

For Information	
Public	
Report to:	Strategic Resources and Performance Wo
Date of Meeting:	2nd November 2021
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Agenda Item:	4

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Tackling Modern Slavery (Including Human Trafficking)

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To update the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Commissioner with regard to Nottinghamshire Police's performance and response to modern slavery.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the force's performance and response to Modern Slavery is noted.

3. Reasons for Recommendations

- 3.1 To ensure the Nottinghamshire Police & Crime Commissioner is aware of the Force's performance and response to Modern Slavery.

4. Summary of Key Points (this should include background information and options appraisal if applicable)

- 4.1 Serious and Organised Crime (SOC) is the deadliest national security threat faced by the United Kingdom (UK) with criminals ruthlessly targeting the most vulnerable, ruining lives and blighting communities.¹ Her Majesty's Government (HMG) SOC Strategy (2018) divides such high harm and high impact offending into three strands, specifically commodity, prosperity and vulnerability, with modern slavery (MS) mapping into this third strand.
- 4.2 The force's policing of SOC aligns to the National Crime Agency (NCA) National Control Strategy (NCS) 2021/22 in delivery of a single whole system approach to tackling high harm and high impact criminals and Organised Crime Groups (OCGs) across the national identifiable strands of commodity, prosperity and importantly insofar as this report is concerned, vulnerability, specifically MS exploitation.
- 4.3 The force's Serious and Organised Crime Unit (SOCU) is principally responsible for the policing of MS and Organised Immigration Crime (OIC). A team of accredited detectives, specifically 1 Detective Sergeant (DS) and 6

¹ Her Majesty's Government (HMG) Serious and Organised Crime Strategy (2018)

Detective Constables (DCs) now comprise the MSOIC Unit (MSOICU) and are managed by a Detective Inspector (DI), who is also responsible for the County Lines Unit (CLU). Nottinghamshire Police are the only force in the East Midlands to have a dedicated team of detectives devoted to the disruption of MS offending.

- 4.4 In September 2020, the Professionalising Investigations Programme level 2 (PIP2) investigative capacity of the force's response to MS was strengthened through the force's *Career Pathways* programme. The following month (October 2020) the Chief Constable authorised an uplift of an additional Detective Sergeant (DS) within SOCU thus allowing for separate supervision of the force's response to MSOIC and CL. The cumulative effect of this action was that for the first time since the force has had dedicated a response to MS, the team responsible for such disruption [i.e., the MSOICU] was entirely comprised of fully qualified detectives.
- 4.5 MS exploitation is defined by section (s.) 3 of the Modern Slavery Act (MSA) 2015 and comprises the following acts:
- (a) Slavery, servitude and forced labour
 - (b) Sexual exploitation
 - (c) Organ removal
 - (d) Securing services by threats, force or deception
 - (e) Securing services from children and vulnerable persons
- 4.6 Human trafficking (HT) is an offence proscribed by s.2 MSA 2015
- 4.7 In terms of criminal exploitation, essentially that described at para. 4.5 (d) and (e), child criminal exploitation (CCE) commonly stands for the greatest threat, harm and risk and manifests itself in county lines (CL) activity. The response by Nottinghamshire Police to the disruption of CL is documented within a separate report to the OPPC Strategic and Performance Work Programme.
- 4.8 88 MS crimes (an increase of 17% from the previous year) were recorded by Nottinghamshire Police and 168 National Referral Mechanisms (NRMs)² (an increase of 15% from the previous year) were received by the force during the period 1st April 2020 and 31st March 2021.
- 4.9 By exploitation type, MS recorded by Nottinghamshire Police can be broken down as follows:

Exploitation Type	Crimes	NRMs
Forced Labour	10	30
Sexual Exploitation	4	10
Criminal Exploitation	73	125
Domestic Servitude	1	3

² UK's mechanism to identify, assess and support potential victims of modern slavery independent of any criminal investigation and can only be completed by a first responder. A NRM must be completed for all children that are suspected to be a victim of modern slavery. Adults must give their consent in relation to the NRM.

- 4.10 Dealing first with MS recorded crime, of the 73 occurrences recorded for criminal exploitation, 22 [30%] related to offences intrinsically linked to CL offending or cuckooing.³ This continues to reflect the proliferation of drugs trafficking offending adopting a CL model and such abuse now exceeds labour exploitation that was once the MS area of primary concern. When examining the countries of origin for injured parties, UK nationals accounted for the majority of victims, with the Western Balkans region (Albania) second. Finally turning to the age of victims, 38% were over 18 (compared to 55% last the previous year) and 62% were under 18 years of age (compared to 45% the previous year).
- 4.11 The vast majority of NRMs had a positive reasonable grounds decision⁴ made by the single competent authority (SCA) at the Home Office. Akin to the recorded crime data, UK nationals accounted for the majority of victims [51%], followed Albanian nationals at 21% of persons vulnerable of trafficking (PVoT). Nottinghamshire has continued to experience a year on year rise in Albanian nationals entering the NRM as illustrated in the table below. This is attributable to the surge in proactive policing operations engaged against cannabis cultivation sites, intrinsic to increased community intelligence.

Year	Albanian PVoT	Percentage ↑
2018/19	6	
2019/20	13	117%
2020/21	35	169%

- 4.12 Finally the age range of victims entering the NRM was between 13 and 53 years, with 49% over 18 and 51% under 18 years of age.
- 4.13 Within the 12 months under review (01/04/2020 to 31/03/2021), the 5 highest number of agencies referring into the NRM are shown in the table below and the trend is comparable to the previous year.

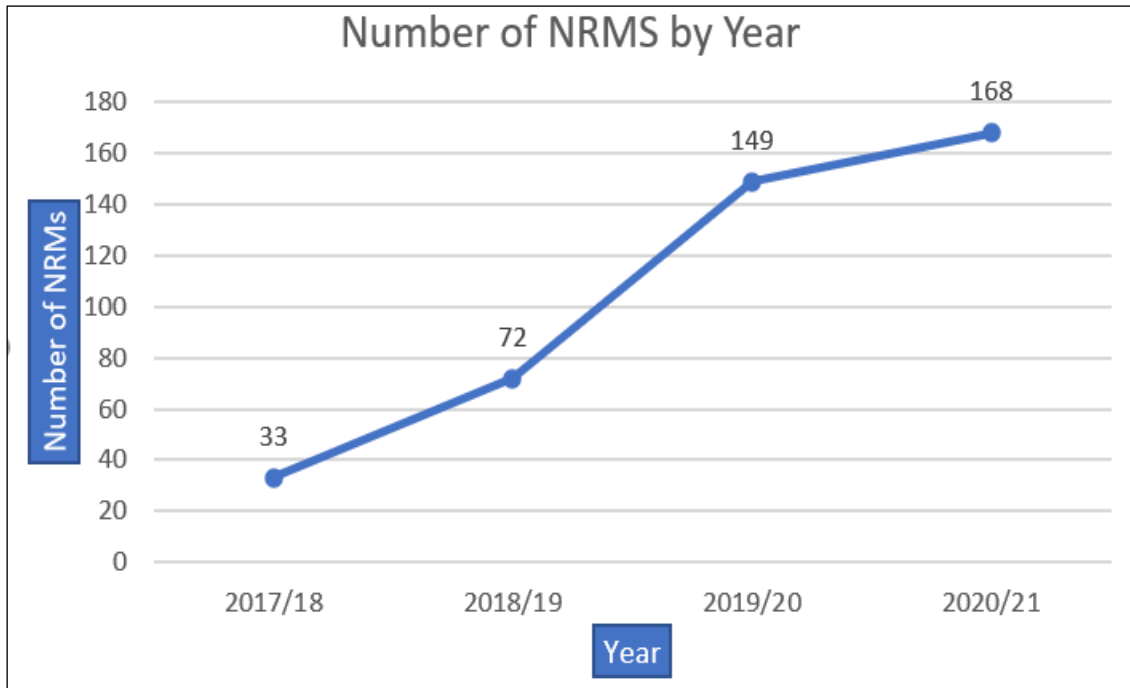
Agency	Referrals (c.)
Nottinghamshire Police	78
Home Office	28
Nottinghamshire County Council	21
Nottingham City Council	17
Migrant Help	10

- 4.14 MS offending recorded in Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire, continues to increase although this is in part attributable to a greater awareness of indicators to this crime type, given the MSOICU has continued to deliver training both within Nottinghamshire Police and across statutory partners and relevant third sector stakeholders. The year-on-year increase in PVOTs is illustrated below.

³ The practice of taking over the home of a vulnerable person in order to establish a base for illegal drug dealing, typically as part of a CL operation.

⁴ A positive reasonable grounds decision means the victim has been accepted into the NRM and is entitled to a range of support, including a recovery and reflection period of a minimum of 45 days.

Year	NRM	Percentage ↑ from previous year
2017/18	33	
2018/19	72	118%
2019/20	149	107%
2020/21	168	13%



4.15 The activity of the MSOICU is scrutinised quarterly by the force's Safeguarding Adults Scrutiny Board chaired by the Assistant Chief Constable (ACC) for Crime and Operations. As of 12th October 2021, the MSOICU had 17 live operations representing complex investigations.

- 4.16 The DI for the MSOICU chairs the monthly Slavery and Exploitation Risk Assessment Conference (SERAC) with multi-disciplinary membership comprising statutory partners and the third sector. SERAC provides a structure where professionals can refer known or suspected victims of exploitation so that a multi-disciplinary group can plan a multi-agency response. In the last 12 months, the scope of geographic responsibility for SERAC has been extended beyond Nottingham City and now also serves the boroughs of Rushcliffe, Broxtowe and Gedling. In the next 12 months, the force will work with partners to extend the SERAC service to capture all districts comprising the county of Nottinghamshire.
- 4.17 On 12th August 2020 the National Police Chiefs' Council (NPCC) MS and Organised Immigration Crime Programme (MSOICP), which had been operating across England and Wales since November 2016 to transform MS across communities, published a report entitled *'Improving Police Forces' Modern Slavery Outcomes.* That report highlighted that when the rates of cases referred to the Crown Prosecution Service (CPS) per 100,000 of the population were taken into consideration, out of the 43 police forces of England and Wales, Nottinghamshire Police were the 5th highest in terms of the number of charges granted and non-charges directed (i.e., cases referred to the prosecuting authority).
- 4.18 The number of force resources assigned to policing both MSOICU is currently based on professional judgement, formed over several years, after an MS team was first established in 2017 with a primary focus on safeguarding (over investigation). Given the MSOICU's primary focus is now both Pursue [criminal inquiries] and Protect [safeguarding] in equal measure, as part of SOCU's annual department assessment (ADA) business planning cycle for 2021/22, demand analysis from the force's Corporate Services department was secured so that an evidence base could be captured to inform future establishment capacity. Given the disparate range of referral channels into the MSOICU, such analysis is complex and consequently demand profiling is expected to continue for the next circa (c.) 9 months. However, preliminary reporting indexed to rudimentary data sources provides for an indication that resourcing is sufficient for how the MSOICU currently tackles MS offending across the Prepare, Prevent, Protect and Pursue (4P) spectrum.
- 4.19 Strong partnerships exist in the SOCU's policing of MS. In addition to the multi-agency Nottingham City SERAC arrangements, the force is an integral member of the Nottingham and Nottinghamshire Modern Slavery Partnership (NNMSP), chaired by the Chief Executive for Gedling District Council. It is through the NNMSP that the University of Nottingham (UoN) Rights Lab was commissioned to produce the MS problem profile⁵ for Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire. Since the publication of the problem profile, workshops attended by statutory partners and third sector stakeholders comprising the NNMSP have been held

⁵ Police data was used to inform the Nottingham City and Nottinghamshire modern slavery problem profile.

resulting in the setting 25 of overarching actions to be delivered by the partnership against the below strategic priorities.

- (a) Assets, accommodation and survivor support
- (b) CCE and CL
- (c) Emerging threats and trends
- (d) Communicating with communities

4.20 A solid strategic and tactical partnership exists between Nottinghamshire Police and the East Midlands Specialist Operations Unit (EMSOU) Vulnerability Hub. It is through this very effective relationship, coupled with regional cooperation harnessed through the MS Strategic Governance Group (SGG), that all 5 forces of the East Midlands are close to securing funding from the non-governmental organisation (NGO) Justice and Care for two Victim Navigators (VNs), one of whom will be posted within our force MSOICU. On behalf of all forces in the region, Nottinghamshire Police has taken the lead in the drafting of all relevant information sharing agreements (ISAs) and Data Privacy Impact Assessments (DPIAs) to allow for the introduction of these 2 novel posts.

4.21 The overarching mission of Justice and Care is to prevent HT in the most at risk communities, to protect victims and help them recover and, where appropriate, to support the state's effort to bring criminals and their wider networks to justice. The VN programme has been devised to fill a specific and important gap by forming a trust bridge between the police and victims of MS by flexibly and independently brokering support from external specialist services according to an individual victims' needs. VNs engage victims from the moment of identification by the police, providing trauma-informed and specialist support during the crucial post-rescue period and then providing seamless ongoing coordination between the victim and the officers investigating their case. VNs help victims understand their rights and entitlements and co-create with victims an individualised support plan, according to their needs, priorities and aspirations. VNs act as an advocate and where necessary chaperone, helping victims to 'navigate' the complex landscape of services and entitlements and their journey through the criminal justice process.

4.22 For reasons of investigative integrity and to safeguard the right to a fair trial, viz-a-viz article (art.) 3 of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), the author is limited on the level of operational detail that can be revealed within this public facing report. In summary and in so far as the live cases referenced at para. 4.15 are concerned, as examples of the MSOICU's work in the last 12 months, excluding CL cases [see report to the OPPC Strategic and Performance Work Programme] there are criminal prosecutions impending relating to (a) labour exploitation linked to property renovation, (b) criminal exploitation intrinsically linked to non-CL drugs trafficking, and (c) human trafficking and criminal exploitation of Vietnamese children engaged in cannabis production. Further complex cases remain under investigation including but not limited to (a) residential domestic servitude, (b) domestic professionally enabled sexual exploitation, (c) international trafficking for the purpose of sexual exploitation, (d) international trafficking and labour exploitation, and (e) international trafficking for the purposes of drugs trafficking with proximate firearms criminality.

- 4.23 In addition to the above, the MSOICU is engaged with European law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies in advancing two international MS investigations through the engagement of separate Joint Investigation Teams (JITs), as enabled by Eurojust. Additionally, in May 2021, facilitated by International Letters of Request (ILORs), the MSOICU worked with Romanian law enforcement and its state prosecuting authority to disrupt an international sex trafficking OCG mapped by Nottinghamshire Police. The evidence collected by the MSOICU has been used to support an impending Romanian prosecution of all the OCG members, the majority of whom are remanded overseas.
- 4.24 In April 2021, following a trial at Nottingham Crown Court, Elvis Scriparu was convicted of international HT, MS (labour exploitation) and money laundering following a complex investigation under the operational name 'Undeserved.' Not only was the investigation complex, but so too was the foreign national victim management given the travel, accommodation and COVID-19 testing arrangements that had to be secured (involving embassy liaison) during a period when passage across United Kingdom border was restricted in consequence to the COVID-19 pandemic. Elvis Scriparu was sentenced to 3 years and 4 months imprisonment in addition to being handed a 10-year slavery and trafficking protection order (STPO).
- 4.25 Finally the force is steadily strengthening its Prevent response. The STPO referred to in the above paragraph is the second such prohibitive / restrictive ancillary order obtained on conviction under the MSA 2015. In the last 12 months the force has also additionally applied for and obtained 3 slavery trafficking and risk orders (STROs) after criminal conviction of suspects was not possible under the MSA 2015 due to evidential difficulties beyond the control of the police. Finally, arising from joint MS partnership activity, the Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) have also successfully obtained STROs against 2 Nottinghamshire residents.

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

- 5.1 None

6. Human Resources Implications

- 6.1 None

7. Equality Implications

- 7.1 The SOCU has a Representation (Diversity and Inclusion), Attraction, Recruitment, Progression and Retention (RARPR) strategy. The department strives to increase its establishment of officers and staff who identify with minority protected characteristics, in order to be more reflective of the communities it serves.

7.2 The Code of Ethics is central to all decisions taken in the policing of MS. The SOCU acts with fairness and impartiality and does not discriminate unlawfully or fairly.

7.3 Article 3 of the ECHR provides for the prohibition of torture and inhuman or degrading treatment. Nottinghamshire Police has a positive obligation to ensure that no one shall be subject to torture or to inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment. This includes protecting people from the unlawful act of another where that act would constitute an act proscribed by the MSA 2015.

8. Risk Management

8.1 Not applicable

9. Policy Implications and links to the Police and Crime Plan Priorities

9.1 The four main strategic priorities of the Nottinghamshire Police and Crime Plan 2018 to 2021 are central to the policing of MS, specifically (i) protecting people from harm, (ii) helping and supporting victims, (iii) tackling crime and antisocial behaviour, and (iv) transforming services and delivering quality policing.

10. Changes in Legislation or other Legal Considerations

10.1 In the last 12 months, there have been no changes to statutory legislation proscribing against MS. The key primary legislation remains the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

11. Details of outcome of consultation

11.1 Not applicable

12. Appendices

12.1 None

13. Background Papers (relevant for Police and Crime Panel Only)

13. None