

## GENDER ADVISORY GROUP

**Meeting held at Victoria House, Balliol Business Park on Monday 12th September 2013 at 5.00pm**

Issues Discussed:

- Vera Informed the group that a Scrutiny Committee had now been set up who will initially look at finalised complaints files made against Northumbria Police.
- Vera informed the group that 847 responses had been received in relation to the Violence Against Women project. These responses will be used to produce a Violence Against Women strategy with the launch expected to take place on 25th November 2013.
- The group were updated on the recent Convention of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) Conference which was held in Geneva. CEDAW is an international agreement signed by countries that affirms principles of human rights and equality for women around the world. The committee does not have any enforcement powers and it remains the responsibility of each country to determine how best to bring their policies and laws in line with ending discrimination against women.

CEDAW has been used to reduce sex trafficking, domestic violence, and female genital mutilation, ensure primary education for girls and vocational training for women, ensure the right to vote, end forced marriage and child marriage.

The UK delegation attending the conference delivered a shadow report which included a number of recommendations on ending discrimination and increasing equality for women and girls. The CEDAW committee then produced their own report with key recommendations to be undertaken by the UK Government.

- Vera Baird announced the national roll out of training to help protect millions of people visiting bars and clubs across the UK. More than 100,000 door staff outside clubs and bars across the country will take part in specialised Security Industry Authority (SIA) training as part of a ground breaking initiative to ensure they can identify vulnerable people and know what steps to take to help protect them. The training was developed in the Northumbria Police force area in May as result of a unique partnership set up by Vera Baird with the police, Safe Newcastle and Phoenix Security.

The SIA which regulates the private security industry, including door supervisors, will now adopt Northumbria's training which means that door staff will be better equipped to take an active role in ensuring the safety of the public. Revellers who are refused entry to bars or clubs or are asked to leave can end up wandering the streets, cut off from their friends and with no means of getting home. The training gives door staff options on the safest ways of helping people, based on their assessment. This intervention will also help police officers policing thriving night time crowds.

It is hoped that this training could be rolled out to other individuals involved in the night time economy such as taxi drivers and Street pastors.

- Vera informed the group that discussions were underway regarding the opening of a Safe haven venue in the Big Market, Newcastle. This building will be operated by Ambulance Service staff and will be a place where individuals can be taken if vulnerable or in need of help.