

Item No. 13.	Classification: Open	Date: 18 November 2014	Meeting Name: Cabinet
Report title:		Adoption of the Women's Safety Charter	
Ward(s) or groups affected:		All	
Cabinet Member:		Councillor Michael Situ, Environment, Recycling, Community Safety and Volunteering	

FOREWORD – COUNCILLOR MICHAEL SITU, CABINET MEMBER FOR ENVIRONMENT, RECYCLING, COMMUNITY SAFETY AND VOLUNTEERING

I am delighted to be presenting this report for cabinet approval. Southwark Council is one of the first local authorities in the country to commit to the adoption of a Women's Safety Charter as one of its fairer future promises. The introduction of the Charter has been led by Councillor Radha Burgess, the council's deputy cabinet member for women's safety. Her unique role demonstrates how seriously we take the issue of harassment and how it affects women's quality of life. The Charter will build on the good work we are already doing with our partners and the community to challenge the acceptance of these attitudes and behaviours.

The feedback received following our consultation on the subject has shown that the harassment of women in the night time economy is largely unreported because women feel they will not be taken seriously. The Charter will help to radically change this perception and ensure that women feel confident and comfortable to seek help if they feel they are being harassed.

I welcome the significant number of licensees across the borough who have committed to adopt the Charter, with many more showing interests. Working with licensees across the borough, we will make Southwark a safer environment for women.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the cabinet agree the Women's Safety Charter (WSC) as set out in Appendix 1.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2. The council recognises the importance of improving women's safety in the borough through its commitment in establishing a Women's Safety Charter (WSC) as part of the fairer future promises (promise number 7).
3. There is anecdotal evidence that suggests that female sexual harassment in bars and night clubs is seen as normalised behaviour and goes unchallenged and unreported. Harassment can frequently be trivialised and women and men can feel that it is not worth confronting.
4. The council takes this type of harassment seriously and believes it to be an issue that reduces women's quality of life.
5. The WSC is recognised as an important step forward in challenging these perceptions and behaviour. It builds on the learning from a pilot programme previously

implemented in Lambeth.

6. The proposed WSC for Southwark is a voluntary code of conduct which licensed premises can sign up to. It is based on a number of key principles which ensure that all staff working at licensed premises act in a responsible and supportive manner, taking all reports seriously. The intention is that the WSC will send out a clear message that female harassment in these premises will not be tolerated.

KEY ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

7. As part of the development of the WSC, officers have carried out extensive consultation with members of the public, council and partner officers, elected members and licensees.
8. The consultation was multifaceted consisting of a questionnaire available both online and in hard copy, accompanied by leaflets that outlined the purpose and aim of the consultation. The consultation was promoted through a press release, article in Southwark Life, social media, e-mails to key forums and partner organisations (both statutory and non statutory), presentations at community councils, outreach stalls at street markets and Tooley Street lobby. The consultation also included outreach activity and focus groups that involved the Southwark Youth Council. The Southwark Young Advisors also carried out outreach activity in the night time economy and some of the borough's educational institutions.
9. Specific consultation took place with licensed premises in the three alcohol saturation zones, Borough & Bankside, Camberwell and Peckham due to the concentration of premises in these areas.
10. As part of the consultation, members of the public were encouraged to fill in questionnaires. 132 questionnaires by members of the public were submitted. 51 licensed premises were also consulted, as well as 20 young advisors and 12 youth council members, giving a total figure of 215 people. A summary of views expressed included:
 - A majority of respondents felt that training for venue staff was a key tool in delivering change in this area
 - Displaying signage and posters on acceptable behaviour and/or unacceptable behaviour and what to do if someone harasses you
 - Information about support services that can be contacted to support victims
 - Perpetrators of these types of acts to be removed from licensed premises and in some cases banned.
 - Licence premises to work with the police to make sure evidence was available including higher quality CCTV footage.
11. The overwhelming majority of respondents were in support of the adoption of the WSC and feedback provided evidence that the issue of harassment in the night time economy is prominent and also goes largely unreported. A more detailed summary of the feedback received can be found in Appendix 2.
12. Those licensees who were consulted all welcomed the WSC initiative. When asked how they currently deal with the reports of harassment in their premises, they outlined procedures currently in place which were both positive and an acknowledgement that they recognised women's safety and the harassment of women as an issue.

13. Licensees also highlighted the importance of recording incidents and the importance of training of staff. Both of these issues have been addressed through:
 - The creation of a simple reporting form developed in conjunction with the local police for premises to use.
 - A training package for staff use, developed with input from an independent charity which leads in the field of women safety.
14. In light of the feedback during the consultation, it is proposed that the following principles feature in the charter:
 - Prominently display high visibility posters in the venue which discourage harassment and encourage reporting
 - To take every report of harassment and sexual intimidation seriously and take appropriate action
 - To take active steps to support persons who report harassment or sexual intimidation that might take place in their premises.
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 - To train all front of house staff to address women's safety and harassment.
 - To take active steps to ensure women leave the venue safely.
15. Appendix 3 sets out the 29 premises which have currently committed to adopting the WSC (these have been mapped at appendix 4). These premises are currently undertaking a briefing and training package in readiness for the launch of the charter. This will continue as additional premises sign up and adopt the WSC.
16. Officers are also exploring the connections between the WSC and the City Safe Havens scheme. This scheme involved a network of sites and premises across the borough that are recognised accredited venues that anybody can take refuge at if they feel that their safety has been compromised. It is anticipated that a number of premises signing up to the WSC might also be willing to become part of the City Safe Haven network therefore providing further benefit.

Implementation of the Women's Safety Charter

17. Following the adoption of the WSC the premises who have agreed to participate will display the WSC and accompanying visuals in prominent spaces in their premises. They will receive training and record any incidents reported and dealt with back to the council for monitoring purposes. Training is free to all participating premises.
18. Police and council licensing officers will monitor the response and the number of calls from each premise in relation to the harassment of women and will undertake regular six monthly reviews of the impact, for both the premises and perception of safety. This will be reported to the cabinet member for community safety and volunteering and the deputy cabinet member for women's safety.
19. Officers will continue to work with licensees to encourage more premises to adopt the WSC and the monitoring of this will form part of the six monthly review.
20. The WSC will form part of the consultation that the council will be undertaking as part of the renewal of the licensing policy which will commence in early 2015.

Policy implications

21. The WSC will contribute to delivering the council's Fairer Future promises, as set out in the Cabinet report dated 2 July 2014 - Delivering a Fairer Future for all in Southwark. More specifically it will deliver the Fairer Future promise 7 - Safer Communities delivery of a WSC. It will also contribute to the Fairer Future promise of making the borough a place to be proud of.

Community impact statement

22. An equalities analysis has been carried out on the proposed WSC and no negative potential impacts have been identified.
23. Due to the nature of the WSC initiative, the extensive consultation and the involvement of partners in this process, the proposals set out in this report are likely to create only positive impacts in relation to protected characteristics.
24. The equality analysis demonstrated that the policy shows no potential for discrimination.

Resource implications

25. The cost of implementing the proposed WSC is estimated to be approximately £10,000, mainly to cover communication and training. This cost can be covered within existing community safety & enforcement budgets.

Consultation

26. Consultation has been a key part of the development and planned implementation of the WSC. Appendix 2 contains a summary of the feedback received.
27. The WSC was presented to the housing and community safety scrutiny sub-committee in September and October 2014. It was received very positively and sub-committee members' comments have been taken into account when setting out proposals in this report.
28. The WSC has also been presented to all three party groups (Labour Group, Liberal Democrat Group and Conservative Group).

SUPPLEMENTARY ADVICE FROM OTHER OFFICERS

Director of Legal Services

29. This report seeking the approval of the Cabinet to approve the Women's Safety Charter.
30. Pursuant to Part 3B of the Constitution, the Cabinet has responsibility to formulate the council's overall policy objectives and priorities.

Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services (FC14/027)

31. The report seeks cabinet approval to the Women's Safety Charter as set out in Appendix 1.
32. It is noted that the estimated cost of £10,000 for implementing the proposal will be contained within existing budgets. Staff and any other costs connected with this proposal are also to be contained within existing departmental budgets.

BACKGROUND DOCUMENTS

Background Papers	Held At	Contact
WSC equalities impact assessment	Community Safety Partnership Service, 160 Tooley Street, SE1 2QH	Eva Gomez 020 7525 7246
Link: http://moderngov.southwark.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=302&MId=4863&Ver=4		

APPENDICES

No.	Title
Appendix 1	Women's Safety Charter
Appendix 2	Consultation feedback summary
Appendix 3	Premises committed to adopting the Women's Safety Charter
Appendix 4	Map

AUDIT TRAIL

Cabinet Member	Councillor Michael Situ, Environment, Recycling, Community Safety and Volunteering (Community Safety and Volunteering)	
Lead Officer	Deborah Collins, Strategic Director Environment and Leisure	
Report Author	Eva Gomez, Safer Communities Team Manager	
Version	Final	
Dated	5 November 2014	
Key Decision?	Yes	
CONSULTATION WITH OTHER OFFICERS / DIRECTORATES / CABINET MEMBER		
Officer Title	Comments Sought	Comments Included
Director of Legal Services	Yes	Yes
Strategic Director of Finance and Corporate Services	Yes	Yes
Cabinet Member	Yes	Yes
Date final report sent to Constitutional Team	6 November 2014	

APPENDIX 1

Women's Safety Charter



A charter for Southwark's licensed premises to commit themselves to make Southwark the safest place for women in London.

The signatory undertakes to:

1. Prominently display high visibility posters in the venue which discourage harassment and encourage reporting.
2. To take every report of harassment and sexual intimidation seriously and take appropriate action.
3. To take active steps to support persons who report harassment or sexual intimidation which might take place in their premises.
4. To train all front of house staff to address women's safety and harassment.
5. To take active steps to ensure women leave the venue safely.

By this my signature I confirm I agree to adhere to the above principles and ensure their implementation and that I am duly authorised to act on this matter:

Signed (the Licensee): _____

Print: _____

Dated: _____

APPENDIX 2

Women's safety charter (WSC) consultation feedback summary

The WSC consultation was multifaceted, consisting of an online questionnaire which was promoted through a press release, article in Southwark Life, social media, e-mails to key forums and partner organisations (both statutory and non statutory) and presentations at community councils.

The consultation also included outreach activity in public places such as street markets, parks and focus groups; for example, the Youth Council and young advisors. The young advisors carried out outreach activity in the night time economy and some of the borough's educational institutions.

132 questionnaires were submitted. 51 licensed premises were also consulted, as well as 20 young advisors and 12 youth council members, giving a total figure of 215 people. The overwhelming majority of respondents are in support of the WSC and feedback provides evidence that the issue of harassment in the night time economy is prominent, but also largely unreported.

The questionnaire used open questions in order to meaningfully consult participants on what actions they would like to address on the issue of normalised sexual harassment in bars, clubs and pubs. It also asked questions around participants' experience in wider settings such as parks, public transport and the street.

The first question asked was 'What do you think venues licensed to sell alcohol could do to address harassment?'

- The majority of respondents felt that training for venue staff was a key tool to deliver change in this area. This included training to identify harassment, training to support survivors and to deal with perpetrators.
- Signage and posters on acceptable behaviour and unacceptable behaviour as well as what to do if someone harasses you. Including support services that you can contact was also suggested as a good measure.
- The final emerging theme was around effective enforcement. Respondents wanted those perpetrating these types of act to be ejected from the licensed premises and in some cases banned. They also wanted them to work with the police to make sure evidence was available including CCTV footage that was considered to be often substandard.

The second question was 'Please tell us what you think that the council, the police and their partners can do to address harassment in licensed venues?'

- Work with venues by supporting them to tackle any issues that they have, if these do not improve then take actions against their licenses.
- More visible and approachable police.
- Engage with young people to address these behaviours before they become normalised to them. This could be in the setting of schools, bars or even football clubs.
- Third party reporting options for those affected by harassment.

Officers were also keen to understand why respondents felt it was important to address harassment. The general consensus was that the perpetrators cannot understand the level of distress and harm it causes the victims. Some respondents felt that it was their

responsibility to ignore it or just put up with it. Below are some of the views that we received.

“Because people deserve to be treated with respect - male or female. Harassment is intimidating and unpleasant at best and terrifying and dangerous at worst.”

“Part of life, my personal responsibility to ignore/deal with it.”

“Women have the right to socialise without being pawed by sexual predators chancing their arm.”

“Women shouldn’t have to have their lives limited because of harassment. We’ll also have a more vibrant night economy if women feel safe to go out and about.”

“Casual harassment is only a short step from sexual violence in or outside the bedroom. We want all our citizens to feel safe and equal, and where alcohol is present we have a greater responsibility to put suitable measures in place.”

“Women I have known have said that they have been a victim of harassment. They have just put this down to lads behaviour however I think there is a very thin line between lads behaviour and harassment.”

The consultation also sought to identify respondents’ wider experience of harassment in Southwark; this has provided valuable information for wider work in the future around harassment.

Streets, parks and public transport were identified as the three locations where respondents were most likely to experience harassment in Southwark, with just under 50% of respondents identifying each of these categories as areas of concern. Bars/pubs/clubs were identified by almost 40% of those responding.

Inappropriate comments, leering and whistling were the most likely types of abuse experienced. Other forms of harassment and abuse were also reported including flashing and inappropriate touching.

The comments received illustrate that the incidents vary widely and the locations can be almost anywhere.

“There was another incident with some workmen in a van. I was walking down the road and they shouted, “eat some food you skinny bitch.” When I looked at them as if to say why you are saying this to me, they shouted ‘lesbian’.”

“The stalking is worrying as the person has made up his mind that we are in a relationship. I have been trolled on social media (which is not mentioned here) and had him waiting outside my house and the railway station.”

“It actually happened in the library. A man sat next to me and began to touch my leg.”

46% of those who had experienced abuse told someone about it, with a high number of respondents reporting that they did not feel that it was important enough to report as it happened too frequently and some saying that they did not want to waste police time or that they did not think it would be taken seriously. 47% of those who did report stated that were happy with the response that they had, 35% were unhappy whilst the remaining did not answer this question. Some offered examples of good practice; others were less positive about the response they received:

“Told work colleagues, friends, family and the police. The police took the public masturbation incident seriously. The hate crimes unit were really good.”

“Reported the flasher to London underground staff they did nothing, they did not even ask for my name. In the pub, although I did not know who groped me, I went and told a door supervisor who approached the crowd of men and warned them all in general.”

“It just happens all the time - there's no-one to tell, and I'm not sure anyone would do anything about it anyway.”

Equalities and diversity profile

The 32 respondents that took part in the consultation were self selection and broadly representative of the respective of the population of Southwark. This has to be viewed within the context that 66% of respondents lived in the borough, 23% worked in the borough, 5% were visiting the borough and 6% offered no response to the question.

Ethnicity

The ethnicity of those taking part was also representative of those living, working or visiting Southwark (see Chart 1 opposite).

Gender

75% of those responding to the survey were female and 20% were male. This was expected as the survey focused on women’s safety.

Sexual orientation

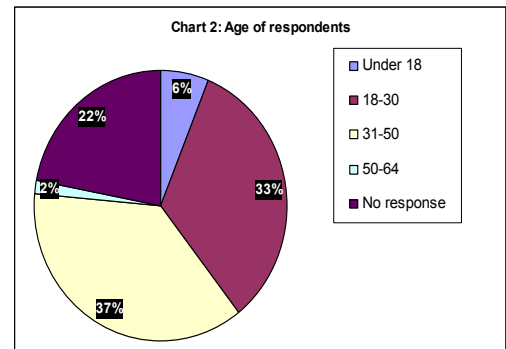
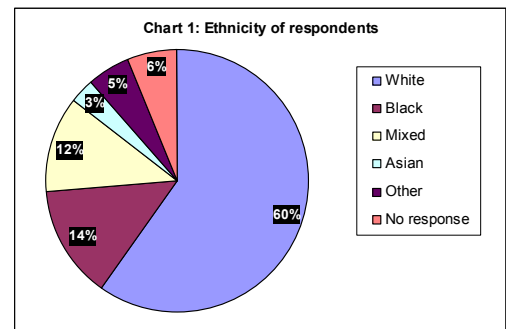
83% of those responding to the survey identified as heterosexual, 5% bisexual, 3% lesbian and 2%. The remaining responds declined to answer.

Disability

6% of those responding identified with having a disability. 86% of those responding did not identify with having any type of disability.

Age

The age of those taking part reflected the core demographic that the council aims to engage with in that more than 70% of respondents were 18-50 years old (see Chart 2 opposite).



APPENDIX 3

Premises committed to adopting the Women's Safety Charter

Number	Venue	Address	Postcode
1	The Hope	66 Rye Lane	SE15 5BY
2	The Tiger	18 Camberwell Green	SE5 7AA
3	Blue Eyed Maid	173 Borough High Street	SE1 4NG
4	The White Horse	20 Peckham Rye	SE15 4JR
5	Lerryn's	200 Rye Lane	SE15 4NF
6	Ministry of Sound	103 Gaunt Street	SE1 6DP
7	The Coronet	28 New Kent Road	SE1 6TJ
8	The Market Porter	9 Stoney Street	SE1 9AA
9	Peckham Liberal Club	24 Elm Grove	SE15 5DE
10	The Vault (Shad Thames)	Tower Bridge, The Horace Jones Vault, Shad Thames	SE1 2UP
11	Pizza Express	Cardamom Building, 31 Shad Thames	SE1 2YR
12	All Bar One	34 Shad Thames, Butler's Wharf, Spice Quays	SE1 2YG
13	Dean Swift	32 Lafone Street	SE1 2LX
14	The Prince Albert	111 Bellenden Road	SE15 4QY
15	Victoria Inn Public House	77-79 Choumert Road	SE15 4AR
16	Bar Story	Railway Arch 213	SE15 4QL
17	The Montpelier	43 Choumert Road	SE15 4AR
18	Barcelona	481 Lordship Lane	SE22 8JY
19	The Ship A'Ground	33 Wolseley Street, London	SE1 2BN
20	The Kings Arms	251 Tooley Street	SE1 2JX
21	The View	The Shard, 32 London Bridge Street	SE1 9SP
22	Shangri-La hotel	The Shard, 31 St Thomas Street	SE1 9SP
23	London Bridge Quarter	The Shard, 32 London Bridge Street	SE1 9SP
24	Oblix Restaurant	Level 31, The Shard, 31 St Thomas Street	SE1 9SP
25	Hutong	Level 33, The Shard, 31 St Thomas Street	SE1 9SP
26	Aqua Shard	Level 31, The Shard, 31 St Thomas Street	SE1 9SP
27	The Pigeon Hole Cafe	2 Datchelor Place	SE5 7AP
28	South Bank University	103 Borough Road	SE1 0AA
29	Corsica Studios	4/5 Elephant Road	SE17 1LB

APPENDIX 4

Location of premises currently signed up

