



DOMESTIC VIOLENCE OUTREACH WORKER, WOKING

8 MAY 2002

KEY ISSUE:

Domestic violence is a significant problem, accounting for around 25% of all violent crime in Woking. The proposal is to fund the appointment of a Domestic Violence Outreach Worker for the Borough, employed by Surrey Women's Aid in collaboration with Victim Support (Woking).

SUMMARY:

This report seeks the Committee's support for a Domestic Violence Outreach Worker for Woking, as proposed by all members of the Woking Crime & Disorder Partnership.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATIONS:

That this Committee

- (i) welcomes the collaboration between the partners in Woking Community Safety Strategy with Women's Aid and Victim Support in developing a Domestic Violence Outreach service for Woking.
- (ii) supports the commitment of £15,000 per annum to co-fund the cost for a period of 3 years.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Addressing domestic violence is a key crime and disorder priority at national, County and Borough level.
- 1.2 The current (2002-05) Woking Community Safety Strategy identifies domestic violence as a key priority. It is a significant issue in Woking as Police figures show:

		<u>2000/01</u>
	No. of reported incidents	434
of which	No. classified as crimes	207
	% repeat victims	20%
	% alcohol related	43%

- 1.3 All the evidence from national and County level studies is that domestic violence (DV) is substantially under-reported, and the figures above should be perceived accordingly.

2. PROPOSAL

- 2.1 Home Office advice is that “what works” to reduce DV is a combination of education about the unacceptability of DV, prosecution of offenders, and outreach support to victims.
- 2.2 A proposal has been brought together across the three Boroughs comprising the North-West Police Division to create a DV outreach serve in each of the three Boroughs – Runnymede, Surrey Heath and Woking. Surrey Women’s Aid and Victim support have collaborated locally to be able to provide an outreach worker in each Borough as a cost of around £26,000, including on costs. Details are set out in a Business Plan which has been considered by each Crime and Disorder Steering Group.
- 2.3 The case for an outreach worker in Woking is strongly supported by the Police, Social Services and the Borough Council, and by me as the County Chief Executive’s representative on the Steering Group. The Borough Council has also offered to co-locate all three outreach workers for the Division, and their managers, at the Maybury depot. This offer has been welcomed by the two voluntary sector agencies.
- 2.4 The cost will be met in the first year by funding of £15,000 from my Crime and Disorder budget, and by match funding from the Borough Council. Their funding is however conditional upon the County Council’s contribution being over the three year duration of the Woking Community Safety Strategy (2002-05). The chances of the appointment of a skilled outreach worker are much higher if a three year contract can be offered by Women’s Aid/Victim Support.

- 2.5 Hitherto the County Council's local Crime and Disorder budget (£20,000) has been vested in the Local Director (or his/her predecessor). Whilst this remains true, it is important that such a significant partnership development is both know about, and supported by this Committee.

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