours. I am advised that a 24-hour telephone line is available, but, unlike the UK, there is no provision for a live chat service. This is an important distinction, as chat services can be accessed covertly and engaging in this way may be less daunting for the victims. As 24-hour support is already in place, this is primarily a technological solution rather than the development of a new service. I have instructed officers to establish costing and scope of this facility, with a view to seeking funding to either develop a similar service in Jersey or to arrange for the extension of a currently operating UK service to the Island.

Recommendation 58 – Legal aid for migrant workers

The Taskforce recommended that legal aid provision should be made available to migrant workers who face employment-based discrimination and/or abuse.

Next Steps

Jersey, unlike many jurisdictions, has established the Jersey Employment and Discrimination Tribunal to be both free and accessible without legal support. I note that this Taskforce recommendation relies on the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, and I have instructed officers to determine if the existence of the Tribunal service means that Jersey arrangements are compliant with the requirements of this Convention.

More broadly, I believe that we should better align all relevant systems, including legal aid, the tribunal service and the Jersey Customs and Immigration Service, to ensure that rights against discrimination can be effectively exercised.

If a gap in provision is found to exist, I will engage with the relevant parties to establish the feasibility, and if required the cost, of better protecting these rights.

Recommendation 13 – Information on online and technology-facilitated abuse

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should provide and maintain information for citizens in Jersey about online and technology-facilitated abuse.

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to develop guidance on online and technology-facilitated VAWG, in line with the information and advice set out on the UK Refuge Tech-facilitated abuse webpages. This information will be reviewed and updated every 6-months as developments in this space are fast-moving.

Recommendation 50 and 57 – Improve available information related to VAWG and Immigration

The Taskforce recommended that Jersey Customs and Immigration Service should improve information available to the public regarding the

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to improve the information available to migrants coming to Jersey. This will result in enhanced and targeted information in relation the rights and entitlements being placed on gov.je as well as enhanced information being given directly to all migrants travelling to Jersey to work or settle. This will be delivered by

rights and entitlements of migrants. It is also recommended that information on VAWG specialist services should be publicly available alongside guidance for responding to migrant workers who are abused by their employer or colleague.

Q2 2024. I am aware that employee/employer/colleague interactions are complex and need to be considered on a case-by-case basis. In the case of employee/employer relations, the correct forum to raise a grievance is by contacting the Jersey Advisory and Conciliation Service. In the case of abuse, this should be raised with the States of Jersey Police.

Nonetheless, Jersey Customs and Immigration Service have a role in ensuring that migrant workers are not put at risk of being forced to remain in employment situations where they are being abused by colleagues and employers. As such I have instructed officers to ensure that robust investigations are carried out into any allegations of abuse and appropriate immigration arrangements are swiftly made to minimise identified risks.

Separately from the Taskforce, a review has been undertaken by the Work Permit Holder Welfare Review Panel into the related area of permit holder rights and based on that work I have agreed to bring forwards Modern Slavery legislation to address gaps in protection.

Recommendation 56 – Review evidential thresholds for proving domestic violence in Indefinite Leave to Remain applications which rely on ‘Domestic Violence’ as a ground

The taskforce recommended that Jersey Customs and Immigration Service should recognise that evidence submitted by specialist domestic abuse support services can be considered strong evidence under the UK Home Office guidance. Specialist services should work with the Jersey Customs and Immigration

Next Steps

The granting of the immigration permission ‘Indefinite Leave to Remain’ permits a person to live and work anywhere in the United Kingdom and the Crown Dependencies. Any permission granted in Jersey is recognised in the UK and vice versa. It is therefore imperative that application processes and assessments for indefinite leave to remain are consistent between both jurisdictions. Publicly available guidance is available that outlines how evidence for domestic violence should be assessed by Immigration Officers. I am aware that Jersey Customs and Immigration Service officers have met and are working with

Service to better understand the evidential requirements of the UK Home Office guidance. This should help to ensure that the evidence submitted is considered strong.

specialist domestic abuse services to ensure that officers and specialist domestic abuse services are equally informed regarding each other's processes and limitations.

Awareness Campaigns

Recommendation 7 – Street Harassment Campaign

The Taskforce recommended that a campaign to tackle street harassment should be rolled out across St Helier.

Next Steps

I note that a number of campaigns of this nature have been carried out in other jurisdictions, and I have instructed officers to review activity undertaken elsewhere and advise on how such a campaign could best be carried out. I do feel that care must be taken when raising awareness in this way to ensure that we do not create a situation in which women begin to feel unsafe in public places as a result of the campaign itself, and I have instructed officers to ensure that any work in this area is effectively targeted and proportionate.

Recommendation 73 – Awareness Campaign

The Taskforce recommended that an ongoing campaign to boost awareness of violence against women and girls and change community attitudes around this issue should be introduced.

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to work with the VAWG Taskforce and the Domestic Abuse sub-group of the Safeguarding Partnership Board to develop an annual comms campaign. I have also asked them to consider whether an ongoing campaign would require working with external comms support with prior experience of developing campaigns of this nature, and, if so, to scope and cost that activity.

Recommendation 9 – Mandatory reporting on Female Genital Mutilation

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should work alongside the Safeguarding Partnership Board to deliver an awareness raising campaign for health professionals to ensure that they are aware of their mandatory reporting duties in relation to FGM and the multi-agency procedures that exist in this area.

Next Steps

I will work with the Safeguarding Partnership Board and the Minister for Health and Social Services to engage with health professionals working across Health and Community Services and primary care to ensure that they are aware of the mandatory reporting duties and available practice guidance.

Recommendation 65 – Promotion of service awareness

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should work with specialist support services including the Dewberry House Sexual Assault Referral Centre, Jersey Domestic Abuse Support and Jersey Action Against Rape, to promote awareness of these services amongst young people.

Recommendation 66 – Parental Education

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should introduce an education programme on VAWG for parents so that they are better able to support and advise their children around this issue.

Recommendation 76 – Updated PSHE curriculum

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should work with schools to improve the way in which education on the issue of violence against women and girls is delivered. In particular, it is recommended that the PSHE curriculum should be updated, that teachers delivering this content should receive training, and that schools should be formally assessed on the way in which they educate young people on VAWG.

Recommendation 77 – Whole-of-School Approach

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should consider rolling out a whole-of-school approach to violence against women and girls, wherein all school staff receive training on how to respond to problematic behaviour and appropriately support students affected by this issue. It is also recommended that schools work with students to develop a Bill of Rights which details what types of behaviour are acceptable and unacceptable.

Next Steps

The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning has taken a significant interest in this subject, and has responded as follows-

“My department will work to develop a comprehensive plan to take these recommendations forward, in close cooperation with schools and support services.

Non-statutory guidance on PSHE content has been developed and is regularly updated, and we will ensure that this guidance reflects the recommendations.

Ultimately, genuine change in this area will require a broader change in the culture of both schools and the wider community, which will in turn require support and engagement from the entire government.”

Training and Practice

Recommendation 12 – Online and technology-facilitated abuse

The Taskforce recommended that the Government should invest in an ongoing programme of learning and development to strengthen the capacity of support service providers to effectively respond to online and technology-facilitated abuse.

Recommendation 47 – Linking animal abuse and domestic abuse

The Taskforce recommended that veterinary professionals in Jersey should receive training on the link between animal abuse and domestic abuse, the indicators of domestic abuse and the referral pathways to specialist support services available for victim-survivors on the island.

Recommendation 68 – Responding to perpetrators

The Taskforce recommended that professionals working in key public services such as housing, health, education and social security should receive regular training on how to identify and respond to perpetrators of VAWG.

Recommendation 55 – VAWG recognition training and safeguarding practises

The taskforce recommended that Immigration officers should be trained to recognise the indicators of VAWG and risk factors. Jersey Customs and Immigration Service should also implement targeted enquiry processes and have consistent safeguarding processes in place so that victim-survivors can be referred to the appropriate support services.

Next Steps

I have asked officers to identify the most appropriate training providers for each of these recommendations, and to scope the potential costs involved in order to develop a cost/benefit analysis for each proposal. Once that work is completed, I will be able to set a priority for this investment and, if required, assess how best to resource them.

Next Steps

I am aware that as a result of this recommendation Jersey Customs and Immigration Service have arranged training in order to ensure that knowledge around VAWG indicators and risk factors is embedded in the Service. The training will be delivered by a third-party training provider and will be delivered in Q2 2024. In addition, a review is ongoing to ensure that safeguarding processes in Jersey Customs and Immigration Service are current and fit for purpose and that officers are aware of the correct processes and support services to interact with.

Recommendation 40 – Training for General Practitioners

The Taskforce recommended that Level 1 IRIS training should be made mandatory for all GPs practicing in Jersey so as to ensure that these professionals are able to identify patients at risk of VAWG, appropriately respond to disclosures and refer victims to specialist support services.

Recommendation 41 – Routine enquiry in sexual health services

The Taskforce recommended that all sexual health services should implement routine enquiry into their practice.

Recommendation 42 – Routine enquiry in reproductive healthcare services

The Taskforce recommended that all reproductive healthcare services should implement routine enquiry into procedures in cases where a patient requests an abortion.

Recommendation 43 – Linking mental health and experiences of VAWG

The Taskforce recommended that all mental health service professionals should receive training on the relationship between mental health problems and experiences of VAWG. It is also recommended that these professionals should incorporate routine enquiry processes into their practice.

Recommendation 44 – Linking substance misuse and experiences of VAWG

The Taskforce recommended that professionals working within the Alcohol and Drug Service should receive regular training on the connection between VAWG experiences and substance misuse. It also recommended that these professionals should incorporate routine enquiry processes into their practice.

Recommendation 45 – Training for health professionals

The Taskforce recommended that all health professionals should receive training on how to identify and respond to patients who have experienced VAWG. It is also recommended that frontline professionals working across Health and Community Services should incorporate targeted enquiry processes into their practice.

Recommendation 46 – Recognising symptoms of non-fatal strangulation

The Taskforce recommended that all frontline health practitioners working across Health and Community Services and Primary Care should receive training on identifying non-fatal strangulation, and that a self-referral pathway should be created so that victims of non-fatal strangulation can self-refer into a forensic physician.

Next Steps

The Minister for Health and Social Services has taken a significant interest in this subject, and has responded as follows-

“The Health and Community Services Department and other officials will work to take these recommendations forward as part of wider improvements required in the delivery of health and community services, including consulting with the Health Advisory Board. Training and routine enquiry processes are a crucial part of addressing Violence against Woman and Girls, and they will be embedded in our services as part of a systematic approach to improving them.”

Recommendation 72 – VAWG strategy

The Taskforce recommend that the Government should develop a comprehensive strategy to coordinate work to tackle VAWG across public and third sector services. The Taskforce also recommend that the strategy should be governed independently to ensure accountability.

Next Steps

Following amendments, in the Government Plan 2024-27 the Government has committed to publishing an annual report which covers-

- An update on the progress of implementing Taskforce recommendations
- An evaluation of the impact the implementation of Taskforce report recommendations have had on addressing VAWG.
- A timeline of the Government's work programme on VAWG for the following year.
- Identification of how measures in the Government Plan will improve gender equality in Jersey.

In order to meet these requirements as well as this recommendation, I intend to publish an annual 'VAWG Action Plan and Progress Report' under the Building a Safer Community framework on an annual basis, in consultation with the Taskforce, to report on progress towards fulfilling all 77 recommendations.

Recommendation 75 – Engagement of men and boys

The Taskforce recommend that the engagement of men and boys should be a key feature of future efforts to tackle VAWG in Jersey and that this should be represented as such in all future strategies.

Next Steps

I have instructed officers to ensure that specific actions relating to the education and engagement of men and boys in addressing VAWG should be featured in every annual VAWG Action Plan.

Recommendation 2 – Intersectional approach

The Taskforce recommend that the Government should apply an intersectional approach to all future strategies and other work to address VAWG.

Next Steps

All actions set out in the annual VAWG action plan should recognise that women with different characteristics face unique vulnerabilities to violence and should outline how these actions will mitigate these vulnerabilities.

The Government has committed to annual reporting that includes identification of how measures in the Government Plan will improve gender equality in Jersey, with a focus on establishing an intersectional approach.

Appendix 1 - VAWG TF Recommendations Implementation Plan

This implementation plan is intended to demonstrate how the recommendations in the remit of the MJHA will be undertaken. Discussion will be held between Ministers in respect of the implementation of recommendations directed at other areas of Government.

To be initiated in 2024

No.	Recommendation	Timeline	Department	
1	Treaty compliance	Ratify the Istanbul Convention	Q2 2024 – Q4 2026	Justice and Home Affairs
3, 14, 64	Data Development	Develop a centralised VAWG data set	Q2 2024 – ongoing	Justice and Home Affairs
7	Comms	Develop street harassment campaign, to include engagement with men and boys	Q2 2024 – Q4 2024	Justice and Home Affairs
9	Comms	Raise awareness of mandatory FGM reporting duty	Q2 2024 - Q3 2024	Justice and Home Affairs
10	Legislative development	Strengthen regulation of online platforms	2024	Digital Economy
13	Support provision	Develop information on online and technology-facilitated abuse	Q2 2024	Justice and Home Affairs
15	Independent review	Independent review of the criminal justice system	Q3 2024 – Q4 2025	Justice and Home Affairs
19	Internal review	Undertake review of IDVA/ISVA service	Q2 2024 – Q3 2024	Justice and Home Affairs
24	Legislative development	Introduce emergency barring orders	Q2 2024 – Q4 2024	Justice and Home Affairs
25	Legislative development	Introduce a non-fatal strangulation offence	Q2 2024 – Q4 2024	Justice and Home Affairs
26	Legislative development	Introduce a stalking offence	Q4 2024 – Q4 2025	Justice and Home Affairs
50, 57	Support provision	Provision of information to migrants	2024	Jersey Customs and Immigration
52	Internal review	Review and publish data sharing policies	2024	Jersey Customs and Immigration/States of Jersey Police
53	Internal review	Review needs of advocacy support organisations	2024	Justice and Home Affairs
54	Internal review	Review process to communicate immigration decisions	2024	Jersey Customs and Immigration
55	Training	Introduce VAWG training for immigration officers	Q2 2024 – Q3 2024	Jersey Customs and Immigration
56	Internal review	Review evidential thresholds for proving domestic abuse in ILR (DV)	2024	Jersey Customs and Immigration
59	Internal review	Review of follow-on accommodation	2024	Housing
60	Internal review	Review of specialist counselling provision	2024	Victims and Witness CJWG
60	Support provision	Introduce concession for victims with insecure immigration status	2024	Justice and Home Affairs/Social Security
63	Support provision	Introduce an online support provision for victims	2024	Justice and Home Affairs
68	Training	Introduce perpetrator management training for public services	2024	[Under discussion]

70	Legislative development	Introduce mandatory post-custodial supervision	Q4 2024 – Q4 2025	Justice and Home Affairs
72	Strategy	Annual VAWG Action Plan and reporting	Q2 2024 – ongoing	Justice and Home Affairs

To be initiated in 2025

No.	Recommendation	Timeline	Department	
2, 6, 9	Research	Further research with marginalised groups	2025	Justice and Home Affairs
7	Support provision	Introduce more street lighting in the Snow Hill area	2025	Infrastructure, Housing and Environment
8	Legislative development	Develop legislation to combat sexual harassment in public	2025	Justice and Home Affairs
11	Legislative development	Strengthen legislation around online and technology-facilitated abuse	Q1 2025 – Q4 2025	Justice and Home Affairs
12	Support provision	Invest into specialist support for online and technology-facilitated abuse	2025	Justice and Home Affairs
12	Training	Introduce training on online and technology-facilitated abuse for specialist support services	2025	Justice and Home Affairs
29	Independent review	Independent review of the family court system	Q1 2025 – Q4 2025	Justice and Home Affairs
47	Training	Introduce VAWG training for vets	2025	Justice and Home Affairs
48	Research	Further research into experiences of health and social care workers	2025	Justice and Home Affairs
73	Comms	Develop VAWG comms campaign	Q2 2025 – Q4 2025	Justice and Home Affairs

Appendix 2 – How the recommendations are directed

This full list shows all the recommendations of the Taskforce and the parties to whom they are directed.

No.	Recommendation	Owned by
1	Pursue extension of Istanbul Convention on combating violence against women	GoJ - CoM
2	Conduct further research into experiences of marginalised women in Jersey	GoJ
2	Use an intersectional approach as part of all efforts to reduce and prevent VAWG	GoJ
3	Develop a Centralised VAWG dataset	GoJ - MJHA
4	Publish guidance on application of domestic abuse offence	LOD
4	Conduct training needs analysis in relation to coercive and controlling behaviour	JDAS and FREEDA
5	Domestic abuse support professionals should receive training on economic abuse	JDAS and FREEDA
6	Conduct further research into experiences of sexual and commercial exploitation	GoJ
7	Introduce support for rough sleepers in Parade Gardens	GoJ
7	Improve street lighting in Snow Hill area	GoJ
7	Introduce a campaign in St Helier to tackle street harassment	GoJ - MJHA/Comms
7	Increase in police presence in St Helier hotspots	SOJP
8	Strengthen legislation around sexual harassment in public spaces	GoJ - MJHA
9	Conduct further research into so-called "honour-based" abuse	GoJ
9	Ensure healthcare practitioners are aware of their mandatory reporting duty in relation to FGM	GoJ - MJHA/Comms
10	Improve regulation of online platforms to ensure they protect their users	GoJ - MJHA/MSED
11	Strengthen legislation around online and technology-facilitated abuse	GoJ - MJHA
12	Introduce specialist support for online and tech abuse	GoJ - MJHA
12	Introduce training on online and tech abuse for specialist support organisations	GoJ - MJHA
13	Provide information for islanders on online and technology-facilitated abuse	GoJ - MJHA
14	Improve data collection on online and technology-facilitated abuse	GoJ - MJHA, and SOJP
15	Conduct an independent review of the criminal justice system	GoJ
16	Publish procedure for managing concerns about police behaviour	SOJP

18	Review data on police response to different genders	SOJP
19	Review current Independent Domestic Violence and Sexual Violence Advisor services resourcing, structure and service offer	GoJ - MJHA
20	More clearly signpost to Code on the decision to prosecute	LOD
20	Publish guiding principles and general rationale used to make prosecutorial decisions	LOD
21	Review of decision-making re: special measures	Courts
22	Provision of training on Jersey legal context and criminal justice system for victim support services	LOD
23	Sex disaggregated data on prosecution rates, acquittal rates and sentencing length should be published in one place	LOD
23	Publish guiding principles used to make sentencing decisions	Courts
24	Introduce Emergency barring orders into the Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022	GoJ - MJHA
25	Introduce an offence of non-fatal strangulation	GoJ - MJHA
25	Guidance on evidentiary basis for non-fatal strangulation should be published	LOD
26	Introduce a standalone offence of stalking	GoJ - MJHA
26	Issue guidance that makes clear economic abuse is covered by the domestic abuse offence	LOD
27	Review Domestic Abuse (Jersey) Law 2022 within 5 years regarding the successful prosecution of economic abuse	GoJ - MJHA
29	Conduct an independent review into the Family courts system	GoJ
30	Training on how to identify and respond to cases where domestic abuse is suspected	Family courts and JFCAS
31	Develop practice pathway for responding to domestic abuse	Courts - JFCAS
32	Review training for judiciary on the relationship between allegations of domestic abuse and parental alienation	Family courts
33	Undertake consultation with the Harm Panel report authors on development of practice guidance for responding to domestic	Family courts
34	Prioritise a review of outcomes according to the gender of the party over the past 5-years	Courts - JFCAS
35	Undertake a review of contact and residency orders to assess if the presumption of parental involvement has undermined children's safety.	Family courts
36	Keep the ongoing safety of child arrangement orders under review in every case where domestic abuse has been alleged	Family courts
37	The Family Justice Council should have specific regard to the way the Family Courts, JFCAS and Children's Service work together in cases where domestic abuse raised	Deputy Bailiff

38	Officers should receive training on how to identify and respond to domestic abuse perpetrators	Courts - JFCAS
38	Family Court professionals should receive training on how perpetrators of domestic abuse may use the system to continue the abuse of their former partner	Family courts
38	Dedicated referral process into JDAP should be included within the domestic abuse pathway	Courts - JFCAS
39	Training on the role of IDVAs and qualifications they have completed should be undertaken	Family courts
40	Level 1 IRIS training for GPs	GPs/Primary Care Body
41	Sexual health services should implement routine enquiry	GoJ - HCS
42	Reproductive healthcare services should implement routine enquiry	GoJ - HCS
43	All mental health services should adopt routine enquiry	GoJ - HCS and third sector
43	Training for mental health service practitioners on connection between mental health issues and VAWG	GoJ - HCS and third sector
44	Training for Alcohol and Drug Service professionals on connection between VAWG and substance misuse	GoJ - HCS
45	Targeted enquiry to be implemented by all frontline professionals in HCS	GoJ - HCS
45	Training for all health professionals on how to identify and respond to victims	GoJ - HCS and primary care
46	Training on identifying non-fatal strangulation should be available to all frontline health practitioners	GoJ - HCS and primary care
46	Self-referral pathway should be made available to victims of non-fatal strangulation	GoJ - HCS and Lead Forensic Physician
47	Introduce VAWG training for vets	GoJ
48	Conduct further research into VAWG experiences of health and social care workers	GoJ
49	Introduce a concession for migrant victims of domestic abuse to ensure they have access to public funds	GoJ - MJHA
50	Improve information available on the immigration system and rights and entitlements of migrants	GoJ - JCIS
50	Migrants should receive information on specialist VAWG support services	GoJ - JCIS
51	A definition of immigration abuse should be included in guidance on application of domestic abuse offence	LOD
52	Review data sharing policies and legislative reporting duties and consider establishing an agreement that data on immigration status will not be shared without consent	GoJ -JCIS, and SOJP
52	Data sharing policies that exist between SOJP and JCIS should be made publicly accessible	GoJ -JCIS, and SOJP
53	Introduce independent advocacy to support minority communities to navigate public services	GoJ - MJHA

54	Review process around communicating immigration decisions to ensure rationale is clear to applicants	GoJ - JCIS
54	Consider options to ensure that individuals are aware of complaints and appeals processes that exists for challenging immigration decisions	GoJ - JCIS
55	Immigration officers should be trained to recognise indicators of VAWG and factors that may escalate risk to victims	GoJ - JCIS
55	Implement targeted enquiry processes and have consistent safeguarding processes in place	GoJ - JCIS
56	Review evidential thresholds for proving domestic abuse in ILR (DV)	JCIS, JDAS and FREEDA
57	Develop and publish practice guidance for responding to migrant workers who are abused by their employers	GoJ - JCIS
58	Introduce Legal aid for migrant workers who have experienced abuse at work	GoJ - MJHA
59	Review the provision of follow-on accommodation for victims leaving emergency accommodation	GoJ
60	Review the provision of specialist counselling support for victims of VAWG	GoJ - MJHA
61	Review training programmes for support services to ensure staff receive training on dynamics of VAWG and using a trauma-informed approach	JDAS, FREEDA, JAAR
62	Consider investment into the establishment of by-and-for services for marginalised groups	GoJ
63	Introduce an online support provision for victims	GoJ - MJHA
64	Develop a centralised dataset on Harmful Sexual Behaviour	GoJ - MJHA
65	Work with Dewberry House, JAAR and JDAS to promote better awareness of these services within schools	GoJ - CYPES and specialist support services
67	Ensure that all students are aware of the provision of school counsellors on site	GoJ - Schools
68	Introduce training on perpetrator management for public services	GoJ - MJHA
69	JDAP assessed for RESPECT accreditation	Probation and Aftercare Service
70	Introduce mandatory post-custodial supervision	GoJ - MJHA
71	Increase awareness of DA Disclosure Scheme	SOJP
72	Development of VAWG action plan	GoJ - MJHA
73	Introduce a campaign to raise awareness and change attitudes about VAWG	GoJ - MJHA/Comms
74	Use VAWG media reporting toolkit to ensure responsible reporting on this issue	Media professionals
75	Engagement of men and boys as part of all efforts to reduce and prevent VAWG	GoJ - MJHA/Comms

76	Develop PSHE curriculum on sex and health relationships	CYPES
76	Ensure PSHE curriculum includes links between gender inequality, misogyny, victim blaming and VAWG	GoJ - CYPES
76	Introduce mandatory training for all teachers who teach PSHE	GoJ - CYPES
76	Schools should utilise skills and knowledge of Brook	GoJ - CYPES
76	Include explicit audit of VAWG in the Jersey Schools Review Framework	GoJ - CYPES
76	Include explicit reference to an assessment of VAWG in schools' annual safeguarding audit	GoJ - CYPES
77	Consider rolling out a 'whole-of-school' approach across schools	GoJ - CYPES
77	Introduce Bystander training for professionals working in educational settings	GoJ - CYPES
77	Work with students to develop a Bill of Rights on what behaviours are acceptable/unacceptable	GoJ - Schools