



Crime and Disorder 2018: Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Topic Group

**To examine the effectiveness of the Crime and Disorder
Partnership in identifying, responding to and preventing
modern slavery and human trafficking**

Report of the Topic Group

6 December 2018

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Appendix 1 Members and Witnesses

Glossary

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| EqIA | Equality Impact Assessments |
| HCC | Hertfordshire County Council |
| HTMS | Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery |

REPORT OF THE CRIME AND DISORDER 2018: MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING TOPIC GROUP

1.0 Purpose of Report

- 1.1 The objective of this scrutiny was to examine the effectiveness of the Crime and Disorder Partnership in identifying, responding to and preventing modern slavery and human trafficking.
- 1.2 The objectives and questions addressed by this scrutiny are referenced in the scoping document and can be found along with associated papers at: [LINK](#)

2.0 Recommendations

- 2.1 That the partnership works with the County Council, districts and boroughs in Hertfordshire to increase the support for identified victims and prevent instances of human trafficking and modern slavery (HTMS). This should include identifying, sharing and implementing effective practice for a consistent countywide approach to HTMS. The outcomes of this work should be achieved by **December 2019**. (4.2, 4.3, 4.4, 4.6)
- 2.2 That the partnership works with county, district and borough councils for HTMS to be included into the Equality Impact Assessment template so that all Departments think through the impact of what they are doing for vulnerable groups at the point of procurement or review of contracts with suppliers. This should be developed and in use by **July 2019**. (4.7)
- 2.3 That the partnership prioritises work with all partner agencies to provide greater support to victims in the first few days of identification. Strategies should be devised and implemented with the aim of reducing the amount of time from five days to three days from identification to re-location to a place of safety. Progress towards this should be made by **July 2019**. (4.8, 4.9)
- 2.4 That HTMS forms part of the Quarterly Safeguarding meeting with the Leader of the County Council, so that he is well informed on what work is ongoing and where there are areas of concern. Following these meetings the Leader should then raise this with Hertfordshire MPs as part of his regularly meetings with them to further support for prevention of HTMS nationally. This should take place by **July 2019**. (4.10, 4.11, 4.12)
- 2.5 That the HTMS partnership increases the amount of awareness raising work that it does with schools and small businesses. Plans for this engagement should be underway by **July 2019**. (4.13, 4.14)

3.0 Evidence

- 3.1** The topic group heard that there are a number of organisations that are involved with the Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Partnership and that as awareness increases this number continues to grow. Members were informed that apprehension of perpetrators can be difficult as no single organisation possesses all available powers of entry and investigation. However, officers shared that partners were already working together to combine their powers of entry, now totalling over 900, to investigate known or suspected exploitative businesses practices.
- 3.2** Members were told of a recent event where a number of organisations, such as the Police, Trading Standards, the Fire Service and Environmental Health, arrived at a business of concern simultaneously. Each organisation has differing powers of entry and used them in conjunction with one another, so that as one entered they could call upon the next organisation after identifying a concern relevant to them. Prior to the formation of the partnership this type of joint approach would have been challenging.
- 3.3** Officers confirmed suspicions held by all Members, which was that HTMS is an invisible crime and the true figures for this are not known. However, it was understood that with more organisations involved there was a greater potential to identify and support victims as well as prevent instances of HTMS before they begin, thereby making this crime more visible.
- 3.4** With the expansion of the partnership there is an increased need for relevant training. It is also vital that this training is delivered in the same way and in Hertfordshire the person responsible for delivering this works with the HTMS unit based within Hertfordshire Constabulary. Members learnt of whole departments that have been provided with training to identify instances of HTMS, such as at Welwyn Hatfield borough council.
- 3.5** Officers shared that often a beneficial outcome of delivering this training is a series of new referrals to the police of instances of suspected HTMS. An example of this occurred not long after some GPs in Hertfordshire received training, when the Police were contacted because a GP recognised concerning behaviour which resulted in an individual being protected and moved to a place of safety.
- 3.6** Other methods of preventing instances of HTMS can be through licensing and housing decisions at the district and borough level. Making sure that all relevant data is shared with the partnership and then disseminated widely, such as the numbers, types and locations of referrals, means that authorities can make well informed decisions and

develop applications with controls in place to prevent occurrences of HTMS.

- 3.7** Members were also informed of changes made in Hertsmere borough council where there is a council wide standard for the approach to instances or the opportunity for HTMS. The sharing of effective practice like this is not conducted across the county currently, but officers shared the view that continued shared learning will benefit Hertfordshire residents.
- 3.8** Although, increasing data sharing and effective practice would provide benefits to organisations and most importantly the victims, Members heard that currently there is a strategy for dealing with instances of HTMS developed by the partnership, but that it is not a countywide strategy. As there is no countywide adoption of the strategy for dealing with or preventing HTMS, the response is not as co-ordinated as it could be whereby all parties understand each other's involvement.
- 3.9** Further to the lack of a countywide strategy there is an opportunity for increasing the strength of procurement. The point of procurement can be an effective place to challenge suppliers and hold them to account. Making sure that the process is robust and that criteria and expectations are clear works to mitigate against the exploitation of individuals in a supply chain. Members heard that adapting the Equality Impact Assessments (EqIA) to include prevention of HTMS would increase awareness and lead to improved practices.
- 3.10** In the current system, when victims are identified, organisations and individuals make referrals to the HTMS unit in Hertfordshire Constabulary. Members heard that there are also instances whereby individuals make false referrals to avoid deportation, which can reduce the unit's effectiveness by preventing officers from dealing with legitimate referrals.
- 3.11** Members were informed that once victims are identified there is a delay of five days until they are relocated to a place of safety. This delay can mean that there is a possibility of victims being drawn back into instances of exploitation. Members were told that around 40% of victims after being identified will be re-trafficked and that reducing the time taken to be re-located to a safe environment would reduce these re-occurrences.
- 3.12** Relocation will always be out of county as movement within county borders does not provide sufficient distance between victims and perpetrators to prevent re-trafficking. As these safe locations are not controlled by Hertfordshire organisations it is reliant on out of county contacts responding to need. However, with an increased understanding of the signs of HTMS and greater data sharing the time taken to re-locate a vulnerable person can be reduced.

- 3.13** Members were told that Hertfordshire has very good relationships with national colleagues and that Herts Constabulary is seen as one of the leading authorities on HTMS. It is one of only a handful of forces that has a PCC funded, dedicated unit to tackle HTMS. A portion of this funding is provided by Central Government, which is set to end. Therefore, when wanting to do more and attract further funding it can be challenging to capture the attention of central government for a largely invisible crime. Awareness in Hertfordshire is steadily increasing but without further support from senior representatives who have a national voice the profile of the crime will not be raised.
- 3.14** While awareness needs to be raised at senior levels and across all partner organisations there are areas where the partnership has had limited engagement. Specifically, this has been with schools and small businesses. The partnership is determined to raise awareness with as many groups as it can within its resource, but to be effective and have a positive impact this needs to be targeted engagement.
- 3.15** Based on the evidence gathered from the training and engagement that had already been carried out, officers were confident that increased awareness and understanding would lead to increased identification of vulnerable people and to the prevention of those vulnerable residents being targeted by HTMS perpetrators.

4.0 Conclusions

- 4.1** Members were pleased with the impact the partnership had already made and encouraged by the large number of partners working together. In particular, Members were impressed by the co-ordinated approach to combine powers of entry.
- 4.2** Members believed that to achieve real benefits across the county it was essential that all partners were working in the same way and so encouraged the adoption of the HTMS strategy by HCC as well as borough and district colleagues. This would further the co-ordinated approach already underway.
- 4.3** Further to this, Members saw that it is vital that further efforts are made to increase the amount of training delivered to relevant frontline staff. It was also important that there is consistency in how the training is delivered to again increase collaborative working between partners through a common understanding.
- 4.4** To support greater collaboration between partners Members believed that organisations should capture and share all relevant data, such as numbers of referrals, with the partnership so that this can be disseminated to all partners. This would increase the ability for co-ordinated responses and also assist the Police in identifying those individuals of concern.

- 4.5** Increased information sharing would provide intelligence for targeted prevention strategies for vulnerable residents. These can then be included when making licensing and housing decisions and applications in districts and boroughs to mitigate against the risk of HTMS.
- 4.6** Members recognised the work that has taken place in Hertfordshire organisations and to establish a consistent approach across the county, all partners should share and implement effective practice.
- 4.7** Another area where a difference can be made is through the inclusion of HTMS in the EqlA template. Members believed that as the partnership works with so many organisations, that it is best placed to make sure that all organisation's responsibilities are represented in an EqlA for the prevention of HTMS. As a result the partnership along with county, district and borough colleagues should continue to make sure that there are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent exploitation.
- 4.8** In circumstances where prevention has not been possible and partners have had to act to protect victims, Members were concerned that it could take five days to re-locate individuals to a safe location. This was seen to be too long a time, especially when considering the high rate of re-trafficking if a victim is not protected in a timely way. Therefore, officers were encouraged to target a reduction in the number of days between identification to re-location to three.
- 4.9** It was believed that this reduction in days would decrease the numbers of victims being drawn back into situations of exploitation. The speed at which those victims were made safe would allow further investigations to be undertaken and increase the likelihood of those victims talking to a wide range of professionals so that intelligence can be gathered to prevent further abuse to others.
- 4.10** On hearing that further awareness raising must take place on a national level, Members believed that the first step to this would be making sure that the Leader of Hertfordshire County Council was fully apprised of HTMS concerns in Hertfordshire. The ideal opportunity identified for this would be at the Quarterly Safeguarding meetings between the Leader and senior officers.
- 4.11** Once the Leader was fully aware of the invisible nature of the crime and of all the work going on, he would then be able to raise this with Hertfordshire's Members of Parliament so that a more national discussion could be had. The goal of these meetings would be to increase national awareness and support so that HTMS work can continue to meet the increased need it is identifying and put in place effective preventative measures.
- 4.12** However, Members also believed that funding decisions should be balanced against other rising needs, given the uncertainty regarding

the numbers of actual occurrences of HTMS in Hertfordshire. In the eventuality that recorded cases continued to increase Members questioned whether more funding responsibility should be placed at the local level rather than nationally.

- 4.13** Topic group Members believed awareness raising was one of the most effective tools the partnership had and that it should continue to look locally as well as nationally. Members saw the opportunity of increasing an understanding of HTMS in the community which could be effectively achieved through a variety of methods, such as school assembly presentations, contact with school governors through the national associations and working with the Local Enterprise Partnership to engage small businesses.
- 4.14** Members were confident that the partnership had all the necessary links to engage with all these institutions and that engagement plans could be in place to dramatically raise consciousness of Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery.

Appendix 1

Members and Witnesses

Members of the Topic Group

Jonathan Kaye
 Barbara Gibson (Chairman)
 Lynn Chesterman
 Jeff Jones
 Jane West

Other Members in Attendance

None

Witnesses

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| David Lloyd | Police & Crime Commissioner |
| Debbie Barker | Office of the Police & Crime Commissioner |
| Duncan Montague | Herts Constabulary |
| Kat Rolle | Shiva Foundation and Coordinator of the Modern Slavery Partnership |
| Kevin Gutherson | Inspecting Officer, Fire and Rescue |
| Lindsay Edwards | AD Services for Young People, HCC |
| Meenal Sachdev | Shiva Foundation and Hertfordshire Modern Slavery Partnership |
| Rachel Harper | National Modern Slavery Helpline Manager, Unseen |
| Sue Darker | Operations Director, Adults with |

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| | Disabilities, Mental Health and Autism, HCC |
| Tim Day | Senior Trading Standards Officer, HCC |
| Valerie Kane | Community Safety Officer, Hertsmere Borough Council |

Officers

Elaine Manzi Democratic Services Officer
Charles Lambert Scrutiny Officer