

To: Scrutiny Committee

Date: 27 March 2017

Report of: Head of Community Services

Title: Guest House Review Group – progress update

February 2016 CEB response:

Guest houses are an important part of the visitor and tourist economy in Oxford and the City Council wishes to encourage guest house owners to play their part in keeping users safe. The Say Something If You See Something campaign highlights safeguarding risks to vulnerable adults and young people and has identified the guest house accommodation sector as having an important part to play in successfully securing progress in this domain. The campaign aims to increase the awareness of people employed in the sector, by training them in what to look for, how to report concerns and where to turn to for help.

A code of conduct for guest houses seems likely to make a useful contribution if it is widely respected and publicised. The Board will discuss with senior officers the serious resource implications of the agenda set out in the Scrutiny report and seek to identify the how to effectively deliver the actions proposed within current administrative resources. Additionally, the Board will draw on the expertise of key partner agencies to assess the viability of a worthwhile initiative in this important area of safeguarding and personal safety.

March 2017 progress update:

<i>Recommendation</i>	<i>Agree?</i>	<i>March 2017 progress update</i>
1. That the City Council should maintain an accurate list of guest houses operating in the Oxford area that is updated at least annually (The Human Exploitation Co-ordinator has produced a basic list which could be developed into an accurate list).	In part	<p>Prior to Oxford City Hotel Watch launch in March 2016 a comprehensive list was compiled using TVP, Oxford City Licensing and Food Hygiene. The list is currently being reviewed and updated to take account of new premises and those that have closed.</p> <p>All establishments are automatically added to the Thames Valley Alert system and receive regular updates of any related crimes and events.</p>

<p>2. That the City Council should, in consultation and collaboration with other relevant statutory, commercial and voluntary agencies, lead on the introduction of a voluntary code of good practice for owners of guest houses in the Oxford area to sign up to. This code should be jointly branded and linked to existing initiatives such as the Say Something if you See Something campaign.</p>	Y	<p>Working with representatives from the Hotel/ Accommodations sector, TVP, Fire & Rescue and Oxford City Council a 'Statement of Intent for Hoteliers' was developed and launched in October 2016. It is aimed at all hotel staff members and has been branded with Hotel Watch brand developed by TVP HQ. The brand is the TVP Thames Valley wide branding and does not include Say Something if you See Something (SSSS) brand. Wherever possible locally the SSSS is applied.</p>
<p>3. That, subject to further consultation, the voluntary code of good practice should commit owners of guest houses operating in Oxford to the following practices which would help to protect guest house owners and their businesses as well as guests and the wider community. These practices should extend to subcontractors working in guest houses where relevant:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Signing up to a basic safeguarding policy statement; b) Providing details of an identified 'single point of contact' who has oversight of the running of the guest house and is responsible for ensuring compliance with the code of good practice; c) Having an identified responsible person on duty at the guest house at all times during its hours of operation; d) Providing Basic Disclosure certificates for the single point of contact and responsible person(s) and if possible, obtaining certificates for all staff who permanently or regularly work in the guest house; e) Having a free crime prevention check every 3 years and implementing recommendations 	In part	<p>'Say Something if you See Something' leaflet has been developed and provided to all Hotels/Guesthouses/Bed & Breakfast and Short Let in the city. Copies were issues at every Hotel Watch event. An information pack including the SSSS leaflet and Statements of Intent for Hoteliers is given to any first contact visits made by Neighbourhood Police Teams, Fire & Rescue, City Licensing teams and joint Crime Prevention & Reduction Advisor and Oxford City Council's Strategic Lead for Human Exploitation.</p> <p>The Oxford City Hotel Watch has set up a Working Group which meets 4 times a year. The Group is made up of Chair (TVP volunteer), TVP Inspector, Sergeant, Neighbourhood Watch & Thames Valley Alert Coordinator and Oxford City Council's Strategic Lead for Human Exploitation, representatives from Travelodge, Holiday Inn Express, River Hotel, Greengables Guesthouse, Bijoux Apartments and Short Lettings. A professionals meeting is also held to discuss any hotels of concern and how to resolve those concerns.</p> <p>The SSSS leaflet provides information on; what to look-out for, Other signs that may raise concern, How can you help? Keeping children and vulnerable people safe from abuse. It also includes who to report concerns to. (a-c & f)</p> <p>d) This has not been discussed and unsure if applicable for this sector.</p>

<p>made by the Crime Prevention and Reduction Advisor;</p> <p>f) Cooperating with the police, including by providing available CCTV footage upon request and allowing the police to freely enter the premises where illegal behaviour is suspected to be taking place;</p> <p>g) Registering with Thames Valley Alert and participating in the hotel partnership to strengthen two-way information sharing between guest houses and the authorities;</p> <p>h) Retaining records of the single point of contact and responsible person(s) completing the ECPAT 'Every Child, Everywhere' e-learning course, and providing all staff working in the guest house with the Thames Valley Police Staff Guide for the hotel trade;</p> <p>i) Having a 'no cash without ID' policy, recording vehicle registration numbers where relevant and requiring visitors to register with reception;</p> <p>j) Holding and restricting access to master keys for all rooms and ensuring that guest rooms are checked daily;</p> <p>k) Having suitable and proportionate arrangements in place for monitoring comings and goings at the premises, including during the night, and where relevant, retaining CCTV footage for a minimum of 28 days.</p>		<p>e) A joint visit is carried out by the Crime Prevention & Reduction Advisor, relevant area PCSO and Oxford City Council Strategic Lead for Human Exploitation if identified as a venue identified through Intelligence or as a result of a warrant.</p> <p>f) A number of hoteliers has been very proactive and report any concerns immediately and provide photographic evidence of any persons of concern.</p> <p>h) ECPAT 'Every Child, Everywhere' is currently not available as being updated.</p> <p>A Thames Valley Police Staff Guide for the Hotel Trade has not been developed.</p> <p>All establishments attending any Hotel Watch event or visited by any member of the Working Group are provided with a Hotel Watch pack which includes a training resources list.</p> <p>TVP and Oxford City Council's Strategic Lead for Human Exploitation have been collaborating with Oxford Brookes University and their partners in promoting COMBAT Trafficking in Human Beings in the Hotel Industry. This material will be made available to members of the Oxford City Hotel Watch at the next members' conference being held on Monday 27th March 2017.</p> <p>i) As a result of previous concerns raised by the membership at the October 2016 bi-annual conference representatives from the National Fraud Agency and Santander gave presentations on how to tackle credit card fraud. Since this meeting a letter is under development from the Oxford Hotel sector highlighting these issues and how to protect their businesses. This has been escalated to a national and governmental level.</p>
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4. That the owners of guest houses in the Oxford area should be asked to self-certify that they comply with the voluntary code of good practice on an annual basis. This process could be prompted by a letter signed by the Local Policing Area Commander, as well as through the hotel partnership and any other relevant channels.	Y	The City of Oxford – Hotel Watch – Statements of Intent for Hoteliers is given to hotel premises within the city. It is signed by Supt Christian Bunt and Tim Sadler and was launched at the October 2016 bi-annual conference held at the Holiday Inn Express, Grenoble Road, Oxford.
5. That guest house owners signed up to the code should be signposted to sources of advice and guidance.	Y	A pack is provided to all hoteliers at the launch and any subsequent visits carried out by TVP Crime Prevention & Reduction Advisor and Oxford City Strategic Lead for Human Exploitation if there has been no previous contact or change in management
6. That the City Council asks Thames Valley Police to give prompt attention to requests for assistance at local guest houses.	Y	This will depend on Police resourcing but Neighbourhood Police teams will always visit and provide advice along with Crime Prevention & Reduction Advisor and Oxford City Strategic Lead for Human Exploitation.
7. That relevant agencies including City Council functions such as Environmental Health and Community Safety, and those provided by partner organisations such as the Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service and Trading Standards, should be asked to report to the code administrator if they have reason to believe that, having been signed up to the voluntary code of good practice, the management of a guest house is non-compliant with it. The single point of contact should then be asked to demonstrate that they have	In part	There is a mechanism in place to include visits from the agencies identified. This work has been expanded to include visits from Oxford City Council's Licensing Team allowing the scheme to have eyes and ears from a number of aspects.

addressed the concerns raised or risk being suspended from the code.		
8. That the administration of the voluntary code of good practice should be adequately resourced. Consideration should be given to where in the organisation this responsibility should sit but the Strategic lead for Human Exploitation Manager should have oversight of this administrative function.	In part	The scheme is shared between TVP and Oxford City Council. Majority of the administration eg minute taking and typing development and sharing of master list sits within Oxford City.
9. That a suitable logo should be created for the voluntary code of good practice that could be displayed on guest house websites.	N	This has not been actioned due to TVP logo 'Hotel Watch' being launched and promoted across the region without taking account of national and local schemes. Other measures have been put into place eg City of Oxford – Hotel Watch – Statements of Intent for Hoteliers.
10. That a list of guest houses covered by the voluntary code of good practice should be displayed on the City Council's website together with details of what the owners of these guest houses have signed up to. The introduction of the code should also be promoted to targeted institutions, such as language schools, as well as more widely, including through a City Council press release.	N	Not actioned to date due to representatives of the Working Group wished to focus on other matters affecting the local industry. This has resulted in the sector fully engaging with the Working Group and identifying issues not previously known and giving other options on how to tackle issues related to Organised Crime, CSE, Human trafficking & Exploitation and Prostitution.
11. That Experience Oxfordshire should be informed which guest houses are covered by the voluntary code of good practice and asked to display the logo next to participating guest houses on their website.	N	Not actioned to date.
12. That the City Council should encourage the larger tour operators and hotels operating in Oxford to sign up to the Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism.	In part	Rather than Code of Conduct for the Protection of Children from Sexual Exploitation in Travel and Tourism other avenues have been pursued locally.
13. That the City Council should ask	N	Not actioned to date due to other demands related to Hotel Watch

<p>organisations such as Experience Oxfordshire and the local Chamber of Commerce to do more to promote the Say Something if you See Something campaign, including through existing relationships.</p>		
<p>14. That the City Council should look for opportunities to join with partners, perhaps through the National Working Group, in pressing government to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Grant additional powers to local authorities to require the embedding of good practices in guest houses, b) Do more to involve the hotel accreditation agencies and major travel website companies, as well as guest houses, in efforts to promote good safeguarding practices in the hospitality sector; c) Introduce a public awareness campaign that empowers people to come forward with safeguarding concerns. 	N	<p>The NWG been contacted and made aware of Oxford City Say something if you See Something - Hotel Watch Scheme. The NWG have been approached to provide support and advice on who to tackle Credit card fraud in relation to Organised Crime.</p>