

## **Gangmaster Licensing - Memorandum of Understanding**

### **Purpose**

1. The purpose of the document is to update CSMP Board members on the development of a memorandum of understanding which the Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) seeks to progress with local authorities.

### **Recommendations**

2. Members of the CSMP Board are asked to:
  - i. Note the development of the Memorandum of Understanding, which has also been endorsed by the COSLA Community Wellbeing and Safety Executive Group and;
  - ii. Local authority representatives are asked to support GLA to liaise with and identify opportunities for working in partnership with local authorities.

### **Background**

3. The GLA regulates those who supply labour or use workers to provide services in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, shellfish gathering and food processing and packaging. Their purpose is to safeguard the welfare and interests of workers whilst ensuring Labour Providers operate within the law.
4. In recent years, Scotland has attracted a large number of migrant workers to many industries, primarily in agriculture, horticulture, food and drinks industry, processing and packaging. These workers bring clear benefits to the economy and communities. However, Local Authorities and regional stakeholders have expressed serious concerns about the potential exploitation of these workers.
5. Migrants can be particularly vulnerable to exploitation on either a small or large scale. Unfortunately, some migrants become the victim of serious organised crime, particularly labour exploitation and issues relating to accommodation. These crimes are often linked to other forms of serious organised crime, including drugs trafficking, which have negative impacts upon local communities as well as upon the individuals affected.
6. The GLA and Local Government Regulation (formerly LACORS) are currently in discussions on the development of an overarching Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) which will aim to establish the principles of closer joint working and information sharing between the GLA and Local Authorities to assist in tackling issues of exploitation and serious organised crime.
7. The GLA has recently recruited a number of new staff as Community Enforcement Officers. A key part of their role is to liaise with local authorities within their individual operational areas, to discuss signing up to the forthcoming MOU, and to identify business areas where joint working and information sharing can be of mutual benefit to the aims of both organisations, particularly in respect of:
  - Environmental Health
  - Housing

- Trading standards

## **Memorandum of Understanding Between GLA and Local Authorities**

8. The intention of a Memorandum of Understanding is to aim to achieve a common understanding and set of standards allowing the GLA and local authorities to share information to support strategic objectives and operational remits, to provide operational assistance to each other, and to conduct joint, or multi-agency operations. The scope of joint working could range from major operations, to simple operational matters such as informal agreement for a joint visit to a House in Multiple Occupation (HMO).
9. There was a discussion about the GLA at the recent COSLA Regulatory Forum meeting and it was agreed that members of the various professional organisations would meet with Ian Japp to develop the MOU.

## **Conclusion**

10. Members are asked to note the contents of this report and CSMP will update the Board with the discussions that have taken place around the MOU.

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