

POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER FOR LEICESTERSHIRE

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

Report of	OFFICE OF POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER (OPCC)
Subject	MODERN DAY SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING
Date	9 OCTOBER 2023
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Purpose of Report

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the panel with an update on the Forces positions with regards to Modern slavery and Human Trafficking (MSHT).
2. The report will also include an update on the contingency hotels.

Recommendation

3. The panel is invited to note the contents of this report.

Background

4. Modern Slavery and Human trafficking features in the Strategic Policing Requirement (SPR) under Serious and Organised Crime. As part of the statutory role of the PCC, to monitor performance against the SPR, the commissioner requested an update report to be produced for the corporate governance board.
5. The Force has a MSHT team which was introduced in September 2019. The team is made up of a Detective Inspector, four Detective Sergeants and a specialist team of experienced Detectives, Police Officers and Police Staff.
6. The Modern Slavery Team are all qualified specialists having attained completion of modern Slavery Investigators course ran by the College of Policing. The team are considered experts in their field and receive regular continuous professional development opportunities. Regionally, Leicestershire are the only force operating a dedicated Modern Slavery team within a wider exploitation team. This operating model is key in delivering against the forces strategic plan.
7. Referrals to the team consisting of both identified concerns and criminal investigations have increased significantly since the team's creation. The increase is considered attributable to the continuing growth in the identification and understanding of this type of criminality/vulnerability both internally, by partners and wider public.

8. Modern Slavery investigations are unique and complex. Investigations will often have an international footprint with varying layers of vulnerability to the victims. The composite vulnerability of the victim is preyed upon by perpetrators who exploit and traffic victims for a multitude of criminal gains. Victims are often too scared to report to the authorities or do not realise that they are being exploited.
9. In an average month the team will investigate approximately 35 live investigations, receive 20 referrals from the National referral mechanism (NRM) and assist in a further 15 investigations providing tactical advice.
10. The expertise of the team is shared across the force by the offer of specialist advice, specifically around the application a defence available in law to victims of exploitation and slavery. This is a key feature to preventing the criminalisation of victims.

Significant developments

11. The East Midlands Policing region has embedded two Victim Navigators through the help of Justice and Care who are a registered charity.
12. The victim navigators assist the Modern Slavery team in finding alternative accommodation for victims. The Navigators support the individual victims needs effectivity taking this responsibility from the investigation team to maximise the chances of victims being able to attend court in any subsequent criminal hearing.
13. Leicestershire Modern Slavery Team have 24/7 access to the victim navigators and have forged a strong working relationship.
14. The Modern Slavery Team have developed and maintain a key network of individuals from across multiple agencies to form a partnership in tackling Modern Slavery. The partnership includes, Immigration colleagues, Department of Work and Pensions, Crimestoppers, Barnardo's, Hope for Justice, Local Authority, Health and others. The key individuals operate in a similar way to a KIN within the neighbourhood policing model and openly share concerns, new emerging themes and help to problem solve at a multiagency level.
15. Leicestershire Police supported on Operation Tacit, an enforcement operation of co-ordinated activity around modern slavery concerns in the garment industry. Op Tacit was one of the largest multi-agency labour enforcement operations of its kind with significant partnership buy-in and resources. Operation Tacit successfully completing over 600 pro-active victim identification visits. The operation created a national blueprint for operations of this kind and provided significant partnership experience and learning that is shared regionally.
16. A problem profile was commissioned to understand that MSHT footprint within LLR. The profile as expected, demonstrated that the majority of the recorded crime occurrences were in the West End of the city. The findings and recommendations of the report are shared with key partners in order to try to meet our current MSHT strategy.

Horizon Scanning

17. The slavery of children is referred to as Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE).
18. The growth in CCE offences recorded by the organisation in the last three years is significant and is the largest area of growth within the Exploitation Team. This is likely to be as a result of educating package developed to raise the profile of CCE amongst colleagues and other professionals regarding the indicators to be aware of.
19. Organised Immigration Crime (OIC) is often an enabler for MSHT crime. There are a number of hotels across LLR that are utilised for housing asylum seekers. This has resulted in strong community engagement at a local policing level. Whilst the Force are cognisant of the potential Links to MSHT there is no specific intelligence or information that asylum seekers in LLR are actively being targeted by organised crime groups.
20. Following a discussion with the Force in CGB in September the Force will be presenting a briefing paper to the PCC that will propose a wider approach utilising best practice from other forces, detailing how the partnership can work as a collective to best use national and local intelligence to work together to better identify, target and disrupt these offences taking place.

Implications

- Finance: No financial implications
- Legal: The PCC has a statutory duty to monitor the force performance in relation to the SPR.
- Equality Impact Assessment: Completed as a part of the problem profile.
- Risks and Impact: None

List of Attachments / Appendices

None

Persons to Contact

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