

**OFFICIAL****WITNESS STATEMENT**

Criminal Procedure Rules, r 27. 2; Criminal Justice Act 1967, s. 9; Magistrates' Courts Act 1980, s.5B

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Statement of: **Sharon ADLEY**.....Age if under 18: **Over 18**..... (if over 18 insert 'over 18') Occupation: **PSE 61181 ADLEY ...**

This statement (consisting of 2 page(s) each signed by me) is true to the best of my knowledge and belief and I make it knowing that, if it is tendered in evidence, I shall be liable to prosecution if I have wilfully stated in it, anything which I know to be false or do not believe to be true.

Signature: **Sharon ADLEY** ..... Date: **09/07/2020** .....Tick if witness evidence is visually recorded ☐ (supply witness details on rear)

I am the lead officer for the Medway Task Force which is a multi-agency team whose overall aim is to keep Medway safe. We have three main objectives firstly to reduce violence – in particular, violent crime committed in a public place; secondly, to reduce vulnerability and thirdly to build resilient communities. Our activity is focussed within a number of wards within Medway. The first area we have selected to work in is the Luton and Wayfield Ward.

In relation to our first objective of reducing violent crime, we are taking the 'public health' approach which is about improving the health and safety of all individuals by addressing underlying risk factors that increase the likelihood that an individual will become a victim or perpetrator of violence. This is achieved by preventing violence before it happens through early intervention work and education. We are able to utilise enforcement activity but also community reassurance combined with long term care and rehabilitation; signposting and facilitating access to the appropriate services.

One of the underlying risk factors identified within some communities is access to alcohol and drugs which are both known drivers of violent crime and anti-social behaviour. Within Luton and Wayfield the team is aware of a few habitual and transient street drinkers who look to use local shops to obtain cheap, high volume alcohol. The team has, while working in Luton & Wayfield, referred local shops to the Licensing Team having observed them selling alcohol to known alcoholics, this is not just at expected times - evenings and nights, but has also been observed occurring at other times of the day when families may be travelling into and through the ward. There are already licensed premises in the Luton and Wayfield area who sell high volume alcohol, which provides street drinkers, alcoholics and also potentially younger people with a variety of sources for obtaining high strength alcohol at any time of the day. Any increase in the number of locations where alcohol can be sourced may only serve to fuel anti-social behaviour and may also have an overall negative effect on the work the Medway Task Force is trying to achieve. A considerable amount of work has already been undertaken by the task force and partners to reduce the levels of anti-social behaviour within the area.

The task force and partner agencies face challenges linked to preventing drug taking and drug supply, which again has a known link to violence and to anti-social behaviour. It is a well-accepted argument that drug taking can be co-located with alcohol dependency as those who have one addiction may often spiral into other forms of addiction. Alcohol is already available in the Luton and Wayfield area meaning it is then easy for those addicted to drugs to access this in addition to, or as compensation for their drug addiction.

It should also be noted that there is limited green space within the Luton and Wayfield Ward and it is of paramount importance that these green spaces are available to be used safely by local residents,

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free from drug use or people using such places to drink alcohol. This point has only recently been emphasised by the current Coronavirus situation and lockdown, as for some residents of this ward these green spaces are their only available outside space in which to exercise. Local children and young people need to be able to access such spaces and not be witness to risky behaviours or violence, which may be exasperated by the easy access to alcohol which the opening of more licenced premises may encourage. Sharon ADLEY PSE 61181

Signature

Signature witnessed by