

PRIVATE AND CONFIDENTIAL - ADDRESSEE ONLY

**UTTLESFORD COMMUNITY SUPPORT GROUP held at 11.00 am on 24 JULY 2000 at
COUNCIL OFFICES LONDON ROAD SAFFRON WALDEN**

Present:- Dale Atkins - Uttlesford PCG
Ronni Ayres - Victim Support
Heather Brun - Colchester Perpetrators Programme
Clive Cooper - Community Safety Officer
Margot Freeman - Saffron Walden Citizens Advice Bureau
Val Long - Educational Welfare
Councillor Mrs J E Menell - Uttlesford District Council
Katherine Nessling - Essex Police
Julia Rodd - Housing Officer
Cathy Roberts - Committee Clerk
Nick Savage - Social Services
Graham Seal - Inspector for Community Safety, Essex Police,
Braintree Division
Alex Stewart - Community Development Manager
Linda Sturgess - Homestart
Roy Withers - Heckford Norton, Solicitors - in the Chair
Chris White - Essex County Council, Social Services Department

1 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Jacqui King and Caroline Skinner.

2 **CHAIRMANSHIP OF GROUP**

Roy Withers introduced himself as the new Chairman of the Group and Members introduced themselves. The Chairman reminded Members of the Group's objectives as set out in the CSAT Crime and Disorder Strategy. It was noted that the objectives included combating homophobic harassment which should be specifically mentioned in the objectives.

Action: That this be drawn to the attention of CSAT.

3 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Group held on 22 May 2000 were received and considered.

(i) Minute 4(i) - Attendance at meetings

The Chairman informed the Group that the letter had been sent and that he was glad to see a good attendance at the meeting. He stressed that the achievements of the Group had to be by team effort.

(ii) Minute 4(ii) (vi) and (ix) - Aide Memoire, Pre-court guide and procedure for anti-social behaviour orders.

Katherine Nessling informed the Group that the work on these items would be completed by the next meeting. It was generally agreed that discussion on anti-social behaviour orders required input from more groups than just police and housing. The Chairman added that the effect of the Human Rights Act would be felt in October as well and would add complications. Members thought nevertheless that the measures envisaged for controlling violent crime by anti-social behaviour orders might have a place within domestic violence cases.

Action: That Clive Cooper would raise the matter of procedures for making anti-social behaviour orders at the CSAT meeting on 28 July 2000.

(iii) Minute 4(iii) - Group membership

Graham Seal referred to the meeting which had taken place on 22 May after the Group meeting that day.

(iv) Minute 4(v) - Crown Prosecution Solicitor's Department presentation

The Chairman informed the Group that a letter inviting a Crown Prosecution Solicitor representative to the next meeting was being sent.

(v) Minute 4(vii) - Polaroid Cameras

Graham Seal and Katherine Nessling explained the availability of polaroid cameras for use by various organisations.

(vi) Minute 4(viii) - Data sharing pro-forma

The Housing Officer circulated copies of the data pro-forma and some Members of the Group alluded to problems of confidentiality which might be posed by it.

(vii) Minute 5 - Domestic Violence

Reports were given on domestic incidents by Katherine Nessling, Julia Rodd and Margot Freeman. It was noted that whilst the Police figures for Dunmow showed a quiet period, the Citizens Advice Bureau at Saffron Walden had recorded a number of cases of violence or threats within the home.

In answer to a question, Julia Rodd informed the Group that it would cost between £80 and £100 to produce a business card displaying contact numbers. A discussion on the problems of the pro-forma and confidentiality ensued and it was noted that district councils have computer software whereby incidents of domestic violence could be cross-referenced using postcodes.

The Chairman circulated a Home Office publication offering guidance to multi-agency groups on combating domestic violence, and he stressed that publicity was regarded as most important in this context. Members agreed that a high profile launch of the proposed information card would be useful. Graham Seal suggested that press coverage of this and a regular spot in local newspapers would be helpful to raise the profile of domestic violence and encourage confidential reporting. Val Long emphasised that the varied composition of the Group should be publicised to make apparent the different services available to give help.

Clive Cooper reminded the group that for audit purposes it would be important to find a way of measuring the effect of the Group's activities on a year-on-year basis. He alluded to the problems of data protection which ran counter to the needs of the crime and disorder initiative and Members of the Group agreed that the problems would be best solved by use of the pro-forma without identification of the informant.

At the suggestion of Dale Atkins it was agreed that the form should be headed 'domestic incident report form'. It was noted that the presentation from the Crown Prosecution Solicitor's Department would be put back to the next meeting.

Action:

- 1 that the pro-forma be amended as agreed.
 - 2 that the following documents be circulated with the Minutes:-

copy of Home Office guidance,
copy of Duluth model,
copy report arising from the workshop on 25 May.
 - 3 that a press release be issued within a few weeks of the next meeting on 19 September, with the launch of the disposable information cards and aide memoire.

(viii) Minute 6 - Racial Incidents Panel

Graham Seal reported that there had been no racial incidents since the last meeting. Alex Stewart stressed, however, that it was essential for the Group to have a policy and a panel for dealing with racial incidents. Nick Savage emphasised that ethnic minority groups must be represented on the panel. Val Long suggested that the Bell Institute could offer help in this context since the largest numbers of persons from ethnic minorities were students at that college.

It was recognised that a policy was necessary and Graham Seal suggested that this could be framed on the basis of the Police duties. Appropriate presentation was necessary, however, as was the right membership of the panel, since perception was all important.

Action: that Graham Seal, Alex Stewart and David Keefe form a Sub-Group to produce a draft policy and that David Keefe and PC Mark Newman be invited to make presentations to the Group regarding ways of supporting racial and homophobic minorities.

(ix) Minute 8 - Perpetrators Programme

Heather Brun reported that the funding bid to the Home Office for the Perpetrators Programme had been rejected and therefore preparations were in difficulty. Referrals had already been made to the Perpetrators Programme however and an offer had been received of premises at Harlow. It was necessary, however, to obtain a pool of volunteers for delivery of the programme and funding for training and for provision of parallel services for women and children. A problem was presented by the fact that the Home Office required a demonstration that perpetrators reduced offending whereas the object of such a

programme was to encourage reporting of offending by the victims. There was to be a review of the work programmes for all offender groups by Probation in September, and it was hoped that there would be more to report following this. In the meantime the next West Essex Management Group Perpetrators Programme meeting was to be on 13 September at Harlow.

4 **GROUP MEMBERSHIP**

The Chairman stressed the importance of replacing retiring Members of the Group and in particular providing a replacement for Margot Freeman, Saffron Walden Citizens Advice Bureau Manager who had worked so tirelessly in this field.

5 **WEST ESSEX VICTIM SUPPORT SCHEME**

Ronni Ayres reported that this scheme was about to be launched, providing a witness service in Epping Magistrates Court. Recruiting and training of volunteers had begun to provide support for adult witnesses, both prosecution and defence.

6 **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was noted that the next meeting would be held on Tuesday 19 September. Linda Sturgess offered her apologies in advance for absence from that meeting.

7 **DOMESTIC VIOLENCE RESOURCE MANUAL**

Chris White reported that 'Domestic Violence, a Resource Manual for the Healthcare Professional' was available free from the Department of Health, P O Box 777, London, SE7 6XH, www.doh.gov.uk/domestic.htm.

The meeting ended at 1.10 pm.