

The role of local authorities in addressing human trafficking



Report of the **SOLACE** Study Group



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This SOLACE report explores how Local Authorities can improve their response to the crime of human trafficking, in particular in the area of identifying and assisting victims. This is a timely study, as the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings entered into force in the UK on 1 April 2009, providing victims of these crimes – both adults and children - with minimum rights and protection.

The report draws on the work of the SOLACE Study Group on Human Trafficking who studied the response of Local Authorities across Europe to human trafficking and identified relevant practice examples for the UK. The study group developed a competence and evidence framework for Local Authorities to assess their own performance in responding to the challenges of human trafficking. This framework identifies five core competences that Local Authorities need to focus upon if they are to improve their response to these challenges; this report expands upon each of these competences, demonstrating how they can be developed in practice.

Victim Identification

The nature of human trafficking means that many victims are reluctant to report the crime or seek help, raising considerable barriers to them accessing protection and support services. The early identification of victims is key to ending the abuse that they suffer and to providing the assistance necessary for their recovery. In the UK the number of identified victims is still relatively low in comparison with some other serious crimes but the impact of the crime on individuals and the community is high. It is therefore possible that public bodies and community organisations encounter these victims without necessarily recognising the signs. The UK has a national framework to assist in the formal identification and help co-ordinate the referral of victims into appropriate services; this is known internationally as a National Referral Mechanism.

Councils have a key role to play in the National Referral Mechanism with staff working alongside police officers, immigration officials and others to identify potential victims; they must understand the new procedures and feel confident in implementing them. Frontline staff will need to be equipped with effective skills and tools so that they can identify the signs that someone may have been trafficked, carry out age assessments of young victims and refer them to the newly created competent authority within the UK Human Trafficking Centre and into appropriate support services. Whilst the majority of victims of trafficking are non-UK nationals, Local Authorities should be aware that there are cases of internal trafficking whereby UK nationals are trafficked within this country, primarily for the purpose of sexual exploitation.

Victim Support

Under the Council of Europe Convention, identified victims of human trafficking are entitled to minimum levels of support and this should be at the core of the Local Authority response to human trafficking. Councils have a duty to provide assistance to trafficked children in their area; adult victims who are foreign nationals may not have recourse to public funds but Local Authority assistance can be provided on a discretionary basis.

Councils should seek to provide easily accessible advice to potential victims, adopting a proactive approach to seeking them out in their working or home environment. Service

provision needs to be carried out in a coordinated multi-agency manner, particularly with third sector and community organisations, health providers, the police and immigration authorities, as the impact of human trafficking and the needs of trafficking victims can be diverse.

Trafficked children are of particular concern to Local Authorities, as studies show that up to half of this group go missing from Local Authority care. Councils need to tighten provision for safe placements. Training for foster families and Local Authority staff in care homes is essential to enable them to understand the specific needs and risks to a trafficked child.

Many victims of trafficking will face significant linguistic barriers to accessing services, and councils should be aware of the most effective measures to address these. Victim support cannot be limited to physical services such as accommodation and schooling; the victim's psychological needs must be addressed from the initial point of contact between the victim and the Local Authority. To ensure that victims do not fall back into the hands of their traffickers, it may be necessary to equip them with new skills to support themselves financially and to rebuild their confidence. Councils should consider working in partnership with NGOs and training providers to meet these needs. When providing services to victims, Local Authorities need to ensure that the victims are at all times safe from their traffickers, and all data about the victim should be treated with the utmost confidentiality. Staff must develop a real understanding of each individual victim's needs and be able to respond to these accordingly, in partnership with other actors in the local area.

Assistance with Repatriation of Victims

The repatriation of victims is a complex process, involving the legal systems of the country of origin and the UK. Whilst Local Authorities do not have a defined role in the repatriation process, they do have a duty of care towards victims living in their area. The Local Authority will therefore need to be assured that a victim's safety and security has been taken into account if they are to be returned to their home country; this may involve working closely with the Local Authority in the victim's country of origin, as well as embassies and consulates in the UK. The UK Local Authority may also assist in preparing the victim for return, working closely with organisations such as the International Organisation for Migration, the UK Border Agency and support services to ensure that the victim is safely repatriated.

Prevention of Human Trafficking

Local Authorities may not immediately come to mind as key actors in the prevention of human trafficking. However, councils do have a responsibility to prevent exploitative practices in the local community and should actively consider measures to reduce the demand for the services provided by victims of trafficking, for example in relation to sexual services and illegal working practices. Local Authorities can actively keep communities informed about the phenomenon of trafficking so that citizens can begin to identify potential exploitative practices to help encourage third party reporting. Local Authorities can also be a useful intelligence source to assist in the identification of traffickers and exploiters.

Working in Partnership

Local Authorities must work closely with other agencies if they are to successfully address the challenges of human trafficking. At a local level, cooperation between councils, the police, primary care trusts, Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and voluntary bodies is essential. All agencies involved in the identification and care of the victim should be clear about their respective roles and responsibilities, using formal cooperative structures and protocols where appropriate. Councils will also need to work closely with national bodies such as the Border Agency, the police and the UK Human Trafficking Centre, the main body responsible for coordinating the national response to trafficking. Finally, Local Authorities need to understand the implications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings for their own local services and partnerships. Councillors, Chief Executives and senior managers, in particular, need to grasp the relevance of human trafficking for the council as a whole.

Conclusions

The greatest challenges in meeting the needs of victims of trafficking lie in the disparate levels of knowledge and understanding about the crime and the needs of the victims at the local level. Effective local leadership is needed to highlight the implications of the crime for the local area and to ensure that the council has a comprehensive approach to assisting the victims and preventing further trafficking. This SOLACE report aims to help Local Authorities develop this role effectively.

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PART 1: OVERVIEW

1. What is Human Trafficking?

Put simply, human trafficking involves tricking or forcing someone to leave their home and moving them to another place within their own country (a phenomenon known as 'internal trafficking') or to another country, and then exploiting them. The United Nations estimates that nearly 4 million people fall victim to people traffickers every year.

Trafficking is a crime that is usually committed by Organised Criminal Networks (OCNs); it is the second largest illegal industry worldwide, after the arms trade. The criminals responsible for trafficking are often also involved in drugs smuggling and other crimes, and simply see the victims as another commodity to be bought and sold.

According to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), 43% of trafficking in Europe is for prostitution purposes; at least 500,000 women are trafficked for this purpose every year. Around 32% of trafficked people are forced into illegal labour, such as sweatshop or restaurant work and domestic slavery. Victims are also trafficked for the purposes of begging, pick pocketing, stealing and forced marriage.

2. Is it a problem in the UK?

The UK is primarily a destination country for victims of trafficking. The majority of people trafficked into the UK originate from the Far East (particularly China and Thailand), Africa and Eastern Europe. There is a lack of reliable statistics on the scale of trafficking, but during 2003 (the last year for which such an estimate is available) there were an estimated 4,000 victims of trafficking in the UK for prostitution purposes alone¹. Indeed, trafficking for forced prostitution appears to be the most dominant form of trafficking in this country. In 98% of these cases, the trafficked victims are women, although some men and boys are also trafficked for this purpose. Trafficking for the purpose of forced labour is also believed to be a significant problem in this country, although the scale of the problem is largely unknown.

There is no centrally-held data on the number of children trafficked into the UK, as child trafficking is largely a hidden crime. The majority of children trafficked into this country are believed to come from South East Asia (China or Vietnam) or Africa (mainly Nigeria). As with adult victims, there are a wide range of reasons why children are trafficked, including prostitution, drug trafficking, underage marriage and benefit fraud. African girls, in particular are often trafficked for domestic servitude, and this is normally hidden under the guise of private fostering. For some trafficked children, the UK is a transit country rather than a destination country; many Nigerian girls, for example, are trafficked into the UK, and then taken to continental Europe to be exploited for prostitution purposes.

Victims of trafficking may face a number of challenges. They are likely to have been confronted with deception, loss of documentation, debt bondage, communication problems, lack of rights, coercion and intimidation. They may also have significant healthcare, housing and social care needs, as well as a need for long-term psychological

¹ House of Lords report:

<http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/jt200506/jtselect/jtrightts/245/24507.htm>

care. They may face additional challenges such as isolation, communication barriers, cultural differences, possible irregular immigration status and a lack of knowledge of the UK's systems and procedures, such as the criminal justice system and immigration processes.

4. What is being done to tackle Human Trafficking in the UK?

In March 2007, the Home Office launched a UK Action Plan on combating human trafficking²; this was updated in July 2008 and is intended to be 'living document'. The Action Plan sets out a wide range of actions that the government believes need to be taken in order to prevent human trafficking from occurring, to catch and prosecute the perpetrators, and to identify and assist the victims.

At the same time as launching the UK Action Plan, the government signed the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings³. This legally-binding Convention entered into force in this country on 1 April 2009. The Convention creates a range of new obligations for the UK in terms of assisting victims of human trafficking, including:

- The development of a formal system for identification of victims - known as a National Referral Mechanism, this sets out a clear process for identifying victims of all forms of trafficking and their protection needs.
- Developing a Model of Victim Support – a system of support for each victim that directly responds to their needs, assisting them in their physical, psychological and social recovery. Such assistance should include appropriate and secure accommodation, psychological and material assistance, the provision of counselling and information services in a language that they can understand and access to education for children.
- Reflection period – a minimum 30-day period during which identified victims will be granted temporary admission to the UK and all removal action will be held in abeyance. This is to allow to person concerned to recover and escape the influence of the traffickers, as well as to be able to take an informed decision on cooperation with the authorities. The UK government has extended this reflection period to 45 days.
- Residence permits – of at least 6 months where (i) the victim's stay is necessary owing to their personal situation, and/or (ii) it is necessary for the purpose of their cooperation with the competent authorities in an investigation or with criminal proceedings. The UK government has decided to grant 1-year residence permits to victims if they cooperate in criminal investigation procedures against their traffickers or if their personal circumstances warrant it. The temporary residence permits will grant access to public funds and employment.
- Provision of Training – for relevant officials in the protection of trafficked people and the prevention of trafficking.

² <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/human-traffick-action-plan>

³ http://www.coe.int/t/dg2/trafficking/campaign/Docs/Convntn/default_en.asp

5. Who is involved in tackling Human Trafficking in the UK?

At a national strategic level, human trafficking is a cross-government priority. The task of combating human trafficking comes under the immediate remit of the Home Secretary under the 'tackling organised crime' portfolio. However an Interdepartmental Ministerial Group on Human Trafficking was created to coordinate the actions of the various government departments, including: the Office for Criminal Justice Reform, which leads on supporting victims of crime; the Foreign Office, which works to prevent trafficking in the countries of origin; the Department for Communities and Local Government, which is responsible for ensuring that Local Authorities are equipped to deal with trafficking victims; and the Department for Children, Schools and Family, which leads on the Safeguarding Children agenda.

The UK Border Agency (UKBA) is the national body responsible for securing the UK's borders and for controlling immigration. The border authorities are often the first point of contact for trafficking victims; some may seek asylum on entering the country, while others may be caught whilst being smuggled in. Many victims, however, pass through immigration undetected and it then falls to other bodies such as the police or Local Authorities to identify them.

In 2006, the Government established the UK Human Trafficking Centre to coordinate and direct the country's law enforcement handling of human trafficking. The centre is staffed by law enforcement agencies, academic experts, victim care organisations, representatives of the Crown Prosecution Service and the Serious and Organised Crime Agency, and the Immigration and Nationality Directorate. The UKHTC will play an important role in the new National Referral Mechanism.

6. Is this an issue for UK Local Government?

Once victims of trafficking have been identified, Local Authorities should have a role in addressing their needs, working together with a range of partners, in particular Third Sector organisations that are experienced in supporting victims of crime, providing gender appropriate services, and working with migrant communities. The task of dealing with victims of trafficking does not fall neatly within the remit of one department. It requires an awareness of the associated issues amongst Chief Executives, senior managers, frontline staff and councillors. It concerns groups of staff that may not immediately be apparent, such as environmental health officers who may come across victims of trafficking working in restaurants, or youth offending teams who may suspect there are child victims of trafficking amongst the young people with whom they come into contact. Specialised training is therefore needed by all of these groups in order to ensure that they understand and are equipped to meet the needs of victims of trafficking.

The research work undertaken by the SOLACE Study Group on Human Trafficking in 2008 identified five key areas of competence for Local Authorities in responding to the crime of human trafficking:

HT1 Victim identification – Local Authority staff need to be able to recognize the signs that indicate that someone may be a victim of trafficking

HT2 Victim support – Local Authorities will need to attend to the immediate physical needs of victims, as well as the longer term social and psychological needs

HT3 Assistance with the repatriation of victims – in some instances, Local Authorities will be involved in the return of a victim to their country of origin

HT4 Prevention of human trafficking – Local Authorities may have a role to play in assisting the police in disrupting organized criminal networks and reducing demand for victims of trafficking in their area

HT5 Working in partnership – councils will need to cooperate with other agencies such as Third Sector and Community Organisations, the police and immigration services, as well as other levels of government

These competences are explored in detail in Part 2 of this report, drawing on relevant practice identified in the UK and from the Study Tours (details of which can be found at the end of this report). The Study Group was established to enable SOLACE members to share their experiences of tackling issues relating to human trafficking with colleagues and experts from key organisations such as the UK Human Trafficking Centre, the UK Border Agency, the police and the International Organisation for Migration, and to explore practices developed by Local Authorities in other European countries in addressing these issues, through research and study tours.

Each member of the SOLACE Study Group took responsibility for exploring a specific aspect of human trafficking (trafficking of women for the purpose of sexual exploitation, trafficking of children for criminal exploitation, and multi agency working in tackling trafficking) and took part in a study visit to a European Local Authority demonstrating good or innovative practices in addressing human trafficking. The Local Authorities visited were Rome, Oslo, Vienna and Valencia. In addition, the European framework for combating human trafficking laid down by the Council of Europe in Strasbourg was studied.

It should be noted that Local Authority competences vis-a-vis victims of trafficking differ in terms of child and adult victims. Whilst Local Authorities have a duty of care towards child victims of trafficking in their areas, many adult victims will have no recourse to public funds. In such cases, each Local Authority must take the decision as to the degree of support that it will provide to victims, in the light of their role in promoting wellbeing in the local community.

7. What other support is available for local government?

In order to successfully combat human trafficking and to ensure the smooth implementation of the UK Action Plan, central government needs to work closely with local government. The Home Office recognises the need to provide greater support and guidance to Local Authorities in this regard and is funding a number of initiatives designed to assist local government. These include:

- the Child Trafficking Advice and Information Line (CTAIL) – run by the NSPCC, this telephone line (0800 107 7057) offers advice to individuals who come across children whom they suspect may have been trafficked, to ensure child victims are referred to Local Authorities and to support Local Authorities to make appropriate assessments and ensure that safeguarding procedures are employed.
- E-learning package – this has been funded by the Home Office and developed by ECPAT (End Child Prostitution and Trafficking) to train practitioners to improve their

skills in identifying and taking appropriate action to safeguard trafficked children. See <http://course.ecpat.org.uk/>

- A Code of Practice for Keeping Children Safe from Harm – the Code emphasises the need to identify trafficked children at risk of going missing from Local Authority care and to take appropriate action to safeguard them. If a looked-after child who may have been trafficked goes missing from care, the Local Authority must follow arrangements agreed with the police for managing missing from care incidents⁴
- A model trafficking protocol for Local Safeguarding Children’s Boards⁵
- A multi-agency human trafficking toolkit – this aims to help frontline responders to identify victims of trafficking. This can be found at www.crimereduction.co.uk/toolkits.
- Funding for the Poppy Project, which provides accommodation and support to women who have been trafficked into prostitution, and the UK Human Trafficking Centre, the main multi-agency organisation responsible for human trafficking issues.

These measures mark a significant step forward in terms of coordinated action between national and Local Authorities in addressing the challenges of human trafficking.

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<http://www.ukba.homeoffice.gov.uk/sitecontent/documents/aboutus/consultations/closedconsultations/keepingchildrensafe/codeofpracticechildren?view=Binary>

⁵ An example can be found on: http://www.n-somerset.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/72AE7F2D-6A8B-4F81-A365-EE1BFACA5840/0/Guidance_Trafficked_children_NorthSomersetLSCBprotocol_Dec07.doc

PART 2: THE SOLACE COMPETENCE FRAMEWORK

The SOLACE Study Group on Human Trafficking has developed the following framework to assist Local Authorities in assessing their performance in identifying and assisting victims of human trafficking at a strategic level. It provides a set of core competences that Local Authorities need to develop in order to successfully address the problems of human trafficking.

Competence	Evidence
HT1 Victim Identification	
1.1 Local Authority cooperates effectively with all other actors involved in victim identification, including police, immigration services and national authorities	Co-ordination mechanisms between Local Authorities, national authorities, police and immigration in place and functioning effectively
1.2 Local Authorities are integrated into formal processes for identifying victims	Local Authorities understand and effectively carry out their designated roles within the National Referral Mechanism
1.3 Frontline staff have the skills and knowledge necessary to proactively identify potential victims of trafficking	Training provided for frontline staff (including environmental health officers, health visitors, etc) in identification of victims
1.4 Local Authority staff have the necessary skills and training to be able to carry out age assessments for potential child victims of trafficking	Suitable staff are identified and they feel confident in undertaking age assessments; victims suspected of being minors are identified quickly and provided with the relevant support
1.5 Local Authority understands the phenomenon of internal trafficking and implement procedures to identify potential victims	Local Authority staff dealing with vulnerable UK nationals, particularly minors, are trained in the identification of victims
HT2 Victim Support	
2.1 Local Authority provides easily accessible advice to victims of trafficking	Resource centres/support units for victims are established and provide access across sectors
2.2 Local Authority provides suitable, safe and secure accommodation for victims	Secure accommodation is provided for child victims and is managed by trained individuals
2.3 Local Authority and other service providers supply joined-up, coordinated services to the victim	Victims can access all Local Authority services via a single point of contact
2.4 Trafficked children receive impartial and coordinated care, advice and services	Child victims have coordinated care plans across all service providers which address their individual needs
2.5 Local Authority addresses linguistic barriers to access to services	Assistance provided in victim's own language
2.6 Local Authority understands and addresses psychological needs of victims	Local Authority supports community groups in providing psychosocial support to all victims
2.7 Victims gain skills that will assist them in integrating into their new societies	Education and training opportunities provided for victims of trafficking

Competence	Evidence
2.8 Victims in Local Authority care are adequately protected from their traffickers	Child victims do not go missing from Local Authority care and addresses are confidential
2.9 Local Authority staff who come into contact with victims understand their specific needs and circumstances	Training in care for victims of trafficking provided to all Local Authority staff involved in providing services to them
HT3 Assistance with Repatriation of Victims	
3.1 Local Authority assists in assuring victim's safety and security on return to their home country	Local Authority cooperates with its counterparts in victim's country of origin to ensure ongoing support for victim after repatriation
3.2 Local Authority assists in preparing the victim for return	One-to-one psychological support and training are provided to victim to prepare them for repatriation
HT4 Prevention of Human Trafficking	
4.1 Local population informed about any potential human trafficking issues within their community	Local Authority runs community information and awareness campaigns
4.2 Local Authority plays a proactive role in the identification of traffickers	Local Authority has mechanisms in place to cooperate with police in the identification of traffickers
4.3 Local Authority works in partnership with local community groups to implement anti-trafficking measures	Local Authority provides financial and logistical support to NGOs involved in prevention of trafficking
HT5 Working in Partnership	
5.1 Local Authority works in partnership with other agencies at the local level	Specific anti-trafficking cooperation mechanisms exist at the local level
5.2 Local Authority works in partnership with national authorities	Regular discourse between Local Authority and national ministry responsible for trafficking issues
5.3 Local Authority understands the implications of the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings	Key Local Authority managers and staff who deal with victims of trafficking are aware of the Convention and understand its relevance for their own roles

HT1. Victim Identification

The early identification of victims is key to ensuring an end to the abuse that they suffer and to providing the assistance necessary to begin their rehabilitation programme. Alongside police officers and immigration officials, Local Authority staff may often find themselves in contact with people who could potentially be victims. These staff include social workers, youth teams, environmental health officers and other frontline staff.

A simple checklist can be found in Annex 1 of this report which sets out some of the potential indicators of trafficking that Local Authority staff may come across in their daily duties.

1.1 Effective Cooperation with Other Actors

What:

A network of professionals and agencies should be involved in the identification of potential victims and should work together in order to protect victims and ensure a referral network without gaps. Local Authorities need to be able to identify the signs that might indicate trafficking and will need to make operational judgements as to the appropriate immediate response.

Who:

There are a number of other agencies that will need to be involved, including the police, immigration services, health services and the non-governmental agencies that provide support to victims. For instance, immigration officers who have contact with children arriving in the country must refer to Children's Services if they have concerns about the future safety of the child. It is also important that Local Authorities think about establishing co-operation mechanisms with representatives of the countries of origin of the victims, with a view to involving them in the victim identification process.

How:

Proper procedures need to be in place to ensure that all relevant actors are aware of any suspicions of trafficking, and this information must be shared quickly and confidentially.

Relevant practice:

- ~~At~~ In the London Borough of Croydon, the Croydon Community Against Trafficking (CCAT*) has used adverts for unlicensed massage parlours to their advantage; they have undertaken operations with the police to raid these parlours and through this have identified a number of trafficked women.
- London Borough of Croydon has also been able to identify some trafficking victims by working with the Accident and Emergency Department at the local hospital.
- The Contact Point centre in the London Borough of Sutton looks at homes that have more than 4 children to identify if the children may have been trafficked.
- In Vienna there is a good partnership between the Romanian and Bulgarian embassies and the city authorities in the victim identification process. Embassy staff are provided with thorough training in dealing with victims of human trafficking and then are able to ensure that the victims can express themselves in their own language.

1.2 Integration of Local Authorities into Formal Victim Identification Processes

What:

The central point of contact for anyone encountering a suspected victim of trafficking is the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC). This hosts the designated 'Competent Authority' for the identification of victims, and is a multi-agency organisation staffed by police officers, civilian employees of the UKHTC and the UK Border Agency; in the future it may also include representatives of Local Authority children's services departments. If the issue of trafficking is raised as part of an asylum claim or part of the immigration process,

there is a separate but linked competent authority, which is situated within the UK Border Agency.

Victim identification is a 2-stage process: the first stage is to assess whether there are 'reasonable grounds' to treat someone as a victim; the second stage is the 'conclusive decision' on victim status.

Who:

The Stage 1 decision is taken by the designated 'competent authority' following a referral by the first responder (i.e. the agency which has initial contact with the suspected victim), which in some cases will be a Local Authority. The Stage 2 decision is also taken by the competent authority (i.e. UKHTC or UKBA).

How:

Provision should be made for the victim to be in a safe place before any assessment takes place; the location should not be divulged to any enquirers until their relationship with the individual has been established beyond doubt, if necessary with the help of police or immigration services. Local Authority staff should also be vigilant about anything unusual such as cars waiting outside the premises, or telephone enquiries about the suspected victim; any such activity should be immediately reported to the police. Remember that the victim may not feel able to disclose full information about their circumstances, as they or their families may have been threatened by the traffickers. Note - the designated Competent Authority is only looking for 'reasonable grounds' to believe that a person may have been trafficked and does not need to have established concrete evidence.

The government recognises that the National Referral Mechanism will need to include specific arrangements for dealing with suspected child victims of trafficking. Local Authorities already have a key role to play in identifying potential child victims of trafficking; under Section 47 of the Children Act 1989, a Local Authority is required, if it has reasonable cause to suspect that a child is suffering or likely to suffer significant harm, to investigate whether they should take action to safeguard or promote the child's welfare.

Relevant practice:

- The London Safeguarding Children Board has been responsible for developing a pilot project for the NRM for children, which will be rolled out across the whole country⁶. The project has resulted in the production of a comprehensive trafficked children toolkit which sets out the roles of different professionals and agencies in identifying and assisting child victims of trafficking.

1.3 Equipping Frontline Staff with Effective Skills and Tools

What:

If the onus is on frontline council staff to identify potential victims of trafficking, it is extremely important that these staff have the necessary skills and knowledge to proactively undertake those roles.

⁶ <http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/trafficking/>

Who:

The UKHTC is currently developing and rolling out an awareness-raising programme targeting first responders, including Local Authorities.

Training should be designed and delivered based on a proper assessment of staff needs and the types of cases that they are likely to be confronted with.

How:

This training should focus upon equipping staff with an understanding of factors such as gender, immigration status, cultural background and the individual circumstances of potential victims, as well as the indicators that they should look out for when trying to identify whether a person has been trafficked. Training is also necessary to ensure that staff understand the procedures for victim identification and know how to apply them.

Training may also be extended to cover other stakeholders within the local community, to ensure that they have a common understanding of the issues in the local area and adopt a shared approach to addressing these.

Local Authorities should also provide their staff with practical tools to help them identify victims. Assessment frameworks, consisting of a list of questions that Local Authority officers can ask victims in order to try to assess the likelihood that they have been trafficked, and checklists of indicators that staff should look out for when trying to identify whether a person has been trafficked, will be useful.

Relevant practice:

- Annex 1 of this report provides a checklist of indicators that different categories of Local Authority staff may come across in their daily work and actions that can be used to ensure the signs of human trafficking are being picked up. This covers both adult and child victims and builds on work undertaken as part of the London Safeguarding Children Board project
- The London LSCB has developed a risk assessment matrix, which can be used to identify and assess whether there are reasonable grounds to suspect that a child has been trafficked⁷.

1.4 Carrying Out Age Assessments

What:

In the UK, trafficked children under 18 years of age are eligible for Local Authority children's services. This means that the council is responsible for providing them with housing and schooling, as well as ensuring that their psychological, social and health needs are met. Most children and young people who are trafficked will either have no form of identification or will have been issued with false papers by their traffickers.

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http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/resources/trafficking/london_safeguarding_trafficked_children_toolkit_january_19th_2009.pdf Appendix 9

Who:

If there is concern about a child's age, it is the Local Authority that has the responsibility for assessing the age of that young person. This is a particularly difficult role, as all medical methods for determining age are recognised as having the potential to be inaccurate by up to 5 years⁸. However, if there is any doubt about a young victim's age, the Council of Europe Convention states that they should be treated as a child until the age can be verified, in the same way as would be done in asylum cases.

How:

The Local Authority representatives involved in age assessments should be trained in child-friendly interview techniques. Age assessments should take into account physical, psychological and cultural factors. Serious child protection issues arise when a child is assessed as being an adult and denied access to appropriate services. Equally, placing adults in children's services may enable traffickers and others to gain unwelcome access to children.

Gangs in this country will often also use child victims of trafficking for prostitution purposes. It is extremely important that Local Authority staff are able to identify children in this position as being underage, so that they can remove them to a position of care. Children trafficked for prostitution purposes must be treated as victims and not as criminals.

Relevant practice:

In Valencia, evidence showed that the Organised Criminal Networks specifically make use of children under the age of 14, or who have been given false identity indicating they were under 14, to carry out petty crimes; in Spain a child of this age cannot be prosecuted for a crime, and therefore the gangs are able to avoid criminal culpability and the risk of losing their assets – the children – to the authorities

1.5 Recognising Internal Trafficking

What:

Internal trafficking refers to victims who are trafficked within this country, including UK nationals. It can occur for any form of trafficking where the victim is moved within the UK. An example identified by the UKHTC involved prostitution, with young girls being groomed by young men who win their trust through gifts, the promise of love and in some cases addiction to alcohol or drugs to keep them under their control, before forcing them to sleep with other men for money.

Who:

Children in care, particularly those in residential units, may be at particular risk of being targeted by gangs for internal trafficking purposes. Children may also be at risk of internal trafficking as a result of online grooming. Social workers, foster carers, Youth Offending Teams and other frontline staff therefore need to be aware of the phenomenon of internal trafficking and to recognize the signs that a young person, even of British origin, may be a

⁸ 'The Health of Refugee Children – Guidelines for Paediatricians', Royal College of Paediatricians, 1999, p13 (<http://www.rcpch.ac.uk/Publications/Publications-list-by-title#H>)

victim. Signs may include going missing from care for short periods, spending time with older men who give them gifts, breaking away from family and former friends, drug and alcohol use and secrecy about where they are going.

How:

Local Authorities need to provide training to Youth Offending Teams, Children's Services departments, etc., to ensure that staff understand and are equipped to recognize and address the problem of internal trafficking. They should also consider providing training and information within schools to ensure that young people are aware of the dangers of falling victim to internal trafficking gangs.

Local Authorities may wish to work together with other local agencies, such as the police and voluntary organisations, to agree a specific protocol for safeguarding young people at risk of internal trafficking. This may be part of a wider protocol on young people at risk.

Relevant practice:

- The government has published guidance on Safeguarding Children and Young People from Sexual Exploitation which can prove useful in helping Local Authorities to develop approaches to dealing with internal trafficking⁹.
- The Child Exploitation and Online Protection Centre (CEOP)¹⁰ was established to tackle the sexual abuse of children, especially in relation to the internet. They carry out information, education and awareness raising work in schools, and provide a series of specialised training courses for professionals who take responsibility for safeguarding children from sexual predators.
- The UK Human Trafficking Centre has produced a set of materials, including DVDs, which can be used to raise awareness amongst young people.
- Nottingham City Council is among a number of authorities that has produced a guide on safeguarding children and young people from sexual exploitation, which includes a section on victims of internal trafficking¹¹. Such a guide is useful not only for Local Authority staff, but also for all partner agencies likely to encounter young people at risk.

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<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/consultations/index.cfm?action=conResults&consultationId=1566&external=no&menu=3>

¹⁰ www.ceop.gov.uk

¹¹ <http://gossweb.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/nottingham/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=2780&p=0>

HT2 Victim Support

The Council of Europe Convention requires member states to assist victims in their physical, psychological and social recovery. As a minimum, victims should be provided with appropriate and secure accommodation, psychological and material assistance, access to emergency medical treatment, information on rights, access to interpreter/translation and legal advice, and access to education for children.

It is the role of victim support which is at the core of the Local Authority response to human trafficking. Particularly in the case of child victims, the Local Authority is the key provider of services.

2.1 Provision of Easily Accessible Advice

What:

Victims of human trafficking face a common set of challenges; they are likely to have been confronted with deception, loss of documentation, exploitation, debt bondage, coercion and intimidation. Many victims will be non-UK nationals and may therefore have little or no understanding of the support that they are entitled to from the state. They are likely to be confused and fearful, perhaps mistrustful of authority figures.

Who:

Local Authorities have a role to play in ensuring that information can be gained from one point of contact and that it is available in the language of the victim.

How:

Local Authorities may wish to create resource centres or support units for victims, making sure that information can be gained from one point of contact and that it is available in the language of the victim.

By coordinating with other actors and adopting a proactive approach to information provision, Local Authorities are likely to reach a higher number of potential victims and ensure that they are properly informed about their rights and entitlements, as well as the procedures for accessing services.

Relevant practice:

- In Rome, the street outreach teams in the Roxanne project hand out leaflets to street prostitutes at night, advising them what help is available to them if they are victims of trafficking. The leaflets are in small, credit card-sized format, and contain only brief important information to ensure they can be pocketed discretely – this is vital as the traffickers are often watching the women's every move. They are provided in a range of languages to ensure that they can be understood by the women, regardless of their country of origin. This ensures that the information reaches as many victims as possible, as the vast majority would not know where to go for information and advice, or would not be able to access it even if they knew where it was available.

2.2 Provision of Suitable, Safe and Secure Accommodation

What:

One of the most disturbing aspects of the human trafficking issue for Local Authorities is the high number of trafficked children who go missing from Local Authority care. In 2007, a government report suggested that of 330 children identified as potential victims of trafficking, 183 had gone missing from Local Authority care¹². Similarly, an ECPAT study of the North West, North East and the Midlands, carried out in 2007, found that of 80 reported cases of known or suspected child victims of trafficking, 48 (60%) had gone missing from Social Services care and never been found¹³.

Research data indicates that most of the trafficked children who go missing do so within the first 72 hours to one week of their time in care. There are two common reasons for victims going missing from care: (i) even after a child registers with Children's Services, the trafficker still has control of the child and seeks to remove the child from the area as soon as possible, or (ii) the child runs away from care, out of fear of being found by the trafficker. There are also a range of other reasons why potential victims may go missing from care, for example if they are actually adults who are not trafficking victims, and who wish to evade age assessment and work illegally.

Who:

Local Authorities have a duty to provide safe accommodation for trafficked children. Reasons why they have proved relatively powerless in preventing trafficked children from going missing from care include a lack of awareness (trafficked children need greater oversight than other children in care so that they do not fall prey to their traffickers) and the lack of suitable safe placements that are secure for the children (suspected victims are generally accommodated in foster care or children's residential units) - at present there is no centre for trafficked children in Britain, or any other models of safe accommodation beyond foster care with robust safeguards.

There is also a need for better service provision for children who leave care, but are still vulnerable to exploitation by their traffickers.

As many adult victims of trafficking have no recourse to public funds, due to their immigration status, they are not entitled to Local Authority housing assistance or benefits. Adult social services departments do not have any statutory responsibility for these adults unless they have additional needs, such as mental health problems or physical disabilities¹⁴.

¹² <http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk/documents/ceop-child-traffick-report-0607?view=Binary>, p48-49

¹³ http://www.ecpat.org.uk/downloads/ECPAT_UK_Missing_Out_2007.pdf, p5

¹⁴ At present, individuals that appear to have such needs would be entitled to a Community Care assessment and to access services accordingly, where they have an assessed need.

How:

Decisions regarding the provision of accommodation for trafficked children should focus upon breaking the link between the child and the traffickers and make provision for close monitoring within the child protection framework.

As of April 2009, there is a new indicator in the national indicator set, 'Children Missing from Home and Care'. Local areas will need to show that information about children who are reported missing is shared between the police force, the Local Authority and, where appropriate the voluntary sector. It will also be important for Local Authorities to identify patterns of individuals or groups of children missing from particular care homes.

A specific risk assessment for trafficking victims should be developed and implemented; this should set out how the Local Authority intends to safeguard the young person so that they can be protected from their traffickers. The care plan/protection plan should include strategies to minimise the possibility of the child going missing – these may include measures such as close monitoring of phone calls and movements to and from the accommodation. Care plans should also include contact details of agencies that should be notified if the child goes missing, including the police and the UK Border Agency. Where there are concerns that a trafficked child has been moved elsewhere in the country, it may be advisable to contact the Missing People Helpline¹⁵ and consider applying for a recovery order if appropriate.

Whilst some councils have set out an anti-trafficking protocol in which they have committed themselves to accommodate adult trafficked victims through community care resources, others have taken legal advice and decided that they cannot support trafficked victims. Some Local Authorities have specifically addressed the needs of trafficking victims through other strategies, such as their work on violence against women or prostitution, and through work with migrant communities.

With the entry into force of the Convention, the Home Office will provide core funding for accommodation and other services for victims of trafficking during the 45-day reflection period. For the foreseeable future, this will be provided through third sector organisations, rather than by Local Authorities. If the victim is granted a temporary residence permit, they will receive support through the immigration support process.

Relevant practice:

- The only safe house for adult women victims of trafficking in the UK is provided by the Poppy Project in London and houses 35 women. The Poppy project, which is funded by the Office for Criminal Justice Reform and receives some support from London Councils, provides accommodation, outreach and support to women over the age of 18 who have been trafficked for the purposes of sexual exploitation and forced to work in prostitution in the UK. The Project also offers outreach support to women who it does not have the capacity to accommodate, and has developed partnerships with hostels and refuges to this end¹⁶. Once a woman is accepted onto the project,

¹⁵ www.missingpeople.org.uk

¹⁶ Further details are available on:

http://www.eaves4women.co.uk/POPPY_Project/Accommodation_and_Support.php

she is allocated a senior support worker and offered a range of services. These may include a subsistence allowance, a health and needs assessment, counselling services, English classes, risk assessments and safety planning and support in accessing legal services. The Poppy project has supported 401 women since it opened in 2003; 210 received supported accommodation and 191 received outreach support. Two additional safe houses are currently being established.

- The problem of trafficked children going missing from care is by no means unique to the UK. Similar problems occur, for example, in Valencia; victims are placed in non-secure children's homes, which they can leave at any time. Other countries, have however, managed to address the issue to some extent.
 - In the Netherlands, the government has channelled €25 million of public funding into the development of a system of secret safe houses. The Nidos project looks after over 2,000 victims of trafficking and employs 250 people. Many of the victims are housed with specially trained foster families or in monitored semi-independent blocks. The most vulnerable are placed in single-sex houses, which have 14 places receiving 24-hour care. Trafficked children in the Netherlands are consequently one third less likely to go missing from Local Authority care than their counterparts in the UK.
 - A guardianship scheme has also been established in the Netherlands, whereby each child is provided with a guardian to safeguard their interests, ensuring that they receive appropriate services and advocating on their behalf. The guardian is independent of the local authority and other bodies involved in trafficking cases and focuses solely on upholding the child's best interests.
 - In Rome, two shelters are provided by the city's Social Services department for women who have been trafficked for sexual exploitation; one of these is a safe house, whilst the other is a semi-autonomous refuge. There is also a hostel specifically for adolescent victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation. The addresses of the hostels are kept secret, and they are staffed by psychologists, lawyers, social workers and cultural mediators. Victims often live in the shelters for up to one year, whilst giving evidence against traffickers, being supported to gain training and employment skills and obtaining work permits.
 - Similarly, the Rosa project in Norway provides safe places for victims of trafficking across the country, as well as providing training and guidance for housing officers and shelter staff.
 - The City of Vienna also invests in the provision of safe accommodation for victims; LEFOE was set up in 1998 as a reception centre for trafficked women. Professional counsellors assist the victims with administrative dealings, such as obtaining official documents and providing for health insurance and medical care. An individual safety plan is drawn up for each victim, suited to the particular circumstances in which the victim finds herself. The addresses of safe houses for victims are kept secret and monitored by video and registered with the police as high priority locations.

2.3 Provision of Joined-up, Coordinated Services, Together with Other Agencies

What:

It is important to provide victims with advice about the complete range of services and help available to them. Victims are unlikely to have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the UK system or to know which agencies provide certain types of advice.

Who:

The Local Authority can play an important role in ensuring that a co-ordinated approach to the provision of information and advice is adopted. In particular, there is a need for effective joint working between the police and Local Authorities.

How:

UK Local Authorities need to examine how they can effectively offer joined-up services with other key stakeholders. Coordination with other agencies may be most effectively achieved through one-stop shops, or it may be the case that a formal forum needs to be formed to oversee this process - with a lead professional who can develop specialist knowledge in relation to trafficking victims and who can act as an advisor to other professionals; such a post-holder could support staff in more than one Local Authority area, if necessary.

Local Authorities should also consider the needs of trafficking victims when developing Local Area Agreements and deciding local priorities. The local support framework should link in with Local Criminal Justice Boards and Crime and Disorder Partnerships and should in some way mirror the services required for victims of other forms of violence and intimidation, such as domestic violence and sexual crimes.

Relevant practice:

- In Rome, the Sportello Centre is a 'one stop shop' that provides victims with advice on escaping prostitution and their traffickers, as well as information on health, education and housing. They also have a dedicated phone line (the Green Line), the details of which are handed out by the street outreach teams to women they suspect of being trafficked into prostitution.
- In Norway, the Rosa project operates an emergency and information hotline that offers help and information to victims and their families, as well as to anyone working with such victims. By calling the hotline, a woman will be offered safety, assistance in contacting public authorities, access to medical help, legal aid, interpretation services, food and money. She will be accompanied to the social welfare office or to the police if she wishes to make a formal complaint against her traffickers. The personnel are sworn to professional secrecy and there is no charge for accommodation.

- The London Safeguarding Children's Board has formed a Trafficked Children Sub-group which ensures an integrated approach between all agencies in London likely to encounter child victims of trafficking¹⁷.
- The Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance (TARA) provides specialist support to adult female victims of trafficking for sexual exploitation in Glasgow. The project was set up by Glasgow City Council and is part-funded by the Scottish Executive; it operates as an inter-agency working group involving the Scottish Executive, Strathclyde Police, the NHS and immigration services. Women may approach the project themselves, or be referred by other agencies. As soon as they are referred, an assessment is carried out of their immediate needs and any risks posed. A more in-depth assessment can then be carried out to inform a comprehensive package of practical and emotional support. TARA works closely with counselling services, the Scottish Refugee Council and the International Organisation for Migration, to ensure that the victim receives joined-up services to meet their needs, regardless of who the service provider is.

2.4 Provision of Impartial and Coordinated Services to Trafficked Children

What:

Child victims of trafficking remain a highly vulnerable group even after they have been identified and placed in care. Local Authorities need to know how to deal with these children, and have an understanding of what it means to be a victim of trafficking.

Who:

Trafficked children do not only pose a challenge to Local Authorities at the main points of entry to the UK, such as Dover or Heathrow; the trafficking of children has increased significantly in locations with smaller regional ports of entry and less ethnically diverse populations. It is therefore an issue which is increasingly concerning Local Authorities throughout the UK, with the authority in which the child is identified being responsible for service delivery for the victim, including accommodation, health, welfare and protection.

How:

Protocols defining roles and responsibilities can be set up between Children's Services, the police, the voluntary sector and other relevant agencies, so that all actors are clear about their roles when encountering and caring for a child who is thought to have been trafficked. These protocols could include factors such as arrangements for making missing persons reports to the police, procedures for information-sharing once a child is identified as missing, and agreed recording and reporting systems. The new 'ContactPoint' computer system should help in this regard; it will hold the details of all children in the UK under 18, and will help to ensure faster contact between doctors, social workers and police if they believe that a child is at risk.

The Children's Act 2004 (section 11) charges Local Safeguarding Children's Boards with ensuring that children and young people stay safe from harm. It is important that any

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http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/resources/trafficking/london_safeguarding_trafficked_children_toolkit_january_19th_2009.pdf p22

trafficking protocols that are developed at the local level compliment the work and the procedures of the LSCB.

Children who have been trafficked are most likely to come to the attention of Local Authorities for reasons other than trafficking. Indicators of trafficking should be included in existing assessment mechanism for safeguarding children, such as the Common Assessment Framework for Children and Young People (CAF)¹⁸. The CAF is a useful tool for assessing children's needs, enabling practitioners to combine their assessment with that of any other professional who is already working with the child, or has completed a specialist assessment for them. The assessment of need should try to establish relevant details about the child's background before they came to the UK, an understanding and analysis of why the child was brought into the country and an analysis of the child's vulnerability to remaining under the influence of their traffickers.

Where it is decided that a child needs support from various agencies, a Lead Professional should be designated, to ensure that the actions identified in the assessment process are fully coordinated. The lead professional provides a single point of contact for the child and assists the young person in accessing services.

Relevant practice:

- The Government has published a guide on 'Working Together to Safeguard Children – Safeguarding Children Who May Have Been Trafficked'¹⁹, which sets out the role of Local Safeguarding Children's Boards and of other agencies and services. Child trafficking has also been included in the cross-government Staying Safe Action Plan.
- Manchester Local Safeguarding Children's Board has developed an action plan to improve agencies' responses to Safeguarding Children from abroad, including combating the trafficking of children. This has led to the establishment of a specialist refugee and asylum service set up by the Children's and Families Service, the delivery of training on child trafficking for social workers and the production of written guidance on working with children from abroad. A multi-agency operational group has also been established that specifically monitors and responds to cases of suspected or known child trafficking.
- Cardiff Local Safeguarding Children's Board has also developed a multi-agency protocol for safeguarding children who may have been trafficked²⁰, which may prove a useful model for other LSCBs.
- The London Safeguarding Children's Board has also developed a trafficking assessment tool, which helps Local Authority staff to identify and assess the needs of the child and the continuing risks that they may face²¹. This multi-agency form, to be

¹⁸ <http://www.everychildmatters.gov.uk/delivering/services/caf/>

¹⁹

<http://publications.everychildmatters.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=HMG-00994-2007&>

²⁰ http://www.cardiff.gov.uk/objview.asp?Object_ID=10969&

²¹

http://www.londonscb.gov.uk/files/resources/trafficking/london_safeguarding_trafficked_children_toolkit_january_19th_2009.pdf (Appendix 16)

completed by all bodies who are involved in the identification and care of the trafficked child, may prove to be a useful tool for other LSCBs and Local Authorities.

2.5 Overcoming Linguistic Barriers

What:

Foreign victims of trafficking, even those who have been in the UK for a significant period of time, may not have a sufficient mastery of English to be able to deal with authorities and access the services to which they are entitled.

Who:

Local Authorities can ensure that interpreters are available to assist victims. Only independent professional interpreters should be used to ensure that there is no opportunity for the traffickers to gain access to their victims through this service; community interpreters must not be used.

How:

Interpreters should be asked if they know the victim and briefed about the sensitivity of their assignment. Should there be an indication that the victim knows the interpreter or that the interpreter knows the victims, the assignment should be stopped and the interpreter asked to leave. The interpreter should be briefed at the end of the assignment. Essential literature advising victims or their rights and access to services should be translated into the appropriate language.

Ideally a linguistic mediator should also be able to understand the cultural values and unique behaviours that are characteristic of a victim's national and ethnic background.

Relevant practice:

- In Vienna, the involvement of the Embassies from the victims' country of origin helps to facilitate this process.
- In Rome, the use of so-called cultural mediators ensures that victims are able to speak with someone from their own linguistic and cultural backgrounds (however this is not good practice when working with children). Cultural mediators are able to assist staff in understanding the behaviour and cultural needs of individuals, whilst also supporting the women in integrating into Italian society.

2.6 Provision of Psychological Support

What:

The provision of support to victims of trafficking cannot be limited to physical services, such as accommodation and schooling; it is also paramount that the victim's psychological needs are met. Victims are likely to be suffering from a high degree of trauma, stress, anxiety and fear of authority, as well as of the criminals who have abused and exploited them.

Who:

Whilst UK Local Authorities may not be in the position themselves to offer psychological support to victims of trafficking, their staff should be clear about whom amongst the local

stakeholders is responsible for this, and ensure that such support is available to the victim right from the first point of contact with them.

How:

Gaining the trust of the victims is key to a successful interaction. Some of the victims may have been trafficked by people whom they trusted, such as members of their own families or authority figures. Some victims, particularly children, may have a fear of authority figures, or may have been taught by their traffickers not to trust people in positions of authority. They may fear their traffickers so much that they do not feel that they can divulge information about them, and they may have received threats from their traffickers both to themselves and their families. Specialist support is needed to assist a victim in overcoming these psychological challenges.

Relevant practice:

- In the Roxanne Project in Rome, psychologists form an integral part of the street units which work with street prostitutes at night. The street units build up a rapport with the women over time and eventually gain their trust, continuing to monitor their whereabouts and safety. In the refuges which form part of the same project, a psychologist works with each victim closely and tries to build up a psychological profile which informs their recovery plan.
- The Vienna Municipal Department for the Promotion and Coordination of Women's Issues has also established a 24-hour women's emergency hotline to offer victims of physical, sexual or psychological violence immediate aid. The hotline is manned by a team of psychologists, lawyers and social workers, who offer victims support by phone, and are also available to meet the victims in person. The team accompanies clients to hospital, the police station or court. All assistance is free of charge.

2.7 Acquisition of New Skills

What:

For victims of trafficking to break free from their traffickers and to create a new life for themselves, they may need to be equipped with new skills which will enable them to support themselves financially. This is equally true whether the individual is going to be repatriated to their country of origin or to remain in the UK.

Who:

It is unlikely that Local Authorities will provide such training directly, but they can provide financial and material assistance to NGOs, in order to encourage them to make training available, and ensure that victims are aware of and can access the services available.

How:

Many victims will benefit from training in basic life skills that can help to prevent them from being re-trafficked; these may include literacy training, interview preparation and career counselling. It is also important that training focuses on the development of self-confidence, as this will help victims to resist future attempts by traffickers to lure them back. The experience of being trafficked is highly likely to have destroyed the individual's

self-worth and confidence; it is vital therefore, that training and counselling empower them to be able to make positive decisions about their own lives.

Relevant practice:

- In Rome, the ProHins project is a social integration project which provides skills-based training to support trafficked women in gaining employment. This includes training in linguistic, IT and social skills.
- The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) Mission in Ukraine offers victims of trafficking an opportunity to complete business development courses, elaborate business plans, and apply for grants to open their own small businesses; since 2004, a total of 168 victims have received business training, and as a result, 83 new businesses were opened by 98 victims of trafficking in Ukraine.

2.8 Protection from Traffickers

What:

One of the key reasons that victims of trafficking often will not identify themselves as such or speak out against the crime is their fear of their traffickers. Victims are therefore unlikely to come forward unless they believe that the authorities can offer them adequate protection from their traffickers.

Who:

In the case of adults, this protection will be provided primarily through space in a safe house; however, such places are very rare in the UK, and for the moment non-existent outside of London.

Child victims of trafficking are particularly vulnerable and may have formed bonds with their traffickers, making them prepared to lie about their relationships with them. Protection for children in care is a significant issue for local authorities – see section 2.4 above.

How:

Children coming to the attention of police and social services must not be returned to adults purporting to be their parents or carers unless full enquires have been made into the relationship between the adult and the child. Photographic identity papers for both the adult and the child should be produced.

All data about the victim and their whereabouts should be treated as confidential. There have been cases in the past where addresses of safe houses have accidentally been published on the internet. Such data, and information about the victim and their case history, must be treated with the utmost sensitivity and confidentiality. There should be clear procedures in place to stipulate which other stakeholders have access to particular components of the information held. The safety and welfare of a child or young person must be the first consideration when making decisions about sharing information about them.

Relevant practice:

- In Valencia, as in many places in the UK too, there is a common problem with adults reclaiming children from care homes using identity papers which did not include photographic evidence of their true identity; this has led to children being returned to their traffickers rather than to their real parents.

2.9 Understanding Victim's Needs

What:

The first concern of all those coming into contact with the trafficking victims should be the individual's welfare. The victims must not be seen primarily as a tool to catch the traffickers. This is key to the victim-centred approach to tackling human trafficking embodied in the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings.

Who:

All Local Authority staff who come into contact with victims of trafficking must understand the special needs that these individuals have in accessing council services. They must also understand the barriers that they face, be they linguistic, cultural or practical.

How:

The use of cultural mediators can act as a bridge between Local Authority staff and the victims.

The processes and systems of support put in place will need to be tailored to the specific needs of the victim – this should also include specific training for the officers dealing with them. For example, the needs of women and children vary enormously; there is also likely to be a difference in needs between internally trafficked victims and victims coming from abroad. Differences in need will also occur between victims trafficked for prostitution purposes, for forced labour and for criminal purposes.

Victims of trafficking may also have additional needs, which do not arise directly from their victim status, such as substance abuse problems or medical needs, and may have specific care needs and/or have dependent children which may make them eligible for assistance under section 47 of the NHS & Community Care Act, the Local Government Act 2000 s.2, Children Act 1989 or other relevant legislation. It is important that these needs are not overlooked, but that the victim is dealt with holistically, addressing all their needs regardless of the origin of the problems.

Local Authority staff also need to be careful not to allow any preconceptions or prejudices to colour their treatment of the victim; for instance a woman who has been trafficked for prostitution purposes has not generally chosen to become a prostitute. Local Authority staff must be careful not to prejudge the victim according to their occupation or to treat them as a criminal.

The implication of this is that a Local Authority will not only need to have a comprehensive strategy in place for assisting victims of human trafficking, they will also need to adapt the strategy to the needs of the individual. This is likely to entail undertaking a comprehensive needs assessment and drawing up an individual care plan, to ensure that all staff who

interact with the victim are aware of the needs and the way in which the Local Authority and its partners have decided to address them.

Relevant practice:

- A key part of the Roxanne project in Rome is the use of cultural mediators; these individuals work alongside the psychologists and the social workers in the street units. They tend to come from the same cultural background as the victims and can communicate in their own language and understand their background. Some cultural mediators also have their own experiences of trafficking or prostitution.

HT3 Assistance with Repatriation of Victims

The repatriation of victims is a complex process, involving the legal systems of the country of origin and the UK. Whilst Local Authorities do not have a defined role in the repatriation process, they do have a duty of care towards victims living in their area. For this reason, a Local Authority will need to be assured that a victim's safety and security have been taken into account if they are to be returned to their home country. The Local Authority may also decide to assist in preparing the victim for return.

3.1 Assuring victims' Safety and Security

What:

It is imperative that the option of repatriation is only activated when it is clear that it is safe to do so. This means that the authorities responsible for repatriation must be confident that the victim will not end up back in the hands of their traffickers in the event of repatriation. There is also the risk that the victim will end up in the same poor economic and social conditions from which they were originally trafficking, increasing the likelihood that they will once again become a victim.

Who:

Whilst repatriation is not the explicit responsibility of the Local Authority, its duty of care towards the victims means that it is likely to find itself involved in the decision-making process. It is important that councils understand the legal framework within which these decisions are taken and that, at all times, the victims safety and security is upheld as the guiding principle in the decision-making process.

How:

When considering repatriation Local Authorities should ideally work closely with the relevant Local Authority in the victim's country of origin, to ensure that a continuous care package is in place. International Social Services (ISS)²² can provide inter-country liaison to Local Authorities to facilitate this process.

Fast repatriation may be tempting for Local Authorities to pursue as it reduces the financial burden on them of housing and caring for victims. However, it is extremely important to follow a victim-centred approach, particularly when dealing with children. A risk assessment should be carried out into the danger that a victim may face if repatriated.

²² www.issuk.org.uk

Relevant Practice:

- In Valencia, when the authority began to have problems with the large number of unaccompanied minors identified as victims of trafficking, their first response was to repatriate the children as quickly as possible to Romania and Bulgaria. However, when social services staff had travelled with some of the children to assess the situation on the ground and to confirm the families' identities, they became increasingly concerned about the care that some of the children received on their return. As a result, the Valencian authorities took the decision to place children in care in Valencia unless they are sure that their families in their home countries had been accurately identified,
- In Vienna, travel documents were issued by the embassies of some countries of origin of the victims within a very short timeframe, sometimes within hours of the victim coming into care. This did not allow for proper procedures to be implemented to check the victims' safety and security or to prepare them psychologically for return. Austrian police have admitted that a large number of repatriated children have found themselves back in the hands of their traffickers once returned.
- In order to ensure the safety of victims on return, the Augarten Centre in Vienna has established centres to support victims of trafficking in Romania and Bulgaria and has provided training for the staff. Fourteen centres have been established in Romania modelled on the Augarten centre, and 3 centres are currently being set up in Bulgaria.
- Slough Borough Council recently had a case of a young Romanian girl, whose mother was ruled by the UK courts to have been complicit in the trafficking of the child. However, as the child's habitual place of residence was legally deemed to be Romania, the courts ruled that she had to be returned to her home country. Slough Borough Council tried to argue, that, under the Council of Europe Convention, a victim should not be returned if they are deemed to be at risk, but it was ruled that EU legislation²³ trumped the Convention in this case. This ruling may have significant consequences for other councils dealing with trafficking cases concerning EU nationals.

3.2 Preparing Victims for Return

What:

It is important that victims who are being returned to their home countries understand the process of repatriation. It is also vital that they are provided with the skills needed to help them to obtain a job back home and to prevent them from falling back into the hands of their traffickers.

Who:

Local Authorities working with adult victims of trafficking who wish to return to their home countries need to refer clients to the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) for information and assistance. The IOM, in turn, needs to work closely with social workers, psychologists and cultural mediators who have already been involved in the case.

²³ Council Regulation (EC) No. 2201/2203, "Brussels II Revised"

The IOM is an international organisation with a remit to assist in managing migration and to fight against the exploitation of migrants, especially the severe human rights violations suffered by trafficked persons. The organisation consists of 125 member states and has offices in over 100 countries, including the UK. Since 1995, globally IOM has assisted over 10,000 trafficked people.

How:

The IOM's programme for assisting victims of trafficking is the Assisted Voluntary Return for Irregular Migrants (AVRIM) programme²⁴. AVRIM provides victims with £1,000 of assistance in kind, including transportation, temporary accommodation and training²⁵. IOM also assist the victim at the airport on the day of departure, and provides reintegration assistance to the victim once they return home.

Relevant practice

- Between 2004 and 2008 only 33 applications were received from trafficking victims under the AVRIM programme in the UK, 26 of who returned to their home country. This shows how few victims of trafficking actually come forward voluntarily, and that of those that do, very few actually want to return to their home country.

HT4 Prevention of Human Trafficking

Local Authorities do not immediately come to mind as key actors in the prevention of human trafficking. However, there are a number of aspects of prevention in which they do have an important role to play. These include ensuring that local communities are informed about the phenomenon of trafficking and that citizens can begin to identify potential victims. Local Authorities can also assist the police in the identification of traffickers, using evidence gathered whilst assisting the victim in order to implicate the criminals responsible. Finally, Local Authorities can implement anti-trafficking measures designed to reduce demand for victims of trafficking.

4.1 Local Information Campaigns

What:

One way in which human trafficking can be prevented is by ensuring that local communities are aware that the phenomenon of trafficking is not something that happens elsewhere; it is occurring throughout the country, both in urban and rural communities, and can only be adequately tackled if citizens know how to spot and report the signs.

Who:

Local Authorities have a vital role to play in raising awareness of the issues locally. In carrying out this role, Local Authorities may wish to draw upon the work of two key organisations: 'STOP THE TRAFFIK' and the UKHTC's Blue Blindfold Campaign.

²⁴ AVRIM also covers individuals who have not been trafficked but who have overstayed their visa

²⁵ It should also be noted that the AVRIM scheme does not apply to EU nationals; IOM officers in EU countries can assist victims returning, but there is no official programme.

STOP THE TRAFFIK is a global coalition working to help stop the sale of people, to see traffickers prosecuted and to protect the victims. It has more than 1000 member organisations in 50 countries, including businesses, community groups, charities, schools, youth groups, universities and faith groups. There are over 600 local community groups in the UK.

The UKHTC Blue Blindfold Campaign²⁶ aims to raise awareness amongst male sex buyers of the exploitation and trafficking involved in off-street prostitution.

How:

The Active Communities against Trafficking (ACT) campaign run by STOP THE TRAFFIK aims to engage local communities in raising awareness of trafficking in their areas. Local community groups work together with the police, Local Authorities and other stakeholders to identify trafficking in the local area and to develop a community action plan on trafficking. A pilot project was implemented in east London in 2008, and further projects are currently being rolled out in London and Manchester. The ACT groups investigate whether trafficking is already happening in the area, making the community aware of the signs of people trafficking, exploring the journey of the trafficked person and informing local stakeholders. STOP THE TRAFFIK aims to set up ACT programmes in all communities.

STOP THE TRAFFIK have also developed a wide range of materials that Local Authorities can use to raise awareness of trafficking in the local community. These include sample lesson plans on trafficking for primary and secondary schools, as well as flexi-cards which explain the indicators of trafficking that citizens might come across in a farm or factory, on the high street, in a massage parlour and when travelling²⁷.

The Blue Blindfold Campaign has provided posters displayed in pubs and clubs in pilot locations, and there has been an online advertising campaign. The website also sets out some of the signs of trafficking that members of the general public can look out for in different environments, such as a domestic labour situation.

Finally, as one of the key employers in the local community, councils can also carry out awareness-raising activities amongst their own staff, ensuring that they are aware of the signs of trafficking they may potential encounter in their everyday lives, outside of the work environment as well as within it.

4.2 Identification of Traffickers

What:

To prevent future trafficking, the police require co-operation in identifying and gathering evidence that can be used to secure the prosecution of those responsible for the crimes of trafficking.

²⁶ <http://www.blueblindfold.co.uk>

²⁷ <http://www.stopthetraffik.org/getinvolved/act/acts.aspx>

Who:

Local Authorities are unlikely to play a key role in identifying and catching traffickers. However, they will be instrumental in gathering evidence from the victims about the traffickers, and may find themselves involved in court cases against traffickers.

How:

Local Authority staff will need to be vigilant in spotting and identifying any evidence in their dealings with victims. However, in so doing, they must always bear in mind that their primary role is to provide care for the victim, not to implicate the traffickers; meeting the needs of the victim must therefore be the primary concern, and must not be compromised in an effort to gather evidence. Clear guidelines should be put into place to ensure that Local Authority staff know what to do with any evidence that they do discover in their dealings with the victims, in terms of how and when this information is passed to the police.

Whilst it is often difficult for the police to gather enough evidence to bring prosecutions for human trafficking, they may be able to prosecute the perpetrators for other related crimes: for example, the role of Local Authorities in licensing saunas and massage parlours means that they could play a vital role in identifying and implicating traffickers.

Local Authorities also need to work closely with HMRC, which has the ability to remove criminal assets, undertake investigations into tax evasion by businesses suspected of being fronts for human trafficking rings and use insolvency procedures.

Relevant practice:

- Glasgow Adult Social Services operate a weekly health clinic for women in the off-street sex industry, enabling trafficked women to be identified, supported and provided with a route out of prostitution. This facility has been able to assist prosecuting authorities with gathering intelligence about trafficking and sexual exploitation of women in Glasgow.
- During the research undertaken for the preparation of this report, Slough Borough Council was able to engage in some very effective cooperation with the Valencian authorities in identifying and prosecuting traffickers. In January 2008 police recovered a 13-year old victim of trafficking from an address in Slough; this child was placed in police protection and into the care of Slough Borough Council. The police investigation in partnership with Children Services identified four adults who had brought the child into the UK, treated her as a domestic slave and exploited her for forced labour. This investigation coincided with the SOLACE study tour to Valencia. Whilst in Spain it was discovered that the identity of the child victim in Slough had been cloned by the same organised crime gang and used to traffic and exploit another child in Spain. This evidence was presented during the UK criminal trial and assisted in the conviction of four adults for trafficking a child into the UK, trafficking a child around the UK and child neglect.
- In Spain, the legal definition of the crime of human trafficking refers only to trafficking for sexual exploitation; this creates a barrier to arresting traffickers who are trafficking children for the purpose of carrying out petty crime. However, in Valencia, the Local Authority works with police to find other ways to prosecute criminals responsible for

criminal exploitation and forced labour. The very effective partnership has practically stopped the trafficking of Roma children in that region.

- In the STOP project in Oslo, a specialist team of police officers focus on disrupting the human trafficking market, most notably by focusing on the landlords and businesses who knowingly allow their premises to be used for illegal purposes. Once officers have ascertained that the sale of sexual acts is being carried out, they formally write to the landlords advising them of the activity and notifying them that, unless they take immediate action they will be prosecuted using legislation against persons financially benefiting from prostitution.

4.3 Implementation of Anti-trafficking Measures

What:

One of the main ways to prevent trafficking of human beings is to reduce demands for victims. There is a need for effective and sustained publicity campaigns, such as those directed at men about what prostitution means to the victims; a new law passed in 2008 made it illegal for clients to pay for sex with a woman who is being controlled for financial gain.

Who:

Local Authorities need to have a conscious awareness of the demand for trafficked victims in their local area and to work with the police and other law enforcement agencies to reduce demand for victims.

The UK Gangmasters Licensing Authority (GLA) regulates those who supply labour or use workers to provide services in agriculture, forestry, horticulture, shellfish gathering and food processing and packaging. Local Authorities should work closely with the GLA to ensure that gangmasters in their local areas are not using victims of trafficking for forced labour.

How:

Local Authorities need to take action to ensure that individuals and businesses are not complicit in the act of trafficking by fuelling demand for victims. This requires a proactive, hard-hitting approach, coupled with close cooperation with the police and other law enforcement agencies.

Local Authorities also need to also be confident that they are not complicit in trafficking themselves by indirectly employing victims, for instance on cleaning contracts or building contracts, where contractors may be using victims for forced labour.

See also section 4.1 for information on raising awareness within the local community.

The demand for victims of trafficking can be affected by seemingly unrelated events. For example, there is evidence that world sporting events create an increase in demand. This may be of particular interest in regard to the 2012 Olympics. There are two main areas in which this may be a concern: trafficking for forced labour and for prostitution purposes. 100,000 construction workers are expected on or near the Olympic site in the run up to 2012. All agencies and organisations involved in the Olympics need to consider if and how their programmes address the issues of discrimination and forced labour. All authorities

involved must be careful to ensure that contractual arrangements in place around the Olympics to hold all contractors and sub-contractors accountable for fair workplace conditions and thereby prevent forced labour and trafficking of vulnerable persons.

Relevant practice:

- The Government of Germany, regional and Local Authorities, international organizations, and NGOs initiated prevention and protection measures for the 2006 World Cup in mid-2005. German law enforcement authorities developed specialized strategies and concepts to prevent and investigate sex trafficking during the games. These included an overall World Cup National Security concept, a state-federal law enforcement information-sharing network, and greater police presence in red-light districts. Politicians and public figures at all levels actively promoted anti-trafficking efforts during the World Cup. The government funded a number of major public campaigns conducted by NGOs, and supported a 24-hour hotline for trafficking victims and World Cup attendees. Posters and flyers were displayed in key areas where fans gathered to watch games on large outdoor screens, reaching a much larger audience than previous anti-trafficking campaigns.
- During the World Cup, the 12 World Cup host cities faced on average a 30% increase in prostitution during the games; many of the additional prostitutes were trafficked into Germany from Central and Eastern Europe. The National Council of German Women's Organizations operated information booths in each of the host cities in Germany to distribute anti-trafficking literature, speak with fans about trafficking and encourage those purchasing sex services to look for signs of trafficking, which could be as simple as asking if a sex worker is there on her own free will. In Hamburg a 24-hour information centre for foreign prostitutes was constructed, complete with interpreters.

HT5 Working in Partnership

5.1 Working in Partnership at a Local Level

What:

As has been demonstrated throughout this report, the needs of trafficking victims cannot be addressed by Local Authorities alone.

Who:

Co-operation between Local Authorities, the police, the immigration authorities, Primary Care Trusts and other public and voluntary bodies is a prerequisite for success in the fight against human trafficking.

How:

All agencies involved in the identification and care of victims need to ensure that they are clear as to their respective roles and responsibilities. It is not enough to rely on good relations between individuals; formal cooperative structures and proper protocols between agencies must be established at the local level. The cooperating bodies need to prepare strategies which include multi-agency protocols and guidance on working with local community groups for the identification of victims of trafficking. There should be regular meetings between Local Authorities, immigration services and the police in order

to ensure that information is shared effectively, particularly as trafficked victims are probably more likely to talk to the Local Authority than to the police or immigration services.

The most effective partnerships tend to consist of multi-disciplinary teams, including psychologists, cultural mediators, mentors, social workers, lawyers and health professionals.

Relevant practice:

- The Oslo Pilot brings together representatives from Local Authorities, the police and NGOs. As a result of this arrangement, service providers are comfortable in referring clients to other services and victims receive coordinated support from all actors involved in their case.
- In Rome, a holistic victim support model has been developed, based on an effective partnership between Social Services, the police and social partners. The project demonstrates the importance of developing good multi-agency working practices, which are enhanced by – but not solely based upon – personal relationships. Communication and information sharing are the keys to the success of this project.

5.2 Working in Partnership with the National Level

What:

The implementation of the Council of Europe Convention Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is likely to increase the pressure on Local Authorities to provide services for victims of human trafficking as it will potentially lead to an increase in the number of victims identified as such. Local Authorities need far greater support from central government, both in terms of training and finances, if they are to deal effectively with this increased pressure.

Who:

Human trafficking will only be addressed successfully if all levels work closely together. Central government and Local Authorities must form a partnership which allows information to flow freely between the different levels, informs policy decisions and successfully allocates resources to where they are most needed.

It is vital that Local Authorities cooperate effectively with national authorities, and particularly with the UK Border Agency and the UKHTC. A proper two-way flow of information is key to this process.

How:

The National Referral Mechanism will play a key role in institutionalising the cooperation between Local and Central Government. There may additionally be some arguments for creating a National Indicator specifically on human trafficking; whilst not wishing to create any additional burden for local government, such an indicator would give a measurement of any potential burden that the Convention is placing upon Local Authorities in terms of assisting victims of trafficking.

It is Local Authorities that have the knowledge of what is happening on the ground in terms of identifying and assisting victims of trafficking. This knowledge can help to shape

and inform government policy on human trafficking. It is therefore important that Local Authorities have the ability to influence national legislation on trafficking, through bodies such as SOLACE and the Local Government Association. National decision-making and consultative bodies on trafficking would benefit from being opened up to membership from these organisations.

One key area in which local government needs additional support from the national level is funding. In the wake of Operation Pentameter 2, the Scottish Government has set aside provision that can be drawn down by Local Authorities on a case-by-case basis to cover the cost of providing support to adult victims of human trafficking who would not otherwise have recourse to public funds. If, as a result of the implementation of the Convention, Local Authorities have to assist a greater number of victims, they will need to be provided with additional resources for this purpose. In 2008, the government entered into agreement with the ten Local Authorities who look after the majority of unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, including trafficked children²⁸. Between them, they care for 3,500 asylum-seeking children and have outstanding bills of more than £30million. The councils are seeking a long-term solution that will mean that all of their costs are reimbursed by the government every year.

Relevant practice:

- The SOLACE study visits demonstrated the importance of multi-annual funding programmes for local anti-trafficking projects; one of the notable features of the visit to Oslo was the considerable financial resources that the Norwegian government and the city authorities jointly invested in tackling human trafficking. However, a great deal of this funding is on a year by year basis, limiting the sustainability and long-term prospects of the projects which are supported. Funding of 24-36 months would lead to more sustainable programmes being implemented.

5.3 Understanding the Implications of the Council of Europe Convention

What:

The implementation of the Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is primarily the responsibility of the national government. However, as this report has demonstrated, it will only be successful if Local Authorities also understand and are involved in implementation.

Who:

It is important that the relevance of the Convention to local government is understood at all levels within a Local Authority. Councillors, Chief Executives and Senior Managers, in particular, need to grasp the relevance of human trafficking for the council as a whole, not viewing it as something which only affects Children's and Adult Services, but recognising its reach into the work of other departments, including environmental health, education and other frontline services. There is a vital leadership role to be played in ensuring that an understanding of human trafficking issues and the spirit of the Convention is mainstreamed throughout the council.

²⁸ The council are Birmingham, Hammersmith and Fulham, Hillingdon, Hounslow, Kent, Liverpool, Manchester, Oxfordshire, Solihull and West Sussex.

How:

The work of the Council of Europe's Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe (CLRAE) - the Council of Europe body representing local government - may be useful in this regard. The CLRAE drafted a declaration on the fight against trafficking in human beings in 2006; the Declaration now has over 500 signatories from 35 countries, who have committed themselves to take a series of measures in their own communities. The central commitments of the Declaration on the Fight against Trafficking in Human Beings are:

- to disseminate information about the trafficking issue within the Local Authority area, with a view to improving public consciousness
- to ensure that the fight against the trafficking of human beings is prioritised by Local Authorities, and as part of that to ensure that the victims of trafficking are protected and rehabilitated

The CLRAE has also developed a number of recommendations on how Local Authorities can play their part in the implementation of the Convention. Councillor Sandra Barnes²⁹, Leader of South Northamptonshire, has prepared a report for the Congress on the role of local and regional authorities in combating human trafficking. The report focuses upon the 3 key issues of awareness-raising, education and specialised training, and, in particular, the protection, rehabilitation and reintegration of victims. The report emphasises that, whilst it is central governments that ratify the Council of Europe Convention, local government has a significant role in ensuring its success. For this reason, all Local Authorities need to develop an understanding of the level and type of trafficking present in their own community and to develop clear strategies to combat the trafficking and to identify and support victims.

²⁹ Councillor Barnes is Vice President of the CLRAE Committee on Social Cohesion. Her report can be found on:

<https://wcd.coe.int/ViewDoc.jsp?id=889879&BackColorInternet=e0cee1&BackColorIntranet=e0cee1&BackColorLogged=FFC679>

CONCLUSIONS

One of the greatest challenges in meeting the needs of victims of trafficking is a lack of knowledge and understanding about the crime of trafficking and the needs of the victims. As Local Authorities have a key role to play in addressing victims' needs, it is imperative that councillors and officers at all levels have a comprehensive insight into the issues and problems.

Protecting the rights of the victim should be the first priority of all anti-trafficking measures. A human-rights based approach must be adopted, which puts the needs of the victim above the need to catch the traffickers. This victim-centred approach should be at the heart of all Local Authority strategies on trafficking and should be the central foundation upon which local government services for victims are delivered.

All Local Authority strategies to address the challenges of human trafficking should build upon existing Local Authority strategies and procedures. There is no need to re-invent the wheel: Local Authorities will, for example, have procedures in place for safeguarding at risk children which can form the core of a strategy for safeguarding child victims of trafficking. Trafficking strategies should be cross-departmental and not only sit within children's or adult social services; buy-in from members and senior officers is also key to the success of such strategies. Whilst Local Authorities do not have responsibility for adult victims who have no recourse to public funding, forward-looking authorities are specifically addressing their needs through their strategies against violence against women and prostitution, as well as through work with migrant communities.

In developing trafficking strategies, Local Authorities should bear in mind the full range of human trafficking crimes. Whilst the majority of known victims of trafficking in the UK have been trafficked for the sex industry, councils may also encounter victims who have been trafficked for other purposes, such as forced labour and petty crime such as pick pocketing, shoplifting and begging. It should also be remembered that it is not only women and children who are trafficked. Men also become victims, particularly in the field of forced labour. Finally, any definition of trafficking must take into account the phenomenon of internal trafficking, whereby UK nationals are trafficked within this country.

Combating trafficking and assisting victims requires a multi-disciplinary and cooperative approach, involving a wide range of stakeholders. Local Authorities have an important role to play, but will not be successful if they try to operate in a vacuum. Local Authorities should be clear about the respective competences and responsibilities that they and the other actors have. This should help to ensure a seamless provision of services to the victim. Councils can perform a mapping exercise to ensure that they have a proper overview of the actors in their local area and in the national context who are involved in the identification and provision of support to victims. In addition to the police, Primary Care Trust, and local NGOs, it is important for Local Authorities to work closely with embassies of the countries of origin of victims, the International Organisation for Migration and the UK Border Agency.

Finally, it is important to remember that trafficking is a crime that transcends borders. Organised Criminal Networks move victims from one country to another, and local and national authorities will not be successful in combating the crime unless they also begin to

think internationally. The Council of Europe Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings provides a common set of European standards for identifying and assisting victims and for successfully pursuing traffickers. However, there is still a need for a truly European approach to addressing the challenges of human trafficking; Europe-wide tools need to be developed, such as a victim database that will help to identify victims who have already been trafficked to another European country, and an international directory of services for victims. This report - and the accompanying checklist for combating human trafficking - is a small step in identifying how good practice in combating the challenges of human trafficking can be transferred from one country to another. Much more now needs to be done to ensure that, at the local, national and European levels, victims are offered the highest level of protection and that all actors work together to combat the heinous crime of human trafficking.

ANNEX 1: Local Authority Victim Identification Audit

Child Victims

Where do we look?	What do we look for?	Who is likely to be the first point of contact?	How do we ensure that we are picking up the signs?
Care homes and foster families	Has a history of going missing and of unexplained moves Received unexplained phone calls Possesses money and goods not accounted for Adults loitering outside the place of residence	Foster carers Children's Services LSCBs	LSCB sub-group on child trafficking formed Training provided for foster carers and social workers on victim identification
Private homes	Different children living in the same home at different times Child has limited freedom of movement Performs excessive housework chores and rarely leaves home Child is malnourished Has not been registered with or attended a GPs practice Has not been enrolled in a school	Children's Services	Social workers trained in identification of trafficked children
Schools	Unexplained periods of absence from school Signs of physical/sexual abuse	Teachers Children's Services	Training and information materials provided for teachers
Hospitals and GPs surgery	Shows signs of physical/sexual abuse	Children's Services A&E staff and GPs	Protocol between Children's services and PCT to ensure checks against Child Protection Register are made
Interviews with unaccompanied asylum seeking children	Has prepared a story similar to those other children have given Mistrust of authority figure Has mobile phone but no money	Children's Services	Social workers trained in identification of trafficked children

Where do we look?	What do we look for?	Who is likely to be the first point of contact?	How do we ensure that we are picking up the signs?
On the streets	Children begging Children committing petty crime, e.g. pick pocketing Underage street prostitution	Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships Youth Offending Teams	CDRPs and Youth Offending teams build awareness of child trafficking

Adult Victims

Where do we look?	What do we look for?	Who is likely to be the first point of contact?	How do we ensure that we are picking up the signs?
Massage parlours	High security measures exist in the work/living quarters (e.g. opaque windows, board up windows, bars, barbed wire, security cameras, etc) Women are not free to come and go as they wish or to take breaks Women appear to be under 18 Women show signs of physical/sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement or torture	Licensing officers Prostitution outreach teams	Training for licensing officers Prostitution outreach strategy includes identification and assistance of trafficked victims
On the streets	The woman appears unhappy and fearful Women show signs of physical/sexual abuse, physical restraint, confinement or torture Special services are offered, included unprotected sex at a low price Woman only knows how to say sex-related words in English Women appear to be controlled closely by a pimp	Prostitution outreach teams Gender equality officers	Prostitution outreach strategy includes identification and assistance of trafficked victims

Where do we look?	What do we look for?	Who is likely to be the first point of contact?	How do we ensure that we are picking up the signs?
Shops, restaurants and factories	<p>Staff show signs of physical abuse or restraint</p> <p>Poor or non-existent safety equipment</p> <p>Workers do not have suitable clothing for their work</p> <p>Workers have no days off or holiday time</p> <p>Employer is holding their identification documents</p>	<p>Health and Safety Inspectors</p> <p>Environmental Health Officers</p> <p>Trading Standards Officers</p>	<p>Health and safety officers, environmental health officers and trading standards officers are trained in victim awareness</p>
Private homes	<p>Overcrowded conditions, with many people sharing 1 room</p> <p>Occupants do not know their own address</p> <p>Occupants are not allowed outside the house unless their 'employer' is with them</p> <p>Minibuses pick up occupants at unusual times</p>	<p>Housing officers</p> <p>Adult social services</p> <p>Migrant integration teams</p>	<p>Housing officers trained in victim awareness</p> <p>Migrant integration strategy includes awareness of human trafficking issues</p>
Local Authority Premises	<p>Workers on cleaning contracts arrive in minibuses and appear to be fearful</p> <p>Workers on building contracts arrive in minibuses and appear to be controlled</p> <p>Workers do not have their own identification papers</p> <p>Workers have no days off or holiday time</p>	<p>All council staff</p>	<p>Distribution of Blue Blindfold/ STOP THE TRAFFIK pamphlets on victim identification to all council staff</p>

Whilst each of these indicators alone is not sufficient to verify that a person has been trafficked, the presence of a number of indicators should raise suspicion and the member of staff concerned should follow internal procedures on trafficking. If the council believe that there are reasonable grounds to believe that the individual has been trafficked, they should notify the UK Human Trafficking Centre.

Sources: The information included here draws upon the UKHTC Blue Blindfold Campaign and the London LSCB Trafficking toolkit.

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Study Visits

A brief overview of each of the study visits is provided below.

(a) Rome

The study visit to Rome was designed to look at the way in which Local Authorities assist women who have been trafficked for prostitution purposes. The Italian experience of dealing with human trafficking issues has been recognised as containing many examples of good practice. Italian law provides trafficking victims with the right to a six-month renewable residence permit and social protection assistance. Whilst benefiting from temporary residence permits, victims can receive accommodation, welfare, health and education services. Residence permits can be converted into work permits when victims obtain employment. These laws have led to the number of trafficking victims assisted in Italy, as well as the number of traffickers arrested, significantly outstripping the comparable figures for the UK. The proactive victim centred approach has allowed high numbers of trafficking victims to be supported and ultimately integrated into Italian society.

Coordination and oversight of social protection projects for trafficking victims in Italy is undertaken by Local Authority social services departments, co-funded by central government. Some services are provided directly by Local Authorities, whilst others are provided by NGOs following submission of tenders to the Local Authorities.

In Rome, the Council runs 'Project Roxanne', which co-ordinates victim support services for women who have been trafficked for purposes of sexual exploitation. Project Roxanne provides the following services:

- Street Units – provides outreach support for prostitutes at night, covering 5 districts in Rome 4 times a week;
- Enquiry Desk – one stop shop for information, advice and assistance for victims of trafficking.
- 2 Social Services funded refuges - 1 safe house and 1 semi-autonomous refuge.
- ProHIns Project - a social integration project that provides language and IT classes and other skills-based training and support to help victims to gain employment.

There is also another refuge funded by the Local Authority, under a different project, specifically for adolescents, and 8 other refuges run independently or by religious institutions – these are not funded by the Council of Rome, but work in partnership with them.

Between 1999 and 2004, 328 women were sheltered under the project. 'Roxanne' cost the municipality €1.4 million per year, with the Central Government contributing an additional €120,000.

(b) Oslo

The study tour to Oslo was designed to look at the effective multi-agency approach to combating human trafficking that has been developed in the Norwegian capital. The main focus of the visit was on the trafficking of women into Oslo for sexual exploitation and in particular in the indoor and street prostitution trade.

Norway is recognised as demonstrating best practice in terms of the provision of care to trafficked children. It is a destination country for women and children from Nigeria, Russia, Albania, Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia trafficked for the purpose of commercial sexual exploitation. At a local level, Oslo city council has developed some interesting initiatives to tackle the consequences of human trafficking. The Oslo Pilot is an inter-disciplinary cooperative forum for the assistance and protection of victims in Oslo, bringing together all the key actors involved in tackling human trafficking, such as the Local Authorities, the police and NGOs. There are also city conferences on prostitution and human trafficking, which bring together police, municipal authorities and welfare services from the six largest cities in Norway.

(c) Vienna

The main aim of the study visit to Vienna was to examine the way in which the city authorities assist Roma children who had been trafficked for criminal purposes. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that there are approximately 7,000 foreign trafficking victims in Vienna alone, many of whom are from Central and Eastern Europe. Women are trafficked for sexual exploitation and domestic service, whilst children from Roma communities are trafficked to beg and to steal. Some of these children are bought from their parents, whilst others are deceived. According to police in Vienna, each child has to bring in a minimum of around €250 a day, incentivised by the threat of beatings and even mutilation. Gang members protect their profit margins by passing on the "failures" to paedophiles for €300 a day.

The Vienna Ministry for Children has a great deal of experience in dealing with trafficked children. They work with a special crisis centre – the Augarten Centre - that is responsible for providing emergency help. The centre provides support to determine a child's identity or nationality, and to return them to their home countries, having received assurances of care from that country.

(d) Valencia

The study visit to Valencia also focused upon assisting Roma children who have been trafficked for criminal purposes. During the summer of 2007 a number of Romanian Roma children came to the attention of the Valencian authorities through committing street crimes, such as theft and knife point robberies. Police identified a specific Organised Criminal Network of Romanian Roma adults who were trafficking and exploiting the children to commit crime. An investigation commenced, resulting in a number of adults being arrested in November 2007 and prosecuted. Due to the limitations of the human trafficking legislation, the adults were prosecuted for conspiracy offences around theft and robbery. A number of the trafficked children were placed into Local Authority care. The

investigation revealed that the children are sold between gangs for €20,000. When not generating sufficient income for the gangs, victims were then sold to paedophiles.

The Police operation has resulted in a huge reduction in the numbers of Romanian Roma children now coming to the attention of the Valencian authorities.

An identified care home in Valencia specialised in supporting trafficked children. It was evident that there was an excellent working relationship between the care home staff and the police. This was fundamental to supporting victims and the police investigation.

(e) Council of Europe, Strasbourg

The study visit to Strasbourg was rather different to the others, in that it focused upon the Council of Europe, rather than the city authorities. The Council of Europe is the intergovernmental organisation responsible for the promotion of democracy and human rights in the whole of Europe. The Council of Europe's Convention on Action against Trafficking in Human Beings is the main legal framework governing the response of national authorities to trafficking issues. The UK has recently ratified the Convention, which entered into force here in April 2009.

The Council of Europe also has a body which represents local and regional authorities – the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities in Europe (CLRAE). The CLRAE has produced a Declaration on the Fight against the Trafficking in Human Beings. More than 500 local and regional authorities from 35 countries have signed the Declaration and committed themselves to take a series of measures in their own communities.