

Committee(s): Strategic Planning and Performance Committee	Dated: 22 February 2024
Subject: Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking update	Public
Which outcomes in the City Corporation's Corporate Plan does this proposal aim to impact directly?	1- People are safe and feel safe
Does this proposal require extra revenue and/or capital spending?	N/A
If so, how much?	N/A
What is the source of Funding?	N/A
Has this Funding Source been agreed with the Chamberlain's Department?	N/A
Report of: Commissioner of Police Pol 25-24	For Discussion
Report author: Amanda Horsburgh, Detective Chief Superintendent, Specialist Operations; Claire Flinter Head of Business Information (Data)	

Summary

At the November Strategic Planning and Performance Committee (SPPC), Members requested an update on the City of London Police (CoLP) threat, demand and response in relation to Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking (MDSHT). This report is provided in response to that request.

Data, analysis timeframe runs to end Q3 (December) 2023-24.

Key points:

- There is comparatively low volumes of this crime type in the City of London. MDSHT currently accounts for 0.13% of crime within the City of London compared to the national average of all other forces at 0.24%
- CoLP is working to improve the intelligence picture with proactive intelligence gathering in partnership with other forces in the region.
- CoLP is working to build capability within Local Policing and Investigators.
- MDSHT often emerges when investigating other crime types such as Drug dealing. CoLP has an ongoing investigation whereby the CPS authorised charges for three subjects from an investigation into drug offences, money laundering and now MDSHT
- More males report being a victim of MDSHT at 76% (n=31).
- Among the victims who declared their ethnicity, White North European victims are the largest group at 43% (n=18)
- 60% of MDSHT offences end with 'outcome 18': Investigation complete no suspect identified and 24% have 'outcome 14': Victim declines/unable to support action to identify offender.
- There has been 1 charge since 2019.

CoLP continues to improve its understanding of and response to MDSHT.

Recommendation(s)

Members are asked to note the report.

Main Report

Background

1. This report provides an update on Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking in response to a request at the November SPPC from Members

Current Position

Overview

2. The City of London's place and population circumstances are unique in the United Kingdom. Despite being the smallest local authority area in the UK, 1 in every 54 British workers works in the City. As such, the City of London has a uniquely small resident population and a uniquely large worker population – there are 68 workers for every one resident. This context is important for understanding the local risk factors and potential for Modern Day Slavery and Human Trafficking (MDSHT).
3. MDSHT currently accounts for 0.13% of crime within the City of London compared to the national average of all other forces at 0.24%

Threat Picture and Response

4. The City of London Police (CoLP) is continuing to work hard to identify main threat with regards to MDSHT within the Square Mile. The Regional Organised Crime Threat Assessment conducted proactive research and analysis, on behalf of City of London Police, of websites promoting sexual services in the City, with the primary goal of identifying potential victims of sexual exploitation and determining if this occurred within the context of a wider criminal network.
5. This research yielded the identification of several phone numbers and addresses associated with potentially exploited individuals. Although face-to-face enquiries and well-being checks by local policing did not reveal any victims of exploitation, the intention is to consistently conduct these checks to enhance our understanding of sexual exploitation within the City.
6. This threat type is on the CoLP's radar and development work is ongoing to proactively seek these offences out rather than being reactive. Trialling 'Traffic Jam', a system that scrapes for data relating to adverts selling sexual services, to assist with proactive investigations into those advertising services in the City and who are at risk of being exploited is a potential next step to proactively research sexual MDSHT offences occurring in the square mile over the next 12 months.
7. This does not mean that this is the only threat of MDSHT within the City and by its' nature it is a 'hidden crime' albeit often in plain sight and consideration is given to how this can present, for example, within hotel or construction industry

therefore in dealing with any strategic intelligence requirements an open minded approach should and will be taken.

8. Over the last two years CoLP has been developing an intelligence led response to tackling Serious Organised Crime. This response is a collaborative effort across local and national portfolios. This response focuses efforts on three key 'pursue' areas: intelligence, tasking & coordination and the investigation of Serious organised crime.
9. To achieve this CoLP has been developing local and investigative policing capability. A key component to the development of these teams is connectivity between local and investigating units. These units have undertaken collaborative operational activity targeting crime groups operating in and around the Square Mile. This operational activity has featured an intelligence led response to disrupting and reducing offending linked to drug supply & MSHT networks as referenced in para 17 below.
10. Training has been delivered to senior and junior investigating officers to ensure they understand how to identify and undertake these complex investigations. Briefings have been delivered by experienced officers from Serious Organised Crime units to Local Policing officers including the Dedicated Ward Officers (DWO's). This is to ensure that these crimes are identified and that there is connectivity through the three key areas of intelligence, tasking & coordination and investigation.
11. This has led to several investigations and charges being brought against those involved in drug supply and modern slavery. It has also led to safeguarding of vulnerable juveniles and greater understanding of these crimes that impact the Square Mile. Including cross border offenders located within the MPS.
12. CoLP has previously successfully prosecuted and disrupted West Balkan crime groups responsible for the making of counterfeit passports that facilitate human trafficking networks.
13. To prevent complacency around the investigation of these crime types the tactical lead for MSHT will be creating a policing model that will build on the 'pursue' strand to collectively focus policing efforts to prevent, prepare & protect our communities from what is all too often a hidden harm.
14. Additionally, commissioned by the Serious Organised Crime Oversight Board, a threat profile has been completed that looks at the issue pan-London, presenting a number of intelligence requirements, the headlines for which are summarised below:
 - What is the true scale and threat of Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking offending within the City of London?
 - What are the initial pathways for exploitation (recruitment & vulnerability factors)?
 - Who is being targeted for different exploitation types?
 - Who are the perpetrators of MSHT offending?

- What are the methods and modes of transport used by traffickers to move victims in to or through the square mile?
 - What are the locations of exploitation within the City of London (i.e. types of industry, geographic locations)?
15. The best intelligence collectors are those operating on the frontline and these requirements are being shared with uniform and detective teams. This deeper dive into the threat picture will assist in establishing a better understanding and the extent of such crime in the City of London. Requirement sharing is being accompanied by briefings that provide the necessary context to this threat. This is an approach utilised to good effect in tackling drug crime and improving the response to those organising such crime.
16. To further assist intelligence and threat understanding, the CoLP is in the process of establishing a seat at the London TOEX Team Tackling Organised Exploitation (TOEX) Programme¹. This will provide direct access to wider intelligence and assist in identifying areas of harm affecting the City of London that often have a cross border impact.
17. In dealing with MDSHT offences taking an open-minded approach when dealing with other crime types is demonstrated with City of London Police identifying MDSHT across other aspects of Serious and Organised Crime. It is often in cases like this those involved as participants in the lower echelons of Serious and Organised Crime Groups can often be subject themselves to criminal exploitation. This has manifested itself within ongoing investigation whereby the CPS authorised charges for three subjects from an investigation into drug offences, money laundering and MDSHT. The matter is awaiting trial and therefore further commentary at this time would not be appropriate.
18. The recent CoLP Crime Data Integrity Review did however highlight areas for improvement in the recording of crimes relating to MDSHT. This is covered in a separate report on the agenda today.

Key Data and Analysis

19. The following key data for MDSHT seeks to highlight the response to this crime type made by City of London Police to date.

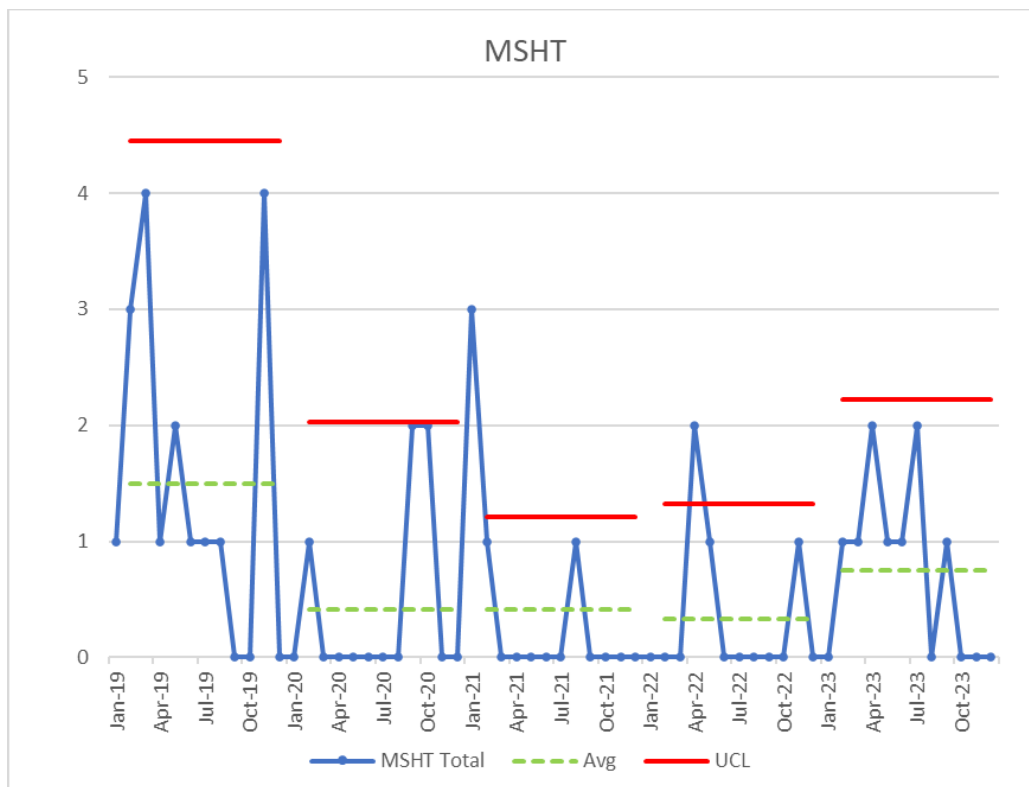
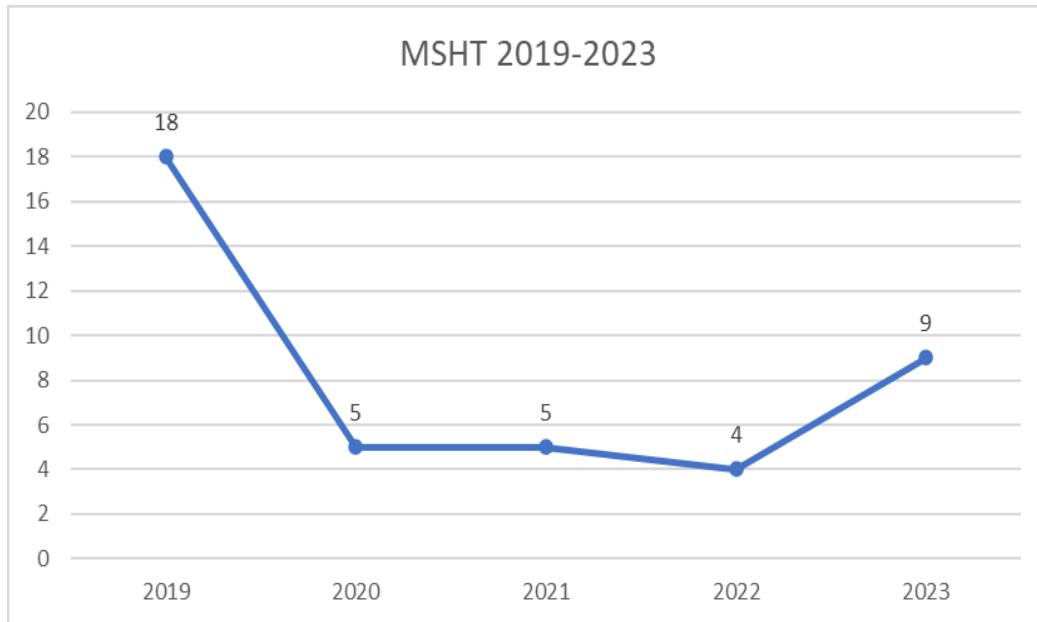
5 years (Jan 2019 – Dec 2023) ** This data covers HO recordable crimes and does not include incidents.

0.13% of all crime in the city has been MSHT. (n=9). City of London Police do not see the same proportion of MSHT in the City compared to national levels (0.13% compared to 0.24% nationally).

¹ [Tackling Organised Exploitation \(TOEX\) Programme \(npcc.police.uk\)](https://npcc.police.uk)

Key Highlights

- With such small numbers, the % of increase or decrease has a bigger impact but may be indicative of raised awareness across teams and better understanding of the Threat Picture.
- The following analysis highlights this: MDSHT has decreased by 50% (-9) since 2019. However, we have seen an increase of 225% (+5) in 2023. It is assessed that volumes reported were impacted from 2020-2022 by the lockdowns and Covid Pandemic.



- More males report being a victim of MDSHT at 76% (n=31).
- The typical profile for male victims is aged between 18-25 years and of White - North European ethnicity.
- 85% of victims are aged between 11-35 (n=35) There are 11 incidents of MDSHT involving persons under the age of 18. Of these 8 are male.
- Among the victims who declared their ethnicity, White North European victims are the largest group at 43% (n=18), followed by White South European 17% (n=7) Unknown ethnicity accounts for 17% (n=7) of reports.
- Temporal analysis reports MDSHT incidents as having different peaks throughout the year. 51% of offences occur in Jan – Apr with no occurrences ever occurring in December. February shows a 50% increase for MDSHT offences above the monthly average.
- 60% of MDSHT offences end with outcome 18: Investigation complete no suspect identified and 24% have outcome 14: Victim declines/unable to support action to identify offender.
- There has been 1 charge since 2019.

AGE	11-17	18-25	26-35	36-45	46-55	56-65	+65	TOTAL
FEMALE	3	2	4	1	0	0	0	10
MALE	8	11	7	2	2	1	0	31
TOTAL	11	13	11	3	2	1	0	41

ETHNICITY	WHITE SE	WHITE NE	BLACK	ASIAN	SE ASIAN	UNKNOWN	TOTAL
FEMALE	3	2	1	1	1	2	10
MALE	4	16	3	1	2	5	31
TOTAL	7	18	4	2	3	7	41

OUTCOME	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	TOTAL	% OUTCOME
1. Charged	1	0	0	0	0	1	2.44
14: Victim declines/unable to support action to identify offender	3	3	1	2	1	10	24.39
16: Victim declines/withdraws support - named suspect identified	0	1	0	1	0	2	4.88
18: Investigation complete no suspect identified	14	1	1	3	6	25	60.98
20: Other body/agency has investigation primacy unresolved	0	0	0	0	2	2	4.88
Resolved	0	0	1	0	0	1	2.44
TOTAL	18	5	3	6	9	41	

Disruptions

20. Disruptions are the key performance measure of law enforcement activity conducted to tackle and infiltrate SOC nominals and OCGs, including those

involved with MDSHT. Disruptive activity can range from arrests, warrants and seizures to training sessions and ancillary orders. They are split into three assessment categories: Major, Moderate and Minor. The categories are defined below and are used to determine the impact their activity has had on the nominal or OCGs capabilities and functionality.

Assessment Category	Impact Definition
MAJOR	Significant, long term disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or vulnerability. This is recorded at sentencing stage.
MODERATE	Noticeable, medium term disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or vulnerability.
MINOR	Minimal, short term disruptive impact on the capability of the OCG, individual or vulnerability.

21. The disruption claims against MSHT look low for each financial year and this is due to only four OCGs since FY20/21 committing or being linked to committing MSHT offences. Currently, have two operations out of 75 live jobs that commit or have primary links to committing MDSHT offences and we await outcomes of charging decisions in this respect. The low volume of disruptions may also be due to the primary crime (Drugs, Fraud) attracting the disruption claim. For obvious reasons we are unable to double count whereby multiple crimes may be present. That said it is an area of focus for CoLP to enhance opportunity of disruption activity in this space.

Operations of significance

22. **Op Sun** was the City Of London response to numerous juveniles being arrested for distraction theft in the City Of London. They were all giving the same address (in the MPS) and asking for the same appropriate adult which gave some suspicion towards Modern Slavery being a factor in their offending. CoLP began enquiries in Romania and established that a number of them were travelling with the same people to the UK and that some were in fact being moved between crime families with the girls being particularly vulnerable to sexual exploitation. CoLP also began working out their network across Europe as they were being arrested in Italy, France and Germany as well.

23. The CoLP was working towards a modern slavery investigation, however the Covid 19 pandemic hit and a lot of the individuals left the UK. As the addresses emptied and they left the country CoLP marked up the juveniles with modern slavery markers so that if they came in via the ports, CoLP could pick them up and the adults travelling with them. The majority now would be Over18. The Operation was eventually shut.

24. **Op Aidant** is co-ordinated by the National Crime Agency (NCA). The operation is run nationally every year and involves local police forces working alongside partner agencies to focus on vulnerability, exploitation and modern slavery. Each force had to provide a return. CoLP would conduct targeted operations, plain clothes around transport hubs, operations on any brothels identified as part of this operation, however many of them were on the borders in MPS area. CoLP also ran previous operations with MPS. . For the ones identified in the City, it was engagement with the sex worker, welfare and seeking their support

for any prosecution – which was never forthcoming. CoLP adopted a Multi-agency approach to ensure their wellbeing. Any intelligence that could be exploited to identify the controller was picked up by CoLPs Intelligence hub for assessment.

NPCC Modern Slavery and Organised Immigration Crime (MS&OIC) Programme Section 22 Collaboration Agreement

25. CoLP is signed up to the National Police Chiefs Council (NPCC) Section 22 Collaboration Agreement for MS & OIC Programme. The Programme is to embed an improved policing and wider law enforcement response to modern slavery and organised immigration crime for all Police Forces in England and Wales. It is currently funded by a grant from the Home Office and CoLP has benefited from the services provided by the national team as described in a previous report to the Police Authority Board in January 2024 (Pol 04-24 refers).

Conclusion

26. City of London Police continues to grow its response to MDSHT. There has been progress made over the last 12 months to understand the threat picture and develop response as highlighted within this report. It remains an area of focus within our Serious and Organised Crime Profile, and we continue to identify methods of both disruption and criminal outcomes in this space.

Background Papers

Pol 04-24 National Section 22 Collaboration Agreement- Modern Slavery, Human Trafficking and Organised Immigration Crime Programme- Updated agreement 2023-25.- Police Authority Board- 10 January 2024

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