

## London Borough of Enfield

### Crime Scrutiny Panel

Meeting Date 16<sup>th</sup> March 2021

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**Subject:** Modern Slavery Team update

**Cabinet Member:** Cllr Alev Cazimoglu

**Executive Director:** Tony Theodoulou

**Key Decision:** NA

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### Purpose of Report

1. To provide an update on the Modern Slavery Team's first year in practice.

### Proposal(s)

2. To note the report.

### Reason for Proposal(s)

3. See purpose of report.

### Relevance to the Council Plan

4. *Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods* - The Modern Slavery Team works in local neighbourhoods to help disrupt criminal activity that will have a negative impact on our local communities.
  - 4.1 *Safe, healthy and confident communities* - by targeting the gang masters in the UK and overseas we can, jointly with the police target the root of this heinous crime.
  - 4.2 *An economy that works for everyone* - by fulfilling our statutory duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the council has worked to ensure that our contracts are ethical and robust to mitigate the risks of modern slavery being in our supply chains.

### Background

5. Modern slavery is a heinous crime that affects all communities of all ages, genders and nationalities. Modern slavery has become a high priority in recent years, with the Government identifying it as 'the greatest human rights issue of our time'.<sup>1</sup> It continues to be the fastest growing international crime;

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<sup>1</sup> ["The greatest human rights issue of our time": Theresa May commits to UK leadership on slavery \(freedomfund.org\)](https://freedomfund.org)

the second largest source of illegal income for organised criminality; and targets the very fabric our society. It can take many forms, some are well-known such as sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and domestic servitude. Others may be less recognised, such as organ harvesting, forced and sham marriage.

- 5.1 Evidence of labour exploitation in high street fashion retail factories in Leicester and other parts of the country last year prompted the government to comment that this “demonstrated how the abuse of people through this abhorrent crime continues to grow in front of the very authorities who should be eradicating this abuse.”<sup>2</sup>
- 5.2 How common is slavery in the UK? Anti-Slavery International claims it is much more common than people think with around 13,000 being exploited in the UK alone. However, the National Crime Agency have said it's just the tip of the iceberg and there are lots more people up and down the country who are being kept as slaves, but their cases have never come to light.
- 5.3 What is modern slavery? In the UK the common form of modern slavery sees people trafficked into forced labour for very little pay. This applies to a variety of industries but is most commonly seen in agriculture, hospitality, car washes, and manufacturing. Women may also be trafficked for sex. Children can also be forced to commit crimes such as petty theft or cannabis production.
- 5.4 Who are victims of modern slavery? Anyone can be a victim of slavery but people who are classed as vulnerable are often targeted. This also includes those who are from a minority and socially excluded groups can also be targeted. The Government says that two-thirds of victims of modern slavery are women and one in four victims is a child<sup>2</sup>. A variety of things can contribute to someone being a victim of modern slavery this can include access to education, poverty and limited opportunities.
- 5.5 The London Borough of Enfield is at the forefront of tackling this crime and supporting survivors to recovery, as statutory modern slavery first responders,<sup>3</sup> by being providers of social housing and safeguarding services for adults and children, and through our disruption activities via England’s first Modern Slavery Team in a local authority.
- 5.6 This report covers the period of 20<sup>th</sup> January, when the Modern Slavery Team was formed, to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020. The team has a focus on
  - raising awareness of modern slavery around the borough
  - providing a holistic response to concerns of potential modern slavery
  - supporting survivors of modern slavery
  - support the safeguarding teams in Enfield with expert advice on individuals that may be potential victims of modern slavery.
  - support the Police to investigate locational issues such as homes or businesses,

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<sup>2</sup> [2020 UK annual report on modern slavery \(publishing.service.gov.uk\)](https://www.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/86422/2020-UK-annual-report-on-modern-slavery.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> [National referral mechanism guidance: adult \(England and Wales\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/86422/national-referral-mechanism-guidance-adult-england-and-wales.pdf)

5.7 The Modern Slavery Team comprises of a Team Manager (part time) and two investigators, working jointly with a specialist modern slavery Police team.

## Main Considerations for the Council

### 6. Purpose of the Modern Slavery Team

6.1 The team was established to be a central point of coordination and expertise on all aspects of modern slavery. While the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hubs (MASH) are the first point of contact for concerns pertaining to an adult or child at risk, the Modern Slavery Team will explore concerns relating to locations, businesses and the organisational crime aspects of modern slavery.

### 6.1 Referrals into the Modern Slavery Team

6.2 During the first year the total number of referrals into the team (20<sup>th</sup> January to 31<sup>st</sup> December 2020) were 83 (see Chart 1). The referrals received during 2020 were from a range of sources (see Chart 2). The team continues to develop a dashboard of all the information we hold (referrals, locations, victims, perpetrators, etc) to map modern slavery across the borough and identify trends in crime types, locations and individuals. We may then establish if there are pockets of modern slavery around the borough and where to target and focus certain resources.

Chart 1

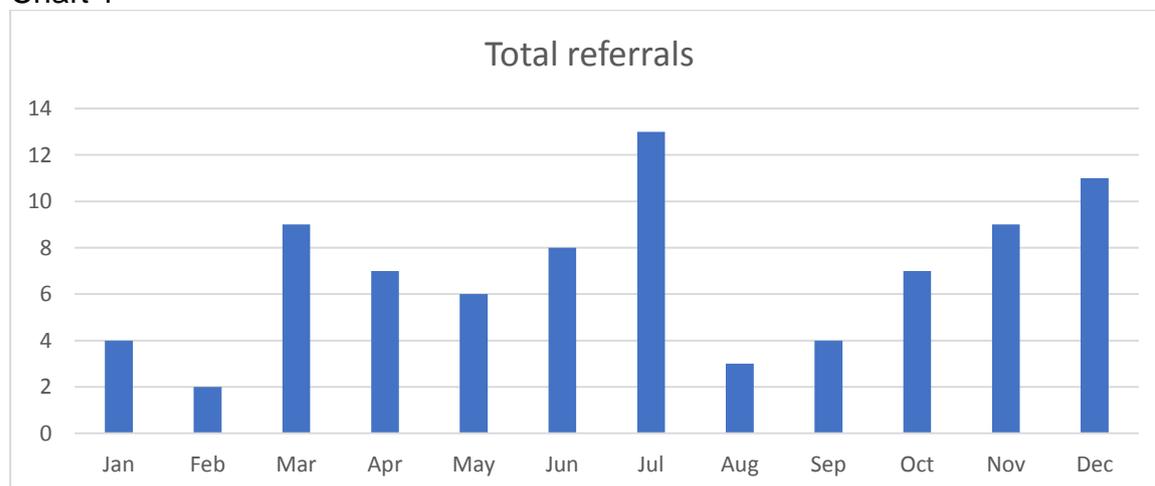
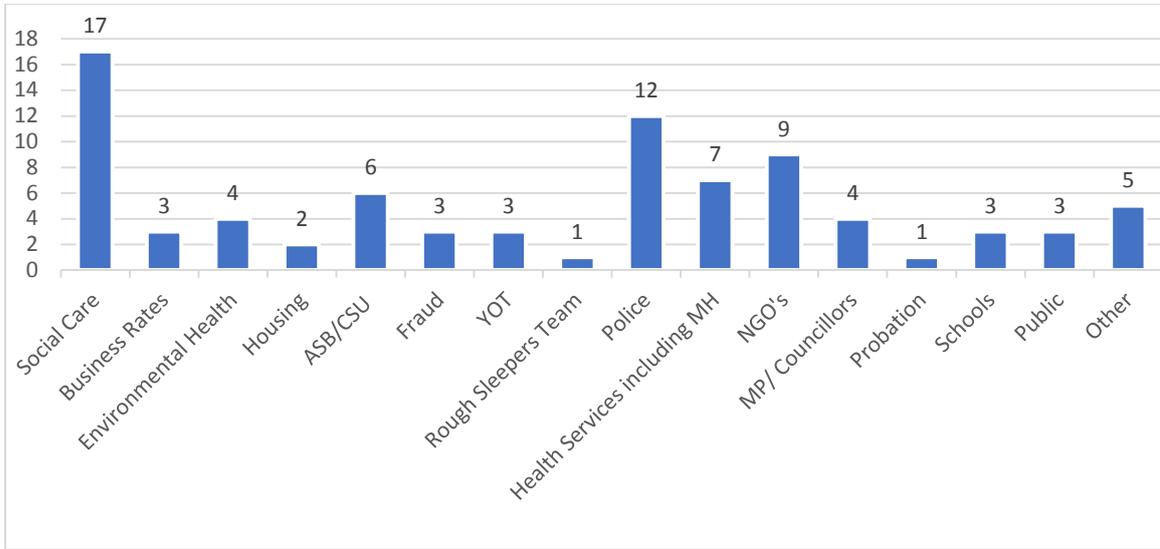
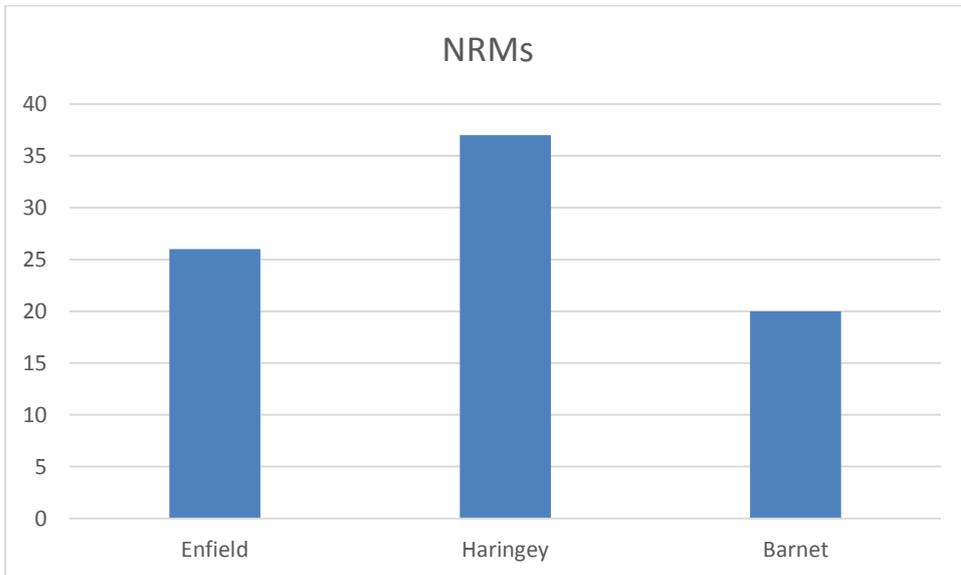


Chart 2



### 6.3 National Referral Mechanism (NRM)

The National Referral Mechanism is a national framework used to identify and refer potential victims of modern slavery for support. Below is a comparison of NRM referrals across Enfield and our neighbouring boroughs for the period of January 2020 to September 2020:



### 6.4 Support to the Police

During the pandemic the team have attended post-raid reception centres (safe spaces where medical treatments and interviews can take place) and participated in planned Police raids regarding locational/business concerns such as local car washes, local brothels and operations regarding county lines and sex workers.

During the seven raids we have encountered potential victims and offered them support services such as emergency accommodation and NRM referrals. We have been on hand to coordinate the local authority response to immediate concerns. We have developed a Safe and Well pack for victims now being used by both our health colleagues and the police.

#### 6.5.1 Case example 1

In late 2019, a referral from Environmental Health concerning a 46-year-old woman who was possibly being exploited was received. Our investigation discovered two potential exploiters living at or linked to the address where the victim was being held. Alongside gathering the information and intelligence for the Police, time was spent building a rapport and trust with the victim, which resulted in the victim disclosing during a site visit that she was a victim of modern slavery (domestic servitude). Based on this disclosure and the information and intelligence provided by the team the Police arrested and questioned the alleged perpetrators, leading to four people being charged with various offences relating to modern slavery. The case is due to go to trial in October 2021. The victim was taken to a place of safety, where she has since been supported to obtain settled status, housing and is currently being supported to find employment.

#### 6.5.2 Case example 2

At the start of the team we were informed by the Central Police Modern Slavery and Kidnap Unit of concerns relating to the farm/warehouse location in Enfield, such as potential breaches of planning control, food hygiene and modern slavery. The team attended the pre-raid planning meeting at Cobalt Square alongside the Police and other key organisations, including Environmental Health. The raid on the site was confirmed for July 2020. It was a large-scale operation involving over 100 police officers, along with colleagues from London Fire Brigade, Environment Agency, National Crime Agency and the National Food Crime Unit. The team supported the Police on site and eleven potential victims were taken to the reception centre and three people were arrested for various offences including modern slavery. The potential victims declined to be referred into the National Referral Mechanism. Some of the potential victims (4) were willing to be supported to find suitable housing and secondary mental health support. The remaining potential victims declined support from the team.

### 6.6 Other Activities

6.6.1 Helpline - In May 2020 we established a specialist modern slavery helpline for professionals and members of the public to seek specialist support and advice, or to refer their concerns of modern slavery in the borough that they encounter. Between May 1st and Dec 31st, 2020, we received 101 calls to the helpline.

6.6.2 Training - We continue to offer awareness sessions on modern slavery via MS Teams. The awareness sessions cover various areas including; what is modern slavery, types of exploitation, where and what signs to look for, the modern slavery strategy, the national referral mechanism and the referral pathways. Between March 1st and Nov 30th, 2020, we delivered 45 awareness training sessions to 433 delegates across Enfield including GP's, schools, social care, etc.

- 6.6.3 Anti-Slavery Week - In October 2020 to mark Anti-Slavery Day (18th October) the Team arranged various events over the week such as awareness sessions for Council staff, an advice surgery session for professionals and we organised a mini conference with guest speakers
- 6.6.4 Enfield Modern Slavery board - chaired by the Director of Health and Social Care, the board meets quarterly to discuss the borough's needs and how as a partnership they will be addressed. The board includes representatives from the Council, the Police, local hospitals, Clinical Commissioning Group, Border Agency and the Human Trafficking Foundation (HTF) and provides governance to the team and their action plan.
- 6.6.5 London Modern Slavery Leads Network (LMSL) - this was established by Enfield Council and the HTF to help provide guidance to London boroughs on how to approach modern slavery concerns and to ensure a collective response in the treatment and support of victims. The LMSL network has strong links with the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC), Modern Slavery Board to highlight the growing need for further resources and support to enable local authorities to continue developing their response.

## 6.7 Challenges

- 6.7.1 Apart from the challenges from the Pandemic, for many victims of modern slavery there is a deep sense of mistrust towards government officials and the Police. It means that not all offers of support are accepted, particularly in the case of the support offered by the NRM. In addition, there difficulties in reaching some marginalised groups to provide support with the Settled Status scheme. The team are currently supporting Health Watch to reach such groups to secure settled status for Enfield residents.
- 6.7.2 Work to tackle modern slavery has not developed in a uniform way across all local authorities or wider local partnerships. To address any ambiguities faced by councils the Government we are lobbying for the government to publish a statutory guidance on responding to modern slavery. This is being raised via the London Modern Slavery Leads Group.
- 6.7.3 Many local authority supported cases go on to get no recourse to public funds (NRPF) status. Given the number of challenges, including the cost, that this poses for councils, the Government should review the use of NRPF as a whole.<sup>4</sup>

## **Safeguarding Implications**

- 7 In Enfield, all cases of potential modern slavery are treated as possible safeguarding cases under s.47 Children Act 1989 and s.42 of the Care Act

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<https://www.local.gov.uk/sites/default/files/documents/09092018%20LGA%20Briefing%20Tackling%20modern%20slavery%20HoC%20%28004%29.pdf>

2014. This is to ensure consistency with our response to the crime and to safeguard vulnerable children and adults in line with the local authorities First Responder duties and obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

### **Public Health Implications**

- 8 Safeguarding of adults at risk is recognised as a significant public health issue; preventing abuse and promoting of choice will increase wellbeing within these populations. We will work with local people and partners to promote an approach that concentrates on improving the quality of life for the adults concerned; being safe is only one of the things people want for themselves and there is a wider emphasis on wellbeing.

### **Equalities Impact of the Proposal**

- 9 N/A

### **Environmental and Climate Change Considerations**

- 10 N/A

### **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken**

- 11 N/A

### **Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks**

- 12 N/A

### **Financial Implications**

- 13 N/A

### **Legal Implications**

- 14 N/A

### **Workforce Implications**

- 15 N/A

### **Property Implications**

- 16 N/A

### **Other Implications**

- 17 N/A

### **Options Considered**

18 N/A

## Conclusions

- 19 The Modern Slavery Team will continue to work to develop and build on its successes from the last year and continue to establish victim pathways, pursue perpetrators, promote and share good practice with our colleagues, and act as a collective voice to address challenges and raise awareness across London.
- 19.1 The team will continue to liaise with the agencies managing the Victim Care Contract with the hope of being able to receive updates on the potential victims that have been referred into the National Referral Mechanism. This will help the team better understand if best outcomes are being achieved for those who have accepted a National Referral Mechanism.
- 19.1 The success of the online conference in October 2020 and the repeated request of attendees for other similar events, means that the Modern Slavery Team hope to create a repeat event later in 2021.
- 19.2 The Modern Slavery Team will continue to work with the Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) teams and other council departments to drive up the number of National Referral Mechanisms being completed.

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4<sup>th</sup> March 2021

## Appendices

Action plan 2020/21 and 2021/2022

## Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: