



Motion for Change Toolkit

- Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls: Why councils must act now
- Building Momentum: How to pass a Motion for Change
- From Promise to Progress: Making your motion matter
- Support and guidance

This toolkit is designed to support councillors to pass a Motion for Change and successfully implement its pledges. If you have any questions about proposing or enacting a Motion for Change, please contact us at policy@womensaid.org.uk

Tackling Violence Against Women and Girls: Why councils must act now

women's aid
until women & children are safe

Domestic abuse is a national emergency with devastating personal and public costs. **1.6 million women and 1.8 million children experience domestic abuse each year (ONS, 2024).**

The impact of domestic abuse:



Over **one in four** women aged 16 and over have experienced domestic abuse. (ONS, 2025)

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1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Over **one woman per week** is killed at the hands of their male partner or ex-partner. (ONS, 2024)

We welcome the government's commitment to halve violence against women and girls (VAWG) in a decade, but to achieve this we need urgent action from local government.

Women's Aids' Motion for Change: Together Against Violence Towards Women and Girls (VAWG), has been developed in recognition of the key role councils play to fulfil this ambition.

It has been designed to support councils to drive forward progress, committing to a bold set of pledges to address the root causes of VAWG, and ensure survivors and their children can access specialist support at every stage of their journey.

[Click here](#) to view our Motion for Change Template which includes powerful supporting evidence illustrating the cost of domestic abuse to survivors and local services'.

Building Momentum: How to pass a Motion for Change

Step 1: Secure Support

Our Template Motion outlines the scale and urgency of violence against women and girls (VAWG) at a national level. To ensure the motion is impactful, **it's important to consider how the motion aligns with local context.**

What are the specific challenges facing survivors in your community? The best way to find out is by speaking directly to local experts. Contact a local specialist domestic abuse service or email policy@womensaid.org.uk if you would like us to help you get in touch.

Start conversations with your fellow councillors. **Explain why the motion matters and listen to their views.** They may have ideas to strengthen the motion or insights into how it could be more effectively implemented. **Securing a seconder is essential**, so identify a councillor who will formally support the motion.

Step 2: Present Your Case

Check your council's constitution to understand the process for submitting a motion ahead of a Full Council meeting.

When presenting the motion, make sure to explain to colleagues why the motion matters in your community.

Using local case studies can be a powerful way to illustrate the personal impact of VAWG in your council. Please make sure to get explicit permission before sharing any personal stories and keep case studies anonymous.

Step 3: Make Some Noise

Once you have passed a Motion for Change - don't let it go unnoticed!

Email policy@womensaid.org.uk to let Women's Aid know and we will spotlight your council on our website and in our **Councillor Network Newsletter**.

Use **social media assets** to spread the word on your own platforms. Keep your constituents informed by highlighting the motion in any newsletters, blogs, or community updates you produce.

From Promise to Progress: Making your motion matter

Pledge 1

Work with survivors, local specialist and 'by and for' services to understand the impact of VAWG in [council area] and develop a strategy to address this.

➤ **Meet with local specialist domestic abuse services and survivors.** These organisations offer valuable local insight and support, helping the council to effectively deliver on the commitments outlined in the motion.

➤ Try to engage with a diverse range of services, including smaller 'by and for' services that are run by and for Black and minoritised survivors. This can help build a deeper understanding of the challenges survivors face in your council area and ensure the motion strengthens local policy and practice for all survivors.

➤ Check out our [Meaningful Survivor Engagement Guide](#), developed by Women's Aid and [Imkaan](#), which includes best practice for involving adult survivors meaningfully in local service planning and delivery.

From Promise to Progress: Making your motion matter

Pledge 2

Work with local specialist services to ensure comprehensive education on healthy relationships is available in all schools across [council area].

- Councillors can fulfil this pledge by partnering with local specialist services to design and fund age-appropriate, evidence-based programmes on healthy relationships.
- Our training team works with schools and local specialist services across the country to deliver high-quality, expert-led **healthy relationship education** funded by the Home Office.

Pledge 3

Work with survivors, local specialist and 'by and for' services to understand the impact of VAWG in [council area] and develop a strategy to address this.

- **Women's Aid Commissioning Guidance** (co-developed with Public Benefit Lawyer Julian Blake), outlines why alternatives to competitive procurement, such as grant funding, are not just better for survivors, but supported by statutory guidance.
- Women's Aid works directly with local authorities to conduct local needs assessments and support the development of **innovative, efficient commissioning plans** that improve services for survivors.

From Promise to Progress: Making your motion matter

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Pledge 4

Appoint a councillor as a VAWG Champion, to hold the council to account on this motion and amplify the voice of survivors.

- We encourage councils to appoint a VAWG champion, who demonstrates a strong commitment to addressing violence against women and girls.
- **No government funding intended for direct frontline provision should be used for this role.**
- VAWG Champions should connect with their local specialist domestic abuse and VAWG services to understand the local barriers to accessing support, and the work they do everyday to reduce VAWG locally.

Pledge 5

Report to Full Council within [12] months on the actions it has undertaken to fulfil the pledges in this motion.

- Once you've reported on the motion please do get in touch so we can spotlight any progress or good practice in your area as a result of this motion.
- If you would like to discuss how Women's Aid can support you to fulfil the pledges of this motion, please email policy@womensaid.org.uk

Support and guidance

Existing Support and Guidance

Our [Councillor and Commissioner Hub](#) hosts policy briefings, case studies, and commissioning advice tailored to local authorities.

Our [Research and Reports](#) cover a range of topics from an 'Annual Audit' of domestic abuse service demand and provision, to research into attitudes towards healthy relationships in children and young people. These reports include recommendations and learnings for councillors and commissioners.

Join the [Domestic Abuse Councillor Network](#) and connect with other councillors who are working to improve provision for survivors in their area. Members receive **newsletters** with the latest policy updates, practical tools, training opportunities and invitations to **exclusive events**, including workshops and networking sessions

Self-Care and Support

We recognise that many councillors who support Women's Aid are also survivors of domestic abuse, and/or will have friends, family members or constituents who have been affected by VAWG. Engaging with this work can be emotionally challenging, and it's important to care for your own wellbeing, as well as that of your colleagues.

You can find a range of support on our website: [I need help - information and support on domestic abuse networking sessions](#)