



Overview & Scrutiny Committee
9th February 2010

**Report from the Director of
Policy & Regeneration**

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

Services for Women In and Exiting Prostitution

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 The attached report represents the finding and recommendations of the Services for Women In and Exiting Prostitution task group.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Overview & Scrutiny Committee agrees the recommendation of the Services for Women In and Exiting Prostitution task group.
- 2.2 That the report is forwarded to the Executive.

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 This task group was set up by the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in December 2008 following the publication of Eaves POPPY Project's report *Big Brothel – A survey of the off-street sex industry in London*. This report highlighted the scale and nature of the brothel based sex industry in London and identified Brent as having the second highest number of adverts for brothels in London. The issues highlighted in this report were raised at the Crime Prevention Strategy Group by the lead member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety. The partners involved in the group agreed to support the task group's work.

Meeting
Date

Version no.
Date

3.2 The task group members are:

Councillor Ann John (OBE) Chair
Councillor Clues
Councillor Mistry
Andy Brown, Head of Substance Misuse, NHS Brent
DCI Kevin Concannon, Metropolitan Police
Christine Topping, Violence Against the Person Focus Desk, Metropolitan Police

3.3 In order to complete its work the task group took evidence from the following sources:

- Helen Atkins – Eaves POPPY Project on prostitution and trafficking with a focus on the London Borough of Brent
- David Thrale – Director of Environmental Health on the licensing of massage parlours
- Andy Brown – Head of Substance Misuse, NHS Brent about local themes and perspectives on substance misuse and the sex industry
- Christine Topping – Violence Against the Person Focus Desk Manager, Brent Police, provided an snapshot of police intelligence relating to prostitution in Brent
- Helen Hepburn Development Manager, Make a Change Ipswich, and DCI Tim Beach, Suffolk Constabulary explained how the Make a Change projects had started following the murders of prostitutes in Ipswich, the barriers they faced and their current work in developing an off street prostitution strategy.
- DCI Kevin Hyland CO14, Clubs and Vice, Metropolitan police
- David Blake, Publishing Director, Archant London
- Alice Peycke, Partnership Co-ordinator, Safe Exit, Toynbee Hall, Tower Hamlets told us about an initiative which aims to provide better services for women involved in prostitution
- The Chair of the task group attended the *Solace Human Trafficking Conference* which launched their report into the role of local authorities in addressing human trafficking.
- The Chair of the task group attended the Developments in Prostitution Policy conference organised by the Eaves the parent organisation for

the Poppy Project. Information brought back to the task group included:

- Taking a human rights based approach to prostitution – Cate Briddick, Rights for Women
- Parliamentary developments on legislation against demand for Prostitution – Fiona Mactaggart MP
- GAPS Newcastle, sexual exploitation and sex work in Tyne & Wear – Laura Seebohm & Kelle Holliday
- Successful demand prevention in Nordic Countries – Gunilla Ekberg CATW international

Individual members of the task group reviewed a great deal of literature and academic research in relation to this subject area and a list of references is set out at the end of the task group's report. Ultimately though, the task group was keen to ensure that its report focused on Brent and produced locally implementable recommendations.

3.4 The task group's recommendations are set out on page five of the attached report and focus on the following areas;

- The scale and nature of prostitution in Brent
- The impact of a major sporting arena
- Tackling sex industry adverts in Brent
- Working in partnership to provide services for women in and exiting prostitution in Brent

3.5 The chair of the task group has presented the draft report to the Crime Prevention Strategy Group to consult them about the key findings and recommendations. Members of the Crime Prevention Strategy Group welcomed the report and endorsed the recommendations. The lead member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety has also expressed broad support for the report and its recommendations.

4.0 Financial Implications

4.1 None

5.0 Legal Implications

5.1 None

6.0 Diversity Implications

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6.1 None

7.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

7.1 None

Background Papers

Contact Officers

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