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To: Chief Constables and Force Sex Work Leads and Stakeholders

NPCC Sex Work Guidance Update

As the NPCC lead for the Sex Work Working Group (SWWG), I am writing to provide an update on the Sex Work National Police Guidance.

In early 2019, the SWWG published refreshed national guidance to address the complexities of sex work and enhance consistency in policing approaches. However, since that time, both police operations and internet-facilitated sex work have undergone significant changes. Recognising the need to adapt, we undertook a comprehensive review and refresh of the guidance, resulting in the latest version, which came into operational effect in June 2023.

Feedback received after the update was published highlighted potential limitations in the consultation process. In consequence to this feedback, I have formally commissioned another round of consultation. Our goal is to ensure that the guidance takes into account diverse perspectives from within policing but also incorporates the views of many stakeholders and interested parties.

To achieve this, the Vulnerability, Knowledge, and Practice Programme (VKPP) Research team will play a pivotal role. They will critically assess the best available research evidence, with a particular focus on lived experiences. Additionally, we will apply an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) framework to extract relevant insights from all submitted research.

I invite you to contribute to this process by submitting any research or professional perspectives that can enhance our understanding of the following areas:

1. Use of the term 'sex work' for the working group

What does the evidence tell us about...

- ... the different contexts in which the exchange of sex for money or other resources between adults take place?
- ... the pathways into sex work?
- ... the experience of those described as being engaged in 'sex work'?

2. Should police continue to work with Adult Service Websites?

What does the evidence tell us about...

- ... the extent to which ASWs enable child and adult exploitation?
- ... how effective ASWs are at screening and monitoring exploitative and illegal activity through risk assessment?
- ... the impact of different policing approaches on tackling exploitation in the context of ASWs?
- The impacts on sex workers (within the context of ASWs) of different approaches/responses to sex work (e.g. criminalisation, economic aspects, health, wellbeing, safety, family, support networks, access to justice, marginalisation etc.)?



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3. In regard to brothel keeping legislation, is the current focus on exploitation rather than prosecuting individuals operating out of the same premises the right approach?

What does the evidence tell us about...

- ... the impacts on sex workers (within the context of brothels) of different policing approaches/responses to sex work (e.g. criminalisation, economic aspects, health, wellbeing, safety, family, support networks, access to justice, marginalisation etc.)?

What evidence is there...

- ... for the rate of prosecutions under brothel-keeping legislations?
- ... the negative or positive outcomes of prosecution?

Additionally, for those in operational and strategic policing roles:

- Does the current brothel legislation cause any operational difficulties when conducting a safeguarding/welfare visit?

Please send your submissions to the following email address: VKPPResearch@college.police.uk. This consultation will remain open for submissions until the 22nd of July.

For your reference, the current version of the guidance can be accessed here: [NPC Sex Working Guidance - Document \(npcc.police.uk\)](#)

Thank you for your commitment to improving our response to sex work and ensuring the safety and well-being of vulnerable individuals.

Yours sincerely



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