Human Trafficking and the Cardiff Position
Briefing Paper July 2012

1. What is Human Trafficking?

Human Trafficking is an emotive issue and can take a number of forms. Common to all is the irreparable damage caused to victims.

Forms of Human Trafficking. All definitions can apply to the trafficking of people from abroad (International Trafficking) or those trafficked within the UK (Internal Trafficking)

Labour Trafficking

Adults are the main victims of trafficking for forced labour or services, slavery, servitude or the removal of organs and have been found “working” for criminal employment agencies across the UK in factories, agriculture, hotels and cannabis farms for example.

Adult Sexual Exploitation

Women are the main victims and often suffer rape and abuse and are held under “debt” bondage or threat of violence against family members.

Trafficking of Children

This relates to children who are trafficked for a variety of reasons including sexual exploitation, domestic servitude, informal fostering arrangements, sexual abuse, sweat shops.

2. Is there a Human Trafficking Problem in Cardiff?

While there is has been no systematic work undertaken to establish the extent of the problem in Cardiff, there is increasing evidence that human trafficking is an issue in Cardiff, as it is in most major cities across the UK.
Evidence of Trafficking in Wales and Cardiff

- ACPO reported 79 cases of trafficking in Wales in 2009
- The UK Human Trafficking Centre reported 34 cases in Wales in 2011
- The NSPCC reported 24 in cases in Wales in 2011

Evidence of Trafficking in Cardiff

- Amnesty International reported 60 cases of trafficking in Cardiff (although little evidence to support these figures)
- Two people were convicted in Scotland of trafficking and sexual exploitation, and included fourteen women being sexually exploited for prostitution in Cardiff in 2011.
- A Pembrokeshire couple have been prosecuted for running an Irish trafficking prostitution ring from Wales, which included activity in Cardiff.
- Operation Artemis in Gwent has found 40 potential victims of trafficking, several of whom were being held in Cardiff but not included in Cardiff statistics.
- There is an on-going prosecution in Cardiff where 2 men have been charged with the human trafficking of 53 Eritrayan’s.

Labour Trafficking

There is little information currently available to understand the extent of this issue in Cardiff. While there is an increasing Czech and Eastern European population in Cardiff there is limited understanding of their employment status.

Sexual Exploitation

There is increasing anecdotal evidence that this is a hidden issue in Cardiff, with the common issue being fear of reporting. These women are controlled in brothels, flats and houses and do not tend to be visible or present in shop-front massage parlours.

Children and Internal Trafficking

Barnardo’s research show an increase in number of Sexual Exploitation Referral Assessments (SERAf) over the past 2 years. Of the 171 referrals made in Wales in 2011/2012, 141 were deemed at significant risk of sexual exploitation. 122 of the 141 children had periods of going missing overnight or longer and 63 out of the 141 were known to have entered vehicles driven by unknown adults.

Operation Artemis in Gwent, has made conclusive links to missing children and internal trafficking in the UK involving children, with successful
convictions totalling 6 yrs and 3 months for 2 local men. There has, however been no systematic work undertaken in Cardiff to establish the extent to which this is an issue locally.

In summary, that we have done little to look for this problem in Cardiff does not mean that it does not exist.

3. Should we be doing more about it?

Ignorance of human trafficking is no longer a defence for any organisation or partnership. Section 71 of the Coroners & Justice Act 2009 (also known as the Slavery Act) states that “the circumstances must be such that the defendant knows or ought to know that the person is being so held, or required to perform such labour”.

Given the increasing evidence, it is suggested that leaders in Cardiff must now act to address this issue as a shared priority.

4. Developing a meaningful response

While human trafficking is a recognised issue across the United Kingdom there is no consistent approach to addressing the problem nationally. A number of areas have, however, taken action to address the issue with programmes of work across partner agencies which focus on:

- Victim identification
- Victim support
- Assistance with repatriation of victims
- Prevention of human trafficking

There is increasingly evidence that such approaches can be successful in tackling this issue.

5. Options for Cardiff

In presenting this issue, the Partnership has a number of options it can consider:

Option 1 – Do Nothing

Given the issues presented in this paper, it is assumed that this is not an option.
Option 2 – Wait for Welsh Government Action

Partner agencies in Cardiff could work with the Wales Government Human Trafficking Co-ordinator when appointed to scope the issues and develop a response.

Option 3 – Agree to progress this issue as a joint priority

This option supposes that Partners accept that Cardiff has a (albeit unknown) level of human trafficking which needs to be addressed. On this basis, a Human Trafficking Co-ordinator should be appointed from existing resources to review the extent of the problem and develop a targeted action plan based on evidence of good practice including:

- The immediate development of a multi-agency rapid response strategy and pathway for people who present themselves as victims of trafficking and those that are suspected of being victims of trafficking
- Raising awareness on a local level amongst front-line professionals and the public, developing & co-ordinating training, and identifying appropriate lead professionals within all key partner agencies who are named responsible officers for human trafficking

6. Conclusion & Recommendation

It is proposed that there is sufficient evidence to conclude that human trafficking is an issue in Cardiff. It is, however, recognised that the extent of the issue is currently unknown and the public and professionals working in Cardiff need to be far more aware of the issue.

It could be argued that failure to act places Cardiff in an extremely vulnerable position. The development of a multi-agency response should therefore be considered a priority both to minimise this risk and address the significant ethical and moral issues associated with human trafficking.

Partners are therefore asked:

- a) To endorse the recommendation that this issue be progressed as a shared priority, with an officer identified to lead this work, reporting to the Partnership Board
- b) To identify named lead officers within their own organisations to work with the Human Trafficking lead officer, who can be held accountable for progressing this agenda internally

Nici Evans
September 2012