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Honorary Patrons – Lord Cotter, John Penrose MP, Ann Goodchild, Paul Chivers, Erin Pizzey and Clive Lever

Speaker Note / Briefing Note:

86: Lord Paddick and Baroness Featherstone

Page 58, line 8, at end insert

“, that one third are male, and that some are in same sex relationships

(1) About the ManKind Initiative

- 1.1 The ManKind Initiative charity (formed in 2001) was the first charity in Great Britain to support male victims of domestic abuse. We take a modern 21st century inclusive and equality-based view of domestic abuse and believe that there needs to be more support and recognition for both women and men. We recognise there are more female victims than male victims and do not want funding taken away from female victims to be given to men, we want more funding for all.
- 1.2 Our core services include a national helpline (2,000 calls per year), National Service Standards, a training programme and a national information service for agencies. We also worked in partnership with both the CPS and the Home Office on their respective statements regarding male victims of VAWG crimes.
- 1.3 A core part of our work is to ensure the voices of male victims, their children and wider family (including mothers/fathers and sisters/brothers) are heard. This includes ensuring their experiences are not minimised by gender stereotypes or the narrative on domestic abuse so they are better recognised within society and the public services.

(2) Speaking Note

- 2.1 The charity supports the Statutory Guidance in principle. However, there is a danger that despite male victims making up one third of all victims of domestic abuse (see Section 4 for headline statistics below), the current clause and its interpretation within the Guidance will minimise their experiences and continue with the gender stereotypes about male victims of domestic abuse. This includes those in same-sex relationships.
- 2.2 The amendment will go a considerable way in ensuring that these gender stereotypes are addressed and reflects the reality of domestic abuse in the diverse society that Britain is today - a society that fully recognises that women and men are victims and perpetrators including those in same-sex relationships.
- 2.2 These gender stereotypes are that men cannot be victims or that very few are and the current clause without the amendments reinforces that view – that domestic abuse is really only a crime that affects women.

2.3 From our experience in working with male victims for nearly 20 years, this view means there are barriers for male victims themselves and also how they are supported and recognised.

2.4 For male victims of domestic abuse, these gender stereotypes mean:

- Men are not recognising that the domestic abuse behaviours perpetrated against them are actually domestic abuse.
- They are less likely to tell anyone they are a victim (only 51% of men tell anyone) and less likely to be supported by a domestic abuse service because they are not contacting them or being signposted (less than 5% of victims supported by a domestic abuse service are men, even though they make up one in three of all victims).

2.5 As a male victim, the gender stereotypes mean they:

- Experience a sense of shame
- Fear not being believed because they are a man*
- Do not know there is support for them
- Fear being laughed at
- Feel their sense of what it means to be a “man” is undermined (resilient, strong)
- Do not comprehend how they can be a victims of domestic abuse
- Can have their gender used against them by the perpetrator (“you are a man, no one will believe you are a victim”)

*in heterosexual relationships this can manifest in “how can I be a victim, I am 6ft 2 and my partner she is 5ft 6?”

2.6 In terms of society and public services, the effect of these gender stereotypes about male victims include:

- Lack of belief, being laughed at, not being taken seriously
- Lack of professional curiosity by some professionals in public services (police officers, GPs, A&E, social services) in not “thinking” that a man presenting with “symptoms” of domestic abuse can be a victim
- Lack of personal curiosity by family, friends, work colleagues and employers in the same way as above
- Lack of recognition of the need for male-friendly services and support for men
- Little focussed awareness campaigns for male victims targeted at encouraging them to come forward.

2.7 For men in same-sex relationships, these stereotypes can also be used:

- To continue the abuse and be controlled because of their identity
- Being threatened of being “outed”
- Threat or actual disclosure of HIV status
- To be ostracised by family/community
- Threats to men on spousal visas/racism/discrimination

(3) Six examples of how gender stereotypes affect men in reality:

- 1) “Mr Anderson explained he didn’t really want to report that incident at the time because he felt embarrassed about having to explain what was going on. He said he didn’t think men suffered from domestic violence” (*Metro*, 20 December 2016).
 - 2) “When James attended MRI with a police officer for treatment of the stab wound, he was not asked any questions by attending professionals in relation to domestic abuse. There was no targeted enquiry and no apparent consideration that James may have been a victim of domestic abuse.” (*Taken from the DHR of “James” who was fatally stabbed*).
 - 3) “...the fact that Mr D was not regarded as the victim, despite third party reports, did not enable conversations and appropriate risk assessments to be undertaken with him. The Panel also felt that because he was a male there was an assumption made that he was the perpetrator of abuse for the domestic incidents reported to the police, therefore summarising that gender stereotypes were most probably at play during this time.”(*Taken from the DHR of “Mr D” who died by suicide*).
 - 4) “Respondents [local magistrates] were asked about their perception of the risk and harm that might be faced by a survivor if they were in a range of couple relationships. Responses indicated that most magistrates were influenced by the public story of Domestic Abuse and the accompanying gendered assumptions. The majority of magistrates responding to the question perceived that the most risk and harm would be experienced by women when they were faced with violence from men.” (*The Training Needs of Magistrates in relation to Domestic Abuse”, Magistrates Association*)
 - 5) “A barman has spoken out about the horrific abuse he suffered at the hands of ex-fiancée which ended in her stabbing him 28 times. Martyn Brown admitted he was ‘ashamed to tell anyone what was happening’ even keeping the truth about Harriet Sharp’s behaviour from his own family” (*Daily Mirror*, 2016).
 - 6) #ViolenceisViolence video (role reversal public experiment video –health warning of swearing): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=u3PgH86OyEM>
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(4) Statistics on male and LGBT+ victims

4.1 As set out, male and LGBT+ victims make up a significant minority of victims (one in three of all victims are male), the list below provides statistics which can be used in the debate.

- 1) The Office for National Statistics figures show¹ every year that one in the three victims of domestic abuse are male equating to 757,000 men (1.561m women).
- 2) One in 6-7 men and one in 4 women will be victims of domestic abuse in their lifetime².

¹ Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2WQ4JZ8> (Table 2)

² Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2WQ4JZ8> (Table 1)

- 3) However, only 4% of victims of domestic abuse being supporting by local domestic services are men³.
- 4) Of domestic abuse crimes recorded by the police, 26% were committed against men⁴.
- 5) Over a three year period (April 2016 to Mar 2019), 38 men were killed by a partner or ex-partner (222 women)⁵.
- 6) Half of male victims (49%) fail to tell anyone they are a victim of domestic abuse and are two and a half times less likely to tell anyone than female victims (19%)⁶.
- 7) 11% of male victims (7.2% women) have considered taking their life due to partner abuse.⁷
- 8) 8.3% of men (16.9% of women) were victims of both domestic abuse and also then suffered from “force” within that abusive relationship⁸.
- 9) Since Covid, the charity saw an increase of calls to its helpline by one third and visits to its website double. Victims have reported being more isolated than ever, the intensity of the abuse (psychological and physical has increased), less able to leave because of lack of money (furlough and redundancy) and lockdown has been used an excuse for breaches in agreed child contact agreements by mothers.⁹
- 10) There are only 39 organisations with 220 refuge/safe house spaces for male victims (only 48 are solely available for male victims, the other 172 are for either men or women).¹⁰
- 11) Less than 2% of men who are victims of partner abuse state that it is a man who has carried out the abuse¹¹.
- 12) The percentage of gay men (6.0%) or bi-sexual men (7.3%) who suffered domestic abuse in 2019/20 is more than for heterosexual men (3.5%). Lesbian women (12.2%) and bisexual women (19.6%) as a percentage are more likely to be a victim of domestic abuse compared to heterosexual women (6.9%)¹².

For further information – please contact Mark Brooks OBE, Chair, 07834 452357 / chairman@mankind.org.uk

³ Domestic abuse victim services, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2Nf2bSx> (Table 13)

⁴ Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2WQ4JZ8> (Table 16)

⁵ Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2WQ4JZ8> (Table 23)

⁶ Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales: year ending March 2018: Report - <https://bit.ly/38epe4X>

⁷ Partner abuse in detail, England and Wales: year ending March 2018: Report - <https://bit.ly/38epe4X>

and Data - <https://bit.ly/38faSRL>

⁸ Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2WQ4JZ8> (Table 1)

⁹ ManKind Initiative helpline calls (March to September 2020)

¹⁰ Male Domestic Abuse Network (www.mdan.org.uk)

¹¹ Partner abuse in detail, year ending March 2018 – <https://bit.ly/2KLW8UO> (Table 2)

¹² Domestic abuse victim characteristics, England and Wales: year ending March 2020 - <https://bit.ly/2WQ4JZ8> (Table 6)