

## **MERTON PROLIFIC OFFENDER GROUP (POG)**

### **Background:**

In 2002, the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership, London Borough of Merton's "Merton Partnership Against Crime" (MPAC) formed the Prolific Offender Group (PO Group). The group's aim is a multi-agency approach to intervene with those who MPAC partners consider to be the most prolific or potentially prolific offenders within the borough of Merton, not currently being dealt with by other statutory agencies.

The purpose of the PO Group is to:

- Work with identified prolific offenders not being dealt with by other criminal justice agencies.
- Identify and refer individuals for whom POG intervention is likely to achieve some positive results in reducing crime, disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB).
- Target young offenders who are at risk of becoming prolific offenders.

The rationale behind the scheme is:

- Access to the programme is on a voluntary basis
- Individual Action Plans are developed
- Good multi-agency working
- A holistic approach

The PO Group is chaired by the Met. Police Detective Chief Inspector (Crime Manager) Wimbledon and includes representatives from the Youth Offending Service, Metropolitan Police Service, LB Merton, Housing, Youth Inclusion Support Panel, Social Services, MPAC, Progress 2Work (Eco Actif), Merton Youth Awareness Programme, London & Quadrant Housing Trust and other relevant agencies as required. The POG Officers were funded by Building Safer Communities Fund, Borough Command Unit Fund and Burglary Public Service Agreement in 2003/04 and have received further funding for 2004/05.

### **Assessment:**

A recent evaluation of the scheme (May 2004) found that 62% of the clients had not re-offended since intervention of the Prolific Offender Group (POG) Officers and 90.2% approached by the POG Officers were voluntarily willing to engage in diversion. The evaluation indicated that in part this is as a result of the skills, knowledge and dedication of the POG officers.

GOL would like to alert the Minister that the Merton model is an early scheme and voluntary, not like the current scheme. Some of the partners of the current scheme are a little resistant to change to a more carrot/stick approach.

Sue Mansbridge  
6.10.04