

2021

**Devolution and women's disadvantage:**  
***Tackling women and girls' multiple  
disadvantage at a regional level***  
**A policy briefing**



This briefing builds on the findings of *Breaking Down The Barriers: The Final Report of The Commission Into Women's Domestic And Sexual Violence And Multiple Disadvantage*.<sup>1</sup> This report identified the need for gender and trauma-informed responses that understand the interconnected experiences women face when seeking help for violence and abuse, mental ill health, substance use, homelessness and motherhood.

Following this publication, Agenda and AVA worked with Greater Manchester Combined Authority officials, women's sector organisations and women with lived experience in Greater Manchester (GM) to understand how the Commission's recommendations could be achieved across the region.<sup>2</sup> This work has informed the recommendations for change at the regional level set out in this briefing.

This work has been funded by the Lloyds Bank Foundation for England & Wales.

## AVA

AVA (Against Violence & Abuse) is a feminist charity committed to creating a world without gender-based violence and abuse. We work with survivors to champion evidence based change. We are an expert, independent and ground-breaking national charity particularly recognised for our specialist expertise in multiple disadvantage and children and young people's work. Our core work includes training, policy, research and consultancy.

## Agenda

Agenda, the alliance for women and girls at risk, is working to build a society where women and girls are able to live their lives free from inequality, poverty and violence. We campaign for women and girls facing abuse, poverty, poor mental health, addiction, homelessness and contact with the criminal justice system to get the support and protection they need. We work to get systems and services transformed, to raise awareness across sectors and to promote public and political understanding of the lives of women and girls facing multiple disadvantage.

## Lloyds Bank Foundation England and Wales

The Lloyds Bank Foundation for England and Wales is an independent charitable trust funded by Lloyds Banking Group. The Foundation partners with small and local charities helping people overcome complex social issues, including domestic and sexual abuse. Through long term funding, developmental support and influencing policy and practice, the Foundation helps charities make life changing impact. This project and briefing was funded through the Foundation's Transform programme aimed at stimulating innovation and improvements in the domestic and sexual abuse sectors.

# About this briefing

## Who is this briefing for?

This briefing is aimed at decision makers, combined authorities, metro mayors and local authorities working to improve local government approaches to tackling multiple disadvantage in the lives of women and girls across England. It is particularly focused on metro mayoral regions, but will be of use for decision makers across local government with strategic decision-making responsibilities.

### Those who will find this briefing particularly useful include:

- Metro mayors
- Local authority leaders and officials
- Cabinet members with responsibility for public health, violence against women and girls, homelessness, housing, child and adult social services
- Local authority commissioners
- Police and Crime Commissioners
- Local Government bodies such as the LGA, ADASS and SOLACE
- Voluntary sector organisations working with women and girls with multiple disadvantage

## What does this briefing cover?

- **Co-production and working with experts by experience**
- **Data collection**
- **Strategic responses**
- **Commissioning and funding for gender and trauma-informed practice**
- **COVID-19 response and recovery to meet the needs of the most disadvantaged women and girls**

Throughout the briefing, we set out key recommendations for regional and local leaders on how they can use their convening and commissioning power to create a more holistic approach to women and girls facing multiple disadvantage.

In particular, we are calling on **newly elected and returning metro mayors** to use available funding and devolved powers to ensure that these recommendations are driven forward across their regions, and to lobby for further powers to support their efforts to tackle women's multiple disadvantage. We also intend that **all regional and local leaders** across England and Wales use these recommendations as a guide for change.

### Top tips for metro mayors and national and regional leaders influencing change:

- Take the lead in setting the Women and Girls equalities agenda for their regional area through thought leadership and collaboration with the specialist women and girls sector.
- Identify how existing and potential new devolved powers could be used to create strategies and commissioning practices that better meet the needs of women and girls in local communities and across regions.
- Lead on creating collaborative and integrated services for women and girls across local government by championing the commissioning of specialist gender and trauma-informed services.
- Ensure that clear and robust governance and accountability arrangements are in place to provide the leadership and decision-making capacity required for creating change.

# Introduction

For many women and girls, their experiences of disadvantage are underpinned by a history of extensive violence and abuse. Women are ten times as likely as men to have experienced extensive physical and sexual abuse during their lives, with one in 20 women affected. **That's 1.2 million women in England alone.**<sup>3</sup> Many of these women are deeply traumatised and go onto face multiple, complex and life-long issues. Without the right response from local services, the needs of the most disadvantaged women and girls go unaddressed.

## What is multiple disadvantage?

In this briefing, the term 'multiple disadvantage' refers to any combination of homelessness, violence and abuse, substance misuse, poor mental health, poverty and contact with the criminal justice system. In addition, other forms of inequalities compound the experiences some women and girls may face. For example, Black and minoritised women and girls are further disadvantaged by the multiple forms of discrimination and racism they experience. *See Glossary for a more detailed definition.*

## Barriers to support

Many of the challenges in the lives of the most disadvantaged women and girls demand local solutions. Due to the complexity of issues many women and girls face, they often find themselves bounced between services or excluded.

Previous research carried out by AVA and Agenda found that of 173 local areas in England and Wales, only 19 had access to support for women facing multiple disadvantage that could address all of the following issues: substance use, criminal justice contact, mental-ill health and homelessness.<sup>4</sup> Furthermore, a lack of disaggregated data broken down by age, ethnicity, disability, sexuality and other protected characteristics on which women and girls are being turned away from services, and why, often mean that local authorities are unable to quantify the scale of the problem and accurately assess the needs. Consequently, some women are disproportionately excluded from the support they need.

Survivors of abuse need specialist support created to work with women who have experienced trauma. However, too often they are required to access mainstream services, which are unable to get to the bottom of the issues they are facing and may leave women at risk of further harm.

The cost of not tackling the complex issues that women and girls face is enormous. Breaking Down The Barriers identified the need for gender and trauma-informed responses that acknowledge and understand the interconnected experiences women face when seeking help.<sup>5</sup> Without the right response in local services, women and girls' needs often go unaddressed, with the potential for problems to spiral, creating further and more complex problems down the line.

### Nadey's Story\*

"At 15 I had an apprenticeship to do childcare. But then at 16 I was raped. After it happened, I went back to work, to try and just keep going and distract myself. But I just went downhill. My boss would talk to me and I couldn't hear what she was saying, I started losing interest. I got really bad depression.

I got referred to a project that works with young people at risk of homelessness then, who referred me to a mixed hostel for anyone over 18. It's in an area where there are all the drug dealers and sex workers and sexual exploitation.

One night there was one old man, about 42, in one of the communal areas who tried to kiss me. And he'd been telling me earlier he had a daughter about my age! So I hit him, and then security came in, and said I was being reckless and causing problems. I don't understand how I can get abused and I'm the one being kicked out.

The project for young people I'd originally been referred to understood I was at risk, and that wasn't a safe decision – they said, in the end, 'we shouldn't have put you there'.

They need to make services worthwhile. At the moment you're not getting much from it. Otherwise, we're just going round in a circle. Maybe if they'd tackled my mental health when I was younger, maybe it would be better now."

\*Name changed to preserve anonymity

## Multiple disadvantage and the impact on families

Women facing multiple disadvantage experience particular issues related to motherhood and childcare. In 2017/18 local authorities spent £7.9 billion on children's care, comprising 13% of their locally controlled budgets.<sup>6</sup>

- Many "single" women who are homeless will in fact have children who are not in their care: half of the women St. Mungo's work with are mothers, and 79% of these mothers have had children taken into care.<sup>7</sup>
- Women's imprisonment affects an estimated 17,240 children in England and Wales,<sup>8</sup> with 95% of children who are separated from their mother by imprisonment forced to leave the family home to go into care or live with relatives.<sup>9</sup>

Having children removed into care, particularly when they are permanently removed, has life-long consequences for mothers and their children.

# Using local and regional powers to transform the lives of women and girls

- Combined and local authorities and their leaders hold a strategic convening role across local authority areas and can therefore ensure local systems work for women facing multiple disadvantage. The transfer of powers and budgets to Mayoral Combined Authorities (MCAs) provides local leaders with a huge opportunity to transform the lives of the most disadvantaged women and girls.<sup>10</sup> With nine city regions in England with metro mayors, the opportunity for ‘place-based approaches’<sup>11</sup> to address the needs of women and girls is now more pertinent than ever: 41% of England’s population (including Greater London) now live in areas with some sort of mayoral devolution deal.<sup>12</sup>
- Elected mayors hold crucial strategic and economic power and can address local social and economic challenges. Devolved powers give local governments varying degrees of freedom and flexibility to address these challenges and improve public services and effective partnership working in their areas. These areas of power include, but are not limited to, more control over housing, employment, policing and crime, and health and social care. With increased power in these areas, new opportunities to take a ‘helicopter view’ of the system response across local authorities emerge, encouraging collaboration and providing a platform for good practice. Importantly, metro mayors can also exercise influence outside their areas of formal responsibility by using the ‘soft power’ that can come with their high profile and personal electoral mandate.
- Effective change will require local and regional leaders to work closely with women and girls themselves, and the specialist women’s sector organisations that support them. Women with lived experience of multiple disadvantage must be centred and their contributions must be actively sought out at all levels of decision-making. It is crucial that this work includes organisations run by and for Black and minoritised women<sup>13</sup>, lesbian, bisexual and trans (LBT) women, disabled women and migrant women, including those operating at regional or national level if no provision exists locally. By prioritising relationship building and collaboration, leaders will have access to better information and more creative, practical and tailored ideas to assess and address local and regional need.

## A chance for change after COVID

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated many of the inequalities in women and girls’ lives, with levels of poverty, unemployment, poor mental health and violence and abuse soaring.<sup>14 15</sup> However, local leaders now have a unique opportunity to transform approaches to women and girls as they chart the course for post COVID-19 recovery in their regions.

Local leaders have responded dynamically to meet the needs of their communities during this challenging time, demonstrating the power of a local response. As the newly elected metro mayors start their new terms, they have a vital opportunity to be innovative in how they address disadvantage in the lives of women and girls. As they look to stimulate local economies and establish long-term prosperity, the most socially and economically marginalised women and girls cannot be overlooked. Evidence shows that women’s services, particularly those that take a holistic ‘whole person’ approach, can lead to improved outcomes and have a positive impact on women and their families.<sup>16</sup>

By putting in place the right measures now, local areas can generate huge savings in the long-term, and help thousands of women and girls to build lives away from poverty, inequality and violence. They have the power to ensure gender inequality is not set back by decades if they are courageous in their vision, work collaboratively with women and girls, and the sector that supports them, and take decisive action.

### Key recommendation:

#### *Covid-19 response*

1. Combined and local authorities should develop a joined-up COVID-19 response and recovery strategy for women and girls facing multiple disadvantage in their area. This strategy must be created in partnership with local specialist women’s sector and women with lived experience.

## A joined up approach

Devolution of power provides an opportunity to have a more joined-up approach to regional services across local authority areas, as well as offering policy support and development. For women facing multiple disadvantage, this is particularly important as these women often require support across local authority boundaries, for example when they are escaping violence, leaving prison, moving through areas for involvement in survival sex or sex-work. Local and combined authority leaders can ensure local systems work for women facing multiple disadvantage by co-ordinating and encouraging all parts of the system to work together better by taking a central, strategic overview.

The first step in this process must involve gathering robust data on women's needs, informed by women with lived experience and the specialist women's services that support them.

### Key recommendation:

#### *Data and insight*

1. **Identify target groups by collecting joined-up data on multiple disadvantage**, broken down by gender as well as all protected characteristics. Where robust data appears not to exist, approach organisations already working with hidden or marginalised women to gather insight and intelligence for needs assessment.
2. **Commissioners should ensure that services provide disaggregated data** on which women are being turned away, and why, to allow robust data collection on service thresholds and provide clarity on local need. Local authorities should hold central responsibility for the collation and evaluation of this data, and feeding it back into strategic decision-making.

By working with the specialist women and girl's sector, leaders can support the development of systems that break down service siloes and offer person-centred, holistic support for women and girls from diverse backgrounds. Strategies led by Combined Authorities in areas such as health or housing should take into account the needs of women and girls, providing local councils with the vision and framework to exercise their own statutory powers to respond to the needs of the women and girls in their areas. Services across local authority areas can then work collaboratively to break down service siloes through one-stop-shops, co-location of professionals, or 'navigator' models, where individuals or teams support service users to navigate systems. For example, children and adult's social care, health and housing responsibilities may sit with different councils in a single locality, but it is vital these services are joined up and partnering with women and girls' community-based services.

At an even more granular level, local councillors can also drive forward local strategies and action plans that are sensitive and responsive to marginalised groups, including women and girls facing multiple disadvantage. Without strong leadership driving collaboration,<sup>17</sup> progress will stall on improving service delivery for women and girls facing multiple disadvantage.

### Key recommendation:

#### *Strategic response*

1. **Undertake an audit of local strategies and action plans** to review whether they are effectively responding to the needs of women facing multiple disadvantage. This review should involve women and girls with lived experience and professionals from the specialist women and girls' sector.
2. **Work in partnership with the specialist women and girl's sector** and women with lived experience through co-production methods when assessing need, developing strategies, commissioning services, and identifying gaps in service provision.

## Case study: A regional approach to mental health in West Midlands Combined Authority

Maximising its devolved health powers, the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) has paved the way for a local approach to tackling the mental health crisis among women and girls. It is among the first of the Combined Authorities to commission research into mental health and its impact on the public sector, and put in place a regional action plan to create positive change.

The commission published its action plan, Thrive West Midlands,<sup>18</sup> in January 2017. It set out to transform the way people with mental health problems are treated by public services and employers in the West Midlands.

The action plan, informed by the research commissioned from the University of Birmingham,<sup>19</sup> points to the evidence which shows the disproportionate levels of poor mental health among the most disadvantaged women and girls, particularly Black and minoritised women and girls.

Key outcomes for women and girls facing multiple disadvantage included the establishment of a group to ensure access to specialist 'perinatal' mental health services across the region for women during pregnancy and after they give birth, and a commitment to examine why detentions under the Mental Health Act are rising in the region, particularly repeat detentions, and address inequalities.

The WMCA's strategic prioritisation and central oversight of mental health in the region has provided an opportunity to scale up positive measures across the area, and to reduce variations in access and uptake of well-evidenced interventions. The momentum of this work has been sustained over the years by local leadership, including the West Midlands Mayor, Andy Street, who committed to continuing to support those experiencing poor mental health through the Thrive programmes in his 2021 manifesto.

## Commissioning specialist gender and trauma-informed services

Good commissioning and adequate long-term funding can transform responses to women facing multiple disadvantage. Without holistic and effective prevention measures put in place, local government will ultimately pay the price. In 2018/19, local authorities spent £2.2 billion on homelessness-related activities, with spending on family homelessness now more than 25% higher than it was in 2008/09.<sup>20</sup> A majority (56%) of statutorily homeless households in England are women with dependent children or lone women.<sup>21</sup> In 2019/2020, 'risk of domestic abuse' was the third most commonly recorded support need.<sup>22</sup>

To effectively support women and girls with complex needs, local authorities should allocate funding to commission specialist gender and trauma-informed services and developing trauma-informed practice and principles across its work, drawing on the findings of the Women's Mental Health Taskforce report.<sup>23</sup>

While allocated funding to tackle violence against women and girls is essential, leaders should also scrutinise and promote the role of broader public health, housing, homelessness and other funding streams in gender and trauma-informed commissioning.

### Key recommendation:

#### *Commissioning for gender and trauma-informed practice*

1. Allocate long-term funding to commission specialist gender and trauma-informed services and developing trauma-informed practice and principles across its work. This should involve commissioning specialist women's services, including specialist services for Black and minoritised, LBT and disabled women, with access for women with NRPF.
2. Regional and local leaders should develop a shared set of expectations for commissioning for gender and trauma-informed services, establishing a shared approach across homelessness, health, drugs and alcohol and criminal justice.

3. **These expectations should prioritise breaking down service siloes** and offering person-centred, holistic support for women from diverse backgrounds through one-stop-shops and co-location of professionals. Where this is not possible, 'navigator' models, where individuals or teams support service users to navigate systems, should be developed to support survivors to access available services.
4. **Specialist organisations should be fully involved at key stages of the commissioning cycle**, in decision-making and data collection. If specialist organisations are not awarded contracts, incentives should be built into commissioning processes to encourage mainstream services to work collaboratively with the specialist women's voluntary sector.
5. **Commissioned services must be required to ensure that staff make trained enquiries** about domestic and sexual abuse, and respond appropriately with clear pathways into appropriate trauma-informed support.
6. **Thresholds and criteria for support set by commissioners should be reviewed** to ensure women experiencing domestic and sexual violence and multiple disadvantage are not disproportionately excluded from the support they need.
7. **Police and Crime Commissioners' (PCC) local plans should have a gendered lens** that understands the connections between women's offending and their experiences of domestic and sexual abuse and enables more holistic commissioning that addresses the risks that cause women to become involved in the criminal justice system. Police and Crime Panels should scrutinise PCC decision-making on the basis of how well they have achieved this, working alongside victims and equalities leads at the Association of Police and Crime Commissioners. .

### **Case study: Joined-up approach offering dispersed refuge to women in Northumbria**

An example of effective cross-boundary work where local authorities and the voluntary sector come together to tackle disadvantage is by offering women with unmet (complex) needs who are also victims of domestic abuse safe refuge accommodation. Six local authorities in Northumbria have collaborated in the development of this project, which delivers trauma-informed, dispersed refuge accommodation.

This project was developed initially through Community Safety Team meetings, in which [Changing Lives](#) and other locally based organisations working with women facing multiple disadvantage highlighted the important gap in accommodation for women with unmet (complex) needs.

To address this gap, Sanctum Safe Houses was piloted using funding from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government – which the partnered approach helped to secure. The model started in Sunderland, however the success of the model led to neighbouring local authorities wishing to explore the model in their area - and Sanctum is now delivered across the six Local Authority areas in Northumberland, Tyne and Wear.

The Police and Crime Commissioner in the region has been strategically engaged with the model, and plays a central role going forward to further embed the learning and impact this work has had. Specialist women's organisation in the local area have worked with commissioners to develop commissioning frameworks that better respond to complexity. For the first time, this approach to tackling the gap in safe refuge provision for women with unmet (complex) needs is being put forward and is part of wider bid led by the Police and Crime Commissioner to help address system change for women who face the most disadvantage in our communities – meaning it will not be reliant on short-term grants.

This is an example of how local authorities can work together and partner with the voluntary sector to develop a more integrated system for women with unmet needs.

One woman reflected: *"These services didn't exist when I was a bairn and my Mam was beaten up. I can't go into refuge, but I can go into Sanctum. I won't be like my Mam was, I want my life back."*

# Glossary

## **1. Combined authority**

A combined authority (CA) is a legal body set up using national legislation that enables a group of two or more councils to collaborate and take collective decisions across council boundaries. *The Cities and Local Government Devolution Act 2016* permits a combined authority to establish a directly elected mayor.

## **2. Multiple disadvantage**

Lankelly Chase's *Gender Matters* report shows that women make up 70% of people experiencing homelessness, substance misuse, poor mental health and interpersonal violence and abuse simultaneously.<sup>24</sup>

In addition, other forms of inequalities compound the experiences some women and girls may face. Black and minoritised women and girls are further disadvantaged by the multiple forms of discrimination they experience. Structural racism and socioeconomic inequalities intersect with gender inequality and make Black and minoritised<sup>25</sup> women disproportionately at risk of multiple disadvantage. Migrant women who are unable to access public funds, due to the No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) condition, are further driven into multiple forms of disadvantage. Local authorities are often left with the responsibility to provide for subsistence and accommodation needs that would otherwise be centrally funded.

There are also many other outcomes that are commonly related to these experiences of disadvantage, such as involvement in 'survival sex', removal of children into social care, and poor educational and employment outcomes.

## **3. The women and girls' sector**

Women's specialist services, including women's centres, and girls' specialist services are community-based support services for women and girls facing multiple disadvantage, including women and girls in contact with the criminal justice system. These services provide holistic, gender and trauma-responsive services in safe, women- and girls-only spaces.

## **4. Trauma-informed**

Trauma-informed practices understand and respond to the high prevalence of trauma and its effects, as well as understanding that experiences of trauma can lead women and girls to developing coping strategies and behaviours that may appear to be harmful or dangerous. Key principles for commissioners and services to adopt are set out in the *Women's Mental Health Taskforce report*.<sup>26</sup>

## **5. Gender-informed**

Gender-informed approaches recognise how women and girls' specific needs and experiences are influenced by their gender. Women and girls' experiences of multiple disadvantage are significantly different to men and boys' experiences, with women and girls much more likely to have experienced extensive violence and abuse and poor mental health.<sup>27</sup> Gender-neutral services can overlook this difference, and offer inappropriate and even harmful responses to women and girls.

## **6. Age-informed**

Age-informed approaches recognise the age-specific experiences and needs of girls and young women. Services designed for adult women by default can be intimidating and inappropriate for girls and young women. For example, girls and young women may use different language to talk about their experiences, and may face stigma on account of their younger age, such as in perinatal mental health services, for example.

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## **7. 'By and for' services**

This term refers to specialist women's services that are designed and delivered by and for the users and communities they aim to serve. This can include services led by and for Black and minoritised women and girls, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (LBT) women and girls, disabled women and girls and migrant women and girls.

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## **8. Black and minoritised**

The term 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic' is commonly used in policy and commissioning contexts but can collapse together a broad range of differences between individuals, as well as reinforcing the idea that certain groups automatically occupy a minority position. Drawing on critical analysis of this term by services led by and for marginalised groups, we use the term 'Black and minoritised' to refer to racialised women and girls.<sup>28</sup> Whilst groups can be 'minoritised' in a number of ways, we specifically use this term to highlight the way in which certain racialised or ethnic groups are constructed as 'minorities' through processes of marginalisation and exclusion. We include Gypsy, Roma and Traveller people within this definition.

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## **9. No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF)**

No Recourse to Public Funds (NRPF) refers to a visa condition set out in the Immigration and Asylum Act 1999 that prevents migrants from accessing 'public funds' if they are 'subject to immigration control'. This means they have no entitlement to most state-funded benefits, tax credits and housing assistance. The restrictions include women not on a spousal visa who are fleeing abuse, limiting their ability to access financial support, legal aid and safe accommodation. NRPF individuals can, nevertheless, be eligible for assistance from their local authorities for a range of services. Consequently, boroughs often have the responsibility to provide for subsistence and accommodation needs that, under different circumstances, would be centrally funded.

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## Endnotes

1. Agenda and AVA (2019) Breaking Down the Barriers. The Commission was established by AVA and Agenda to explore the links between domestic and sexual abuse and multiple disadvantage. Chaired by Baroness Armstrong of Hill Top, the Commission convened leading experts from across the health, homelessness, substance use, criminal justice and violence against women and girls sector. Recommendations were based on a national call for written evidence, a community of practice and peer research. For more information, visit <https://weareagenda.org/breakingdownthebarriers/>
2. Agenda and AVA (2021) Tackling women's multiple disadvantage in Greater Manchester [https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Tackling-women%E2%80%99s-multiple-disadvantage-in-Greater-Manchester\\_Final21-1.pdf](https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/03/Tackling-women%E2%80%99s-multiple-disadvantage-in-Greater-Manchester_Final21-1.pdf)
3. Scott, S. & McManus, S. 2016. (DMSS research for Agenda) [Hidden Hurt: Violence, abuse and disadvantage in the lives of women](#)
4. AVA and Agenda (2017) [Mapping the Maze](#). p.8
5. Agenda and AVA (2019) [Breaking Down the Barriers](#)
6. Institute for Government (2019) Children's Social Care: Performance Tracker <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/publication/performance-tracker-2019/children-social-care>
7. St. Mungo's (2014), Rebuilding Shattered Lives <https://www.mungos.org/publication/rebuilding-shattered-lives-final-report/>
8. Prison Reform Trust (2018) What about me? <http://www.prisonreformtrust.org.uk/portals/0/documents/what%20about%20me.pdf>
9. Caddle, D and Crisp, D. (1997) Mothers in Prison
10. As part of the government's devolution agenda, various powers and budgets have been devolved to MCAs following a series of 'devolution deals' struck between Whitehall and local leaders. [This LGA Devolution Register](#) outlines the powers that have been given through devolution deals across England. All have a portfolio that includes transport and spatial planning, post-16 skills training, business support services and economic development.
11. The term 'place-based' is used here to describe a range of approaches aimed at achieving significant change in a specific geographical area. This can include funding and grantmaking to long term, collaborative partnerships. It also describes a style and philosophy of approach which seeks to achieve 'joined-up' change across sectors and services in that area.
12. Institute of Government, 'Metro Mayors', [Accessed 14.07.21], <https://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/explainers/metro-mayors>
13. See glossary.
14. Agenda (2021) Voices from Lockdown: A Way Forward for Women and Girls <https://weareagenda.org/a-way-forward/>
15. Wenham, C. and Herten-Crabb, A. (2021) Why we Need a Gender Advisor on SAGE <https://ppr.lse.ac.uk/articles/10.31389/lseppr.25/>
16. Nicholles, N. and Whitehead, S. (2012) Women's Community Services: A Wise Commission. <http://www.womencentredworking.com/wp-content/uploads/2014/08/Nef-report-Womens-Community-Services-A-Wise-Commission.pdf>

17. For more information, see: Local Government Association (2020) The drivers of collaboration Working in partnership across local government [https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5.87%20The%20Drivers%20of%20Collaboration%20Report\\_05%20%28002%29.pdf](https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/5.87%20The%20Drivers%20of%20Collaboration%20Report_05%20%28002%29.pdf)
18. Lamb, N. Appleton, S. Norman, S. Tennant, M. (2017) [Thrive West Midlands: An Action Plan to drive better mental health and wellbeing in the West Midlands](#): West Midlands Combined Authority
19. Newbrigg, K. and Parsonage, M. (2017) [Mental Health In The West Midlands Combined Authority](#): University of Birmingham
20. WPI Economics, St Mungo's and Homeless Link (2020) Local authority spending on homelessness: 2020 update <https://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/Local%20authority%20homelessness%20spending%202020.pdf>
21. Agenda (2020) Women and girls who are homeless [https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Women-and-girls-who-are-homeless\\_2020-Agenda-Briefing-2.pdf](https://weareagenda.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Women-and-girls-who-are-homeless_2020-Agenda-Briefing-2.pdf)
22. MHCLG, Detailed local authority tables: 2019/20, Table A3 (29 Oct 2020) <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/statutory-homelessness-in-england-financial-year-2019-20>
23. The Women's Mental Health Taskforce was set up in early 2017 in response to evidence of deteriorating mental health amongst women and poor outcomes experienced by some women in mental health services. The Taskforce brought together experts in women's mental health to develop proposals to improve not only the mental health of women, but also their experience of mental health services. It was co-chaired by Jackie Doyle-Price, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Mental Health, Inequalities & Suicide Prevention, and Katharine Sacks-Jones, CEO of Agenda. In its final report published in 2018 it outlined key priorities and recommendations for improving women's mental health and their experiences of services including principles for service design and future strategic priorities. [https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/765821/The\\_Womens\\_Mental\\_Health\\_Taskforce\\_-\\_final\\_report1.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/765821/The_Womens_Mental_Health_Taskforce_-_final_report1.pdf)
24. Lankelly Chase (2020) Gender Matters: New conversations about severe & multiple disadvantage <https://lankellychase.org.uk/resources/publications/gender-matters/>
25. The term 'Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic' (BAME) is commonly used in policy contexts but it can reinforce the idea that certain groups automatically occupy a minority position. Drawing on critical analysis of this term by services led by and for marginalised groups, we refer to 'Black and minoritised' women and girls to highlight the way in which these groups are constructed as 'minorities' through processes of marginalisation and exclusion.
26. Agenda and the Department for Health and Social Care (2018) [The Women's Mental Health Taskforce Final report](#)
27. Lankelly Chase (2020) Gender Matters: New conversations about severe & multiple disadvantage <https://lankellychase.org.uk/resources/publications/gender-matters/>
28. Thiara and Roy (2020), [Reclaiming Voice: Minoritised Women and Sexual Violence](#), Imkaan