

26. 2. 2004



**PROSTITUTION REFORM ACT SUBCOMMITTEE  
26 FEBRUARY 2004**

**A meeting of the Prostitution Reform Act Subcommittee  
was held on Thursday 26 February 2004 at 1.30pm**

**PRESENT:** Councillor Sue Wells (Chairperson),  
Councillors Helen Broughton, Alister James, Lesley Keast  
and Ingrid Stonhill.

The Subcommittee reports that:

**PART A - MATTERS REQUIRING A COUNCIL DECISION**

**1. STREET WORKERS LIAISON GROUP**

<b>Officer responsible</b> Environmental Health Policy Leader	<b>Author</b> Terence Moody, Environmental Health Policy Leader, DDI 941-8834
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The purpose of this report is to consider the groups and individuals that are to be invited to form a liaison group to assist the Council examine the various means of further controlling the perceived problems arising from street prostitution in the city.

**BACKGROUND**

On 19 December 2003, the Council considered a report from the Subcommittee which outlined, amongst other matters, the issue of sex workers soliciting on footpaths and in other public places. It was pointed out that the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 contained no specific powers for making bylaws in this regard. However, the Council's Public Places and Signs Bylaw 1991 did contain provisions enabling control of the selling or exposing for sale any services on any road without a licence issued by the Council and subject to conditions imposed by that licence.

The Council adopted the recommendation of the Subcommittee as follows;

*"That the Prostitution Reform Subcommittee investigate the matter of developing a liaison group with the Council consisting of the Police, Community and Public Health, Child Youth and Family, and the Safer Community Council to examine means of further controlling the perceived problems arising from street prostitution".*

The formation of the liaison group was discussed by the Prostitution Reform Act Subcommittee on 16 February 2004. It was agreed at that meeting that the Subcommittee would reconvene on Thursday 26 February 2004 to determine the precise makeup of the liaison group.

The initial public consultation arising from the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 was undertaken by the Subcommittee during October and November 2003, with about 1600 submissions received.

Some of the issues raised by submitters in relation to street prostitution were;

- Allegations that persons under the age of 18 years are involved in street prostitution.
- The alleged undertaking of sexual activities in public places or on adjacent properties.
- The leaving of offensive (and alleged dangerous in some cases) litter in public places or adjacent properties.
- Perceived threats to safety of passer-bys or local residents from persons associated with the street prostitutes, or those attracted to the activity.
- Issues of safety related to street prostitution.
- Concerns regarding the health aspects of street prostitution and the ability of health providers to deal with these.

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The Subcommittee decided on 16 February 2004 to consider an extended list of groups and individuals to be approached to consider forming a liaison group.

Under the Prostitution Reform Act 2003 there are limited additional requirements placed on street prostitution than existed previously under the Summary Offences Act 1981 with the removal of the offence of soliciting.

The introduction of the Act has provided a need for consideration of safety and health requirements and controls over the age of persons employed in the profession. It has also led to the raising of the issues referred to above. At present there is only limited information available to the Council, other than some that is anecdotal, on the extent and degree of any problems that may be arising from the activity of street prostitution.

It is considered the liaison group should include a wide enough representation of groups and individuals with some information on the actual activities, or have the capability to obtain the information to determine matters that may need to be addressed.

Of the groups referred to in the Council recommendation, the Police, the Medical Officer of Health, and Child Youth and Family would have significant responsibilities and information and the Safer Community Council has contracted the Youth Health Centre to examine problems with young street sex workers. A member of that group should be invited to take part.

The Salvation Army also operates an outreach programme and should be included, as should a representative of the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective.

The matter of litter has been raised in both the submissions and complaints received by the Council and it may be useful to include a representative from the Council's City Environment Group to consider this matter.

Any complaints received by the Council are dealt with by the Environmental Monitoring section of the Environmental Services Unit and it would also be helpful to have their input into the liaison group deliberations.

The majority of street prostitution appears to occur, from the limited information that is available, within the area covered by the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board and they may be able to provide actual information on the perceived problems. The Community Board could be asked if they wished to nominate a person to take part in the liaison group.

**Recommendation:** That a liaison group be formed to meet in March consisting of representatives of the New Zealand Prostitutes Collective, Child Youth and Family, the Police, Salvation Army, Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board, businesses, residents, Youth and Cultural Development, 198 Youth Health Centre, Drug Arm and other stakeholders as may be identified by the Subcommittee from time to time. The liaison group will identify what the different issues are and agree on a course of action to alleviate any problems identified.

The meeting concluded at 1.58pm

**CONSIDERED THIS 26TH DAY OF FEBRUARY 2004**

**MAYOR**