



VERA BAIRD^{QC}
POLICE & CRIME COMMISSIONER

POLICE AND CRIME PANEL

24th April 2018

REPORT OF THE SAFEGUARDING DEPARTMENT, NORTHUMBRIA POLICE

AN UPDATE ON OPERATION SANCTUARY AND THE CURRENT ISSUES IN REGARD TO MODERN DAY SLAVERY

1. PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update with regard to Operation Sanctuary and the newly formed Complex Abuse Investigation team and to highlight current issues with regard to Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Operation Sanctuary was a Northumbria Police led multi-agency operation which began in Newcastle in 2014 to target the criminal behaviour of men who commit sexual offences against vulnerable women, and children. From the start, this operation into sexual exploitation was supported by social care resources and resources from the third sector and health.

- 2.2 In April 2015, a successful home office innovation bid of £3.5 million allowed the expansion of a Sanctuary victim team including additional social care and third sector resource, as part of a two year project which operated both north and south of the Tyne to tackle and investigate perpetrators who commit / attempt to commit sexual exploitation and to safeguard and support vulnerable adults and children who are victims of CSE/SE and Human Trafficking or at risk of CSE/SE and Human Trafficking.

- 2.3 Operation Sanctuary has been absorbed into the Complex Abuse Investigation Unit, within the Safeguarding Department and consists of:

2.4 Intelligence capability

2.5 Prevention:

The intelligence picture is developed using police and partner intelligence and information and from that identify geographical locations, problematic areas, takeaways / food outlets, places where vulnerable adults and young people gather and then develop patrol plans for those areas.

2.6 Promote Awareness:

The team raises awareness and increases Safeguarding interventions within the Police, raises understanding with partner agencies including local authorities and promotes awareness from the business community and the general public.

2.7 Offender Activity:

The team build intelligence, highlight current and potential offenders, build activity around any persons with live intelligence which associates them with potential sexual abuse or exploitation and builds intelligence / activity around geographical locations associated to abuse or sexual exploitation.

2.8 Investigation:

The investigation team are made of a workforce blend of Detective Constables and Police Constables who are undergoing detective training (ICIDP). The officers are trained in the investigation of rape and serious sexual assaults and in child abuse investigation (SCAIDP and SSADIP), or are working towards their accreditation or are enrolled onto the process. The officers within the teams are now experienced officers investigating complex cases of sexual exploitation, conspiracies to commit sexual exploitation and modern day slavery.

2.9 The investigation team have responsibility to investigate the most prevalent models of sexual exploitation with Northumbria Police;

2.10 Inappropriate relationship – usually involving one perpetrator who has control over a young person or vulnerable adult who may believe they are in a loving relationship.

(Project Sanctuary is unable to deal with all inappropriate relationships and deal with those perpetrators who target more than one victim or the victim is at high risk of sexual exploitation).

2.11 Boyfriend Model – the perpetrator befriends and grooms the victim into a relationship and then coerces them to have sex with friends and associates.

2.12 Organised and party network – Young people (often connected) are passed through networks possibly over geographical distances between towns and cities where they may be forced / coerced into sexual activity with multiple people. Young people are often used as agents to recruit others into the network.

2.13 In addition to the sexual exploitation models, the investigation team have the responsibility of investigating the offences of Modern Day Slavery.

2.14 The Victim Team

The development of Sanctuary's response around prevention, investigation and disruption has yielded very successful outcomes in terms of safeguarding future victims and bringing offenders and organised crime groups to justice. From 2018/19 the PCCs Supporting Victims Fund has supported Changing Lives and Bright Futures to deliver these support services.

The victim teams are made up from Police officers, social workers from Adult and Social Care and charities including;

- 2.15 Bright Futures – This is a young women’s project that supports young women around healthy relationships and staying safe, health and wellbeing, employment, education and training. Bright Futures offer one to one support but also carry out a range of other activities including education work in secondary schools and colleges.
- 2.16 Barnardo’s – A family therapist sits within the team and receives referrals to provide and manage support plans for vulnerable families due to Child sexual exploitation.
- 2.17 Changing Lives – Provides specialist support to vulnerable people in relation to drug addiction, homelessness, sex work and sexual exploitation.
- 2.18 The victim teams are co-located within rented premises to establish a community based hub that has a victim focused approach to build on identified good practice. The North victim team is based at Freeman House, West End of Newcastle and the South team, is at the Hub, Crowther industrial estate, Washington. The priority of the team is to protect victims or potential victims of sexual exploitation by working closely with them and our partners to ensure they receive the appropriate safeguarding and support.
- 2.19 The benefit of the specialist victim multi agency team is that they are able to efficiently and effectively share their information and to make a sensitive approach to a suspected victim through an identified trusted individual.
- 2.20 Through persistence and patience the team build a rapport with the victim, gain their confidence to allow the team to help and support victims and potential victims to Safeguard them, capture their evidence and support them through the court process and beyond.
- 2.21 The purpose of the victim team is three fold:
- To ascertain if the potential complainant is a victim of Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) / Sexual Exploitation (SE) and if they want to provide an evidential account. This then allows the investigation team, to investigate and prosecute the named offenders.
 - If the potential complainant does not wish to provide an evidential account, the social worker and or Police officer engage with the potential complainant to asses the risk of CSE/SE. This enables support to be put in place around understanding the risk of CSE/SE to build their knowledge of exploitative behaviour and their ability to keep themselves safe with the hope that this reduces the risk of CSE/SE and significant harm to that person.
 - To build an intelligence picture to allow for disruption of those suspected to be engaged in exploitation, to protect those who are susceptible to exploitation and to prevent offences being committed against them.
- 2.22 On several occasions, (especially on initial contact) many potential complainants will not disclose any offending against themselves but have provided intelligence to those engaging with them whether that be a police officer, a social care representative, or a colleague from one of the third sector organisations. This intelligence can be used and developed by the intelligence team for disruption purposes to target hot spot areas and potential suspects to help prevent any further offending.

- 2.23 As a result, it is difficult to overstate the positive impact of Sanctuary on culture and practice and, as a consequence improvement in addressing sexual exploitation. The multi-agency victim team has allowed for positive improvements in relation to safeguarding partner's working together, improving victim's welfare, restricting and preventing abusive activities by perpetrators. The dedicated victim's teams have been nationally recognised as best practice in a victim centric approach and is subject to national interest from other Police Forces, Local Authorities, Government bodies and the third sector and was highlighted as best practice in the Newcastle joint serious case review which was recently published.

3. DRIVERS FOR CHANGE

- 3.1 The Home Office funding for Sanctuary ended in April 2017. Consultation with Local Authorities ensured that they; Newcastle, Gateshead, South Tyneside and Sunderland children and adult services committed to Sanctuary and continued to support the victim team by funding their social care resources. North Tyneside and Northumberland attend a weekly information sharing meeting held at Freeman House but have not committed a resource to the victim team. Bright Futures, Changing Lives and Barnardo's have also obtained funding streams to fund their resource within Sanctuary.
- 3.2 More recently there has been an emergence of Modern Day Slavery (MDS) investigations which are complex and organised crime investigations, which has placed further demand upon the Safeguarding and the Sanctuary team. The approach to MDS from Sanctuary has similarly seen Northumbria Police and partners recognised by the Anti-Slavery Commissioner as best practice.
- 3.3 Following the implementation of the new Safeguarding Operating Model, there have been three key changes to Sanctuary;

The two investigation teams formerly based in Washington Police Station and Etal Lane Police station have moved location and have combined as a centralised team at Gateshead Police Station. To reflect the nature and type of investigations undertaken by the team, they have been rebranded as the 'COMPLEX ABUSE INVESTIGATION TEAM'. This provides resilience for the larger investigations and ensures a more coordinated approach. There are now four larger investigation teams supervised by four Detective Sergeants and 2 Detective Inspectors. This team will continue to investigate offences of CSE / SE / MDS and will continue to work with the victim team in exactly the same way as before.

- 3.4 The change in the name of the investigation team has no impact upon the Sanctuary victim team, who will remain known as such and which continues as our dedicated multi agency response to protecting and safeguarding victims / suspected victims of CSE.

The Intelligence cells from South and North Sanctuary teams to return to FIB to a centralised location.

- 3.5 The two multi-agency victim teams remain co-located with safeguarding partners in non-police premises, to ensure continued delivery of the best possible service, to support victims and ensuring that dangerous offenders are brought to justice, victims are safe and public reassurance and confidence is maintained. Newcastle Council, Newcastle CCG have agreed that they will share the cost with Northumbria Police to

maintain the victim hub at Freeman House, West Road, Newcastle. The South Hub for the financial year 2018 -2019 will be paid by Northumbria Police.

4. THE CURRENT POSITION

4.1 Victims and Engagement

The total number of referrals into Sanctuary are 640, of these 432 are associated with sexual exploitation offences and 77 are associated to modern slavery or trafficking offences and 131 are related offences such as drug offences and assaults. 409 are adults and 231 are children. All potential complainants were contacted and visited by the victim teams. Of these complainants a total of 166 have engaged, 133 providing evidential accounts in relation to CSE/SE and or MDS. All 166 complainants are currently engaging with the victim team.

4.2 Partnership Collaboration and Engagement

In relation to the complainants, the following numbers of referrals have been made to the agencies within the victim team:

36 to Changing Lives, GAP/MAP service
6 to Children's Society
42 to Barnardo's
56 Bright Futures

4.3 Investigations

There have been a number of successful prosecutions and custodial sentences achieved by the Sanctuary teams; 97 convictions for offences including rape and sexual assault, offenders sentenced to over 400 year's imprisonment. There are 35 prosecutions still ongoing. As stated the complex abuse investigation team investigate offences of the emerging threat of Modern day Slavery, Sexual Exploitation and Child Sexual Exploitation. The investigations are complex, large scale and often involve conspiracies.

4.4 Intelligence

There has been a total of 1437 intelligence items containing information relating to CSE and Modern Day Slavery were further researched and acted upon which has resulted in a number of disruption tactics;

290 vehicles actively monitored on police intelligence system or PNC & ANPR action markers involved or suspected involved in CSE / SE / HT / MDS, multiple vehicles have been uplifted and seized for no insurance or other traffic related matters.

713 subjects actively monitored on police intelligence system suspected involved in CSE / SE / HT / MDS currently subject to directed tasking / disruption by NPT

Over 60 premises visited with partners – consumer service, trading standards, environmental health, immigration, fire service. In excess of £40,000 served by way of civil penalty. In excess of £30,000 worth of illicit alcohol / tobacco seizures.

220 CAWNs (Child Abduction Warning Notices) served (34 North, 102 Central, 78 South, data provided by MSET coordinators)

60 Taxi licences – suspended persons suspected involved in sexual exploitation
2 Sexual Risk Order, 4 Sexual Harm prevention order, 3 Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders, 7 Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders

14 persons detained / pending removal from UK/ awaiting deportation

10 people removed from UK due to info share with UKBA

16 live trigger plans

552 names of persons provided to Op Nexus (Immigration Service), referrals to see if they can be removed under the High Harm scheme

9 names of persons provided to Op Signal (UK Border Force) to prevent their re-entry to the country

2 door supervisors licences revoked

8 Organised Crime Groups mapped and scored and subject of ongoing disruption

The disruption opportunities which have been conducted throughout Sanctuary have showcased our commitment to tackling offenders of CSE/SE and MDS. The disruption activity is also subject to national interest from government bodies and interest from other Police Forces wishing to learn more and adopt our approach.

The disruption aspect of the response is again something which, is understood, will be highlighted as best practice in the joint serious case review.

5. EMERGING CHALLENGES

- 5.1 CSE and SE continue to occur with Northumbria Police. Social media platforms assist perpetrators to contact and groom victims. Northumbria Police and the safeguarding partnership recognise the signs and indicators of CSE/ SE and have a good understanding of its impact. Despite targeted activity and investigation this type of offending continues.
- 5.2 There are also new emerging trends of sexual exploitation, most recently the pop up party type model whereby children who are not necessarily known to services are being targeted. In these types of incidents, details are given out via social media of an all-night party where payment is expected on entry. The organisers rent a quality apartment/venue and the location and venue is given over social media with little notice, money paid on entry with drugs and alcohol made freely available. The victims become intoxicated through drink and drugs and become victims of sexual offending. The next day the organisers tidy the venue and leave.
- 5.3 Modern Day Slavery (MDS) forms part of Northumbria Police's control strategy and there has been an increase in reporting in MDS offences. Police are leading partners with regard to training to raise awareness and understanding of MDS offences. An MDS partnership coordinator role has resulted in multi-agency training being provided to all Local Authorities in relation to MDS. As a result of this training and further work from the Safeguarding department, the Local Authorities are now considering their response to MDS and identifying strategic leads to have responsibility for MDS. Durham and Northumbria PCCs have successfully applied for funding for a Modern Slavery Partnership event aimed at engaging partners agencies to better understand and tackle this emerging crime.
- 5.4 Newcastle City Council has identified a dedicated victim reception centre (VCR) for the safe recovery of victims of MDS. The VCR offers them a safe place where they can be assessed for health and care and support needs. The accommodation allows officers to work with the victims to gain their confidence and cooperation to support

an investigation and allows them safe accommodation until alternative safe accommodation can be obtained through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) process or robust safeguarding, harm reduction and trigger plans can be implemented.

- 5.5 The referrals to the National Referral Mechanism are increasing year on year as a result to ensure capability the Government have put in place proposals to reform the NRM, which include extending the move on period from 14 days to 45 days for confirmed victims of modern day slavery. Providing drop in services for all confirmed victims for up to 6 months after leaving support and to work with Local Authorities.

6. MOVING FORWARD

- 6.1 The current Safeguarding model was partly devised due to learning from Sanctuary principles and the bespoke victim strategy and the teams have been resourced accordingly to reflect the present demand of the complex MDS/SE and CSE investigations.
- 6.2 Moving forward, the intention is to build on the preventative, disruption approach to CSE which includes early intervention model, improving the MSET (missing sexually exploited trafficked) meetings and our approach to, understanding and investigation of missing children.
- 6.3 By improving our response to missing children which is inextricably linked to CSE and understanding the push and pull factors to the missing episodes working with agencies at the first opportunities to problem solve, consider early intervention and information sharing between all agencies including schools and health and not just police and children social care will allow us the opportunity to get upstream of the problem and work together is our agencies.
- 6.4 Modern Day Slavery is still a relatively hidden crime. However Northumbria Police and partners are well briefed in relation to the signs and indicators of Modern Day Slavery and are able to work together to deal with incidents and investigations where we know it exists.
- 6.5 There is consultation ongoing with Northumbria Police, the Local Authorities and safeguarding partnerships to establish a joint Modern Day Slavery protocol for all agencies to agree and sign up to. This will ensure a corporate approach in dealing with victims of Modern Day Slavery to ensure that their care needs are met and they are fully supported through out a modern day slavery investigation.