

## **'Crime against Business' Discussion Document**

This issue will be discussed at the SWAPU meeting on October 30th, so please get your comments back to Viv Rayner by October 13<sup>th</sup> at the latest.

'Crime' is one issue where the FSB survey 'Barriers' has made a tremendous difference. Problems with definition mean that Government Statistics are not very good at revealing levels of 'Business Crime' or as we should be describing it, 'Crimes against Business' (CaB). This problem with definition is given as the reason why CaB is not a performance target for the Police.

One example would include a nurse being punched by a patient, using 'business' to mean 'place of work'.

### **How would you define 'Business'?** **How would you define 'Crimes against Business'?**

The Barriers survey in 2004 and again in 2006 showed that more than half of all small businesses had suffered from crime in one form or another during the previous 12 months. The crimes that were listed for members to respond to were:-

Minor Crime
Vandalism
Graffiti
Vehicle theft
Vehicle damage
Threatening behaviour/ intimidation
Shoplifting
Fly-Tipping
Serious Crime
Arson
Burglary
Robbery
Assault on owners/ staff
Financial Crime
Employee fraud
Employee theft
Cheque fraud
Credit card fraud

### **Are there any that are not listed that you would have included?**

### **Do you have any other comments – about the crimes listed, their importance, their relevance as 'crimes against business' or about how much police time should be spent against them?**

Perhaps one of the reasons why CaB is not a performance target is that businesses do not report crime. 'Barriers' showed that only some 2/3rds of

businesses experiencing crime actually reported it. For some crimes, this level fell to 1/3<sup>rd</sup>.

The Survey asked members why they did not report crime and these were the responses they were offered:-

Would not achieve anything
Don't think police will be able to find the criminals / achieve a successful prosecution
Crime not serious enough
Police not interested
Not making an insurance claim
Lack of proof/ evidence
Too time consuming
Effect on future insurance premiums
Person responsible was dismissed
Fear of reprisals / negative publicity
Stolen items were recovered

### **What other reasons would you give?**

For example, one retailing member would not bother to report a shoplifter. Her reason is that with a small shop and only one other member of staff where should she keep the shoplifter and who should look after the person while waiting for the police to call. There are all sorts of personal and property security issues.

### **Do you have other, business oriented reasons for not reporting crime?**

### **Has crime, or the fear of crime affected how you run your business? Have the changes you have made to deal with crime affected your business profitability or made you less competitive?**

Examples of this would be not trading on line for fear of fraud, or being forced to install metal shutters, which reduces your window display opportunities.

In 'Barriers', members were offered the following ways of reducing the risk of crime:-

Crime prevention advice
Business watch /shop watch
More visible police presence
Faster police response
Grant assistance for security
CCTV surveillance
Private security guard / patrol

ASBOs (anti-social behaviour orders)
Tougher sentencing
Police Community Support Officers

**Have you had experience of any of these? Was it effective?  
Have you tried anything else? How did it work?**

**What changes would you like to see to reduce crime levels?**

**Have you any other comments about Crimes against Business?**

Vivienne Rayner  
4<sup>th</sup> July 2006