

April 25, 2018: PLASP Meeting

Some points of interest:

- The recent business event was a success. There were indications that some employers might seek further professional advice to ensure ethical practice in their employment of staff and use of supply chains. The issue will become more relevant with amendments to the Modern Slavery Act and increased pressure on employers to operate to high ethical standards. [The Police and Crime Commissioner's Office for Staffordshire](#) has produced a [Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Ethical Business Pledge](#) for employers and Lancashire has started to look at something similar which would cover all procured services.
- *Unseen* has produced its [Modern Slavery Helpline Annual Assessment for 2018](#) along with a four page [Executive Summary](#). In Lancashire, the number of Potential Victims indicated increased by 68% from 50 (2017) to 84 (2018). 11% of potential victims were reportedly minors. 33 cases of Modern Slavery were recorded by the Helpline in Lancashire, which was a 43% increase from 2017. There is specific reference to Lancashire in the report via the Lancashire Anti-Slavery Partnership which features a picture of the Freedom Bus and: *"Modern Slavery is a hidden crime and so as a key part of the work of the Pan Lancashire AntiSlavery Partnership, we are committed to raising awareness and helping to spot the signs. Over the past year we have held a number of events in towns across Lancashire, engaging with the public around this important issue. By working in partnership with Unseen, we have been able to promote the 24/7 confidential Modern Slavery Helpline. This offers a safe and credible way for people to seek advice and report concerns. As a result of the awareness raising and the use of the Helpline, we have seen a real increase in the numbers of victims being identified and supported. One of our most eye-catching tools we use is the Freedom Bus which displays the Helpline number and other key messages as it drives around the streets of Lancashire."*
- The update of the PLASP Toolkit is nearly complete and will be forwarded soon. Partners should disseminate as widely as possible.
- The Review of the Modern Slavery Act is coming out in parts and Sion has sent out two: [Independent MSA Review Interim Report 3 – Independent Child Trafficking Advocates](#); and [Independent MSA Review Interim Report 4 – legal application](#). Advocacy is an issue for adults as well as children. The City Hearts Integration Support Programme covers legal support, housing, health, employment and identification, but there is a need for more comprehensive provision. It is an issue for the development of a PLASP Victim Care Pathway.
- Onjali Q Raúf will come to Fulwood Methodist Church on 31 May to front a discussion on modern She is the founder of [Making Herstory](#) a woman's rights organisation tackling the abuse and trafficking of women and girls in the UK and beyond. Her début novel, **The Boy at the Back of the Class**, draws on her own experience delivering emergency aid convoys for refugee families.
- PLASP plans to partner with Merseyside in raising awareness which will feature the Freedom Bus outside the Slavery Museum. We will need a few volunteers. The next Freedom Day in Lancashire will probably be in Ormskirk in June for which we will need planning via a publicity sub-group. It would be good to follow with one in Blackpool, perhaps to coincide with the Illuminations. We discussed the possibility of taking the Freedom Bus to agricultural shows.

- Trafficking has come up under *concealed or denied pregnancy* where there is a high risk of infant mortality. There is a need to circulate policy so that employees are aware of the issue and know what to do if they suspect something. We will alert our Home Start, Pendle and Ribble Valley, contact.
- The Friendship Foundation is now UK centred rather than Romania though the people supported are mainly, if not exclusively, Romanian. The scale of the growing problem of trafficked Romanians is highlighted by the Modern Slavery Helpline figures which show an increase of potential victims from 756 to 1,231 between 2017 and 2018. The second highest figures for 2017 and 2018 are 233 for Poland and 293 for Vietnam. It has proved very difficult to get interest in Romanian communities on the issue of human trafficking. An advisor has been appointed in Preston and for Blackpool we have a PLASP member. The Romanian Consul now sits in Manchester and should be approached.