

Introduction

Trafficking in people is a serious crime and violation of human rights. A National Crime Agency study indicated that in 2012 there were 2255 potential victims of trafficking in the UK, with the most prevalent country of origin for victims being Romania, Poland, Nigeria, Vietnam and Hungary. Trafficking can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and domestic servitude. In the West Midlands and in the UK as a whole, efforts to tackle these problems have met with limited success. This may be due to a lack of understanding and resources from the statutory agencies, limited public understanding of the problems, and a failure to recognise trafficked people when they are encountered.

Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) is the sexual abuse of a child or young person aged under 18 by an adult who involves them in inappropriate sexual activities either with themselves or another person. CSE is to a large extent a hidden problem and the full extent is unknown. Media interest in high profile cases and the work of campaigners has increased public awareness, but these horrible crimes continue and children and young people are still being abused.

The Summit focused upon these dreadful crimes, hearing from a series of expert speakers and seeking an improved and new response for the West Midlands.

145 people attended and heard from a variety of well-respected speakers as well as taking part in two Panel discussions. A number of themes became apparent during the course of the day and these have been used to draw together the action plan at the end of this report.

Copies of some of the presentations can be seen on the Commissioner's website (www.westmidlandspcc.gov.uk).

Purpose of the Summit

The Summit was opportunity to make some real changes in the West Midlands and improve the response and help for some of the most vulnerable people. The Summit sought to address the following:

- How can partners come together to do more on prevention and early intervention?
- How can communities do more to flag up the issues?
- How can we improve our collective understanding of the problems and the issues?

- Future strategic planning for all the statutory agencies including West Midlands Police.
- The role and perspective of the voluntary sector and its interface with the statutory agencies

Police and Crime Commissioner, Bob Jones

The most important factor for all the agencies is the need to work together to stop the suffering of children and people being trafficked, and to do this, we need to engage both statutory and voluntary partners. The message continues to be that even now partners are not joining up well enough, and victims are still falling between the cracks.

The day offered an opportunity to hear from a series of expert speakers on both Human Trafficking and Child Sexual Exploitation. This would be followed by discussions and contributions from the floor and from the speakers, all leading towards the development of a meaningful action plan for the West Midlands.

The Commissioner was pleased to announce that Mr Stephen Rimmer has been appointed as the region's strategic leader on action against the sexual exploitation of children and other vulnerable people. The position is a two year secondment and involves developing joint working to tackle CSE by seven local authorities, West Midlands Police, the criminal justice system and the voluntary sector. Mr Rimmer will be based at Birmingham City Council. This significant appointment should mean that the West Midlands has the resources to make real improvements to how it tackles CSE.

The Commissioner offered a big thanks to those who have helped organise the event, in particular Mr Tom Duffin, and also Dr Martin Wright and Wolverhampton University for their generosity in providing the use of the Auditorium and facilities of the Wolverhampton Science Park.

Superintendent Tim Bacon, West Midlands Police (WMP)

Supt Bacon is lead for WMP on Child Sexual Exploitation and also on Human Trafficking. It is very positive that so many agencies are all together in the room, and Supt Bacon took the opportunity to outline the work undertaken by WMP.

Over recent months WMP has worked with statutory partners to examine the structures and processes in place to work together on CSE. Whilst there is a massive amount of good practice in the West Midlands, with lots of good work and some very well informed people amongst the practitioners, WMP recognises that there is more that can be done. Recent developments include the appointment of a full time inspector, Jayne Goodridge to work on CSE at Force level, and the Force has also established a community reference group on CSE which has now met for the first time.

We all know how important partnerships are and there are some really good strategies in place such as around road policing that will help prevent CSE.

A high priority is tackling offenders and taking action against them. WMP has identified 218 individuals who haven't actually been convicted and will now take action against them.

With regard to human trafficking WMP continues to develop its strategy. The work of the third sector is hugely important in this, particularly in supporting victims.

So now what? We have to improve our victim focus and our child focus. We cannot allow victims to be invisible, and we must make sure that our processes are meeting their needs. WMP needs to make sure that its five teams are coordinated effectively and must also develop the way it uses and respects the expertise of our partners who often have more knowledge and expertise. Police and partners have to improve the early identification and referral of potential victims. For example, in some cases where child are known to have been abused, people have assumed they were in a consensual relationship. Another example is workers who are being exploited but who will not complain because they are afraid of being deported.

Emma Jackson - A Survivor's Story

Emma (a pseudonym) is now 24 years of age but was a victim from the age of 12. Emma's story started when she went to a shopping centre with friends at weekends. Lack of confidence and low self esteem are very often a factor for teenagers and children who are groomed but Emma is from a loving and attentive family and was not vulnerable in any unusual way. The initial approaches were from young boys, not adults, but as time went on she was introduced to older teenagers and then adult men. During the time she was being abused, Emma believed she was having a fantastic time but it was also the worst time of her life, all at the same time. The exploitation went on until Emma was 15. Since then a number of grown women have come forward with the same allegations against the same men and the police are investigating. It was easier to say yes than to say no - if victims try to say no they are likely to be detained and raped, and to say yes is often the quickest way to escape the situation. There was no education for young girls on how to avoid sexual exploitation-the perpetrators were smartly dressed, had nice cars and were nice looking - and this was never warned against.

Professionals were no help, they gave Emma condoms and warned her to avoid getting pregnant but she was not helped to escape the abuse. Their approach made Emma feel that what was happening to her was quite normal but in fact it wasn't - she was being exploited. If she had told someone that a family member was regularly raping her but then giving her drink and drugs, professionals would have helped and immediately removed her from the situation, but in the case of CSE there was no professional help. In the end her parents removed her to another country to try and rescue her. This was not the end of Emma's problems as the psychological damage and the breakdown of trust with her parents took many years to repair.

Since then life has turned around, Emma was offered a publishing deal for her story and has spoken at various events.

The important things are education and prevention. Once a child has been raped it is too late. It is not acceptable in this country in this day and age that children are being tortured and that men are acting out their sexual fantasies on children. It is not normal and we should not accept it.

Jim Gamble, CEO Ineqe Safe and Secure

Jim works in business and for a number of charities and is also Independent Chair of the Hackney Safeguarding Children Board.

Jim started off with some context - Henry Heeler lived in Pimlico. His premises were raided and he had 132 000 photographic images of children being abused, and that was in 1874!

All cases have two things in common: people and technology. It is unhelpful to label people eg 'paedophile rings', because people don't fit the stereotypical images.

We have to remember that people are unpredictable and also that people tell lies. CSE is about sex, it is not about love.

Perpetrators almost always take photographs. They are collectors. This is important and we are not capitalising on this fact enough.

How can we do more on early intervention and prevention? The lessons now are the same as they were in the 1940s, so why haven't we moved on? Serious case reviews continually repeat the same issues. Inter-organisational rivalry and pettiness is shameful.

Organisational pride takes priority and we are not victim-centred. We have now moved to a point where we arrest perpetrators in cities but we have not halted the international trade in human traffic.

Another difficult question is the balance between social workers and the voluntary sector. At serious case reviews and at the point of intervention, there should be a social worker and this is important. Voluntary advocates should be listened to, but the frontline work should be done by social workers.

We must also avoid racial stereotyping and remember that the vast majority of perpetrators are white men.

Some London boroughs have used secure accommodation for victims and on occasion that can be appropriate because victims are often heavily seduced and indoctrinated. Sometimes this may be the intelligent and focused way to help victims.

Sometimes offenders are given a caution if their offence is to have photographs and it is considered to be a consensual relationship. This misses an early signal and early opportunity for intervention, as if charged they could be placed on the sex offenders register, and their behaviour monitored.

Co-location is critical. Partners having meetings but then going their separate ways is not the same thing. Money should be invested in co-located centres. Collaboration is better than competition.

Licensing and design has a big role to play, signs in hotels and taxis, public information and very early intervention and education are needed. Education needs to use contemporary cases. Children need to be empowered to help themselves and each other, using discussions rather than lectures. There is free online training on CSE that is easy to use. It can be viewed on the ineqe website.

A great deterrent is the stigma attached to being a child abuser. We need to continue to stigmatise perpetrators.

Jenny Mahimber, Programme Manager, Children's Society and Coventry Streetwise

We all need to remember that consent is no defence. It is not possible to consent to being exploited and CSE is never a lifestyle choice. It is often a gender issue and there are a number of cultural overlays. For example, the number of white BBC TV presenters who are perpetrators! The number of white girls who come forward may be a sign that it is more difficult to disclose for children from BME communities.

Perpetrators take victims to parties, and use drugs and alcohol as weapons, as a means of control and to create addiction. They use it as a threat of exposure, to create memory loss and to be able to say that the victim owes them money.

Streetwise offers 2 hour awareness raising sessions for frontline professionals, and also for hotels in Coventry, using the campaign, '*Say Something if you see Something*'. There is also targeted work with young people in homes, schools and other groups.

Victims are whole people with all sorts of things going on in their lives, and they are not just witnesses and victims. Streetwise makes multiple visits and uses other methods such as texting and phoning victims, and not taking no for an answer. Even when they can't get the young person to work with them, they try again. It is about assertive outreach, but never in the victim's own home as there may be things they won't talk about there.

It may seem that victims do not want to be helped, but even adults in domestic violence situations take an average of 7 times before the victim will leave, why should children be any different?

We need to recognise and accept that the behaviour of victims may go downhill at times. Workers have to build trust but have to be very challenging and nosey, do not accept what they are being told!

Streetwise cannot do it alone and multi-agency work is critical. Intelligence gathering is important and this is then shared with social care and with police. Streetwise uses an *Outcomes Wheel* to map progress. This is completed with the young person and shows whether they have progressed.

Coventry City Council undertook a scoping exercise to identify high, medium and low risk young people. This was helpful, but do other local authorities do similar scoping exercises?

With multi-agency commitment more could be done to build upon and share the good work done by Streetwise. This could include:

Merging projects that cross local authority borders, such as the Birmingham Runaways and Coventry streetwise projects

Operation encompass

Volunteer programme

Training for professionals

Improve ability to intervene and recognise CSE

Recognising the signs

Alison Quigley, Safe in the City, Coventry

Alison spoke about her work on Human Trafficking in Coventry and the '*Say Something if you See Something*' Campaign. The campaign was started prior to the Olympics as there is often an increase in the sex trade before major sporting events take place. All hotels in Coventry were invited to the training, with a choice of day or evening. The response was small with just five hotels and one B&B taking part. Evaluation by the participants was positive and subsequently staff from these establishments have contacted police when they have had concerns.

With police help Streetwise now knows which hotels they should target and they have been approached. Now want to extend this to the wider leisure industry as the problem is not restricted to hotels.

Panel Questions and Answer Session

During the session the following subject areas were raised and discussed:

1. Co-located teams

Co-located teams are largely accepted as a means of developing close and successful multi-agency teams although care must be taken to get them right. For example, if teams are located within police premises some service users may be reluctant to continue to access the service. WMP has recognised that more work needs to be done to explore how to create the most successful multi-agency partnerships there is a short term task and finish group with representation at chief executive level to come up with solutions on co-location or multi-agency work.

Whilst waiting for this work to finish there are systems we can set up to create virtual co-located teams and this is an important step we can take.

One reason that we do not already have co-location is the lack of political will and the lack of available resources.

2. Education and training for politicians and leaders

It is important that we try to educate and raise awareness amongst politicians and also school governors. Examples of how this could be achieved were provided, eg Streetwise are currently showing the play, *Chelsea's Choice*, which sets out the issues, and also offers bespoke training sessions.

3. Education in schools

In an ideal world education on the dangers of CSE and what children should be wary of would be compulsory but it isn't. Education is the key but secondary schools often don't have the time to support training for young people on the issue of CSE. WMP has offered to visit schools but this offer has not been taken up. Even when free training is offered some schools still do not engage because they do not wish to be seen as a 'problem school', even when there is lots of intelligence around that school.

It would be helpful if the Safeguarding Children's Boards could actively encourage education departments and schools to deliver training and education to pupils, staff and parents.

Elected members could champion this at a local level and we need a consistent approach on this.

We need to be persistent and name and shame the organisations that refuse to take part. Using social media we can encourage these organisations to take part.

4. Working with Faith communities

The problem of CSE may exist within faith communities but do the agencies go in to these tight knit communities to address CSE? One important way to get the message out is to approach the Faith communities. This can be a difficult message because people who have faith trust their pastors or leaders. Any organisation that deals with children should be encouraged to appoint a safeguarding lead, and this person should then approach their Safeguarding Board for awareness raising. They can also access the *Say Something if you see Something* resources.

5. Increased practical measures to protect children who are being exploited - what immediate steps can be taken?

The following suggestions were made:-

- Why are we not using our existing safeguarding forums to take forward the multi-agency work?
- focus on taking time to make an informed risk assessment and provide early intervention.
- All of the policies and strategies should include parents at their meetings as equal partners.
- The current system is built to protect children from abuse from within their own family but this is a different kind of abuse. We also have to live with the uncomfortableness that the children may continue to be abused whilst we are working with them.
- All agencies should consider all of the possible consequences before taking action. For example, recent attempts to move at risk children to rural children's homes resulted in these homes being destabilised.
- Parents probably won't engage because they think their own children are safe. The most effective time for a media campaign is in the aftermath of a high profile case. This is the time when parents feel more vulnerable and are more likely to listen to the messages.
- We must all be aware that these issues happen to boys as well as girls!
- Finance and resources are the real block to making progress.

6. Final word from Emma -what this country is desperate for is therapeutic places, but such places are very rare. It is also important to target and educate parents. For example, have a stall at the new parent's evenings for children starting comprehensive school.

Bob Jones and Cath Hannon

At the beginning of the afternoon session the Commissioner handed over to non-executive Strategic Policing and Crime Board member Cath Hannon to chair the session.

Simon Cottingham, Chair of the regional missing, sexual exploitation and trafficking sub group of the Regional Safeguarding Network.

Simon spoke about the role of the voluntary sector, starting with a brief history of the development of the independent charitable sector and how it grew to address social problems and to play a crucial role as advocates for people as well as a critical friend to the state.

When we talk about the voluntary sector people may imagine a complex mass of small organisations that is too difficult to understand. Simon listed some of the many organisations that are working with victims of CSE and receiving funding to do so. Yet, the statutory organisation contribution to these charities is just £200k for the West Midlands, in addition to what they raise themselves. In order to enable the sector to be fully productive the statutory sector should move away from thinking about commissioning the voluntary sector towards providing resources - we need to recognise the contribution the sector can make – it's not just about procuring a particular service. At present the focus is on the artificial competitive environment and horse-trading between charities, and this takes the focus away from victims. The voluntary sector has access to some resources (over £3-4million) that are not available to the statutory sector. Simon highlighted some of the research and guidance developed by the sector which produces effective tools that can then be used by the statutory sector.

We need to develop a shared West Midlands strategy that includes the voluntary sector, and the sector needs to be able to access information more freely than it does at present. It would be impossible to work with all the thousands of small organisations that exist, but the strategy could identify a small number of key voluntary organisations and improve the information flow to them.

James Behan, National Crime Agency UK Human Trafficking Centre

The centre has been in place since 2006 although the NCA was officially created only yesterday. The Centre is only involved with human trafficking, not smuggling of illegal migrants.

There is a lack of serious understanding of the problem and people think it does not happen here and is not a big problem. Traffickers are often organised criminals as there is often a lot of money involved and profit margins are huge. In the UK there are all forms of trafficking: domestic servants, enforced begging, labour or criminal exploitation and even organ/tissue harvesting and others.

The complexity from a law enforcement perspective is balancing the needs of the victim against the needs of the investigation. The investigation needs to secure evidence for the prosecution, but there is a conflicting need to focus on the victim and not on the crime.

The challenges now are the increasing numbers and costs and the fact that there is no requirement to support a police investigation. Potential victims often go missing, even children who are rescued and placed in care. There is also an increasing number of false allegations of trafficking made as a way of trying to overcome the UK immigration system.

The Centre also helps victims who are not from overseas but have been forced in to labour in the UK.

Mark Heath, Head of Business Change and Development, Gangmasters Licensing Authority

The Authority is a small non-departmental government body that regulates and provides licences to those providing labour to the agricultural sector, and this includes food packing/processing and shellfish gathering. The agency works alongside the industry to try and drive up standards. The agency also has a law enforcement function. Officers have the power of arrest and there have been several convictions over the years. The Agency does not cover areas such as hospitality or car washing.

We are seeing an increase in the way workers are mistreated and issues are more prevalent now than in recent years in terms of forced labour, poor accommodation and gross exploitation. There are three priorities: prevention, protection and tackling criminality. The Agency has 68 members of staff.

The Agency picks up on several associated issues including community tensions, increase in acquisitive crime, and poor working conditions. To tackle this there is a need for partnership working and also engagement with the industry. Training and education are required in order to make this happen and enable the early identification of potential trafficking and forced labour.

Kerry Smith and Robin Brierley, Regional Anti Trafficking Network (RAT)

Kerry introduced the work of the RAT network, and described how agencies were unsure how to go about supporting victims of Human Trafficking. Traffickers are very resourceful and often work in a network, making a lot of money from trafficking. In response to these problems, agencies agreed to set up a network for frontline practitioners from across all sectors. This was the start of the Network, in 2008. It now has 55 members and has made good steps forward in partnership working.

Kerry echoed the comments made by Simon Cottingham that it is not productive for all charities to be competing and spending resources chasing work. The Network tries to encourage cooperation between the agencies and each doing what they do best. It would be a big step forward if this approach could be pursued across the West Midlands.

The Network has achieved a single point of contact in HMIC and other agencies, shares and discusses reports and trends, facilitates sharing of experiences and resources and works to identify gaps in current provision and in particular the development of support and after care provision. Campaigns have included the hotels campaign and other best practice and education campaigns.

Areas for future development include better business links and more collaborative work. The biggest gaps are in education and health, and it is hard to engage with those agencies. It would also be positive to encourage the development of similar networks in other parts of the country and overseas.

The challenges are to clarify exactly what trafficking is and provide knowledge and information on the breadth and scale of the problem. We need to encourage wider participation and develop better information-sharing pathways between relevant agencies.

Question and Answer session

Cath Hannon chaired the Panel discussion, which included the following points:

There is an overlap between domestic servitude and exploitation. Young children come to the UK and work as servants but often are not aware that there is anything wrong with what is happening to them, as this is quite normal in some countries. There is still a lot to do on this. Issues are often identified by the NHS or dentists. The cultural norms do mean that it can be difficult.

A question was raised by a small voluntary group called *Stop the Traffic*. This group works to empower communities so that they can recognise the danger signs of human trafficking. Problem is in knowing how to refer information on, and what action should members of the public take if they have concerns?

WMP is working on this for the public and also for its own frontline police staff, to teach them how to effectively identify and refer such information. The police are the right agency if concerns are urgent. Crimestoppers is also an option and they have been trained on trafficking and CSE. A third referral method is through the Salvation Army, which has been trained to take referrals. The message that needs to go out to the public is that there are various ways of referring information and concerns about their neighbours. It would also be useful to monitor how effective all three organisations really are when information is referred to them.

Closing Comments

Before closing Cath provided a quick summary of the day. The main point of the summit was to discuss issues that cause concern and also to share information on how we can better work together. Some key issues during the day were that technology can empower perpetrators but can also empower us all to help victims and track down offenders. There are lots of skilled people working as volunteers and lots more out there who might be prepared to volunteer. Information sharing is a big issue but could we make it simple by agreeing a framework around it. Agencies need to be aware of the language they use - language is important and can have an effect on how victims and offenders are perceived. For example men involved with CSE are paedophiles and should be referred to in those terms and not as members of crime gangs which gives them a more acceptable status.

There is a lot of work to do but it was very positive to see the number of people who have attended today and the very positive conversations that have taken place.

DRAFT

Child Sexual Exploitation Action Plan

1	The report of the Summit together with the priority areas for improvement be used to inform and influence the strategic partnerships in the West Midlands who have responsibility for CSE. This will include sharing with the Chief Executive led Group CSE and also with Mr Stephen Rimmer and LSCB Chairs with the request that they incorporate the actions that relate to CSE into their programmes of work.	PCC
2	Develop a shared West Midlands strategy on CSE that includes both statutory and voluntary sector.	All agencies
3	All agencies and the multi-agency partnerships should aim to improve their victim focus and their child focus and build their capacity to recognise victims of CSE.	All agencies
4	Explore new ways of working with the voluntary sector, with a move away from commissioning towards a cooperative approach to the allocation of work based on the strengths of each organisation. This work should include Barnardos, as the third sector lead on the issue at a national level. PCC to meet with Simon Cottingham and Kerry Smith to discuss further. A report of the outcomes of this discussion should be shared with other relevant agencies with a view to recommending a future decision. <i>(This action also appears in the Human Trafficking Action Plan)</i>	PCC Simon Cottingham Kerry Smith/Robin Brierley
5	Explore means of more effective information sharing and better use of intelligence between all agencies on CSE, including the voluntary sector.	WMP All agencies
6	Address the gaps in terms of business links and collaborative working. Initially this should focus upon education and health. Explore areas for future development between the agencies.	All agencies
7	PCC to monitor the work of WMP and in particular the need to make sure that the Force is equipped to improve the early identification and referral of potential victims.	WMP PCC
8	Police and all partners should work to improve the early identification and referral of potential victims.	All agencies

9	<p>An important area where improvements could be made is education and prevention. There are a number of practical steps that could be taken:</p> <p>Safeguarding Children's Boards should strongly encourage schools to understand their role in CSE education and prevention and to deliver training to pupils, parents and to staff.</p> <p>Elected members can champion this at a local level and we need a consistent approach on this.</p> <p>Support for practical projects such as information campaigns or having information available at the new parents' evenings for children starting comprehensive school.</p> <p>Approach the Faith communities. This can be a difficult message because people who have faith trust their pastors or leaders. Any organisation that deals with children should be encouraged to appoint a safeguarding lead, and this person should then approach their Safeguarding Board for awareness raising.</p>	<p>Safeguarding Children's Boards</p> <p>Education Departments</p> <p>Councillors</p> <p>Local Authorities</p>
10	<p>Co-location of multi-agency teams should be further explored. Following the conclusion of the co-location pilot project in Sandwell, police and other partners should review and evaluate, with a view to agreeing a strategy for developing future co-location. This work should recognise that co-located teams working on CSE are not the same as MASHs.</p>	<p>WMP</p> <p>PCC</p> <p>All agencies</p>

Human Trafficking Action Plan

1	Develop a shared West Midlands strategy on Human Trafficking that includes both statutory and voluntary sector.	All agencies
2	<p>Explore new ways of working with the voluntary sector, with a move away from commissioning towards a cooperative approach to the allocation of work based on the strengths of each organisation. PCC to meet with Simon Cottingham and Kerry Smith to discuss further.</p> <p>A report of the outcomes of this discussion should be shared with other relevant agencies with a view to recommending a future decision. <i>(This action also appears in the CSE Action Plan)</i></p>	<p>PCC</p> <p>Simon Cottingham</p> <p>Kerry Smith/Robin Brierley</p>
3	Improve the information that is shared with the public about how to refer information and concerns about their neighbours. It would also be useful to monitor how effective the referral organisations (police, Crimestoppers and the Salvation Army) really are when information is referred to them.	<p>PCC</p> <p>WMP</p> <p>All agencies</p>
4	Greater awareness and a shared understanding of human trafficking for the public and also amongst the agencies. The challenges are to clarify exactly what trafficking is and provide knowledge and information on the breadth and scale of the problem, and to encourage wider participation and develop better information-sharing pathways between relevant agencies.	All agencies