

The Way Forward: Taking action to end violence against women and girls

Greater London Authority factsheet on new measures to tackle prostitution

A series of new prostitution measures come into effect in April 2010 as part of the Policing and Crime Act 2009.

Tackling the demand for prostitution

Section 14 introduces section 53A of the Sexual Offences Act 2003 creating a new strict liability offence of paying for sexual services with a prostitute who is subject to exploitative conduct, which includes force, coercion, deception or threats. Ignorance will no longer be an excuse. Men who pay for sex risk a fine of up to £1,000 and a criminal record.

In addition to this, police will no longer have to show kerb-crawlers are “persistent” before arresting them.

Brothel closure orders

Section 21 gives courts new powers to close down premises associated with certain prostitution and pornography offences. They will allow police to disrupt criminal activity associated with sexual exploitation by closing down premises they take enforcement action. At the moment, these premises may continue to operate soon after police action despite arrests being made by the police, unless the premises are associated with nuisance, disorder or class A drug use.

Amendment to the term “common prostitute”

Section 16 amends the term “common prostitute” as this term is outdated and offensive.

New orders as an alternative to a fine

Section 17 introduces a new court order as an alternative to a fine for the offence of loitering or soliciting for the purposes of prostitution. Under this order women will be required to attend three meetings to address the

causes of their involvement in prostitution and is aimed at helping the exit prostitution.

For further information please visit the Home Office website:

<http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/crime-victims/reducing-crime/prostitution/>

The Policing and Crime Act can be viewed at:

http://www.opsi.gov.uk/acts/acts2009/ukpga_20090026_en_1