

**BRIEFING ON BIRMINGHAM PROSTITUTION ACTION PARTNERSHIP
(BPAP)**

Purpose of the briefing

To provide information on the work undertaken by the SBP team and reported to the Violence and Vulnerability Group.

Contents

- Background and history to the work
- Current Structure of BPAP
- 2007/2008 performance
- Diary of meetings
- Current issues

1) Background and history of the work

What is the Birmingham Prostitution Action Partnership? (BPAP)

- The work of the current BPAP arises from in the original report recommendations from Birmingham City Council's Policy Development Panel, (PDP) established in 1999.
- The PDP was set up in response to local residents' complaints to elected members, therefore the panel solely concentrated on the problems generated by on street prostitution in the Edgbaston/ Rotton Park, area of the city.
- One of the main recommendations of the PDP report (2001) was to set up a multi agency action group in order to look at the issues and promote solutions.
- The work of the current partnership has now expanded to include other areas of the prostitution agenda. It has taken account of the changes in legislation, and the advantages that has afforded agencies in problem solving around the various aspects of prostitution.

- Government development of policies, eg 2004 Co-ordinated Prostitution Strategy to be incorporated and the recent review by the Home Secretary into challenging the demand.

Current membership of the group

- The BPAP is chaired by Birmingham City Council Cabinet member for Adults and Communities. Statutory and voluntary agencies attend with representatives from, various BCC Directorates, Adults and Families, Children, Young people and Families, Housing, Legal Services, as well as other agencies, West Midlands Probation Service, Heart of Birmingham PCT, Safe project, Barnardos Space project and Anawim, a specialist support agency for women, and finally representatives from Edgbaston/Rotton Park resident groups

Terms of reference and structure of the group

- In 2005 the BPAP was re-organised, to take account of the wider prostitution agenda. In order to support BPAP there have been several sub groups made up of representatives from relevant agencies that look at particular aspects of the agenda, e.g. children and young people, men, indoor work, civil law processes and aftercare and support of women.
- **See Terms of reference(see Appendix 1)**

Action to date

- Over the life of the BPAP there have been several action plans. The first plan dealt with issues wholly around addressing the on street activity. This included action for BCC departments, e.g. environmental and waste management dealing with waste disposal hotspots, issues around the licensing of hackney carriages, to procedures for the then Social Services dept to develop over missing young persons from the look after service. There were also agreed actions for other partners.
- Previously part of the group's work has been supporting the use of the Civil Justice system in or to deal with persistent female offenders on the streets. This work included not only using the court to keep those women off the street, but to provide support in order to help do so, e.g. around drug dependency, alternative employment opportunity.
- As part of the agenda to improve the situation on the streets of Edgbaston, attention was given to the exiting and support of women with an action plan developed along multi agency responses to issues of support, education, training and health to women involved in

prostitution. Some of the work and issues are ongoing and currently are including responses to the long term affects on women and the agencies that support them, of the closure of Brockhill Prison to female inmates.

- The group as a partnership also contributed in the consultation exercise through the Home Office document "Paying the Price" (2004). The result of the consultation was the "Co-ordinated Prostitution Strategy (2006), which has been examined in relation to the work of the group. New action plans are being currently developed by the sub groups in order to tackle the wider range of issues with reference to the guidance in the strategy. Also for the groups to consider are the changes in legislation, for e.g. the Criminal Justice Act, and the targets required by Community Safety partnerships and partners' agencies through public and local service agreements, Local Area Agreements, crime reduction initiatives, targets for health agencies, safe guarding children and young people and drug and substance misuse targets for Drug Action Teams.

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BIRMINGHAM PROSTITUTION ACTION PARTNERSHIP

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. ROLE AND FUNCTION OF THE GROUP

- 1.1. The Birmingham Prostitution Action Partnership is a strategic partnership of statutory organisations, voluntary agencies and community groups. The Partnership is a strategic group that exists to examine the problems caused by prostitution in Birmingham and to propose through inter agency working a plan of action to tackle the problems.
- 1.2 This action plan will be achieved through the development of appropriate work (or sub groups) that are identified by the chair and members of the partnership to examine aspects of prostitution. Extra groups to be ratified as when required to deal with emergent issues and/or by members of the main partnership

Current groups:

- 1) Aftercare and Support
 - 2) Civil Orders Group
 - 3) Young people who are sexually exploited and abused
 - 4) Indoor work (to include arrest referral)
 - 5) Men who sell sex forum
 - 6) Residents forum
- 1.3 Each group will elect a chairman, vice chairman and the group will develop their own develop terms of reference, which is supported by an action plan and implementation/delivery plan.
 - 1.4 The chairman/ vice chairman will report on the progress of the group actions to the main partnership.

2. MEMBERSHIP OF THE GROUP

- 2.1 The group is chaired by Birmingham City Council, administered by Democratic Services and reports directly to the Cabinet and will report on a regular basis to Cabinet.
- 2.2. The partnership is to include representation from the following agencies and to be flexible to include other members that may be identified and/or co-opted as the work progresses:
- Birmingham City Council, to include locally elected members and directorate officers
 - Community Safety Partnership team
 - West Midlands Police
 - Drug Action team
 - Voluntary agencies
 - Resident groups
 - RSL's
 - PCT's and other Health related projects
 - National Probation Service

3. FREQUENCY OF MEETINGS

- 3.1 The partnership will meet on a bi - monthly basis.

Time and location to be confirmed.

4. CONFIDENTIALITY

- 4.1 Members of this partnership will be expected to observe the principles of confidentiality, given the nature and sensitivity of the information that is shared, in relation to the meetings and the business of the partnership.

5. ACCOUNTABILITY

- 5.1 The Birmingham Prostitution Action Partnership is accountable to Birmingham City Council Cabinet and Birmingham Community Safety Partnership.

6. REVIEW OF TERMS OF REFERENCE

6.1 In order to ensure that the Partnership remains fit for purpose, the terms of reference to be reviewed on an annual basis.

