

LEICESTERSHIRE SAFER COMMUNITIES STRATEGY BOARD

20TH MARCH 2020

**LSCSB UPDATE: LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND
MODERN SLAVERY ACTION GROUP**

Background

1. The Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland Modern Slavery Action group (LLRMSAG) commenced in June 2018 bringing together different agencies and organisations (both governmental and non-governmental agencies including the private sector) committed to sharing intelligence and working collaboratively to reduce the prevalence of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in Leicester, Leicestershire and Rutland (LLR).
2. The LLRMSAG has representatives from 37 public, private and third sector organisations, including Leicestershire Police, De Montfort University (DMU), the Office of the Police Crime Commissioner, Local Authorities, HM Revenue and Customs, Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA), Government Agencies Intelligence Network, and leading non-governmental organisations such as Unseen, Stop the Traffik and Barnardo's.
3. The LLRMSAG meets on the first Wednesday of every month, coordinated by the DMU lecturer Laura Pajón and chaired by Detective Inspector Jen Heggs (Leicestershire Police) of the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking team.
4. The following gaps were noted when the partnership was set up:
 - a. Lack of awareness of Modern Slavery by members of the public;
 - b. Lack of awareness and understanding at the professional level;
 - c. Lack of a victim safeguarding pathway;
 - d. Lack of modern slavery data and problem profile.
5. Strategic objectives, Terms of Reference and a partnership delivery plan have now been established, providing focus and vision for the LLRMSAG.

Notable developments and challenges:

Past Year

6. There has been a significant amount of work delivered by the LLRMSAG during the past 12 months, including:

- Webpage for easy access to information and guidance (aimed at professionals and the general public):
<https://llrmodernslaveryactiongroup.our.dmu.ac.uk>
- #knowthesigns #stopmodernslavery awareness-raising campaign launched in June 2019.
- Delivery of modern slavery intensification week.
- Development of a basic schools training package.
- Workshops on Labour exploitation.
- Briefing sessions delivered to more than 200 professionals from different agencies (i.e. local authorities, fire and rescue service, NHS, etc.)
 - Briefings have been delivered by Leicestershire Police or the coordinator of the partnership.
 - Different partner members have led briefing sessions within their own organisations/community (e.g. job centred, police, NHS, faith community).
- Establishing a training tasking group for the development of training packages for delivery to relevant agencies.
- Conducted multi-agency proactive activities in identified risk areas within LLR.
- Joint enforcement operations.

Outputs

7. Some key outputs since the implementation of the partnership:
 - Since the launch of the LLRMSAG webpage in October 2019, the webpage has attracted so far 556 views.
 - Evaluation of the training shows an increase in the level of understanding of HT aspects.
 - Reports from the MS helpline indicate an increase in the number of victims identified, but not an increase in the total number of cases identified. Before the implementation of the partnership, the MS helpline identified 34 cases of MS and 87 victims of trafficking (i.e. the year 2017 and Q1 and Q2 year 2018). After the implementation of the partnership, 33 cases have been identified and 117 victims of trafficking (i.e. Q3 and Q4 year 2018 and the year 2019). The lack of increase in the number of cases identified suggests a need for further awareness raising on the MS helpline.
 - An update on data from Leicestershire police on MS crimes and incidents recorded will be provided during the meeting.

Coming Year

8. There are ongoing initiatives and actions taken, which aim to see the results within the coming year:
 - Training tasking group:
 - The group has undertaken a large amount of research around the different material on MS including presentations, leaflets, downloadable toolkits, guidance etc. The aims are to create presentations for the voluntary

sector, statutory and non-statutory agencies and first responders. Once created these will be sent for review to the LLRMSAG. If agreed, the objective will be to deliver them to agencies, businesses, authorities etc. so that knowledge and training can be shared as well as awareness of the LLRMSAG raised.

- Awareness-raising voluntary sector and faith group:
 - A partnership collaboration with Voluntary Action Leicestershire and the GLAA has been established to pilot a Workshop on awareness-raising to voluntary sectors leads aiming to provide guidance and signposting for the support of victims within the community and voluntary sector. The work aims to be nationally disseminated.
 - A working group to engage with faith groups has been set up to raise awareness and promote identification/reporting of victims of trafficking.
- Efforts have been focused on increasing links with the business sector, in particular retailers.

Key issues for partnership working or affecting partners

9. There are challenges that are hindering the productivity of the group including;
 - Although attendance at the meeting is good, and there is appropriate participation by all, it has become apparent, however, that representation at the meeting by Law Enforcement Agencies and Non-government organisations is not at the right level, demonstrated by attendees being unable to make decisions or take away workstreams.
 - Representatives from other organisations are unable to take away work streams from the delivery plan nor make decisions on behalf of their organisation; the police and the LLRMSAG coordinator are currently the only representatives with any workstreams.
 - Representation from the Local Authorities is poor. Some representatives attend but do not appear to share the information within the organisations.
 - The only source of funding currently available to the group is from the Leicestershire police, DMU and the OPCC. The group has recently had to turn down awareness-raising events due to funding issues.
 - The demands for training across the organisation has increased. However, there is a current lack of capability to deliver all the requests.
 - Intelligence and information sharing is inconsistent and not expeditious. Information sharing may cause short and long term barriers.
 - The lack of a safehouse, and a safeguarding-pathway in place, difficult the safeguarding of victim of trafficking.

Aspirations/ initiatives

10. In view of the challenges, the coordinator and chair of the partnership (in agreement with the rest of the partners) propose the following initiatives to improve the effectiveness of the partnership (some of them have already been proposed to the Vulnerability Executive Group):
- Establishment of a strategic governance group to lead on objectives and ensure strategic buy-in, allocation of responsibilities within the delivery plan, and funding.
 - Allocation of Modern Slavery leads for each organisation to ensure information flow, clear lines of communication and delivery of LLRMSAG training.
 - Establishing a Modern Slavery MARAC for quick reporting of cases and effective joint operation for prosecution and safeguarding.
 - Exploration of funding opportunities for a safe-house for victims.
 - Allocation of clear, direct and established sources for funding.
 - Development of a Modern Slavery problem profile for the LLR area.

Issues in local areas

11. The Garment industry is a risk area of exploitation in Leicester. Currently, the partnership lack the resources, capability, and strategic leadership to propose a solid plan to target the issue effectively.

Recommendations for the Board

12. We ask the board to
- (a) Acknowledge the progress made so far in awareness-raising and joint operations, considering the challenges faced;
 - (b) Support the partnership in the allocation of Modern Slavery leads in CSPs and other relevant organisations;
 - (c) Support the partnership in the identification of sources for funding for a safe house for victims of trafficking;
 - (d) Assist the LLRMSAG in the development (and implementation) of a safeguarding pathway;
 - (e) Support the partnership on the identification of funding opportunities for awareness raising actions and other relevant initiatives, which may link with the board's safeguarding remit;
 - (f) Assist the partnership in the development of a Modern Slavery profile for LLR.

Person to contact

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