

# AAFDA

## Minutes/Notes from AGM

Held on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2011 at Swindon Council Offices

### Bob Wright, Councillor and Trustee Swindon news

Bob, as a Councillor, has witnessed the difficulties that people face in domestic abuse situations. Bob would like people to engage and become more informed about Domestic Violence/Abuse and the role of the council in supporting victims.

Currently the council is being innovative in developing an idea suggested by AAFDA

#### How can we make a difference?

An example would be Pastoral support in schools - Children who are the victims/witnesses of domestic abuse, will be going to school feeling 'bereaved' as there is no-one there to talk to about it.

The pooling of ideas, resources and sharing of information -  
For example when 'One Swindon' develops it will join all the agencies together, so that they will work in a trusting partnership

#### Three key points in the case of domestic abuse which need to be looked at:-

1. Victims are often made homeless.
2. Perpetrator usually ends up with the home.
3. Children normally go with the mother.

We need to give more reassurance and help to victims when forced to leave home, and provide more safe housing. The intentionally homeless policy needs reviewing in order to assist victims

Bob introduced his idea of an 'Asset Freeze', so that victims don't go penniless when separating from a perpetrator. Quite often victims can't access bank accounts because perpetrators control the finances. Bob has already taken this matter to the local MP Robert Buckland to pursue. Along

with any injunction, the victim should have the right to access their finances, and for their fair share.

Bob said that in his role as a Councillor, he can make a difference. Victims often don't realise that they can go to the Council for help. The Council should have an 'open door' policy and should broadcast the service.

Recommendations:

- Extend the use of the 'Privacy card'. If this works in Swindon, it could be extended across the UK. AAFDA is working with two other councils at the moment.
- Pastoral Care for children in schools - for children who are the victim/witnesses of domestic abuse.
- Asset Freeze
- 'One Swindon' to be the example to other councils, and to make a significant difference.