

Safer communities for the young and vulnerable

The Association of Public Service Excellence today warned that any 'crackdowns' on prostitution must take into account the innovative moves that local authorities have already put into place to tackle neighbourhood level crime and liveability issues. Welcoming the fact that a taboo subject can now be properly debated Paul O'Brien Chief Executive of APSE commented **'The issue of prostitution and the some times devastating effect it can have on local communities is one that local authorities have been grappling with for decades'** Mr O'Brien continued **"Prostitution is not a single issue. Making residents feel safe and safeguarding the often young vulnerable people who work as prostitutes needs a collaborative approach from police and local authority community safety and drug action teams. It is also a key issue for local ward councillors. There is a danger in unplanned kerb crawler crackdowns that we move the problem on from one community into a neighbouring community"**.

Commenting on the announcements by Minister, Fiona MacTaggart , Paul O'Brien added **"We would urge Ms MacTaggart to take into account the already excellent examples of local authorities and local police forces tackling neighbourhood crime and prostitution such as Nottingham and Bolton"**. Mr O'Brien added **'Any new laws need to work in a practical way for local authorities at a local level. National strategies that fail to take into account the resources and powers available to local councils will leave a gap in what Government wishes to achieve"**.

Ends

1. APSE is the Association for Public Service Excellence
2. APSE represents around 300 local authorities throughout England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland
3. APSE will debate the issue of neighbourhood crime and prostitution at the Labour Party Spring Conference and has a key note speakers including Carrie Mitchell from the English Collective of Prostitutes and Cllr Leon Unczur from Respect for Nottingham (a local authority campaign that deals with street begging, prostitution and street selling).
Saturday 11th February 2006 Blackpool Winter Gardens (journalists welcome security restrictions apply)
4. Contact: Paul O'Brien, APSE's Chief Executive for comments on 0161 772 1810. .. For Press details contact mroden@apse.org.uk on 0161 772 1810. For details on APSE's upcoming fringe events at the Labour Spring Conference contact mbaines@apse.org.uk on 0161 772 1810.