



Lancashire
Constabulary
police and communities together

REPORT TO: Strategic Scrutiny Meeting

DATE: 15 September 2016

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SUBJECT: Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery

1. Issue for Consideration

1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Police and Crime Commissioner of current issues in Lancashire with regards to Human Trafficking and Modern day Slavery and the Constabulary response to those issues.

2. Recommendation

2.1 The Commissioner is requested to note the contents of this report.

3. Background

3.1 The issue of Human Trafficking and Modern Day Slavery is a global threat being played out at a national, regional and local level within Lancashire.

3.2 In order to combat this issue, Lancashire Constabulary has set up a dedicated trafficking team as a pilot in East Division. This has been supported by funding from the Police and Crime Commissioner for a Detective Sergeant post and a researcher. The team has 3 key functions to its role:

- Investigation of incidents, safeguarding of victims and the prosecution of offenders.
- Training and awareness-raising of staff, partner agencies and importantly, the public.
- Building and developing networks to disrupt and prevent the spread of trafficking and slavery.

3.3 The new Slavery Act has helped greatly in the fight against the traffickers, but in many cases prosecution is difficult because of the reluctance of victims to come forward, or because of their vulnerability. Prosecutions for other offences that don't rely on the victim's testimony (e.g. drugs offences) and disruption of their networks are all part of a strategy to help make it a hostile environment for the traffickers to operate in.

3.4 A specific and significant threat for Lancashire is around Romanian Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) moving to the area and trafficking girls in for the purpose of sexual exploitation. However, there are many kinds of human trafficking and modern day slavery which are broadly categorised as sexual exploitation, forced labour (both legal and illegal), domestic servitude and removal of organs.

3.5 This exploitation is very much on a sliding scale, from domestic servitude to complete control over the victim's movements. It is important to understand that control over vulnerable victims need not just be physical restraint. Withholding passports and identity documents, implied threats and isolation from their family and friends all work to controlling the movement and freedom of victims. As a result of the potential to make vast sums of money, trafficking has attracted the attention of many organised crime groups.

3.6 A lot of work is currently being done to identify 'hotspot' areas of business that tend to attract traffickers. The opportunities are almost endless; however, some of the specific areas of concern are around low paid and unskilled work. Apart from prostitution, businesses such as takeaways, car washes and nail bars offer organised criminals the ability to earn large sums of cash through their illegal activities and then try to legitimise it by running it through these kinds of cash only business.

3.7 Organised criminals rarely confine themselves to just one area of criminality, and we see that groups involved in exploitation may well be involved in drugs, money laundering and violence, much of which reinforces the control over the victims. Many victims of human trafficking/modern day slavery are often very reluctant to come forward through fear of their captors, mistrust of authorities or simply because they don't see themselves as victims. This mistrust in authorities is often greater for victims who have come from countries where corruption is prevalent.

3.8 Many victims were already (or have become) vulnerable because of learning difficulties, drug and alcohol dependence or mental health problems. Coupled with this are language barriers, disorientation, isolation and concerns about immigration status and it is no surprise many victims go for years without seeking official help.

3.9 The numbers of victims of Human Trafficking / Modern Day Slavery (HT/MDS) within the UK are still only estimates but what is clear is that as we become more successful in identifying victims and offenders, that demand on resources will grow significantly. This is clearly a threat in a time when most public services are reducing.

3.10 Some of the things we have put in place to address the issues are;

- We have developed a comprehensive multi-layered training/awareness program. Firstly there is the National Centre for Applied Learning Technologies (NCALT) online training package available for all our staff. We are currently adding to this by a face to face training input to all frontline staff (this is between 30minutes to an hour). This is being delivered by staff from the HT team and it is anticipated

that all staff in Lancashire Constabulary will have had this training within the next couple of months. In addition there have been a series of training days organised by the Office of Police and Crime Commissioner (OPCC), delivered by Hope for Justice but supported by Lancashire staff. This training was aimed at multi agency statutory partners. In conjunction with the National Crime Agency (NCA) and Immigration Service we developed and delivered a bespoke and more advanced training to those staff who are likely to be directly involved in dealing with Human Trafficking (HT) issues. This was attended by Police Forces from around the Region.

- We have reviewed and updated our Standard Operating Procedures (SOP) and included a document outlining to staff a Red, Amber, and Green (RAG) response to reports of HT/MDS. This has all been well documented on our internal intranet (Sherlock) for staff.
- We have put in a county wide process to capture Referrals to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and Duty to Notify (DTN) reports and also worked with the Force Registrar to put systems and checks in place to ensure National Crime Recording Standards compliance (specific counting rules have been produced nationally around HT/MDS)
- We have secured funding and a suitable site to create a debriefing base for victims of HT/MDS. I am hoping to open this facility within a few weeks. This will allow victims to be spoken to in a safe and comfortable environment and allow us to look after victims whilst obtaining the best account of their story.
- We are heavily linked into Operation Genga and utilise this process on all HT/MDS operations. A good example recently was on Op Hornsman (a National NCA led week of action) we visited numerous premises with varied partner agencies and were able to arrest offenders, save victims and deal with many offences and breaches of legislation.
- As highlighted earlier, a key threat is from Romanian OCGs who are travelling to Lancashire and making significant sums by trafficking victims into the sex industry. Members of the HT team have recently been to Romania to develop joint working and to look at how they are tackling the problem from within. We were pleased with the amount of work that is taking place over there and some of their victim focussed activities are amazing. We are just in the process of arranging a visit by a delegation from Romania which will include Police, Prosecutor and members of an Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO). Already there have been some tangible results from this shared working.
- We are linked into the NCA UKHTC (National Crime Agency UK Human Trafficking Centre) and have done much joint work with them and received some really positive feedback around how we are tackling this issue.
- We are currently working towards the National Trafficking Week in October and have launched a media strategy to keep the issue of HT in the forefront of people's minds. On the run up to the week of action, for example, we have got a weekly entry on the Sherlock Homepage around various aspects of HT. A wide range of activities have been planned across the County (also linked in with the

Region) including a Conference on the 18th October aimed at front line partner agencies. Following a visit to Romania, we have invited a delegation of Police, Prosecutors and NGOs (Non-Governmental Organisations) to improve and develop joint working. On an intelligence led basis, there will be a number of multi-agency visits to various businesses and individuals in an effort to protect potential victims, deter potential offenders and broaden awareness of the issues around HT/MDS. A targeted Crimestoppers campaign will be launched during this week.

- We are working closely with the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) both locally and nationally) to ensure a joined up approach to HT/MDS.
- Work is on-going across South and West Divisions to ensure that all the lessons of the pilot in East are shared and put into practice to ensure that we give victims the best service possible across Lancashire.
- There is a Multi-Agency Human Trafficking meeting held at Lancashire Police HQ which is chaired by the Head of the Public Protection Unit. This meeting helps to develop and drive actions around the agenda and as a result of the development of a dedicated HT team we are in the process of reviewing and possibly redesigning the HT Force Action Plan.

3.11 Some local examples highlight the scale and complexity of the problem. A Romanian couple were arrested for shoplifting in a town centre, however, when they were spoken to, it began to emerge that they were a professional couple who had been tricked into coming to the UK on the promise of legitimate work. As soon as they arrived they were told by the traffickers that they needed to go out shoplifting to cover the cost of travel and accommodation. The debt was enforced through threats of violence to them and their families. The victims were too afraid to go to court, but were offered support to return home to their families. While unable to prosecute on this occasion, we were able to start to look at the offenders. As with many organised crime groups, the group responsible did not just stick with one kind of criminality and turned their attention to anything that would make them money. When we began to look at them it became apparent that they were trafficking women into the area for purposes of sexual exploitation.

4. Implications

Financial:	
Legal:	
Equality Impact Assessment:	
Risks and Impact:	
Link to Police and Crime Plan:	This area of policing directly links with both “Protecting Vulnerable People” and “Tackling Crime and Reoffending” the victims being very vulnerable and subject to organised crime groups.

5. List of attachments / appendices

6. Background Papers