

Project Scope – Guest Houses Review Group

Review Topic	'Preventing exploitation in the hospitality sector'
Lead Member	Councillor Van Coulter
Other Members	Councillor Mark Lygo Councillor Gwynneth Royce Councillor Craig Simmons
Officer Support and allocate hours	Scrutiny Officer support – approx. 2-4 days per month for up to 4 months (Mid-August – Mid-Dec). Additional support from other officers including officers working in Environmental Health, Environmental Protection and Policy & Partnerships.
Background	<p>Police investigations in recent years have found that child rape and trafficking offenses have taken place in an Oxford guest house, as well as a variety of other premises.</p> <p>The Anti-social Behaviour, Crime and Policing Bill included new powers to require hotels and similar establishments to provide information about guests to the police, where there is a reasonable belief that child sexual exploitation is taking place.</p> <p>There is concern that the regulatory framework and responsibility for ensuring the safety of these 'public' premises is weaker than with other types of venues. Guest houses are not licensed and the City Council's powers in this sector are limited to issues of food safety and health and safety.</p>
Rationale	<p>Scrutiny Members want to understand whether there is more that could reasonably be done to strengthen safeguarding and prevent and disrupt the exploitation of children and adults in the hospitality sector.</p> <p>The Scrutiny Committee prioritised this review when agreeing its work programme for 2015-16.</p>
Purpose of Review / Objective	To understand what is already being done to prevent exploitation in hotels and guest houses and explore the case for further interventions, including the introduction of a voluntary code of practice for providers.
Indicators of Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wide and constructive engagement with stakeholders and experts that delivers a range of opinion; - The production of evidence-based report setting out what (if any) further action could be taken to prevent exploitation from taking place in guest houses, and the resource implications of doing so; - The majority of any recommendations to the City Executive Board are agreed and implemented; - If a voluntary code of practice is adopted, a significant number of guest houses sign up to this.

Out of scope	General quality standards within guest houses. This is the responsibility of tourism bodies.		
Methodology/ Approach	Evidence gathering could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Inviting written and verbal evidence from stakeholders and experts; - Desk research / literature review; - Undertaking a site visit if required. 		
Specify Witnesses / Experts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ian Wright – Service Manager, Environmental Health; - Linda Ludlow – Human Exploitation Coordinator; - Val Johnson – Policy & Partnership Team Leader; - Richard Webb – Trading Standards & Community Safety Manager, Oxfordshire County Council - Stefan Wynne-Jones – Oxford Association of Hotels & Guest Houses; - Andy Dipper – Oxford Communities Against Trafficking; - Liz Patterson – Team Manager, Elmore Community Services. - Thames Valley Police; - Oxfordshire Fire Service; - Tourist Information Centre; - Representatives of guest houses (Acorn, Nanford, Athena). 		
Specify Evidence Sources for Documents	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Factsheet: Child sexual exploitation at hotels, UK Government; - Oxfordshire Children's Safeguarding Board Serious Case Review: Findings and Response, Thames Valley Police - Stocktake report into progress made in tackling child sexual exploitation in Oxfordshire, Oxfordshire Safeguarding Children Board; - Professional Handbook for Tackling CSE (incl. CSE Strategy), OSCB; - Oxfordshire's multi-agency procedures, OSCB; - CSE Screening Tool, OSCB; - Other OSCB documentation; - Say something if you See Something campaign, NWG Network; - Letters sent to hotels as part of 'Anti-trafficking day 2011' - Press articles; - <i>Other documents TBC.</i> 		
Site Visits	TBC		
Projected start date	7 August 15	Draft Report Deadline	27 Nov 15
Meeting Frequency	Monthly	Projected completion date	17 Dec 15

Draft outline of meetings

Meeting one
Scoping meeting to agree the purpose of the review.
Meeting two
Briefing by the City Council’s Human Exploitation Coordinator.
Meeting three
First evidence gathering session including discussions with witnesses/experts. Confirmed: representatives of Acorn and Athena Guest Houses, Val Johnson, Ian Wright.
Meeting four
Second evidence gathering session including discussions with witnesses/experts.
Meeting five
Final meeting to approve report and any recommendations before they are published for Scrutiny.

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