

Ref: 6211/2010
Issued: Tuesday 6 July 2010

POLICE RECORD HIGHEST NUMBER OF DOMESTIC ABUSE CALLS FOLLOWING ENGLAND'S WORLD CUP EXIT

Greater Manchester Police recorded 353 incidents of domestic abuse on the day England went out of the World Cup after a 4-1 defeat by Germany.

Apart from New Year's Day, it's the highest number of domestic abuse incidents recorded in a day so far this year and is 15.7 per cent higher than the same day in June last year.

Figures released this week also show calls to the Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline rose by 187 during June, which included England's three-week World Cup campaign, compared to the number of calls received the previous month. The helpline received 448 calls in May, while in June, with England matches against USA, Algeria, Slovenia and Germany, 635 people contacted the helpline.

For the first time ever agencies from across Greater Manchester have worked together to run a campaign to urge victims of domestic abuse, their friends and families as well as those committing the abuse to seek help and advice over the World Cup. It is supported by Manchester City Council and the nine other Greater Manchester local authorities, Greater Manchester Police, Greater Manchester Public Health Network, Greater Manchester Domestic Abuse Helpline, and voluntary organisations.

Assistant Chief Constable Terry Sweeney, GMP's lead on Domestic Abuse said: "The figures recorded by both ourselves and the helpline highlight the importance of this domestic abuse awareness campaign.

"I am pleased at how many people have responded to the campaign so far and found the courage to come forward. Throughout the remaining World Cup tournament and beyond, we will continue to work with our partners to ensure anyone affected by domestic abuse knows where to go to get the help and support they need.

"I also want to send a clear message to offenders that there is no excuse for

domestic abuse at any time and we will look to ensure that those responsible are caught and brought to justice."

Rowetta of X Factor and Happy Mondays fame helped to launch the campaign on 7 June by unveiling a window display on Market Street in the city centre, which showed the images to be used throughout the campaign.

Rowetta has escaped an abusive relationship and said: "There are a number of peaks in domestic abuse throughout the year. Evidence shows that the combination of a major sporting event and good weather leads to a significant rise in domestic abuse. I've been in a violent relationship and know how hard it can be to get out. This campaign aims to make sure that anyone suffering knows how to get the support they need to leave an abusive relationship and start re-building their lives."

Manchester City Council's Lead Member on Women, Councillor Suzanne Richards, said: "The statistics show that major sporting events and the consumption of alcohol lead to a rise in incidents of domestic abuse. We have recognised this and worked jointly with the police and other authorities, the health service and voluntary groups across Greater Manchester. Our aim is to raise awareness and give victims, their friends and families and perpetrators the information they need to seek help and support.

"Last week I shadowed an officer from one of Greater Manchester Police's divisional Domestic Violence Units. I got to see how their targeted World Cup campaign is working in practice. There is a high level of dedication to enforcing the law on perpetrators of domestic abuse, which we would expect but there is also a real focus on preventative action and support for victims."

Independent Choices, Chief Officer, Sam Priestley, added: "We were pleased to see such great public support and interest for the campaign so far, however we are only part way through the World Cup and beyond this, as we know, domestic abuse is sadly widespread within our communities. It is encouraging so many people have come forward for support to the helpline and other agencies this month. The message across Greater Manchester is that local support is available and everyone has choices that can help to make positive change."

A series of hard-hitting posters incorporating striking images of a football shirt, remote control and broken beer bottle with headlines such as: Blow the Whistle on Domestic Abuse and Being Controlled is Domestic Abuse are being displayed in locations such as hospitals, doctor's surgeries and licensed premises.

A credit card sized information card is also being distributed providing domestic abuse victims, their friends and families and perpetrators with some key contact numbers for support services.

For more information about those services available to help stop domestic abuse, visit: www.endthefear.co.uk. Those responsible can also get help to stop by contacting the Respect Phonenumber: 0845 122 8609.

-ends-

For further information, please contact: Vanessa Loney, Senior Public Relations Officer, Greater Manchester Police, 0161 856 2244 or mob: 07796 335749 or Sally Wheatman, Press Officer, Manchester City Council, tel: 0161 234 1010.

**Additional Information:
Key National Statistics:**

- Home Office statistics show the number of cases of domestic abuse rise by almost 30 per cent on England match days
- A victim can suffer from 35 attacks before the abuse is reported to the police
- In the UK on average 2 women per week are killed by a current or former male partner
- Domestic Abuse accounts for 15 per cent of all violent incidents
- 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men will be a victim of domestic abuse in their lifetime with women at greater risk of repeat victimisation and serious injury
- 89 per cent of those suffering 4 or more incidents are women
- One incident of domestic violence is reported to the police every minute