

CELG(4) HT3

National Assembly for Wales

Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee

Inquiry into: Human Trafficking

Response from: Jeff Farrar, Chief Constable, Gwent Police Wales



Submission to the Communities, Equality and Local Government Committee on by Jeff Farrar, Chief Constable, Gwent Police Wales Policing Lead for Human Trafficking - 13 November 2013

1. Background

- 1.1** Modern slavery or human trafficking has become one of the most lucrative areas for illicit criminal activity, worth billions of pounds to organised groups. It is estimated that there are over 20 million current victims of human trafficking across the globe, with around 2.5 million people actively being trafficked or smuggled at any one moment. Often the crime is hidden from public view and victims are reluctant to approach the police due to the levels of control and fear placed on them.
- 1.2** Dealing with human trafficking requires coordinated action across the Governments and Assemblies of the UK. In Wales, the Welsh Government has legislative competence for a number of policy areas integral to combatting human trafficking, in particular the fields of communities, child protection and healthcare.
- 1.3** In response to numerous reports, including those by Joyce Watson ('Knowing No Boundaries – Local Solutions to International Crime', 2008), and by SOLACE (Human trafficking report, 2009) there were a number of measures introduced in Wales. These developments have been bolstered by the appointment of an Antihuman Trafficking Coordinator (AHTC) who aims to make Wales a hostile place for human trafficking to exist and to co-ordinate the best possible support for victims.
- 1.3** On 4 April 2011 Bob Tooby was appointed as the first Anti Human Trafficking Coordinator for Wales with the intention of creating an environment in Wales that was hostile for Human Traffickers.
- 1.4** He was given three key objectives - to scope and inform key agencies of the scale, types and locations of Human Trafficking in Wales and their specific localities, to improve the sharing of

intelligence and recording of incidents in Wales and to create a route map for service providers to know how to respond to occurrences of Human Trafficking. Additionally, he was asked to ensure key agencies were aware of developing intelligence in readiness for the 2012 Olympics.

- 1.5 The post holder was initially employed by Gwent Police but the current post holder, Steve Chapman, is now funded by Welsh Government. I initially line managed the Co-ordinator but this responsibility has now passed to the Welsh Government.

2. Key Responsibilities of the Co-ordinator

2.1 Objective 1-

To scope and inform key agencies of the scale and type(s) and location of Human Trafficking in Wales and in their specific localities.

Outcome

- 2.2 Networks were established across Wales and the UK to scope where Human Trafficking is occurring.
- 2.3 Over 70 presentations and additional meetings were held with UK & Welsh stakeholders to raise awareness and encourage compliance with national policies, processes & guidance.
- 2.4 Over 1500 public service providers across Wales were given greater understanding and awareness of how Human Trafficking manifests itself in their locality.
- 2.5 Networks were established with over 80 organisations likely to encounter victims or offenders. This resulted in greater preparedness and consistency of response.
- 2.6 Evidence emerged of greater use and compliance with national policies, processes & guidance, as evidenced by numerous interventions with victims and perpetrators across Wales.

2.7 Objective 2-

Improve the sharing of intelligence and recording of incidents in Wales

Outcome

- 2.8 Cross sector engagement was undertaken that included:
- 2.9 Meetings with all 4 police force intelligence leads, UKHTC, UKBA and gang masters licensing agency to discuss joint approaches on intelligence sharing.
- 2.10 UK Intelligence updates were shared across the region.

- 2.11 UK government guidance on ownership and responsibilities was distributed to relevant agencies.
- 2.12 Intelligence was shared across agencies to ensure a more informed and a joined up approach was taken to prevention, intervention and victim support.
- 2.13 UKHTC statistics were updated and targeted on specific areas in Wales
- 2.14 The coordinators intervention triggered action and intervention in a number of cases including;
 - Gwent – multi victim child exploitation;
 - Swansea- Nail bars/ forced labour;
 - Ports – intervention planned to tackle the movement of
 - Trafficked Individuals in line with national best practice;
 - Cardiff – 14 victims were identified and appropriate support and intervention was actioned.

2.15 **Objective 3-**

Create a route map for service providers to know how to respond to occurrences of Human Trafficking

Outcome

- 2.16 All public sector providers were consulted for existing procedures and a route map was prepared for agencies to respond to victims and perpetrators where Human Trafficking is apparent.
- 2.17 All UK investigative agencies were visited to agree the route map.
- 2.18 The compilation of the map identified a number of existing gaps in process and procedure that were highlighted and flagged up to the relevant agency.
- 2.19 The route map was distributed widely across Wales.
- 2.20 Posters and leaflets were prepared to advertise and support this process.
- 2.21 Multi lingual options were produced and a guide was produced for the CPS.
- 2.22 CPS staff were provided with awareness training
- 2.23 Police Investigator training was triggered as part of this process as it was an identified gap and resulted in the first UK training for investigators being delivered by South Wales Police.
- 2.24 Key agencies were provided with a useful and informative guide for how to deal with Human Trafficking if they encounter it.
- 2.25 The introduction of training for Investigators equipped them with greater knowledge and understanding on the most appropriate approach to take when Human Trafficking becomes apparent.

- 2.26** This resulted in both victims and perpetrators encountering a more professional, consistent and joined up service.

3 Recent Developments

The accompanying report provided to the Committee by the current Co-ordinator, Steve Chapman, provides a comprehensive commentary on his recent achievements. The highlights are summarised below.

- 3.1** A Wales Anti Human trafficking Leadership Group has been established to provide Strategic Leadership. This group is currently working with partners across Wales to develop a more accurate picture of the scale of human trafficking in Wales.
- 3.2** Regional Human Trafficking Consultation Forums have been established, or are being established, across Wales. They incorporate members from the Police, Health Boards, other relevant partner agencies as well as Welsh Govt departments.
- 3.3** Referrals have subsequently been made to the police by Health Providers.
- 3.4** A training programme has been developed for Senior Investigating Officers that has been recognised as 'Good practice' by the Association of Chief Police Officers.
- 3.5** All four Welsh Police Forces are involved in 'Operation Eagle', which aims to improve the response to human trafficking. The Co-ordinator acts as the Single Point of Contact within each force.
- 3.6** The first Human Trafficking Multi Agency Risk Assessment Conference has taken place and following positive feedback, this process will be used for all future cases involving potential victims of human trafficking.

5 Questions Posed by the Committee

- 5.1 The Role of the Anti-Human Trafficking Co-ordinator, including its effectiveness and achievements so far.**

This has been addressed by the body of this report

- 5.2 The effectiveness of multi-agency working between UK and Welsh Government departments and other bodies such as health boards and the police.**

5.3 The Welsh Coordinator has put Wales firmly on the UK map by gaining acceptance on numerous UK Human Trafficking Boards, such as the UK Threat Reduction Board and the UK Human Trafficking Strategy Board. This has ensured that we remain aware of activities across the UK and Ireland as well as being included in activity across Europe and the rest of the world.

5.4 As stated in this report, there is now a greater degree of partnership working through the Strategic Leadership group. The Police, Health boards and Government departments are

represented on this group and on the various local Forums that have been established throughout Wales. At an Operational level, referrals have been made to the Police from Health Boards concerned about individuals who they believed at risk from trafficking.

- 5.5** The Inter-Departmental Ministerial Group co-ordinates the UK's efforts to combat human trafficking. The Group is chaired by the Home Office Minister for Security and comprises Ministers from other Whitehall Government Departments, the Wales Office, the Scotland Office, the Scottish Government, the Northern Ireland Executive and the Welsh Government. The Welsh Government is represented by the Minister for Local Government and the Coordinator. There are also regular meetings between the Coordinator and relevant Government departments from across the UK.
- 5.6** Closer collaboration is now in place to target harden entry points for people who are being trafficked. The Coordinator has worked closely with the UKBA and the Welsh Extremist and Counter Terrorist Unit (WECTU) to highlight Human Trafficking Intelligence as well as recommending covert and overt operations that have since been implemented to strengthen the already strong Welsh activity around our ports.
- 5.7** Cross Sector Intelligence Sharing is in place in Gwent, Cardiff, Pembrokeshire and Wrexham amongst others. Additionally, the Coordinator has worked closely with UK Human Agencies as well as visiting over 80 organisations across Wales and the UK to establish the holistic Welsh and UK picture. He has since provided over 70 presentations across Wales to Local Authorities, Health Trusts, the Police and Criminal Justice Partners along with a wealth of charities and non-government organisations. This training would include around 2,500 partners who now understand what to look for and how to respond.
- 5.8** The Coordinator has worked closely with the UKBA and the Welsh Extremist and Counter Terrorist Unit (WECTU) to highlight Human Trafficking Intelligence as well as recommending covert and overt operations that have since been implemented to strengthen the already strong Welsh activity around our ports.
- 5.9** **The Role of Local Authorities in identification and awareness raising.**
- 5.10** Across Wales, Local Authorities play an active role, as demonstrated by the Chief Executive of Denbighshire, Mohammed Mehmet taking the lead as the PSLG lead, cascading good practice and promoting the agenda across the Country.
- 5.11** Local Authorities are enabling their staff to participate in a training package delivered by the Coordinator to raise awareness and explain how and where they should refer incidents or concerns.
- 5.12** Local Authorities are engaging in the Strategic Leadership Board and in the local forums across Wales.
- 5.13** **How the recommendations of the Council of Europe 'GRETA' report and the 2009 SOLACE report on human trafficking are being taken forward and plans for future work.**

- 5.14** The SOLACE report addressed the role of Local Authorities in addressing human trafficking. As described above, Local Authorities are engaging with their partners to further the agenda in Wales. Mohammed Mehmet's role includes raising awareness of the reports throughout the Local Authorities.
- 5.15** The Wales Migration Partnership document (Uncharted Territory: Violence against asylum-seeking, refugee and migrant women and girls, 2013) seeks to further the identification and support of victims across local authorities and partnerships in the future.
- 5.16** A campaign of leaflets and posters has been launched to advise people who to contact to provide victim support and action to be taken against traffickers.
- 5.17** The GRETA Report ('Concerning the implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings by the United Kingdom, 2012') has led to the building of partnerships and structures across Wales to further the aims of the report. The Co-ordinator will continue to work to this agenda and build on his success.

6 **Conclusion**

- 6.1** There remains strong cross party political support & interest in Human Trafficking and the Coordinators role, as well as considerable support and interest from all public service providers in Wales.
- 6.2** The work of the coordinator has attracted positive high level attention outside Wales and there has been considerable media and academic interest and requests for involvement.
- 6.3** There have been regular and positive engagements with the Home Office and other Whitehall Departments There has been excellent engagement with and from key agencies and awareness raising sessions have been well attended.
- 6.4** The National and local coordinators have made effective use of existing good practice in well developed areas such as domestic abuse and community cohesion to formulate their approaches.
- 6.5** There has been excellent engagement with and from key agencies and awareness about the issue has improved.
- 6.6** Partnership working across Wales is now more co-ordinated and effective.
- 6.7** Awareness of the problem across Wales has been successfully raised.