

Human Trafficking and Exploitation

Policy Development

To inform the Board of the publication and implications of the Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy and the current awareness raising campaign.

Summary and Recommendations

The Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy was laid before Parliament in May 2017. There will be ongoing work in this area over the next year as the Scottish Government and partners take forward the actions identified in the Strategy.

The Board is invited to:

- i. Consider and comment on the Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy;
- ii. Identify any current or additional actions local authorities are taking which will contribute to the Strategy;
- iii. Support the awareness raising campaign currently live and in the future.

References

Previous reports covering human trafficking and exploitation:

- Community Well-Being Executive Group December 2016 – Human Trafficking – Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy

Mirren Kelly
Policy Manager
mirren@cosla.gov.uk
0131 474 9276

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Policy Development

1. In May 2017, following a public consultation, the Scottish Government laid the [Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy](#) before Parliament. The Strategy sets out the approach and commitment of Scottish Government to tackling human trafficking by supporting and protecting victims, disrupting the activities of perpetrators and addressing the conditions which foster trafficking, both in Scotland and elsewhere.
2. As part of the Strategy COSLA is seeking to support Scottish local authorities in developing collaborative approaches to contribute to the Strategy. COSLA also Chairs 'Action Area One' within the Strategy. This focuses on identifying and supporting victims of trafficking and exploitation.

Current COSLA Position

3. COSLA and local government have long been committed to tackling human trafficking and exploitation in communities. Human trafficking and exploitation are complex and hidden crimes, as well as abuses of human rights and dignity. They are not only international issues, nor are they confined to our larger towns and cities, but can and do affect communities all over Scotland. The many purposes for which people are exploited – including commercial sexual exploitation, labour exploitation, criminal exploitation (for example benefit fraud and forced drugs cultivation), domestic servitude, sham marriages and organ trafficking – are continually evolving.
4. The draft was written collaboratively with COSLA and reflected the comments made by the Executive Group during the consultation process. The draft of the Strategy was therefore endorsed by the previous Community and Wellbeing Spokesperson in March 2017 at the meeting of the Strategic Oversight Group.
5. COSLA has supported the awareness raising campaign and will continue to contribute to this agenda.

What is changing?

6. The Strategy outlines three key action areas and an ambitious action plan to support victims, disrupt perpetrators and tackle the causes of trafficking and exploitation. Local authorities should consider the Strategy and how they can contribute to raising awareness and tackling human trafficking and exploitation in their areas.
7. On 29 August the Scottish Government launched an awareness campaign on human trafficking and exploitation. This will be continuing, including adverts on STV, until the end of September and members of the Board are encouraged to get involved. Anti-Slavery Week begins on 18 October and this will be another opportunity to raise awareness.
8. In addition, following the consultation the Scottish Government decided to increase the period for which Ministers must secure support for adult victims of trafficking from 45 to 90 days. This will continue to be provided by Migrant Help and TARA.

9. The Human Trafficking and Exploitation (Scotland) Act 2015 also includes a provision placing a duty to notify Police Scotland of a person who is, or appears to be, a victim of trafficking. It is anticipated that the Scottish Government will seek to commence this at the end of 2017/early 2018. COSLA is working with local authorities and the Scottish Government to ensure that it is not a significant burden and is a smooth process, a pilot is currently being developed with the City of Edinburgh Council.
10. Police Scotland in conjunction with COSLA through Action Area One are developing an e-learning module which is intended for all public authority staff to raise awareness on the signs of trafficking and exploitation.

Proposed COSLA Position and Next Steps

11. COSLA continues to support local authorities in contributing to this agenda. Local authorities should consider the Strategy and ensure that they have processes in place for identifying and supporting victims. Once the e-learning module is finalised, local authorities will be able to consider how they can make this training available to staff.
12. COSLA will continue to work with the Scottish Government to ensure that the duty to notify works within current local authority processes and procedures and is in line with data protection requirements.
13. The Board is asked to identify any areas of good practice, training or initiatives which already exist in this area. Additionally the Board is asked to discuss where they would like to see additional work and support from COSLA to contribute to this agenda in their areas.

Summary and Recommendations

14. The Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy was laid before Parliament in May 2017. There will be ongoing work in this area over the next year as the Scottish Government and partners take forward the actions identified in the Strategy.
15. The Board is invited to:
 - i. Consider and comment on the Trafficking and Exploitation Strategy;
 - ii. Identify any current or additional actions local authorities are taking which will contribute to the Strategy;
 - iii. Support the awareness raising campaign currently live and in the future.

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