

Understanding the Potential of Licensing Frameworks and Teams to **Tackle Modern Slavery in the UK**



Section 3

How local licensing teams can practically confront modern slavery in their daily operations

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Summary of Recommendations

Capacity Building (Statutory Authorities): Capacity building is crucial for practitioners who may encounter modern slavery to ensure people affected by modern slavery are identified and perpetrators are deterred from exploiting people in inhumane conditions for profit.

✔ Recommendation 10:

Enhance the safeguarding training for licensing officers by **incorporating modern slavery training that is specific to their role.**

✔ Recommendation 11:

Integrate information about **modern slavery in the safeguarding training that members of licensing committees receive.**

✔ Recommendation 12:

Ensure quality assurance of modern slavery training (both pre-existing and training which forms part of wider safeguarding training) to ensure all relevant modern slavery elements are of a good standard.

Raising Awareness (Licence Holders): Licensing enforcement teams can educate businesses on modern slavery risks through training and holding them accountable for any violations.

✔ Recommendation 13:

Extend **modern slavery training for licence-holders to high risk-licensed** premises.

✔ Recommendation 14:

Provide licence holders with modern slavery guidance documentation during routine visits and inspections. This guidance should provide information on different types of modern slavery, how to mitigate the risk and how to report concerns.

✔ Recommendation 15:

Provide licence holders with publicity materials (in relevant languages) on modern slavery which can be displayed publicly.

Partnership Working in Law Enforcement: Local information sharing works well within borders but can falter across borders or between different enforcement teams and the police.

✔ Recommendation 16:

Establish **licensing action groups** to regularly review licensing applications and any licensing issues uncovered.

✔ Recommendation 17:

Engage in joint visits with other agencies to combat modern slavery.

✔ Recommendation 18:

Encourage the use of prevention and risk orders among licensing teams in collaboration with relevant law enforcement partners.



3 Licensing Teams and Daily Operations

3.1 Capacity Building (Statutory Authorities)

Thorough and tailored training is a powerful driver of change. It ensures that individuals are equipped with the skills and knowledge to address various risks arising in their role both safely and effectively. From a safeguarding perspective, it is vital for frontline team members (such as licensing officers) to be trained to understand, identify, and tackle modern slavery. From an organisational and management perspective, it is important for local authority staff and councils to understand the risks of modern slavery present in licensed businesses, so they feel able to make informed strategic decisions and support policies that directly address them. If practitioners are unable to identify and report modern slavery cases, people trapped in exploitative situations will remain unidentified and perpetrators will be undeterred in their efforts to exploit people in inhumane conditions for profit.¹

3.1.1 Role Specific Awareness Training for Frontline Licensing Officers

To proactively identify and prevent modern slavery in their roles, licensing authorities should deliver specialist training to departments that are likely to encounter modern slavery as part of their engagement with licensed businesses. This is especially critical in cases of licensing frameworks related to sex shops or special treatments, as these have a higher risk of modern slavery. Some local authorities have already implemented a checklist to help inspectors identify exploitation in licensed venues offering specialist treatments.

The importance of specialist modern slavery training for frontline officers and inspectors of regulatory authorities was identified as important by nearly 50% of roundtable attendees. One attendee said: “We need to give all officers who conduct inspections some awareness training. My team has had some, so [now] they know what to look [out] for and to ask when carrying out routine inspections”².

Case Study (HMSP Modern Slavery Workshop): Licensing authorities in Hertfordshire work closely with taxi drivers. The HMSP organised a modern slavery focused workshop in January 2019, attended by at least one representative from each of the 11 local authorities. The purpose of the licensing workshop was to support licensing officers to better understand human trafficking/modern slavery and to support taxi drivers to report safeguarding concerns related



1 LGA (2022) – ‘Council guide to tackling modern slavery’. [Accessed 20 June. 2023]. The LGA’s modern slavery guidance has a section on regulatory services and provides councils with a maturity matrix which allows councils to benchmark their work to tackle Modern Slavery.

2 Out of the 28 organisations that contributed to this project, just over 60% (n=17) had delivered or arranged for delivery of specialist training to frontline officers.

to modern slavery, child sexual exploitation, county lines and extremism. Knowledge levels were assessed before and after the workshop. Directly following the workshop, at least five local authority officers demonstrated an increase in knowledge of modern slavery and human trafficking.

Case Study (Hampshire): Hampshire's Modern Slavery Coordinator delivered a modern slavery awareness session to Portsmouth City Council's Housing Regulation Team in February 2022. The training included information on: 1) what modern slavery is; 2) how to spot the signs of exploitation, including examples of specific case studies relevant to the housing department and within the remit of officer roles; 3) national legislation; 4) local procedures to follow if modern slavery has potentially been identified (e.g. Modern Slavery Victim Pathway at Hampshire); and 5) signposting to the e-learning module on modern slavery developed by Hampshire Modern Slavery Partnership.



Case study (West Sussex): West Sussex County Council piloted specialist modern slavery training to the Fire Safety Team within West Sussex Fire & Rescue Service (WSFRS) in January and March 2022. This team is responsible for inspecting relevant licensed premises to ensure compliance with business fire safety regulations. This training incorporated information on national agency powers which are outlined in the National Enforcement Powers Guide to encourage and facilitate partner engagement and collaboration. The training also included information on possible modern slavery indicators at business premises and referral pathways to follow if a possible case is identified.

There can be obstacles to delivery of training, including capacity/resource constraints, so having senior buy-in is important to overcome these barriers.

 **Recommendation 10:**

Enhance the safeguarding training for licensing officers by **incorporating modern slavery training that is specific to their role.**

3.1.2 Basic Modern Slavery Training for Local Councillors on Licensing Committees

Safeguarding training is delivered to or by local councils across the UK and, for the most part, this will include some reference to modern slavery. In many regions, modern slavery specific training is delivered to first responders³ but this same level of training is not consistently delivered to licensing teams. Training supports managers to identify any knowledge gaps or training needs and encourages shared practice and learning to enhance overall knowledge levels.



Training is a high priority for anti-slavery partnerships as it is widely understood that licensing authorities require the right knowledge and tools to identify and report people trapped in modern slavery.⁴

A cohort that can sometimes get overlooked are local councillors and other political leaders, much to the detriment of progress on the issue. The Local Government Association (LGA)'s councillor guide⁵ notes that the 'personal initiative and commitment of individual council members in driving the agenda can make a huge difference to ensuring that tackling modern slavery is a council priority in areas such as licensing'.⁶

Case study (Hertsmere Borough Council, Hertfordshire): As a member of the licensing committee, Councillor Sachdev saw an opportunity to include information on modern slavery within Hertsmere Borough Council's Statement of Licensing Policy (Appendix 5), when it came under review. Due to the knowledge she held on modern slavery; Councillor Sachdev successfully advocated for a modern slavery section to be added. The section was approved by the rest of the committee and then full council. Through this type of commitment, licensing officers can be trained to not only raise awareness within licensed premises, but also better identify possible cases when visiting such premises.⁷



Recommendation 11:

Integrate information about **modern slavery in the safeguarding training that members of licensing committees receive.**

3 In its review of anti-slavery partnerships in 2019, the University of Nottingham revealed that just under 60% of anti-slavery partnership areas deliver frontline training on modern slavery to partners. These partners include local enforcement bodies and local authorities, who are members in just under 60% of anti-slavery partnerships. See University of Nottingham Rights Lab (2019) 'Partnerships for freedom: Improving multi-agency collaboration on modern slavery', p.19. [Accessed 20 June 2023].

4 There is anecdotal evidence to suggest that training has led to higher NRM referrals, including by the police and local authorities and an increase in police investigations and offences recorded. See Justice and Care (2022) *A Path to Freedom and Justice: a new vision for supporting victims of modern slavery*

5 LGA (2019) – 'Councillor guide to tackling modern slavery'. [Accessed 20 June 2023].

6 Quote from Councillor Simon Blackburn, *ibid*, p.2.

7 Extract from *Ibid*, p 10

3.1.3 Quality Assurance of Training

Quality assurance is important to ensure training is of a good standard nationally and applied consistently across the UK. However, the stakeholders for this report noted that training delivery differs in terms of trainer organisation, sourcing of content, duration and intensity.⁸ Skills for Care & Development, in collaboration with St Mary's University and the Bakhita Centre for Research on Slavery, Exploitation and Abuse, launched a Training Framework on the Identification, Care and Support of Victims and Survivors of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking in September 2020.⁹ This framework aims to establish clear training standards for those involved in identifying, supporting, and caring for people who have experience of modern slavery and human trafficking.

Recommendation 12:

Ensure quality assurance of modern slavery training (both pre-existing and training which forms part of wider safeguarding training) to ensure all relevant modern slavery elements are of a good standard.

Ongoing quality-assured training, that is refreshed regularly, is essential for staff to feel empowered to proactively identify and prevent modern slavery correctly. While all staff should be provided with modern slavery training, it is particularly important that frontline staff who are most likely to encounter modern slavery in their work are provided with specialist training that is tailored to the day-to-day operations of their role.

3.2 Raising Awareness (Licence Holders)

Awareness of modern slavery among local businesses, including licensed premises, is still low or in some cases non-existent. Recent research by Alcumus, identified that one in five UK SMEs are unaware of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, with 46% of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) advocating for more specific information from the government on how to become compliant, which would encourage them to make it a higher priority on their business agenda.¹⁰ More could be done to educate local businesses on what modern slavery is and how it applies to individual businesses. The licensing sector is currently an untapped resource that could support that.

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8 Two out of the 15 stakeholders sourced training which was delivered by the local police force. Four out of the 15 stakeholders worked with partner agencies and organisations to source and deliver their content. Training partners ranged from academic institutions (Wilberforce Institute at Hull University) to charities (Shiva Foundation and Hope for Justice) and other statutory and regulatory agencies (HMRC and GLAA). Four out of 15 stakeholders created e-learning modules on modern slavery. Eight out of 15 stakeholders used an internal training provider (e.g. the organisation's modern slavery coordinator or local authority community safety team members). Four out of 15 stakeholders used an external training provider (e.g. The police or sharing the Home Office's first responder modern slavery e-learning module). Only 1 out of the 15 stakeholders who delivered training explicitly mentioned going through some sort of quality assurance process. (For example, the Environment Agency shared their training with the National Crime Agency and requested for them to provide feedback on the training content).

9 Skills for Care, 'Training framework - Identification, care and support of victims and survivors of modern slavery and human trafficking', accessed on 22nd June 2023

10 Employer news (2021) – 'Significant gap in understanding and awareness of Modern Slavery leaves UK SMEs exposed', [Accessed 20 June 2023].

3.2.1 Modern Slavery Training and Guidance for Licence Holders

Local councils already have experience in delivering training to a variety of license holders. As highlighted in **Section 1 on National Policy and Legislation**, Licensing authorities now provide safeguarding guidance to both taxi drivers and private vehicle operators, following the release of the Statutory Taxi and Private Hire Vehicle Standards by the Department for Transport in July 2020.

Other examples of licence holders that have received training include hotels and night-time economy venues. It is therefore a reasonable step to embed modern slavery training into the training and advice offered by licensing authorities. It is recommended that councils target licensed premises with a higher risk of modern slavery, such as special treatments, hospitality and night-time economy venues.¹¹

Case Study (Watford): Watford Borough Council's mandatory training to taxi and private vehicle drivers includes provisions of a handbook and knowledge checks. (See Appendix 6 for the safeguarding and modern slavery section extracted from the Watford Borough Council Training Handbook). Feedback from licence holders on modern slavery training tends to be very positive. For example, taxi licence holders have reported being "more aware of safeguarding issues" and able to better spot "crimes and acts of abuse" as well as "inform the right authorities". They also disclosed a renewed commitment to being "more vigilant", aware of their surroundings and using "all the knowledge in their role as a taxi driver".¹²

Delivery of modern slavery training to licence holders by regulatory authorities as part of their normal engagement with local businesses would ensure that licence holders develop a basic understanding of: 1) the signs of modern slavery, 2) what steps to take to mitigate the risk to their business, 3) how to report any issues and 4) where to seek support with any potential cases identified. Training would therefore have a dramatic impact on improving awareness of modern slavery amongst local businesses, facilitating increased identification and prevention of modern slavery.

It is standard practice for licensing authorities to provide licence holders with guidance documents. Licensing authorities are in a prime position to raise awareness of modern slavery among local licence holders, given that engagement with these businesses is a standard part of their day-to-day role. As part of routine engagement with licence holders to support with raising awareness, modern slavery guidance should also be provided. There are number of pre-existing resources (general and sector specific) that could be used by regulatory authorities for this purpose and are free to download, including from Stronger Together¹³, Shiva Foundation and STOP THE TRAFFIK's joint SME Toolkit¹⁴

11 Out of 28 stakeholders who contributed to this project, just under 80% (n=22) confirmed that they had delivered training to at least one cohort of licence holders in their local area as part of their national remit.

12 Results are from an evaluation survey undertaken by taxi drivers who took part in these training sessions.

13 Stronger together, 'Resources', [Accessed 20 June 2023].

14 Shiva Foundation and STOP THE TRAFFIK, 'SME Toolkit', [Accessed 22 June 2023].

✔ **Recommendation 13:**

Extend **modern slavery training for licence-holders to high risk-licensed** premises.

✔ **Recommendation 14:**

Provide licence holders with modern slavery guidance documentation during routine visits and inspections. This guidance should provide information on different types of modern slavery, how to mitigate the risk and how to report concerns.

3.2.2 Publicity Materials

Publicity materials, including posters, leaflets, and business cards, help to raise awareness of modern slavery amongst the public, but also serve as a reminder to employees of their rights. Some councils have provided publicity materials to at least one cohort of licence holders in their local area as part of their national remit. Alongside taxi drivers and private vehicle operators, other examples of license holders that have been provided with publicity materials include hotels, night-time economy venues and special treatment venues.

The language used for the materials should also be reflective of the languages spoken by workers. Recognising the important role that publicity materials can play in educating workers and the public, the GLAA and the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline have produced translated posters for workers. These are available online and free to download.¹⁵

Publicity materials help to raise awareness of modern slavery amongst the public, but also serve as a reminder to employees of their rights.

Case Study (Brighton and Hove): Brighton and Hove City Council provided local hotel and bed and breakfast licence holders with police leaflets on child sexual exploitation. The leaflets contained information on how the abuse manifests itself, the indicators, and the steps to be taken by managers if any staff encounter a potential victim. Whilst no reported cases following the provision of the packs have been reported, licensing teams have revisited those premises in person to find out whether any CSE issues have been identified and to assess whether staff awareness of this issue has increased.¹⁶

15 Example of free resources for download and share with local businesses: 1) GLAA Exploitation Posters (available in 12 foreign languages), 2) GLAA Know the Signs/Rights Industry Posters, 3) GLAA Workers' Checklist Poster (available in 5 foreign languages), 4) GLAA Workers' Rights Leaflets (available in 19 foreign languages), 5) GLAA Know Your Rights Podcast, 6) Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline Materials and 7) Stop the Traffik Spot the Sign Posters and Leaflets (Specific exploitation type and industry focus).

16 See Appendix 10 for a copy of the Sexual and Criminal Exploitation of Children: Guidance for Hotels and Bed and Breakfast.

Case study (Hammersmith and Fulham): The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham includes a modern slavery condition in all special treatment licences. This condition requires special treatment licence holders (such as massage parlours or sex entertainment venues) to ensure ‘a STOP THE TRAFFIK poster is on display in a prominent position where therapists and staff can see it’.¹⁷ The condition also stipulates that those posters should be available in different languages and, similarly to training, cover the main aspects of exploitation such as: 1) confiscation of identity documents, 2) threats, 3) control and monitoring of movements, 4) wage deductions; and 5) working and living conditions. When premises are inspected, compliance with this condition will be checked and non-compliance noted.¹⁸

✓ **Recommendation 15:**

Provide licence holders with publicity materials (in relevant foreign languages) on modern slavery which can be displayed publicly.

3.3 Partnership Working in Law Enforcement

Information sharing is nationally regarded as an effective way of facilitating successful multi-agency working. Sharing intelligence enables law enforcement professionals to better collaborate and tackle crime. As a result, most areas have strong pre-existing frameworks for information sharing. Many organisations are also part of anti-slavery partnerships and serious and organised crime meetings where cases can be shared and discussed. In its review of anti-slavery partnerships, the University of Nottingham revealed that just over 70% of them engage in intelligence sharing between partners.¹⁹



Several roundtable participants also mentioned the positive impact of close working relationships with agencies such as the police, GLAA fire and rescue services, health and safety etc.²⁰ These close relationships help to facilitate effective information sharing. A local authority licensing officer also added that: “Licensing is already well placed to assist. The key is intelligence sharing and where licensed businesses are found to be [engaging in] modern slavery, this needs to be fed back to the local authority”.²¹

17 STOP THE TRAFFIK, ‘Forced Labour – Massage Parlour Poster’. [Accessed 22 June 2023].

18 London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham, ‘Massage and Special Treatment’. [Accessed 20 June 2023].

19 University of Nottingham Rights Lab (2019) ‘Partnerships for freedom: Improving multi-agency collaboration on modern slavery’. [Accessed 20 June 2023].

20 Around a third of stakeholders (n=11 out of 28) that contributed to this research emphasised the importance of information sharing within dedicated multi-agency forums (e.g., anti-slavery partnerships, working groups and subject specific forums).

21 Information from stakeholder interviews (May 2022).

3.3.1 Licensing Action Groups

Case Study (Hammersmith and Fulham): The London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham (LBHF) currently runs a Licensing Action Group, which reviews new licensing applications and any premise complaints. LBHF highlighted that this forum is a “powerful way to share intelligence” as all responsible authorities are invited to this meeting. They discuss premises which have been subject to enforcement action and then determine the appropriate way to deal with them from a multi-agency perspective. Action plans to deal with problem premises are also often agreed at these meetings, including the scheduling of multi-agency visits.

By having the relevant law enforcement organisations present together to discuss areas or premises of concern, they can work more quickly to deal with crimes. Furthermore, by utilising these forums to work more closely together, resources and capacity can be shared to encourage the most efficient response.

Recommendation 16:

Establish **licensing action groups** to regularly review licensing applications and any licensing issues uncovered.

3.3.2 Joint Operations and Visits: Collaboration and Outcomes

Undertaking joint operations with relevant partners is an effective way to pool capacity and resources to ensure efficiency of response. By working together, agencies can ensure that no legal infringements are missed, and that the most suitable enforcement body takes the lead to get the best outcome for the investigation. In its review of anti-slavery partnerships, the University of Nottingham revealed that just under 55% engage in collaborative enforcement activities with partners.²² Understanding which enforcement bodies have which powers to enter premises and the sanctions at their disposal is important for successful disruption of perpetrators.²³ By working together, licensing reviews can be undertaken and licences can be revoked in cases where modern slavery is identified during a routine inspection or joint operation.²⁴

Case Study (Brighton and Hove): In December 2020, Brighton and Hove County Council received intelligence that Immigration Enforcement had identified several possible victims of modern slavery at a newsagent in Saltdean. Joint visits were carried out by the council licensing team, Sussex Police, Immigration Enforcement, and the council’s vulnerable person team. The agencies found staff living at the rear of the premises, working 6am to 7pm for £2 an hour. All their documentation had been taken from them and they were being threatened with deportation by the owners if they tried to leave. Following the visit, the newsagent had its premises licence reviewed and revoked because of the modern slavery offences identified.

22 University of Nottingham Rights Lab (2019) ‘Partnerships for freedom: Improving multi-agency collaboration on modern slavery’, p.19 [Accessed 20 June 2023].

23 Home Office (2021) ‘National Enforcement Powers Guide’, [Accessed 20 June 2023].

24 Just under a third of (n=8 out of 28) contributing stakeholders mentioned the positive impact of joint visits on effective multi-agency working.

During the investigations, a second newsagent in Portslade was also identified with links to the Saltdean newsagent. The licensing team found that the same individual was the licensee at both premises. A licence review hearing was scheduled but the Portslade newsagent chose to surrender its licence before the hearing took place. The Brighton and Hove licensing officer noted that the joint operations helped to facilitate an improved working relationship between the police and council licensing teams and has led to greater information sharing.²⁵

 **Recommendation 17:**

Engage in joint visits with other agencies to combat modern slavery.

3.3.3 Sanctions

3.3.3.1 Slavery and Tracking Prevention Orders and Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders

There are two civil orders available under Part 2 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 which can be applied to prevent those who pose a risk of harm from committing modern slavery offences in the future: 1) Slavery and Trafficking Prevention Orders (STPOs) and 2) Slavery and Trafficking Risk Orders (STROs). A breach of any aspect of an STPO or STRO or interim order is a criminal offence.

STPOs and STROs can be an effective sanction to deter licence holders from engaging in modern slavery practices at current or potential future licensed premises. However, their successful use relies on collaborative efforts with agencies such as the police, the National Crime Agency,

Immigration Enforcement, or GLAA Labour Abuse Prevention Officers, who can submit applications to the court. While only the police, courts, or GLAA officers can issue these orders, cooperation with these agencies allows licensing officers and councils to disrupt modern slavery and utilise different enforcement tools.

STPOs and STROs can be an effective sanction to deter licence holders from engaging in modern slavery practices at current or potential future licensed premises.

Case Study (Crawley & Mid Sussex): A car wash located in Crawley became a premise of interest to the Crawley & Mid Sussex Serious and Organised Crime Group. The premise had already been visited previously by environmental health officers who reported possible modern slavery indicators. Considering these concerns, the Crawley & Mid Sussex SOC Group coordinated a multi-agency investigation and a joint operation with the GLAA and other agencies took place soon after. During the operation, law enforcement partners found staff who spoke little English living on site. They were also working without PPE. Several health and safety infringements were identified, along with fraud offences.

As a result of these findings, a licence held by the owner was scheduled for review and revoked due to the fire safety violations identified. Local enforcement agencies then utilised the evidence found to apply for a Slavery and Trafficking Risk Order (STRO) against the Crawley car wash owner. This was granted. Reviewing the case during an interview, the West

²⁵ Case study taken from stakeholder interview (May 2022)

Sussex Council officer saw the successful STRO application against the car wash owner as being “a real success” because it meant that the car wash owner was prevented from employing anyone as a business owner for five years and would not be able exploit any more people without facing serious repercussions from the court.

This case demonstrates that such orders can be utilised as an effective tool for disrupting modern slavery and deter perpetrators from committing future offences. The lead licensing officer of this case argued that, in his experience, these orders were greatly underused locally due to a lack of awareness, their complexities, length of application process and the level of information required in the form for it to be considered in court. Additional training and awareness raising around STROs and STPOs to relevant agencies is necessary to bridge this gap and increase the use of these orders at a local level.²⁶

 **Recommendation 18:**

Encourage the use of prevention and risk orders among licensing teams in collaboration with relevant law enforcement partners.

²⁶ Four out of five stakeholders interviewed (who were specifically asked about STROs and STPOs) were not even aware of the existence of these orders, let alone how to apply for one in collaboration with relevant law enforcement agencies.

Section 3: Summary

This section emphasises the importance of capacity building, raising awareness among license holders, and fostering partnership working in law enforcement to combat modern slavery effectively. Enhancing safeguarding training for licensing officers and integrating modern slavery training for licensing committees are crucial steps. By extending training to high-risk licensed premises, providing guidance documentation, and offering multilingual publicity materials, licensing enforcement teams can educate businesses, promote accountability, and mitigate modern slavery risks. Establishing licensing action groups, conducting joint visits with other agencies, and utilising prevention and risk orders in collaboration with law enforcement partners enhance partnership working. Implementing these measures will enable practitioners to identify and address instances of modern slavery, deter perpetrators, and protect the well-being of those affected.