



WRDA Stormont and Westminster Update – November 2021

Summary

This summary reflects Bills within both the Stormont Executive and Westminster Government and relevant questions tabled to Stormont Ministers during Departmental Question Times; alongside, consultation responses from both WRDA and the Women's Policy Group (WPG). This month there has been a number of political developments surrounding the thematic issues highlighted within the [Women's Policy Group \(WPG\) Covid-19 Feminist Recovery Plan](#).

This month COP26 was underway, and **climate change** was at the forefront of many discussions across different sectors. Despite this, there was no movement on either climate change Bill in Northern Ireland. For more information in relation to the gender impacts of climate change, please find the [Feminist Recovery Plan Key Briefing on Climate Justice](#).

The issue of **violence against women and girls** featured prominently in legislation in both Stormont and Westminster. Naomi Long's Protection from Stalking Bill Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims Bill remain at Committee stage. The upsurge in spiking behaviours in our clubs and bars, illustrates the prevalence of violence against women remains within our society. This illustrates the importance of recent Bills within the DOJ but also highlights they must complete their legislative journeys and more must be done to combat other violent behaviours largely targeted against women such as spiking. This issues also featured during the Justice Minister's Question Time and was linked to the importance of the implementation of a Violence Against Women and Girl's Strategy in Northern Ireland

The issue of **reproductive health** and **access to abortion** featured prominently this month in Stormont and within the local streets of Northern Ireland. MLA Rachel Woods made sure to raise the issue of commissioning abortion services here in Northern Ireland frequently during both the Executive Office Question Time and the Department of Health Question Time. The WPG also issued a consultation response in relation to Safe Access Zones. Further, the Justice Minister verbally showed support for the Safe Access Zones Bill and likened anti-choice protests outside of clinics to that of harassment and intimidation.

The Executive Office mentioned the Feminist Recovery Plan in relation to the 'Building Forward: Consolidated COVID-19 Recovery Plan'. However, despite praise the Executive Office only allowed five days for the women's sector to respond to a call for consultation. This illustrated the gross lack of consideration of women and the women's sector.

This update has been put together by Courtney Girvin (WRDA volunteer)

Stormont

Executive Bills

Issue	Proposed by	Stage	Comments	Links to the feminist recovery plan (FRP)
Protection from Stalking Bill	Naomi Long, Minister for Justice	Committee Stage – no movement since 08/02/2021	<p>A Bill to provide protection from threatening or abusive behaviours, and from stalking behaviours. This new legislation will have greater penalties and protections from stalking behaviour compared to current legislation.</p> <p>The introduction of stalking protection orders (SPOs) will enable the police to intervene prior to any conviction to address stalking behaviours before they become entrenched or escalate in severity, therefore, protecting victims when there is an immediate risk of harm. The Bill is divided into three parts. Part 1 creates the specific offence of stalking and creates the offence of threatening and abusive behaviour, which can be triggered by a single incident. Part 2 provides for the introduction of SPOs. Part 3 deals with the interpretation, commencement, and short title of the Bill.</p>	<p>Stalking is an inherently gendered crime, with women representing a disproportionate number of victims.</p> <p>Domestic homicide is linked to high-risk indicators such as coercive and controlling behaviour, stalking and domestic violence</p> <p>The FRP also notes NI specific considerations such as the link between paramilitarism and stalking behaviours.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p>
Justice (Sexual Offences and Trafficking Victims) Bill	Naomi Long, Minister for Justice	Committee Stage – no movement since 13/09/2021	A Bill to make provision about and in connection with sexual offences; regulate particular matters relating to cases of trafficking or exploitation; and amend rules applying with respect to certain sexual or violent offences prevention orders.	The FRP is pleased to see the implementation of the Gillen Review recommendations and believes they have the potential to transform the experience of those reporting

			<p>The Bill is divided into four parts. Part 1 legislates for the sexual offences covered within this Bill and the right to anonymity and privacy for both victims and perpetrators. Part 2 details trafficking and slavery offences separately. Part 3 detail what offences qualify for sexual offences prevention orders. The final part deals with the interpretation, commencement, and short title of the Bill.</p> <p>At its core this Bill has two key aims. Firstly, to enhance public safety by implementing elements of the Gillen review of serious sexual offence cases and from a review of the law on child sexual exploitation and sexual offences against children. Secondly, to improve services for victims of trafficking and exploitation.</p> <p>The Bill also creates new sexual offences and penalties such as behaviours of upskirting and downblousing.</p>	<p>their experience of rape and other sexual offences.</p> <p>This is vital given that recent research found that 97% of women have been sexually harassed and 96% failed to report as they believed it would not do anything.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p>
Parental Bereavement (Leave and Pay) Bill	Diane Dodds (previous), Minister for Economy – continued by Gordon Lions (current)	Consideration Stage	<p>A Bill to make provision about leave and pay for employees who have lost their children.</p> <p>The Bill is divided into two main sections. Firstly, parental bereavement leave which will curate the right of parents who have lost their child to be absent from work, regardless of how long they have worked for their employer. Secondly, parental bereavement pay in which those eligible will receive a fixed or earnings-related weekly rate of pay.</p> <p>Consideration stage debate highlighted three divergences of opinion among members. Firstly, when the Bill was first</p>	<p>The FRP highlights the importance of employment protections for mothers and fathers who will undoubtedly be affected by the Parental Bereavement Bill.</p> <p>Parental leave is recommended as a day one employment right within the FRP.</p>

			introduced there was no inclusion of bereavement pay and leave in the case of miscarriage. Second, how soon to implement this legislation, and finally how much the implementation of this Bill will cost – with the figure of £100 million being estimated.	<p>Link to information on the Bill here</p> <p>Link to the consideration stage debate here</p>
Climate Change (No.2) Bill	Edwin Poots, Minister for Agriculture, Environment and Rural Affairs	Committee Stage – no movement since 27/09/2021	<p>A Bill to set targets for the years 2050, 2040 and 2030 for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions; to provide for a system of carbon budgeting; to provide for reporting and statements against those targets and budgets; to confer power to impose climate change reporting duties on public bodies; to provide for reports and advice from the Committee on Climate Change; and for connected purposes.</p> <p>The speaker noted the Private Member’s Bill introduced by Clare Bailey and how “this is the first time that a Bill with provisions that are mutually inconsistent with an existing Bill (with the same topic) has been introduced to the Assembly.”</p> <p>The Minister asserted that he will not agree to a net zero target and that achieving net zero emissions by 2050 is not possible and therefore the goal of this Bill is to reduce it by at least 82%. Whereas Bailey’s Private Member’s Bill aims for a net zero carbon target by 2045. The GPNI leader has offered to compromise and incorporate elements of both Bills together, but this is unlikely given the Minister’s stance that the proposed targets within the Private Member’s Bill</p>	<p>The move to a “Green Economy” & an environmentally sustainable job market is reflected in the FRP. Gender equality must be at the heart of plans to tackle the climate crisis which will require a transformation of civil society and the economy. A new Energy Strategy will set ambitious targets and actions for a fair and just transition to a zero-carbon society.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p>

			would decimate tens of thousands of jobs in the agri-food sector.	
Private Tenancies Bill	Deirdre Hargey, Minister of Communities	Committee Stage – no movement since the 13/09/2021	<p>A Bill to amend the law relating to private tenancies. The private rented sector accounts for 17% of all housing stock in Northern Ireland and is now larger social housing sector. 48% of people living in private renting housing receive state financial support to help with housing costs. As this sector has grown it is important to ensure it is appropriately regulated.</p> <p>Contents of the Bill includes notice given to tenants in relation to current and past matters; tenants to be provided with receipts for cash payments; limits placed on deposit amounts; restrictions on rent increases; and increased health and safety clauses related to fire, smoke and carbon monoxide alarms and electrical safety standards.</p>	<p>The FRP asserts that private renting is one of the most accessible for young people, those with precarious working arrangements, and those escaping domestic abuse – yet it is the most expensive form of housing.</p> <p>The average weekly cost of private renting is £97 per week; this is not fit for purpose for many young women working is underpaid and undervalued occupations such as retail and caring.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p>

Non-Executive Bills

Issue	Proposed by	Stage (as of date of writing)	Comments	Link to Feminist Recovery Plan (FRP)
Severe Fetal Impairment Abortion	Initially introduced by Paul	Consideration Stage	A Bill attempting to restrict access to abortion by amending the Abortion (Northern Ireland) (No. 2) Regulations 2020 to remove the ground for abortion in cases of severe non-fatal fetal	This would infringe upon the bodily autonomy of women and others, and

(Amendment) Bill	Givan (First Minister – Lagan Valley) but sponsorship has been transferred to Christopher Stalford (DUP – South Belfast)		<p>disability. There has been no public consultation for this Bill, and it should be noted that the Northern Ireland Office conducted a public consultation when developing abortion law reform which resulted in the current 2020 legislation.</p> <p>FM stated he will challenge the Secretary of State Brandon Lewis in the courts over his direction that Stormont must commission full abortion services by next March.</p> <p>A second legal challenge has been issued by anti-abortion campaigners against the government for issuing the direction on Stormont to impose a deadline to establish services.</p> <p>Last month both Sinn Fein and the SDLP abstained on this Bill at Committee level enabling it to move to consideration stage. This Bill fails to comply with human right standards and would force those who receive certain foetal diagnoses to travel for abortion healthcare or continue with their pregnancy – removing their right to choose.</p>	<p>violates the reproductive justice principle of the right to not have a child.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p> <p>Link to FM Paul Givan’s position on the issue here</p> <p>Link to Northern Ireland Abortion timeline here</p>
Climate Change Bill	Clare Bailey (Green Party NI – South Belfast)	Committee Stage – no movement since 10/05/2021	<p>A Bill attempting to mitigate the effects of climate change in Northern Ireland. The Bill seeks to establish a legally binding net-zero carbon target for NI, establish an NI Climate Commissioner and resultant Climate Office, achieve a climate sustainable economy by 2045, and guarantee existing climate and environmental protections.</p> <p>This Bill would declare a climate emergency until the threshold of the global temperature as defined by the Paris Agreement has been met.</p>	<p>The move to a “Green Economy” and a more environmentally sustainable job market is reflected in the FRP.</p> <p>The effects of climate change are disproportionately gendered globally.</p>

			These goals are much more ambitious than the Executive Bill proposed by Edwin Poots.	Link to information on the Bill to here
Safe Access Zones Bill (Public Health and Well Being Bill)	Clare Bailey (Green Party NI – South Belfast)	Committee Stage	<p>This Bill requires the Department of Health to provide safe access to healthcare facilities including buffer zones/safe access zones around reproductive healthcare facilities.</p> <p>Such zones would mean anti-abortion protesting and harassment that would cause distress to those accessing healthcare would be unable to occur, and it would be a criminal offence to do so. The Bill also creates obligations on the Department of Health to liaise with police services to monitor and enforce safe access zones, alongside the requirement that the Department publish annual reporting in relation to effectiveness of the usage of safe access zones.</p> <p>The importance of such zones has become incredibly evident as last month after a pro-choice campaigner in Edinburgh was hit by an anti-choicer protester's car outside of the Chalmers clinic in Edinburgh this month. Despite this, the Scottish Government this month recently announced they will not support a national legislation movement to implement safe access zones around reproductive rights clinics in Scotland.</p>	<p>This would enhance the ability of women and others, including the medical professionals who work within these buildings, to access healthcare services such as abortion and accessing contraception without fear of harassment and intimidation.</p> <p>The FRP recognises the importance of enacting safe access and buffer zones.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p>
Period Products (Free Provision) Bill	Pat Catney (SDLP – Lagan Valley)	Second Reading	<p>A Bill to secure the provision throughout Northern Ireland of free period products; and for connected purposes.</p> <p>England, Scotland, and Wales each have varying schemes in place to provide sanitary products free of charge in schools and some other public buildings. Northern Ireland has been the only</p>	The FRP has highlighted the importance of good, gendered governance elsewhere globally – highlighting policies related to free period

			<p>place in the United Kingdom where such products are not provided free of charge in schools.</p> <p>This Bill strives to place a duty on the Department of Health to ensure that period products are available free of charge on a universal basis in appropriate locations; and to create regulations which specify which public service bodies have said duty to ensure access to free period products.</p>	<p>products as an example of this.</p> <p>Furthermore WRDA and the Women's Policy Group have been vocal in their support of movement towards free period products in past consultations.</p> <p>Link to information on the Bill here</p>
Domestic Abuse (Safe Leave) Bill	Rachel Woods (Green Party NI – North Down)	Second Reading	<p>A Bill to make provision for an entitlement to 10 days paid safe leave in each year for victims of domestic abuse; and for connected purposes. The Bill makes this a day one right to be guaranteed to all employees.</p> <p>Safe Leave can help mitigate some of the barriers that victims/survivors face when attempting to seek help and support. It can also help address some of the costs of domestic abuse for employers.</p>	<p>The FRP has highlighted the good practice of similar policies elsewhere globally such as in New Zealand.</p> <p>The FRP supports this legislation but would like to see up to 20 days paid safe leave as a day one right which should be available to take either as a block or more flexibly.</p> <p>Link to more information on the Bill here</p>

Question Tabled in the month of November

Issue	Date	Asked by:	Notes	Link to Feminist Recovery Plan (FRP)
Universal Credit Uplift	01/11/2021	Mr Catney (SDLP – Lagan Valley) To Deirdre Hargey, Minister of Communities	<p>“Could the Minister for Communities give her assessment of the Minister of Finance’s refusal to fund her bid for the universal credit uplift?”</p> <p>There was no refusal by the Minister of Finance, he has been very clear that he put the proposal on the Executive table. Further, both the Minister of Finance and the Minister for Communities agreed that if we were going to fund the uplift, we had to do it permanently because we should not be bringing people to a cliff edge. This would have cost £200 million and would have needed cuts from other departments’ budgets to fund.</p>	<p>The FRP asserts that the British Government should not have cut the £20 uplift as this is a lifeline for many.</p> <p>The gendered dimensions of poverty and caring meant this was vital for many young women and families working within undervalued and underpaid occupations.</p> <p>Link to full answer here</p>
Relationships and Sexuality Education	02/11/2021	Mr Durkhan (SDLP – Foyle) To Naomi Long, Justice Minister	<p>“Has the Minister had discussions with the Minister of Education to discuss collaborative plans to improve the provision of relationships and sexuality education in schools as recommended by the Gillen review report into the law and procedures in serious sexual offences in Northern Ireland?”</p> <p>Changes to how RSE is provided in schools do not fall within my Department’s responsibilities and can only be delivered by the Department of Education. However, I am keen that my officials should support such work insofar as is possible.</p>	<p>RSE has been identified as key factor in addressing violence against women and other issues of gender inequality. As a mechanism to enhance long-term change on these issues RSE much be standardized and in line with CEDAW recommendations.</p>

			It is clear that Sir John Gillen felt that, without changing RSE, we would not be able to have the cultural shift in attitudes in society that would lead to a change in the kind of entitlement that we see displayed when people spike people's drinks, assault people in the street, harass women going about their daily business or, indeed, engage in sexual assault	Link to full answer here
Drink Spiking	02/11/2021	Ms Ní Chuilín (Sinn Féin – North Belfast) To Naomi Long, Justice Minister	<p>“Does the Minister believe that the laws that cover drink spiking are adequate?”</p> <p>There are laws in place to deal with that type of behaviour in Northern Ireland. The Sexual Offences (Northern Ireland) Order 2008 makes it an offence to cause a person to engage in any type of sexual activity without consent. Where it is proven that drugs or alcohol were administered, there is an evidential presumption that the person did not consent. There are also a number of offences under the Offences against the Person Act 1861 that could apply where drinks were spiked or drugs injected where the intention was not sexual assault but to cause harm in some other way.</p>	<p>The FRP emphasises the importance of tackling violence against women and girls in our society. Recognising the gendered nature of this crime does not discount the valid experiences of other gendered identities, but recognises the disproportionate gendered impacts of this crime.</p> <p>One key recommendation is to create and implement a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.</p> <p>Link to full answer here.</p>
Street Harassment and Buffer Zones	02/11/2021	Ms Armstrong (Alliance – Strangford) To	<p>“Street harassment is a prevalent issue for young women. The Minister will be aware of the ongoing harassment of women outside the John Mitchel Place clinic in Newry, amongst other locations. Does she agree that buffer zones or safe-access zones are necessary to protect young women</p>	One of the key ethos of the FRP is tackling gendered violence and violence against women within our society, in all its

		Naomi Long, Justice Minister	<p>who are accessing healthcare, as well the staff who provide those services?”</p> <p>The broader issues of street harassment are difficult to tackle through a criminal justice lens, but one which the Minister is working on to protect women from unwarranted abuse in the streets.</p> <p>The Minister is also aware of ongoing protests outside of clinics which are disruptive to both pregnant people and staff. Everyone has a right to protest, but equally everyone has a right to healthcare free from harassment and intimidation. The Minister supports Clare Bailey’s Private Member’s Bill on Safe Access Zones.</p>	<p>forms including street harassment.</p> <p>Further, the FRP recognises the importance of enacting safe access and buffer zones.</p> <p>Link to full answer here</p>
COP26 and the Climate Crisis	15/11/21	Mr McNulty (SDLP – Newry and Armagh) To Paul Givan, First Minister	<p>“What action does the Executive Office plan take to ensure that Northern Ireland meets its commitments to mitigate the impact of the climate crisis?”</p> <p>The New Decade, New Approach commitments include a strategy to address the immediate and longer-term impacts of climate change. We need to achieve a balance in sustainable living, protect the environment and develop economic opportunities. That will be a theme throughout the next Programme for Government.</p> <p>Our actions include introducing the Executive’s Climate Change (No. 2) Bill, and the green growth strategy. The Executive have also endorsed our environment strategy, which will be one of the main strategies underpinning our overarching green growth agenda. An energy strategy,</p>	<p>Tackling climate change is a key aspect of the economic pillar of the FRP.</p> <p>The FRP emphasises the gendered dimensions of climate change which are often absent from conversations in relation to climate change and tackling the climate crisis.</p> <p>One key factor the FRP raises is widening the understanding of ‘green jobs’ beyond STEM to</p>

			sustainable transport and other plans will not only provide the strategic basis to reduce carbon emissions but create new jobs in the green economy and drive innovation.	incorporate the care sector which is already a low carbon, high recompense sector. Link to full answer here
Strategy to Prevent Violence Against Women and Girls	15/11/21	Miss Woods (Green Party NI – North Down) To Paul Givan, First Minister	<p>“Can the First Minister give an update on the long-awaited and much needed violence against women and girls strategy?”</p> <p>Progress is being made in developing the strategy. Recently, an official was appointed to lead that for us. The First Minister said little else.</p>	<p>As mentioned above one of the key ethos of the FRP is tackling gendered violence and violence against women within our society.</p> <p>The FRP supports the creation and implementation of a Violence Against Women and Girls Strategy.</p> <p>Link to full answer here</p>
Commissioning of Abortion Services	15/11/21	Miss Woods (Green Party NI – North Down) To Paul Givan, First Minister	<p>“The FM will be aware of comments by the Secretary of State during a recent visit that the failure to roll out abortion services in Northern Ireland was abhorrent. Are the Executive on track to implement abortion services no later than March 2022?”</p> <p>The Secretary of State lost court proceedings in respect of this issue. Judgement is awaited on another judicial review taken by the Society for the Protection of Unborn Children</p>	The FRP supports the delivery of services without unnecessary delays which are accessible and deliver on the current legislative framework which is in line with human rights

			<p>(SPUC). The Secretary of State should respect the devolved settlement. He said in his interview that this is a devolved issue, and, therefore, he should not interfere, as he did when he issued the direction.</p> <p>This answer is unsurprising given it was Paul Givan who initially sponsored the Private Member's Bill seeking to restrict abortion access in NI.</p>	<p>recommendations from the UN.</p> <p>Link to full answer here</p>
Commissioning of Abortion Services	22/11/21	Miss Woods (Green Party NI – North Down) To Robin Swann, Health Minister	<p>“Can the Minister give an update on the commissioning of abortion services?”</p> <p>The Abortion Services Directions 2021 came into force on 23 July and required my Department to have commissioned abortion services in place by 31 March. They include requirements for the provision of information, contraception and a regional telephone-based, non-biased advice and referral service, all of which are elements of the ongoing planning work and will form part of an overall draft service specification.</p>	<p>The FRP supports the delivery of services without unnecessary delays which are accessible and deliver on the current legislative framework which is in line with human rights recommendations from the UN.</p> <p>Link to full answer here</p>
Treatment of Women in Conflict with the Law	23/11/21	Ms Ní Chuilín (Sinn Féin – North Belfast) To Naomi Long, Justice Minister	<p>“Can the Minister give her assessment of the Criminal Justice Inspection report ‘How the Criminal Justice System in Northern Ireland Treats Females in Conflict with the Law’?”</p> <p>The Minister welcomes the publication of the report as it provides insight into the challenges faced by women transitioning through and out of the criminal justice system. The Minister also raises the importance of movement from a gender-informed response to a gender-responsive one.</p>	<p>The FRP recommends and supports any initiatives by the Department of Justice which monitors gender and other identities; however, it emphasises the importance of understanding how mental health, poverty and vulnerability impact which</p>

			Recommendations from this report will be considered prior to the finalisation of the new justice-wide strategy for supporting women and girls who come into contact with the justice system. The strategy will be trauma-informed and include the breadth of contact women and girls have with the system including at a community level, and a post custody level.	women and girls are more likely to come into contact with the criminal justice system. Link to full answer here
--	--	--	---	--

Consultations

Issue	Women's Policy Group response (WPG)	Link to Feminist Recovery plan (FRP)
WPG NI Response to Health Committee Call for Evidence: Abortion Services (Safe Access Zones) Bill	<p>The WPG supports the passing of Clare Bailey's Private Member's Bill on Safe Access Zones.</p> <p>The WPG supports the freedom of opinion and expression. However, protests outside of reproductive rights clinics which involve threatening individuals, who are making an extremely private decision, in a public setting; this should be described as harassment and abuse rather than protest. This sort of protest should be condemned and banned from being near any healthcare facility in Northern Ireland. The WPG also wish that abortion legislation which decriminalised abortion here in Northern Ireland be honoured to the letter and urgently.</p> <p>The response includes past responses and evidence submissions relating to this topic, the abortion timeline since the decriminalisation of abortion in October 2019, and evidence testimonies collected by both WRDA and Alliance for Choice.</p>	<p>The FRP recognises the importance of enacting safe access and buffer zones.</p> <p>This Bill would enhance the ability of women and others, including the medical professionals who work within these buildings, to access healthcare services such as abortion and accessing contraception without fear of harassment and intimidation.</p> <p>To read the full response click here</p>

WPG NI Response to NISRA Census Outputs Consultation	The WPG endorses recommendations by the Women's Budget Group in relation to the need for gender disaggregated data to collect more accurate data relating to both trans and non-binary communities living here in Northern Ireland. Further, the WPG and Women's Budget Group raise concerns over the use of the term sex rather than gender within the NISRA census output consultation. Further, the WPG raises the importance of disaggregating data on both gender and sexual orientation to be able to separate lesbian, gay, and bisexual women from collapsed outputs, as the framework of questioning means that it is difficult to separate data related to sexual orientation into other intersectional characteristics.	<p>Gender disaggregated data is an important principle particularly within feminist academic research. The reason for this is that without gender disaggregated data the default or neutral research topic is androcentric, meaning they are assumed male – particularly due to the male domination of the public sphere.</p> <p>The FRP raises the importance of gender disaggregated data to be used by all official agencies.</p> <p>To read the full response click here</p>
WRDA Response to The Executive Office Call for Views on the 'Building Forward:	WRDA thanked The Executive Office for their request to provide view on the 'Building Forward: Consolidated COVID-19 Recovery Plan.' However, they are disappointed that there was only five days given from the initial request on the 24/11/2021 to the deadline of the submission of views on the 29/11/2021. This puts WRDA and the WPG in a position to be unable to contribute, despite being key stakeholders in relation to this plan. This timeframe prevents the women's sector from being able to contribute meaningfully to the plan.	The FRP has been created to address the disproportionate gendered impact of the pandemic on women with an intersectional analysis of the how it has impacted

Consolidated COVID-19 Recovery Plan'	The WPG responded to the initial consultation by The Executive Office on their COVID-19 recovery plan with the submission of a copy of the relaunched FRP. Despite this, the current TEO Recovery Plan continues to have significant gaps in addressing the gendered impact of the pandemic on women.	different women in different ways. Therefore, it is vital to any building forward plan initiated by the Northern Ireland assembly. To read the full response click here
--------------------------------------	---	--

Westminster

Bills (Both Governmental and Private Member's Bills)

Issue	Date	Sponsored by	Stage	Notes	Links to Feminist Recovery Plan (FRP)
Police, Crime and Sentencing Bill	03/12/2021	Robert Buckley, Ministry for Justice (House of Commons) Baroness Williams of Trafford, Conservative Life Peer (House of Lords)	House of Commons passage completed; moved to Report Stage (House of Lords)	A Bill to make provision about the police and other emergency workers; to make provision about collaboration between authorities to prevent and reduce serious violence; to make provision about the powers of the police and other authorities for the purposes of preventing, detecting, investigating or prosecuting crime or investigating other matters; to make provision about the maintenance of public order; to make provision about sentencing, detention, release, management and rehabilitation of offenders; etc. This has been controversial as it is viewed as an attack on the right to protest.	This is a very broad Bill covering a range of topics including gender and sexual based violence. However, the right to protest has also been essential in furthering women's legislation. Read full details of the Bill here .

				Debates have highlighted that the impact of violence against women, particularly domestic violence, sexual violence, controlling and coercive behaviour by men and their impact on the community is included in that strategy to reduce violence against women and girls.	Summary of new clauses added to the Bill here
Northern Ireland (Ministers, Elections and Petitions of Concern) Bill	30/11/2021	Brandon Lewis, Ministry for Northern Ireland Office (House of Commons) Viscount Younger of Leckie, Conservative Hereditary Peer (House of Lords)	House of Commons passage completed; moved to Second Reading (House of Lords)	<p>A Bill to make provision about Ministerial appointments, extraordinary Assembly elections, the Ministerial Code of Conduct and petitions of concern in Northern Ireland.</p> <p>This Bill will deliver aspects of the New Decade, New Approach Agreement which was agreed by the five main NI political parties in January 2020. The Bill is concerned with the sustainability and transparency of the Northern Ireland institutions.</p> <p>Some key changes include requiring petitioners to come from more than one Northern Irish political party and updating the code of conduct for Northern Ireland Ministers.</p>	<p>These new provisions reform the Petition of Concern mechanism in order to reduce misuse</p> <p>Previously the Petition of Concern has been abused and used to block socially progressive legislation such as equal marriage. Such reforms go some ways in ensuring one party cannot override the democratic process.</p> <p>Read full details of the Bill here.</p>
Bereavement Leave and Pay (Stillborn and Miscarried Babies) Bill	20/10/2021	Sarah Owen (Labour)	Second Reading (House of Commons)	A Bill to extend entitlement to parental bereavement leave and pay to parents of babies miscarried or stillborn during early pregnancy; and for connected purposes.	The FRP highlights the importance of employment protections for mothers and fathers.

				<p>The Miscarriage Association reports that about a quarter of a million people each year in the UK miscarry and happens to 1 in 4 pregnancies. Many are forced to take sick pay or sick leave. Ms Owen stated that “we are not sick we are grieving.”</p>	<p>Parental leave is recommended as a day one employment right within the FRP.</p> <p>Read full details of the Bill here.</p>
Conversion Therapy (Prohibition) Bill	22/06/21	Wera Hobhouse (Liberal Democrat)	Second Reading (House of Commons)	<p>A Bill to prohibit sexual orientation and gender identity conversion therapy.</p> <p>There is little detail about this Bill currently given its early stages, however, it will be interesting to keep an eye given similar legislation is in conversation in the Northern Ireland Executive.</p>	<p>This is a gendered offence, in which people were targeted as a result of their sexual orientation and gender identity. It is important to support victims/survivors and future generations deserve to be free from the repetition of similar gendered violence.</p> <p>Read full details of the Bill here.</p>
Miscarriage Leave Bill	29/11/21	Angela Crawley (SNP)	Second Reading (House of Commons)	<p>A Bill to make provision for paid leave for people who have experienced a miscarriage.</p> <p>There is little detail on the Bill in its current stages; however given the introductions of a Parental Bereavement Bill within Stormont this will be</p>	<p>The FRP highlights the importance of employment protections for mothers and fathers who will undoubtedly be</p>

				worth keeping an eye on especially as one of the WPG recommendations is that paid leave entitlement should be included in the Parental Bereavement Bill for those who have suffered a miscarriage.	affected by this Bill. Read full details of the Bill here .
Pregnancy and Maternity (Redundancy Protection) Bill	17/11/21	Maria Miller (Conservative)	Second Reading (House of Commons)	A Bill to prohibit redundancy during pregnancy and maternity leave, including up to six months after the end of pregnancy or leave; except in specified circumstances.	The FRP highlights the importance of employment protections for mothers and fathers who will undoubtedly be affected by the Bill. Read full details of the Bill here .
Hate Crime (Misogyny) Bill	26/11/2021	Wera Hobhouse (Liberal Democrat)	Second Reading (House of Commons)	A Bill to make motivation by misogyny an aggravating factor in criminal sentencing; to require police forces to record hate crimes motivated by misogyny; and for connected purposes. Many in the WPG have campaigned for misogyny to be recognised as a motivation for hate crime – therefore the progression of this Bill will be one to watch.	The FRP recommends that future Hate Crime Legislation Review in Northern Ireland includes gender-based violence, threats and abuse included as protected characteristics. Read full details of the Bill here .