

## Response ID ANON-B85F-J2HJ-3

Submitted to **Equally Safe: A consultation on challenging men's demand for prostitution, working to reduce the harms associated with prostitution and helping women to exit**

Submitted on 2020-12-04 11:41:15

### Chapter 2: Scotland's Current Approach to Prostitution

#### 1 Do you agree or disagree that the Scottish Government's approach to tackling prostitution, as outlined in this section, is sufficient to prevent violence against women and girls?

**Please explain your answer.:**

The Salvation Army in Scotland welcomes the opportunity to respond to this consultation. Since the early days of The Salvation Army in the late nineteenth century, we have provided emotional, spiritual and practical support to people involved in prostitution, and have assisted those wanting to exit prostitution. We have also been involved in combatting trafficking of people into forced prostitution. In England, The Salvation Army holds the contract for supporting victims of Human Trafficking, including those trafficked for sexual exploitation. Internationally we have projects that offer support to women involved in prostitution, including health and well-being initiatives and exit strategies.

The Salvation Army in Scotland operates frontline services providing support for women in prostitution, mainly within Edinburgh and East Glasgow. This response provides qualitative data, drawing on the experience of staff involved with these frontline services.

The Salvation Army in Scotland is broadly supportive of the approach outlined by the Scottish Government in "Equally Safe", and particularly the inclusion of prostitution amongst the forms of violence against women and girls that will receive a robust and effective response, in line with the provisions of the Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) 2015 Act.

#### 2 What are your observations as to the impact of the coronavirus outbreak on women involved in prostitution in Scotland?

**Please explain your answer.:**

Our observations concur with the research findings of the Scottish Government. Consultation with our frontline workers confirms that an increasing number of women, unable to work on the streets mainly because of 'associated stigma', now work from home. This results in extra costs which lead to further debt, which is paid off by working extra nights. Moving their services off the streets also increases the risk of violence, because they are now hidden behind doors, without their usual support or safety nets of others around them.

Within the East Glasgow scene, we have found that there has been an increase in the number of women attending illegal parties and engaging in prostitution in exchange for drugs and alcohol. Our experience is that violence against women is common practice in these settings.

### Chapter 3: International Approaches to Prostitution

#### 3 Which of the policy approaches (or aspects of these) outlined in Table 3.1 do you believe is most effective in preventing violence against women and girls?

**Please explain your answer.:**

Although The Salvation Army has not officially endorsed any one approach to preventing violence against women and girls, we are involved with the Parliamentary CPG on Human Trafficking, which has called for the adoption of something akin to the so-called "Nordic model".

While The Salvation Army welcomes the decriminalisation of women and girls engaged in prostitution, insofar as the removal of the risk of prosecution can reduce the risks they face, and open up easier pathways for exiting sex work, we also urge caution in considering this model. Various frontline practitioners and organisations have signalled that the Nordic model may result in increased risks of violence against women and girls in prostitution. We are also concerned that criminalisation of the sex buyer could result in further isolation of sex workers and reduce their safety, because they would lose influence over the terms under which the transaction occurs because of the risk the sex buyer is taking, the demand for secrecy and the pressure to earn money.

This increased secrecy could also discourage victims of sexual exploitation from seeking help and reduce trust and engagement levels with the Police and other professionals. The 2018 report by Platt and Grenfell, which synthesised evidence on sex work laws, showed that 'arrest of sex workers or their clients displaced sex workers into isolated work locations, disrupting peer support networks and service access, and limited risk reduction opportunities.' The Salvation Army asks that risks of this kind are considered fully during the course of this consultation.

See: Platt and Grenfell, 2018, "Associations between sex work laws and sex workers' health: A systematic review and meta-analysis of quantitative and qualitative studies". See <https://journals.plos.org/plosmedicine/article?id=10.1371/journal.pmed.1002680>.

### Chapter 4: Challenging Men's Demand for Prostitution

#### 4 What measures would help to shift the attitudes of men relating to the purchase of sex? Do you have any examples of good practice either in a domestic or an international context?

**Please explain your answer.:**

In the last five years, The Salvation Army has used guided conversations geared towards developing, articulating and promoting a healthy understanding of sexual relationships. Although these do not directly address the question of prostitution, the emphasis on placing sexual activity in the context of relationships characterized by love, fidelity and trust is nevertheless directly relevant, and this approach may prove useful to others who are engaged in sex education.

**5 Taking into account the above, how can the education system help to raise awareness and promote positive attitudes and behaviors amongst young people in relation to consent and healthy relationships?**

**Please explain your answer.:**

The Salvation Army shares the goals of raising awareness and promoting positive attitudes and behaviours. These objectives are central to the resources developed by various faith communities, including The Salvation Army.

**Chapter 5: Supporting Women to Exit Prostitution**

**6 How can the different needs of women involved in prostitution (in terms of their health and wellbeing) be better recognised in the provision of mainstream support?**

**Please explain your answer.:**

The Salvation Army supports the continued funding for mainstream services such as NHS Scotland to provide harm reduction and mental health support for women involved in prostitution.

**7 In your opinion, drawing on any international or domestic examples, what programmes or initiatives best supports women to safely exit prostitution?**

**Please explain your answer.:**

The Salvation Army is committed to supporting women to safely exit prostitution, and it is our intention that every Salvation Army centre should provide a safe environment for women who experience violence related to prostitution.

Throughout the UK, The Salvation Army has a trained network of employees and volunteers offering support, for example mentoring and peer support, friendship and the opportunity to integrate into the faith community. These relational approaches have resulted in trust and given women the confidence and ability to exit prostitution.

Recognising that the restoration of those who have been exploited and traumatised may be a long and complex process, and that it is critical they are enabled to exercise choice and control of their own lives, The Salvation Army adopts a holistic strategy, providing drop-in centres, debt advice, employment opportunities, housing advice and other practical support, including food and clothing as needed, and will also signpost to mainstream support and to services provided by partners.

Such programmes help to minimize the risk that women will return to prostitution in order to secure ready cash for immediate financial needs. In this respect, consultation with our frontline workers signals the need for a longer term approach to the funding of support services for those exiting prostitution: while funding can usually be secured for the immediate requirements to able exit from prostitution, the ongoing financial needs are not always considered, and our evidence shows that returning to prostitution is perceived as an easier option for quick cash.

Women may be discouraged from exiting and seeking alternative employment by the requirement to disclose convictions, which may also discourage prospective employers. It is therefore important to develop and maintain close relationships with potential employers, and The Salvation Army has knowledge of employers who will and are prepared to employ women who wish to exit prostitution.

**8 Support services are primarily focussed within four of Scotland's main cities – Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow – how can the needs of women throughout Scotland who are engaged in prostitution be met, noting that prostitution is not solely an urban issue?**

**Please explain your answer.:**

See the response to question 7

**9 If there are any further comments you would like to make, which have not been addressed in the questions above, please use the space below to provide more detail.**

**Please explain your answer.:**

None

**About you**

**What is your name?**

**Name:**

Major David Cavanagh

**What is your email address?**

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**Are you responding as an individual or an organisation?**

Organisation

**What is your organisation?**

**Organisation:**

The Salvation Army

**The Scottish Government would like your permission to publish your consultation response. Please indicate your publishing preference:**

Publish response only (without name)

Publish response with name

**We will share your response internally with other Scottish Government policy teams who may be addressing the issues you discuss. They may wish to contact you again in the future, but we require your permission to do so. Are you content for Scottish Government to contact you again in relation to this consultation exercise?**

Yes

**I confirm that I have read the privacy policy and consent to the data I provide being used as set out in the policy.**

I consent

**Evaluation**

**Please help us improve our consultations by answering the questions below. (Responses to the evaluation will not be published.)**

**Matrix 1 - How satisfied were you with this consultation?:**

Very satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**

In the case of this consultation, it might have been useful to provide an introductory section in which individuals and organisations responding could indicate the experience and expertise upon which the response was developed

**Matrix 1 - How would you rate your satisfaction with using this platform (Citizen Space) to respond to this consultation?:**

Very satisfied

**Please enter comments here.:**