

COUNCILLOR ALEX PHILLIPS

Brighton & Hove City Council
King's House
Grand Avenue
Hove BN3 2LS

Councillor Simson
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Hove
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Date: 27 September 2010

Our Ref: AP

Dear Cllr Dee Simson,

I am writing to you with regards to the recent Scrutiny Panel on which I sat with fellow councillors David Watkins, Juliet McCaffery and Averil Older, which looked into Support Services for Victims of Sexual Violence.

I am pleased with much that is detailed in its report, and I very much hope that implementation is speedy, because as we speak stats suggest that more than 2,000 women are being raped each week in the UK, and 14% of female university students experience some form of sexual violence whilst at university. Clearly sexual violence is prevalent – and these are just the reported instances we know of.

These are crimes that effect women in the main and the support services are simply are not there to deal with the traumatic effects these crimes have on the women involved, their friends and family, as well as the wider implications on society. And with a sharp increase in lesser-known offences such as anal rape for instance, this issue is becoming more and more serious.

Under the previous Labour government, women without recourse to public funds had access to sexual violence support services. However that was merely a temporary project which ended in August of this year, and has not since been continued. These are amongst the most vulnerable women in society, and they, like anyone deserve support.

I was pleased that all bar one of my recommendations were accepted by the panel, and I hope that support services will be improved. Nevertheless, I would like to re-request that the Chief Executive, John Barradell to write to the Government to ask for yearly ring-fenced funding. Without this material support, organisations such as the Survivor's Network and RISE will not be able to carry out their much-needed and valuable work.

Yours sincerely,



Councillor Alex Phillips

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