



**Executive
12 April 2010**

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

For Action

Wards Affected:
ALL

**Services for women in and exiting prostitution Task Group
report**

1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report brings to the Executive the work, findings and recommendations of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee's task group investigation into *Services for Women in and exiting prostitution*.
- 1.2 This task group was set up following the publication of Eaves POPPY Project's report *Big Brothel – A survey of the off-street sex industry in London (August 2008)*. Their research identified Brent has having the second highest number of adverts for brothels in local news papers in London. As these finding were potentially significant for Brent the task group focussed on the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent, the impact of a major sporting arena, tackling sex industry adverts in Brent and working in partnership to provide services for women in and exiting prostitution.

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the Executive endorse the task group's recommendations
- 2.2 That members of the task group be thanked for their work

3.0 Detail

- 3.1 Eaves POPPY Project's report *Big Brothel - A survey of the off – street sex industry in London* highlighted Brent as having the second highest number of adverts for brothels in local news papers in London. While this does not necessarily mean that Brent has the second highest number of brothels the findings were potentially significant.

- 3.2 The issues highlighted in Eaves POPPY Project's report were raised at the Crime Prevention Strategy Group by the lead member for Crime Prevention and Public Safety. Partners involved in the group agreed to support the task group's work. The Overview & Scrutiny Committee agreed a partnership approach was essential and the police and NHS Brent were invited to participate in the task group's work.
- 3.3 In order to complete the work identified in the scope and produce locally implementable recommendations that will help this vulnerable group of people, the task group undertook the following research:
- Helen Atkins – Eaves R&D 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 women involved in prostitution 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 a court diversion 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

3.4 The task group's work focussed 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

4.0 Recommendations from the Task Group

1. That the Brent police make the tackling of prostitution in Brent a higher and more co-ordinated priority.
2. That Brent Police:
 - Enhance the awareness of Brent police officers and staff about the issues faced by women involved in prostitution and those who have been potentially trafficked.
 - Provide appropriate training to selected police staff around how to support and deal with women affected by these issues. (This is to include for example advice about tactical options in relation to dealing with a report of a local brothel).
 - Provide clear guidance as to partner staff and the public about how to report a crime against a woman affected by these issues and/or other concerns.
3. That Brent Council and partners, via the Crime Prevention Strategy Group, continue the work the task group has started in relation to the Olympics with the CO14, Safe Exit and other Olympic boroughs to reduce the

- opportunities for organised crime, trafficking and prostitution associated with major sporting events.
4. That the council and partners lobby the Mayor of London to ensure a pan London strategy / approach is developed prior to the Olympics.
 5. That the council and partners continue the task group's work and keep lines of communication open with the press to influence them to keep to their own guidelines and ensure that adverts relating to the sex industry do not include, for example:
 - Photographs
 - Information on ethnicity
 - Information on age
 6. That local newspaper groups operating in Brent agree to carry a prevention and deterrent advert next to sex industry related adverts, the contents of which will be agreed by partners but will include useful contact numbers.
 - 7 That the task group's report and the issues it raises are included in an article in Brent Magazine.
 8. That it is a priority for all front line local authority and partner staff to remove cards advertising sex services from public areas.
 9. That a Partnership Strategy on prostitution is produced which includes the development of services to help women exit.
 10. That a Stakeholder Event is held to bring together all relevant agencies in the borough to help develop the Partnership Strategy.
 11. That a Partnership Group be set up to take this work forward. This should be the responsibility of the Crime Prevention Strategy Group and include some of the task group membership to ensure continuity of developing expertise. The work of the group should include:
 - Identifying resources available to provide services and assistance for women exiting prostitution
 - Ensuring all relevant agencies know how to identify and respond to women in need of assistance.
 - Continue to gather and examine evidence about the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent
 - Develop and update a list of policy and tactical leads from partner organisations, and a map of services and pathways available to women within Brent and nationally
 12. That NHS Brent develops a treatment and care pathway for those women who are involved in or want to exit prostitution.

13. That action against landlords is taken when a brothel is identified - eg letter to tell them they are breaking the law, and checks against council tax.

5.0 Response to the task group's recommendations

- 5.1 The chair of the task group presented the draft task group report to the Crime Prevention Strategy Group on 19th January 2010 to consult partners about the key findings and recommendations. Members of the Crime Prevention Strategy Group welcomed the report and endorsed the recommendations.

Recommendation	Response	Officer Responsible
<p>That the Brent police make the tackling of prostitution in Brent a higher and more co-ordinated priority.</p>	<p>Brent Police undertake to support this recommendation</p>	<p>Brent Public Protection DCI currently Kevin Concannon / will be DCI Matt Bonner</p>
<p>That Brent Police:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the awareness of Brent police officers and staff about the issues faced by women involved in prostitution and those who have been potentially trafficked. • Provide appropriate training to selected police staff around how to support and deal with women affected by these issues. (This is to include for example advice about tactical options in relation to dealing with a report of a local brothel). <p>Provide clear guidance as to partner staff and the public about how to report a crime against a woman affected by these issues and/or other concerns.</p>	<p>Brent Police now have a Borough Champion in relation to Prostitution and Vice issues.</p> <p>Training package to be developed and delivered to all SNT and other selected staff. As part of the training package officers will be provided with a set of questions which will aid risk assessment and identification of potentially trafficked victims.</p> <p>Additional training to be considered for front line partner staff ie: Libraries, One stop shops</p>	<p>Christine Topping, Brent Police</p> <p>Christine Topping, Brent Police</p> <p>Christine Topping, Brent Police</p>

	This area of work is to be included in the service plan for the Brent Community Safety Partnership unit	Genny Renard, Head of Brent Community Safety Partnership
That Brent Council and partners, via the Crime Prevention Strategy Group, continue the work the task group has started in relation to the Olympics with the CO14, Safe Exit and other Olympic boroughs to reduce the opportunities for organised crime, trafficking and prostitution associated with major sporting events.	<p>Work has commenced to find the appropriate sub-group to take this work forward.</p> <p>It will remain a standing item on CPSG partnership update to ensure that it remains within the high priority group.</p> <p>Brent police will contact CO14 Vice Team and establish a single point of contact so that intelligence / information can be exchanged quickly</p>	<p>Genny Renard</p> <p>Christine Topping Brent Police</p>
That the council and partners lobby the Mayor of London to ensure a pan London strategy / approach is developed prior to the Olympics.	This work will be taken up by the sub group and CPSG	Genny Renard
<p>That the council and partners continue the task group's work and keep lines of communication open with the press to influence them to keep to their own guidelines and ensure that adverts relating to the sex industry do not include, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photographs • Information on ethnicity • Information on age 	<p>Working with the Police and Communications Team the CPSG will continue to press for these guidelines to adopted and adhered to.</p> <p>Work with other boroughs is being explored and in addition the Lead Member for keen to continue to lobby central Government for legislative changes.</p>	Genny Renard
That local newspaper groups	This will be included in	Genny Renard

<p>operating in Brent agree to carry a prevention and deterrent advert next to sex industry related adverts, the contents of which will be agreed by partners but will include useful contact numbers.</p>	<p>the work outlined above</p>	
<p>That the task group's report and the issues it raises are included in an article in Brent Magazine.</p>	<p>The report will be publicised through the various channels open to the council in local, national and specialist media and through social media to enhance the council's reputation as a forward-thinking community partner.</p> <p>The CPSG has from time to time funding from the Home Office or Metropolitan Police Association to place adverts, items in the Brent Magazine and other publications. Wherever feasible given the guidelines attached to the funding this issue will be raised.</p>	<p>Cheryl Curling, Communications Manager</p> <p>Genny Renard</p>
<p>That it is a priority for all front line local authority and partner staff to remove cards advertising sex services from public areas.</p>	<p>Safer Neighbourhood Teams have been asked to remove cards and stickers and forward them to the Violence Against the Person Focus Desk Manager at Brent Police for intelligence checks</p>	<p>Christine Topping, Brent Police</p>
<p>That a Partnership Strategy on prostitution is produced which includes the development of services to help women exit.</p>	<p>This is to be included in the two year work plan being developed for Brent Community Safety Partnership Unit</p>	<p>Genny Renard</p>

<p>That a Stakeholder Event is held to bring together all relevant agencies in the borough to help develop the Partnership Strategy.</p>	<p>This will form part of the work involved in developing the strategy</p>	<p>Genny Renard</p>
<p>That a Partnership Group be set up to take this work forward. This should be the responsibility of the Crime Prevention Strategy Group and include some of the task group membership to ensure continuity of developing expertise. The work of the group should include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identifying resources available to provide services and assistance for women exiting prostitution • Ensuring all relevant agencies know how to identify and respond to women in need of assistance. • Continue to gather and examine evidence about the scale and nature of prostitution in Brent • Develop and update a list of policy and tactical leads from partner organisations, and a map of services and pathways available to women within Brent and nationally 	<p>As outlined currently the CPSG are exploring if this important raft of work should sit within an established group or stand alone.</p> <p>The research focuses on making best use of resources and having the maximum impact.</p> <p>Various funding avenues are actively being explored with a view to garnering additional resources hopefully on a one to three year basis or possibly initially seeking resources to help with the inevitable impact Olympics.</p> <p>Brent Police have raised the level of intelligence gathering activity. SNT training should improve the police's ability to gather and act on intelligence.</p> <p>The development of a strategy will include the mapping of services and agencies available.</p> <p>It will also be based on updated evidence.</p>	<p>Genny Renard</p> <p>Christine Topping, Brent Police</p> <p>Genny Renard</p>

<p>That NHS Brent develops a treatment and care pathway for those women who are involved in or want to exit prostitution.</p>	<p>NHS Brent will continue to commission services through Brent CRI Brent Outreach Engagement Treatment Service (BOETS) to work with those women who are involved in the sex industry/prostitution in both on street and off street settings.</p> <p>A clear line of activity to be included in the Adult Treatment Plan 2010/11 to ensure rapid access to prescribing services and Blood Born Virus interventions (where opiates are involved), clinical healthcare assessment and rapid access to GUM clinics.</p> <p>The target for clinical interventions for substance misuse is a 72 hours to enable a rapid access to services and assist in the exit strategy</p>	<p>Andy Brown, Head of Substance Misuse, Brent PCT</p>
<p>That action against landlords is taken when a brothel is identified - eg letter to tell them they are breaking the law, and checks against council tax</p>	<p>Brent Police have drafted letters to serve on Landlords of premises being used as brothels.</p> <p>If the property is listed incorrectly, the council could take action. However, if the premise is being used as a business, we would need to refer it to the Valuation Office to get it included on the business list, and then charge NNDR.</p>	<p>Christine Topping, Brent Police</p> <p>Paula Buckley Head of Revenues</p>

6.0 Financial Implications

- 6.1 The Community Safety Partnership team are exploring sources of funding, in particular they are developing a bid for the Daphne European fund. This bid is for £3 million over five years and is an interacting programme around women, children and violence Daphne111. A further European Bid relating to drugs has also been submitted and this will also cover women in the sex industry -

As is common in Local Government, services will be prioritised and tailored to fit the funding profile of any successful bid. A key element of any externally funded project will be the sustainability of the service offered at the end of the funded period. Extensive work is being done to make sure that interventions create identifiable savings and/or are undertaken with voluntary sector groups who can apply for charitable or trust funding to make sure that following a robust evaluation any key services additional services can be maintained.

7.0 Legal Implications

- 7.1 The Authority has the ability to work with their partners as identified in the recommendations. Under S 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 which provides that every Local Authority has the power to do anything which they consider is likely to achieve one or more of the following objectives;

- The promotion of improvement of the social well-being of their area
- The promotion of the economic wellbeing of their area
- The promotion or the improvement of the environmental well being of their area.

In the circumstances of the proposals the promotion of the work identified by the recommendations falls within the well-being power provided by S2.

8.0 Diversity Implications

- 8.1 Recommendations from task groups are incorporated within service department's delivery or development plans and as such will be subject to the equalities impact assessments carried out by services as part of their work programme.

9.0 Staffing/Accommodation Implications (if appropriate)

- 9.1 None

Background Papers

Services for women in and exiting prostitution task group

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