

# **VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN, DOMESTIC ABUSE AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE (WALES) ACT 2015**

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## **EXPLANATORY NOTES**

### **COMMENTARY ON SECTIONS**

#### ***Section 7 – Matters to which regard must be had in preparing or reviewing a local strategy***

12. **Section 7(1)** outlines a number of matters to which local authorities and Local Health Boards must have regard in preparing or reviewing a local strategy.
13. This includes the most recent needs assessment prepared under section 14 of the Social Services and Well-being (Wales) Act 2014. Section 14 of that Act requires a local authority and each Local Health Board any of whose area falls within the local authority's area to jointly assess the needs for care and support, support for carers and preventative services in the authority's area. This assessment could identify needs for care and support in consequence of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence; such information would help inform the development of local strategies.
14. Paragraphs (c) to (e) of subsection (1) refer to strategic assessments prepared in accordance with regulations made under section 6 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. These assessments inform the content of strategies prepared for a local authority area by a number of public bodies (including local authorities and Local Health Boards and collectively referred to as community safety partnerships) under section 6(1) of that Act for the purpose of reducing crime and disorder, reoffending and substance abuse in the local authority area. Strategic assessments relating to reducing crime and disorder and re-offending are undertaken in accordance with regulations 5 to 7 of the Crime and Disorder (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) (Wales) Regulations 2007 and strategic assessments relating to combating substance misuse are undertaken in accordance with regulations 5 to 7 of the Substance Misuse (Formulation and Implementation of Strategy) (Wales) Regulations 2007. Strategic assessments are undertaken annually for a local authority area by the strategy group established by the community safety partnership under the relevant regulations. The purpose of the strategic assessment is to assist the community safety partnership in revising their partnership plan. The partnership plan for each local authority area sets out the strategies prepared for that area under section 6(1) of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 along with information relating to how they are to be implemented. The strategy group includes representatives from local authorities and Local Health Boards as well as other public bodies that make up the community safety partnership to which the requirements of section 6 of the 1998 Act apply. Strategic assessments include an analysis of the levels and patterns of re-offending, crime, disorder and substance misuse for local authority areas. These assessments may therefore identify levels and patterns of gender-based violence, domestic abuse and sexual violence, which could help inform the development of local strategies. The assessments also analyse any changes in the level

*These notes refer to the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act 2015 (c.3) which received Royal Assent on 29 April 2015*

and patterns of re-offending, crime, disorder and substance misuse and the reasons for such changes. This analysis is likely to assist in the preparation and review of local strategies under section 6 of the Violence against Women, Domestic Abuse and Sexual Violence (Wales) Act.

15. In the event that Ministers consider these assessments were inadequate for the purpose of informing the development of local strategies, they will be able to exercise the regulation power in subsection (2) to require a local authority or Local Health Board to carry out further assessments.