

Vocal Domestic Abuse & Sexual Violence Forum

Tuesday 25th February 2025

10.00am – 11.30pm

Zoom

Attendance

Present

Name	Organisation
Duncan Lyons	We Are Survivors
Jo Charleson	Salford Women's Aid
Laura Eastwood	LGBT Foundation
Maggie Langhorn	Salford Foundation
Nicole Joseph	Manchester YMCA
Yvonne Dronsfield	Salford Women's Aid

In Attendance

Name	Organisation
Andy Mossop	Salford CVS (Chair)
Helen O'Brien	Salford CVS (minutes)

Apologies

Name	Organisation
Amy Moss	Trafford Domestic Abuse Services
Michelle Warburton	Salford CVS

Welcome, Introduction and Apologies

Michelle Warburton was unable to attend the meeting due to sickness. Andy Mossop (Salford CVS) welcomed everyone and invited all attendees to introduce themselves.

Item 1: Minutes of meeting held 20.08.2024

The minutes from the previous meeting were confirmed as accurate.

Item 2: Review of the Forum

Salford City Council are establishing a Domestic Abuse Provider group. Andy asked the attendees to share their opinions on whether the Vocal Forum remains necessary with the new group being established or if this is a repetition of work.

Duncan expressed that it was important to keep the Vocal Forum as is it includes both domestic abuse **and** sexual violence and doesn't want to devalue sexual violence if the other group focuses solely on domestic abuse. Duncan said he would be fine attending the Council group if sexual violence would be included in every meeting and not just brought up every now and again, as there are a lot of ongoing issues with sexual violence support and statutory services in Salford. Duncan further added that he would be worried that voices would be lost in a larger group and that the Vocal Forum functions better regarding raising concerns.

Maggie explained that the Council group wanted to hand over their group to the participants to form it in a way to best suit the domestic abuse services. Maggie agreed that sexual violence needs to be kept. She also added that there is value in a smaller group coming together but that the Council group is valuable due to hearing from different organisations. Maggie felt that this Forum was still needed, and things could be fed back from this Forum to the new group. She also suggested that perhaps a representative from the Vocal Forum could attend the Council group to feed back. Duncan added that doing this on a rotating basis would mean everyone gets a chance to attend and frees up time.

Duncan asked why Salford Council had picked this up and why it was happening now. He expressed that the Council group cannot supersede this Vocal Forum and feedback from the VCSE sector. He added that if the Council group incorporates all those who attend the Vocal Forum and allows attendees to share their voices in the same way, then he would fine with attending it. Duncan also stated that it is hard to get people working in domestic abuse and sexual violence together so doesn't want to lose a group where there is attendance.

Maggie stated that she didn't feel like the Council group were taking over domestic abuse, it was more about getting as many services as possible together and then hand it over to the people in the room to chair and do the agenda. Jo agreed with this, adding that the sexual violence agenda could be driven and everyone would support it.

Jo suggested that perhaps members of the Vocal Forum attend the Council's Domestic Abuse Provider group first before determining whether the Vocal Forum should stop meeting.

Andy suggested holding the next Vocal Forum meeting a week or so after the next Domestic Abuse Provider group meeting, with a slot on the agenda to discuss how the meeting went and further thoughts on the future of the Vocal Forum. All attendees agreed.

Action: Andy to ask Michelle to add Vocal Forum members to the Domestic Abuse Provider group

Item 3: Update from Strategic Partnerships – Tackling Domestic Abuse Board / SSCP DA Subgroup / SSAB DA Subgroup

None of the Vocal Representatives were present at today's meeting so no feedback was given.

Andy added that new Reps are needed and it an opportunity that members of this Vocal Forum could become Reps on such Boards as Salford Safeguarding Children's Partnership, or the Safeguarding Adults Board, as well as others. He explained that Reps get paid £180 per meeting to attend and if anyone wanted to become a Vocal Rep, that they are to let Michelle or Andy know:

Michelle.Warburton@salfordcvs.co.uk
Andrew.Mossop@salfordcvs.co.uk

Action: Andy to send out information on Reps and Boards, and how to apply to the attendees of this Forum

Item 4: Key themes, issues or trends to share with strategic partnerships

Andy asked the group if there were any key themes, issues or trends that they would like to share.

Duncan shared that We Are Survivors are finding issues with clients with learning disability, autism, SEND etc who are experiencing inconsistency when going to interview. GMP in Salford are overly keen to run PIPPA (Pre Interview Planning Preparation and Assessment) assessments. This could be due to lack of awareness. Duncan feels that assumptions are being made rather than listening to the voice of the victim / survivor who state that they don't need assessing. The person will have spoken to police before, then have gone to interview with normal trauma symptoms and then they are being put into assessment rather than continuing the interview despite that being the victim's wish. The best evidence is given when the victim interviews in their preferred way. It is inconsistent as some aren't given assessments. Perhaps this is down to police with inexperience dealing with it and letting people down. There is also an issue in Salford with ABE's being time restricted. The interview should be as long as is needed. It used to be victim focused and worked well but this has changed. Time limits put people off from coming forward.

Item 5: Your updates

Duncan shared that We Are Survivors have recently changed their mission values to support male survivors and their loved ones dealing with sexual harm. We Are Survivors now have a safe room and support available for the survivors' loved ones as well as for the survivors themselves.

Action: Duncan will share information on We Are Survivors services with the Vocal Forum via Helen

Maggie shared that Salford Foundation have received a Leading Light accreditation. They are also about to launch a new website and posters for the service.

Laura asked the attendees to circulate details on recruitment for LGBT Foundation. They are still trying to recruit ISVA positions and have been trying to fill this since December, with two unsuccessful rounds. Jo suggested advertising with End the Fear.

Jo and Yvonne from Salford Women's Aid informed everyone that they are currently doing their second course of the Power to Chance course at Salford Foundation. The next intake is in May, anyone can refer in.

Item 6: Any Other Business

There was no other business.

Meeting ended: 10.50am