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IPSWICH STREET PROSTITUTION STRATEGY  
2007 - 2012

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is an overall strategic aim to **remove street prostitution from Ipswich**. A small working group of representatives from the Prostitution Steering Group have developed the Ipswich Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership Street Prostitution Strategy 2007. A clear strategic plan has been devised to tackle the issue of street prostitution across the county. This will be accomplished within the current legislative framework.

As a result of the formation of the Joint Strategic group comprising of Ipswich Borough Council (IBC), Suffolk County Council (SCC), Drugs and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT), Suffolk Constabulary Southern Area, Suffolk Primary Care Trust (PCT) and Suffolk Mental Health Partnership Trust (SMHPT), a strategic objective was created to remove street prostitution from all areas of Ipswich. A small working group was commissioned by the Joint Strategic Group with representation from IBC, SCC - DAAT, Suffolk Police and the PCT to develop a strategy with the aim of removing street prostitution from Ipswich. This strategy has been written taking cognisance of the Government's long-term strategy for reducing street prostitution, Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO) Policy, Strategy and Operational Guidelines for dealing with exploitation and abuse through prostitution and the Home Office's 'A Co-ordinated Prostitution Strategy'.

The strategy seeks to address the concerns of the local communities affected by street prostitution with regard to nuisance, disruption, anti social behaviour and safety concerns. The activities of kerb crawlers, and men who approach the women on foot, are also high priorities for preventative action due to the very real concerns expressed by the local community.

Street prostitution in Ipswich has a unique profile, involving individuals that are predominantly women. The vulnerability of these individuals has been brought sharply into focus following the recent murders in the town and surrounding area. The significant challenge facing partner agencies is the complex and enduring needs of each of the individuals involved in this activity. Due to this complexity the strategy is a long-term document covering the period 2007 – 2012.

The key objectives must be to ensure that individuals do not become involved in street prostitution in the first instance. If they do then we need to make sure that opportunities are created for them to leave street prostitution and engage in less harmful lifestyles thus improving their quality of life and that of the surrounding communities.

There are five key areas contained within the strategy.

1. **Identifying the Problem:** - improving our understanding of the key issues, the extent of the problem, the impact on the local community and the motives behind those involved in prostitution. This will help to focus, prioritise and allocate resources and finances where they are needed most and ensuring that the situation is continually monitored.
2. **Developing Routes Out:** - by offering multi-agency case conferences for each individual involved in street prostitution, ensuring that drug treatment

programmes, health services, accommodation, and other supportive interventions are available to those individuals who want to change their lifestyles and leave street prostitution.

3. **Tackling Demand:** - responding to community concerns by deterring those who create the demand and removing the opportunity for street prostitution to take place. By utilising and exploiting all available technology for example Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR), to provide the police and their partners with the intelligence to support their aims.
4. **Prevention:** - Awareness raising and early intervention measures to stop individuals, particularly children and young people, from becoming involved in prostitution.
5. **Community Intelligence:** - to respond appropriately to the needs of the communities affected, by keeping them informed of our activities. By listening to their concerns we will ensure the environment is kept clean, safe and designed in such a way to deter and prevent street prostitution.

Whilst acknowledging the significant challenge set to remove street prostitution, there is, as never before, a real opportunity to resolve some of the long standing problems that have been associated with prostitution, its causes and its consequences.

All of the partners are in agreement with the over arching principles of the strategy. Together they are confident that a real difference can be made to improve the quality of life for those vulnerable individuals who engage in street prostitution, those young people at risk of sexual exploitation, as well as improving the life for the residents who have suffered from the consequences of street prostitution over many years.

The Prostitution Steering Group remains in place to oversee the implementation of the action plan and to report back to senior officers and the CDRP on progress achieved. The group is responsible for the further development of the strategic aims and operational actions as the implementation unfolds.

Fundamental to the success of this strategy has been the immediate identification of the following fast time actions. These have been taken forward to prevent the death and / or serious injury of anyone involved in street prostitution.

- To improve key communication links with all relevant stakeholders.
- High visibility Police patrols to provide reassurance.
- Zero tolerance to kerb crawlers
- Intelligence led enforcement activity using Anti Social Behaviour legislation.
- Utilising existing structures to develop an immediate case conference response for developing routes out for individuals who work in street prostitution.
- Conduct an environmental survey of the current area of activity providing recommendations.
- Develop an action plan focusing on the very vulnerable young people at risk of sexual exploitation based on recommendations from Vulnerable Young People in Ipswich; Barnardo's report; Ipswich CDRP

# **1. STRATEGIC AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

## Overall strategic aim

To remove street prostitution from Ipswich.

This will be achieved by:

- *Identifying the problem:* - continual monitoring and evaluation of street prostitution and those involved in the activity enabling appropriate responses to the problems as and when they arise.
- *Developing Routes Out:* - offering individual multi-agency case conferences for each individual involved in street prostitution.
- *Tackling Demand:* - responding to community concerns by deterring those who create the demand and removing the opportunity for street prostitution to take place.
- *Prevention:* - Awareness raising and early intervention measures to stop individuals, particularly children and young people, from becoming involved in prostitution.
- *Community Intelligence:* - understanding the key issues, the extent of the problem and the impact on the local community.

This document is set out to form the foundation for these objectives. In achieving the actions in this strategy, we shall be able to further develop the types of treatment, prevention and crime reduction and enforcement that will ensure the ending of street prostitution primarily in Ipswich but also across the county.

Delivery of these key objectives will enable the partners to make a real and sustained impact upon street prostitution, therefore improving the lives of the individuals involved, and upon the communities affected by this violent, crime based, exploitative and degrading activity.

## **2. NATIONAL PICTURE**

In January 2006 the Home Office, highlighting the responses from a public consultation on 'Paying the Price' document, launched 'A Coordinated Prostitution Strategy'. There were 4 key objectives of the strategy:

- Challenge the view that street prostitution is inevitable and here to stay.
- Achieve an overall reduction in street prostitution.
- Improve the safety and quality of life of communities affected by street prostitution, including those directly involved in street sex markets.

- Reduce all forms of commercial sexual exploitation.

It was recommended in the national strategy that these key objectives can be achieved by specific measures that local partnerships would introduce. These were:

- Prevention – awareness raising, prevention and early intervention measures to stop individuals, particularly children and young people from becoming involved in prostitution.
- Tackling demand – responding to community concerns by deterring those who create the demand and removing the opportunity for street prostitution to take place.
- Developing routes out – proactively engaging with those involved in prostitution to provide a range of support and advocacy services to help them leave prostitution.
- Ensuring justice – bringing to justice those who exploit individuals through prostitution and those who commit violent and sexual offences against those involved in prostitution.
- Tackling off street prostitution – targeting commercial sexual exploitation, in particular where victims are young or have been trafficked.

Ensuring justice is an objective that has not been included specifically in this strategy. Those who commit violent and sexual offences against any individual will be dealt with through the criminal justice system.

Changing attitudes is a key element of the strategy. It is crucial that we move away from a general perception that prostitution is the ‘oldest profession’ and has to be accepted. Street prostitution is not an activity that we can tolerate in our towns. Nor can we tolerate any form of commercial sexual exploitation, whether it takes place on the street, behind the doors of a massage parlour or in a private residence.

Ranges of measures both civil and criminal are available to address the nuisance and criminal activity associated with street prostitution.

The Anti Social Behaviour Act 2003 provides local partnerships with civil measures to address both the street prostitutes and kerb crawler activities using ASB tools such as Acceptable Behaviour Contracts (ABC) and Anti Social Behaviour Orders (ASBO’s) for those persistently causing a nuisance to the local community.

Criminal justice related interventions for prostitutes and kerb crawlers as set out in ‘Prostitution and Kerb Crawling’ ([www.renewal.net](http://www.renewal.net)) are:

- Arrest-referral schemes for drug-dependent prostitutes.
- Prosecuting those abusing children through prostitution under the Sexual Offence Act 2003.
- Giving kerb crawlers the opportunity of retaining their anonymity in exchange for going on a re-education programme. This has been used successfully in America.

- Driver disqualification for persistent kerb crawlers.
- Using planning enforcement orders against owners of premises used for prostitution.

Further criminal justice interventions are laid out in the Sexual Offences Acts of 1956 and 1985 and the Street Offences Act 1959 and the full range of sexual offences as per the 2003 Act can be used alongside the Anti Social Behaviour legislation available.

Guidance has been provided by the Association of Chief Police Officers in dealing with exploitation and abuse through prostitution. This guidance recognises that prostitution is a victim centred crime and that those abused and exploited through it need help to leave it behind and start new lives. It recognises that communities as well as individuals can be victimised and need help too. The guidance therefore proposes a holistic approach to the policing of prostitution that keeps in balance the three elements of individual, community and the investigation and prosecution of those who exploit and abuse. This approach is based on working in partnership with local authorities and other statutory and non-statutory organisations.

Sustainable results are difficult to achieve but ACPO state that they are more likely to be achieved if three aspects of prostitution are tackled simultaneously and in a sustainable way, the diagram below demonstrates this.



Where young people under the age of 18 are identified as being involved in prostitution it is dealt with using the Governments policy guidance given in Working Together to Safeguard Children involved in sexual exploitation (Department of Health 2000). The National Plan for Safeguarding Children from Commercial Sexual Exploitation (Department of Health 2001) also provides guidance in this area.

The Ipswich Street Prostitution Strategy 2007 has adapted these areas for relevance to the local context.

### **3. LOCAL PICTURE**

Ipswich has a long history of prostitution and consequently has developed a unique profile in the region. Currently street prostitution in Ipswich predominantly involves young women, however, the strategy also takes account of the smaller number of men engaged in this activity. It is recognised that at any one time between 6 -12 individuals will be working on the streets of Ipswich.

The Prostitution Steering Group (PSG), formed as a sub group of the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP) in the 2005 – 2008 strategy, has membership from all the key partner agencies. The group has worked concertedly to address the complex issues surrounding street prostitution. The CDRP is a theme panel of the Local Strategic Partnership and information is shared through this network.

Following the murders in Ipswich of five local young women engaged in street prostitution in 2006, a sub group has been formed and tasked with further developing the ongoing strategy. Central to the success of the strategy is the support of all key agencies, flexibility of service response and innovation in the delivery of support.

Focusing on the individual we believe this approach will deliver long-term benefits for the individuals concerned and the local community.

Current drug treatment services offer access to prescribing services, counselling, detoxification, out of county rehabilitation and local aftercare. Services providing accommodation, benefits advice and on street information are also available. Street cleansing, and other environmental measures are provided through Ipswich Borough Council as a regular service and the CDRP enables closer working with anti social behaviour and substance misuse strategies through the Anti Social Behaviour Network and the Ipswich Drug and Alcohol Reference Group.

The current area of street activity in Ipswich is around the Portman Road area moving up into the residential areas of the neighbourhood. The area of activity has changed slightly over recent years with more urban development taking place within Ipswich.

The ongoing murder investigation has highlighted significant detail of the transient and chaotic lifestyles of the individuals who work as prostitutes on the streets of Ipswich. This strategy offers the prospect of making life better for the individuals involved and the communities in which they work in both the short and long term. The penalties for those who abuse and exploit individuals involved in street prostitution will be increased.

### **4. LOCAL PRIORITIES**

#### ➤ Identifying the problem

It is essential that the monitoring of street prostitutes and the complex issues that surround the work of street prostitution are continually monitored. This will enable resources to be appropriately deployed and make sure that the actual issues that are affecting the individuals in street prostitution and the communities in which they work are the ones that are being addressed.

## Priority

- To fully understand all of the issues by developing a detailed problem profile so that resources and activity can be adequately deployed.

### ➤ Developing Routes Out

A key element of this strategy is the development of a case conferencing system for each of the identified individuals.

Utilising a proactive engagement approach, we seek to identify with the individuals, a clear set of factors that need to be addressed. All relevant partner agencies will require meeting with the individual in a case conference. A series of actions will be discussed to either meet or provide solutions to the assessed needs.

Issues that will need to be addressed could include:

- Substance misuse
- Domestic Violence
- Housing Issues
- Debt Management
- Child care issues
- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Education
- Employment
- Criminal Justice interventions (enforcement activity / working with the courts)

It is imperative for the individual to understand the types of support on offer and for them to make clear, informed choices about their behaviour and potential consequences, should they remain engaged in street based prostitution. We recognise that sustained improvement is only going to be brought about by lifestyle change. This idea is supported by comments by the National Treatment Agency.

*'Drug treatment should be about lifestyle change. It's not about being abandoned on a maintenance prescription. While we've made good progress on expanding availability, too many people are getting stuck in treatment with limited progress. That's not what service users, their carers or society want or need'*

Paul Hayes CEO National Treatment Agency 2005.

## Priority

- Outreach team and formal case conference structure agreed and utilised.

### ➤ Tackling Demand

There is clear evidence to show that street sex activities in Ipswich have had a significant and detrimental impact on the local community.

This strategy will consider measures that disrupt the market by addressing demand as well as supply.

## Priorities

- Reducing demand by introducing a zero tolerance and robust enforcement of the law on kerb crawling, utilising all available technology such as CCTV and ANPR.
- Where appropriate the police will engage in intelligence led enforcement activity using anti social behaviour legislation to tackle persistent street prostitution and kerb crawling.
- To discourage street sex markets by improving the environment such as increased street lighting, CCTV and alley-gating along with regular clean ups and the removal of needles and used condoms.

### ➤ Prevention

The prevention of vulnerable young people becoming involved in prostitution is a very real challenge facing services across the County. The strategy seeks to meet this challenge by increasing awareness in schools about risk and harms associated with substance misuse.

Working closely with the Ipswich Anti Social Behaviour network and the work that they are doing with family and parenting interventions via the RESPECT agenda, and Children and Young People's Directorate, we aim to enhance current provision and target resources upon those young people most at risk of sexual exploitation. Through proactive engagement, we believe services will be able to provide positive interventions keeping young people engaged and ultimately directed away from this activity.

Recognising this proactive intervention will be an intensive action, which requires all services to be fully committed to the aim of prevention and for communication between services to be of the highest standard.

Many sectors recognise the challenge of engaging teenagers but also the singular benefits that sustained positive engagement brings to a group of people who would otherwise fall by the wayside and drift into this exploitative and damaging lifestyle.

Priority:

- To develop a series of actions focusing on the very vulnerable young people at risk of sexual exploitation.

### ➤ Community Intelligence

The community has a significant role to play in the development of an effective local response to prostitution. It will be important to ensure that residents are involved at a consultative stage so that their concerns are articulated and properly understood, and community representatives are involved in the development of the different strands of the strategy.

Understanding the key issues, the extent of the problem and the impact on the local community is essential. This will enable us to then be able to respond appropriately to their needs by keeping them informed of our activities, by listening to their concerns and working with them to find lasting solutions.

## Priorities

- To develop key communication links with all relevant stakeholders within the community.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

The Ipswich Street Prostitution Strategy provides a basis for action based on the 5 key areas of intelligence gathering, developing routes out for those individuals working on the street, tackling the demand for street prostitutes, prevention young people being sexually exploited and entering street prostitution and working with the community and sharing this intelligence to enable a more welcoming and safe environment for residents to live.

This strategy is intertwined with both the substance misuse and anti social behaviour strategies of the CDRP and reducing supply plan of Suffolk Constabulary. These strategies will complement the overall aim of reducing street prostitution.

## **GLOSSARY**

ABC	Acceptable Behaviour Contacts
ACPO	Association of Chief Police Officers
ANPR	Automatic Number Plate Recognition
ASB	Anti Social Behaviour
ASBO	Anti Social Behaviour Orders
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CDRP	Crime Disorder Reduction Partnership
CYP	Children & Young People Services
DAAT	Drug & Alcohol Action Team
DV	Domestic Violence
IBC	Ipswich Borough Council
NTA	National Treatment Agency
PCT	Primary Care Trust
PSHE	Personal & Social Health Education
RSL	Registered Social Landlord
SCC	Suffolk County Council
SMHPT	Suffolk Mental Health Partnership Trust

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

- A Co-ordinated Prostitution Strategy and a summary of responses to Paying the Price; January 2006; Home Office.
- Policing Prostitution: ACPO's Policy, Strategy and Operational Guidelines for dealing with exploitation and abuse through prostitution; October 1<sup>st</sup> 2004; Association of Chief Police Officers (ACPO).

A number of documents have been used as guidance when writing this strategy but have not been referenced as they are not quoted. This includes the local research that was conducted in 2004 and the more recent survey conducted in July / August 2006. The authors would also like to thank those organisations and individuals that have given there time to discuss the complex issues around street prostitution.

**APPENDIX ONE**

**IPSWICH STREET PROSTITUTION ACTION PLAN**

*For updated action plan see separate document*

**APPENDIX TWO**

**PROJECT RISKS**

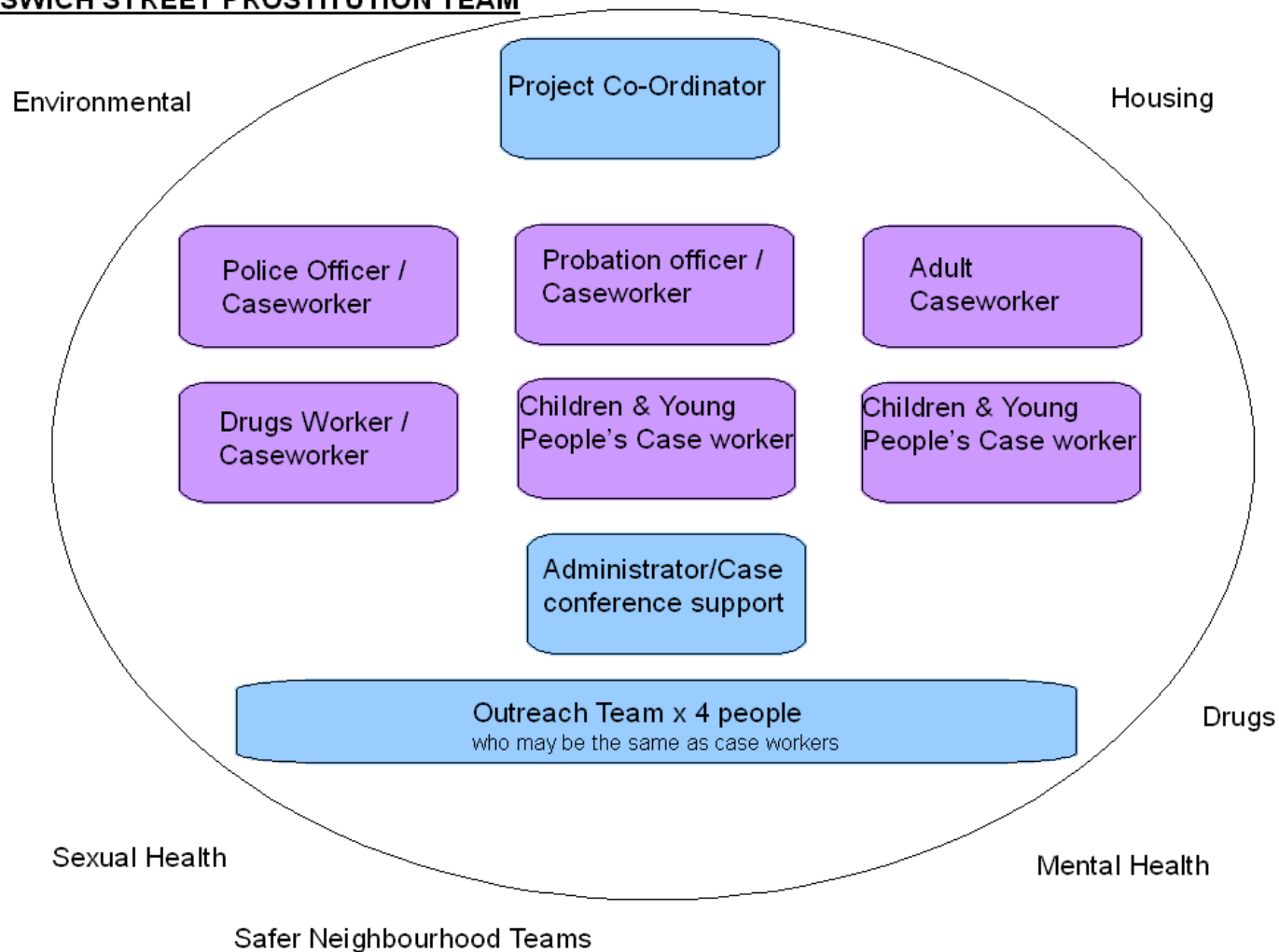
Finance		
Risks	Controls	High / Medium / Low
<p>Lack of funding for one or more of the main areas</p> <p>Financial implications are underestimated</p> <p>Partner agencies are not informed of financial planning and risks</p> <p>Failure to complete the work from one or more areas causes delays to the whole action plan</p>	<p>Experienced professionals oversee the costing of the action plan and identify potential problem areas</p> <p>Clear financial plan is produced and made available to partner agencies</p> <p>Individual areas are regularly updated if funding is restricted and alternative actions planned</p>	High
Human Resources		
Risks	Controls	High / Medium / Low
<p>Insufficient staffing available to do the work</p> <p>Change to working lives and practice causing disengagement</p> <p>Insufficient skill knowledge and expertise</p>	<p>Human resource requirements / capability carefully assessed by individual agencies prior to and during implementation</p> <p>Structured management and staff briefing sessions</p>	High

available for specific areas		
Staff not fully engaged with the plan causing variation from strategy	Regular cross agency management meetings to ensure consistency with the strategy	
Inconsistency of performance in one or more areas of the plan (capability, understanding / interpretations, resistance)	Training provided to ensure clear understanding of aims, objectives and project design.	
<b>Implementation</b>		
<b>Risks</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>High / Medium / Low</b>
Displacement – of street prostitutes and kerb crawlers	Careful monitoring through the case conference process and through front line teams of behaviour and movement of street prostitutes	Medium
Displacement – of criminal activity to other areas	Potential other areas of criminal activity identified (ie shoplifting) raising awareness	
	Good structured communication processes between agencies identifying any displacement and adverse action	
<b>Communications</b>		
<b>Risks</b>	<b>Controls</b>	<b>High / Medium / Low</b>
Potential negative publicity	Comprehensive communications plan developed at the outset	Low
Poor understanding in the media of the plan / strategic aims and outcomes causing misinformation	Structured engagement with media offering opportunities for close co-operation	
Missed opportunity for good media / multi-agency co-ordination		
<b>Community Engagement</b>		

Risks	Controls	High / Medium / Low
Residents poor engagement with the plan potentially not sharing the vision	Demonstrate actions taking place	Medium

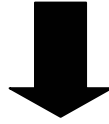
**APPENDIX THREE**  
**IPSWICH STREET PROSTITUTION TEAM**

*Others services that the team will refer to are highlighted outside the circle*



APPENDIX FOUR

KERBCRAWLER POLICY  
FLOW CHART.



**ARRESTED KERBCRAWLER**



**FIRST OFFENCE**



**ADMITS OFFENCE**

**DENIES OFFENCE**



**VERBAL CAUTION**  
**SERVE WITH ABC**

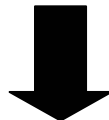
**CHARGE**  
**SERVE WITH ABC IF CONVICTED**



**SECOND OFFENCE**



**CHARGE APPLY FOR ASBO ON CONVICTION**



**THIRD OFFENCE**



- **CHARGE WITH OFFENCE**
- **CHARGE WITH BREACH OF ASBO**
- **CPS TO CONSIDER REMINDING COURT TO DISQUALIFY FROM DRIVING**

APPENDIX FIVE

PROSTITUTION POLICY FLOW CHART

**WOMAN IDENTIFIED SOLICITING OR LOITERING**



**GIVE INFORMATION OF SUPPORT SERVICES. ISSUE 1<sup>ST</sup> HOME OFFICE CAUTION.**



**2<sup>ND</sup> OCCASION WOMAN IDENTIFIED SOLICITING OR LOITERING**



**CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE WOMAN TO ACCESS SUPPORT AND SERVICES  
ISSUE 2<sup>ND</sup> HOME OFFICE CAUTION AND ISSUE ABC**



**3<sup>RD</sup> OCCASION WOMAN IDENTIFIED SOLICITING OR LOITERING**



**CONTINUE TO ENCOURAGE WOMAN TO ACCESS SUPPORT AND SERVICES  
ARREST AND CHARGE WITH OFFENCE**



**4<sup>TH</sup> OCCASION WOMAN IDENTIFIED SOLICITING OR LOITERING**



**REPEAT 3<sup>RD</sup> STAGE**



**5<sup>TH</sup> OCCASION WOMAN IDENTIFIED SOLICITING OR LOITERING  
REPEAT 3<sup>RD</sup> STAGE AND APPLY FOR ASBO ON CONVICTION**

## **APPENDIX 6**

### **ACTIONS – CHILDREN & YOUNG PEOPLE AT RISK OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION**

*Nb These actions are provided from the Barnardos report (2004)*

- To improve recording and monitoring systems to enable clear identification of the number of those exploited through prostitution at any given time, y each individual agency.
- To prioritise the development of a specific protocol for all young people who go missing in Ipswich related to their risk of sexual exploitation.
- To consider ways in which the immediate risks of sexual exploitation could be better communicated to young people in Ipswich, particularly those who are already vulnerable in relation to issues such as experiencing the care system, homelessness, lack of mainstream education or involvement in crime.
- Commitment to a longer-term framework of prevention education provision be drawn down and made available through a variety of settings.
- Concerns related to trafficking and unaccompanied asylum seekers / minors and the risks of sexual exploitation of young people are built into the future SCIp protocol and service practice model