

London Modern Slavery Partnership Board **Wednesday 13 February 2019**

Note and actions

Attendees:

- Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC)
- Metropolitan Police Service (MPS)
- Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)
- Office of the Director of Labour Market Enforcement (DLME)
- DLME
- Caritas Bakhita House
- FLEX
- ADASS, LB Lewisham
- SIA
- Victim Support
- Home Office
- ECPAT UK
- HESTIA
- Shiva
- Office of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner
- Human Trafficking Foundation

Note

Item 1 – Introduction and update on actions

MOPAC opened the meeting and outlined the group will be trialling a new style of meeting. This involves splitting into two groups to draw out key ideas, challenges and solutions.

Item 2 – Housing and Rough Sleeping

The Human Trafficking Foundation (HTF) outlined the issues and challenges.

Issues outlined included the inconsistency in support for different partners, lack of funding for Local Authorities (LA). Less than one quarter of victims within the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) are re-housed and there are concerns regarding outreach support. There is cross support for this issue.

Homelessness typical occurs within specific groups including young people, Eastern European and can be linked to rogue landlords.

There is also a need for LAs to fund training for staff to identify the signs of modern slavery, however it is difficult to encourage boroughs to fund suitable training courses.

Enforcement can also present issues, specifically relating to pro-active raids. In addition, it is recognised that police officers should SPOCs to address specific concerns within Boroughs and it is particularly important to encourage multi agency partnership working.

HTF also discussed the current picture with regards to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). Concerns include that only 20% – 25% of victims are housed and victims can be moved to unfamiliar areas. Asylum accommodation can also be dangerous and unsuitable for families.

Items 3 and 4 – Exercise: brainstorm, discuss and pitch a solution

The board split into two groups to each focus on rough sleeping and housing.

Group 1: Rough sleeping

Insights:

- Vulnerability
 - Substance
 - Immigration – reluctance to report
 - Learning difference
 - Chaotic family situations
 - Criminality
 - Culture and shame
 - Sexual assault
 - Language barriers
 - Do anything including accepting exploitation

Who to contact:

- Soup kitchens
- Need to spot signs of exploiters recruiting from places where authorities or third sector come into contact victims.
- Anti-social behaviour – enforcement response and in HMs (important to note that there is a lack of trust with authorities)
- NGOs including rough sleeping charities, NHS projects, GLAA, NPCC

Key issues:

- Immigration status is still an issue when victims are claiming for appropriate accommodation
- No recourse to public funds
- Housing is often unsuitable with a risk of being re-trafficked
- Traffickers know where safe houses are located
- Challenges around children and safeguarding
- Lack of respect for migrate domestic workers
- Need to look at housing in terms of other services
- Lack of framework and policy guidance
- Victims rely on someone lobbying on their behalf, there may be language barriers

Campaign should focus on:

1. Human centred approach
2. Bring clarity for councils
3. Prevent immigration status from impacting on support
4. Find alternative accommodation post NRM
5. Improve data analysis and knowledge between housing and modern slavery in London

Communicate:

- Campaign aimed at councils
- Train council staff responsibly
- National guidance with legal responsibilities highlighted
- More resources are needed
- Invite Salvation Army to join this group

Convene:

- Look to overseas partners for best practice
- Stakeholder mapping
- Standardised reporting
- Share best practice
- Communicate research

Deliver:

- Identify relevant data sources
- Training for councils

- Create a roadmap which fills in key gaps, addresses confusion and clarifies responsibilities

Further actions:

- The MPS could offer training to housing officers via ADASS and London Councils
- The Mayor could lobby on immigration status support, lobby for more resources for Local Authorities, identify pilot areas, visit take part in 'a day in the life of'
- Local Authorities could engage with London Councils group, new communications distribution channel through Local Authorities (SPOCs), elevate data collection.
- NGOs could take part in a 'day of the life'

Group 2: Homelessness

Campaign should focus on:

1. How might we coordinate a multi-agency approach?
2. How might we target and communicate with partners at all levels to disseminate information around homelessness and safeguarding duties?
3. How might we lobby government for additional funding or support?
4. How might we find funding to support statutory organisations?

Deliver:

- Allow victims to work regardless of their status
- Multi-agency operations
- The Mayor to create a pilot to support projects for male victims post NRM

Convene:

- Establish local joint working arrangements between housing authorities, NRM support providers and homelessness charities.
- Use arguments including cost of JR, responsibilities under Homelessness Reduction Act, Homelessness Care of Conduct and Care Act.
- Create protocols between NGOs, GLAA and councils
- Facilitate a multitasking unit to approach the issue

Communicate:

- Get housing and modern slavery leads to lobby for rights of victims
- Communicate that victims of modern slavery are vulnerable under the Homelessness Reduction Act
- Innovative housing solutions including shared live, plus model that provide support and housing for a reduced cost.
- Lobby government for funding for councils
- Lobby government to extend the Modern Slavery Act to be more victim focused
- Develop national and local communications campaigns to raise awareness, inform victims about the available services and agencies, connect key partners.
- Lobby for funding for additional services e.g. mental health, social care

Item 5 – Next area of work for the board – hospitality

The Shiva Foundation outlined the issues faced by the hospitality sector, particularly related to labour exploitation and the structure of the industry as a key risk.

Item 5 – Any other business

There was no other business