



CEO's Quarterly Report

Jan – March 2015

News

New board

The GLA's new, streamlined board was appointed a couple of days prior to parliament being dissolved. Plans to reduce the numbers of the governing body date back to 2012, when the Government's Red Tape Challenge review concluded that a more compact governance structure would provide clearer strategic leadership and direction. A subsequent Triennial Review reached a similar verdict and the recruitment process for a board of up to eight members plus a chair commenced towards the end of 2014.

Six members were appointed and we anticipate the two remaining vacancies will be filled later in the year. The new board members already in place are: Simon Allbutt, Bill Butler, Angela Coleshill, Professor Linda Dickens MBE, Marshall Evans and Paul Williams.

GLA Chair Margaret Beels said: "The appointees from the initial recruitment represent an excellent amalgamation of experience of past GLA work allied with some fresh thinking for the future. The members are independent but will confer with our key stakeholders to oversee delivery of the revised Strategic Plan for 2015-18, against the challenge of financial austerity but expanding demands on GLA resources."

The smaller board will result in more focussed discussions enabling all members to participate actively in the decision-making process. However, a key consideration for the members will be engagement with the wide range of supportive GLA stakeholders who are no longer represented.

Modern Slavery Act includes review of the GLA

The landmark Modern Slavery Bill received Royal Assent at the end of March with the new legislation calling for a consultation on and review of the GLA's role. The Act is the first of its kind in Europe, and one of the first in the world that specifically addresses slavery and trafficking in the 21st century. It significantly enhances support and protection for victims, gives law enforcement the tools they need to target today's slave drivers, ensures perpetrators can be severely punished, and includes a world leading provision to encourage businesses to take action to ensure their end-to-end supply chains are slavery free.

Home Secretary Theresa May said: "The presence of modern slavery in today's society is an affront to the dignity and humanity of every one of us. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 is

an historic milestone. This landmark legislation sends the strongest possible signal to criminals that if you are involved in this vile trade you will be arrested, you will be prosecuted and you will be locked up. And it says to victims, you are not alone - we are here to help you. I want to pay tribute to the campaigners, organisations, and Parliamentarians of all parties for their hard work and determination to shine a light on this hidden crime and for helping to shape this law.”

GLA National Conference achieves goals

The GLA hosted its inaugural national conference in March which was hugely oversubscribed and attended by licence holders, labour users, retailers, law enforcement officers and other interested parties. Key speakers included the Minister for Modern Slavery Karen Bradley who promised a proposed Government review of the GLA’s role and remit which would ensure the authority targeted the ‘right’ businesses. In her speech, the Staffordshire MP said the Government needed to ensure any changes made to the authority would be effective and based on ‘best evidence’. More than 250 delegates packed the Toyota Suite at Derby County Football Club’s iPro Stadium for the sell-out event, which was also addressed by: Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Kevin Hyland OBE; GLA Chief Executive Paul Broadbent and Chair Margaret Beels; Bishop of Derby, the Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern; Marshall Evans, a director at Staffline; Det Ch Insp Donna Wass of Cambridgeshire Constabulary; Dr Dave Walsh and Prof Coral Dando of Derby University, Cindy Berman of the Ethical Trading Initiative and Beate Andrees of the International Labour Organization.

Mrs Bradley also said: “There is a shared desire to see what more we could do with the GLA’s expertise and how we could use its knowledge and skills to tackle the scourge of Modern Slavery. “In support of this, there have been many calls to extend GLA licensing into new sectors including care, construction and hospitality. “We very much welcome the interest in seeking to improve the GLA’s role but we need to be clear about the most effective changes and make sure that they are based on the best evidence available. “As a Government, we recognise that some of what we ask of you can seem to be bureaucratic and burdensome, when for so many of you, are highly compliant and treat their workers fairly. “So we want to make sure that we target the ‘right’ businesses, the ones who break the law, the ones who exploit their workers and the ones who subject them to servitude and slavery.” Mrs Bradley said that was why the Government had announced last week that if her party formed the next Government after the General Election, they would carry out a full public consultation into the role of the GLA.

Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner Kevin Hyland made another keynote speech at the conference, welcomed the Government announcement and urged a review to look at the powers of the GLA. He added: “As Commissioner I very much support this and I will be looking to the consultation to come up with concrete actions for how we go forward, and there is also a clear case for looking seriously at increasing the licensing powers of the GLA to allow the agency to inspect forced labour. The GLA currently can only prosecute for being an unlicensed gangmaster. I am aware of recent examples where the GLA have produced files on cases of exploitation and handed them to the police, who of course do have the power. But the cases haven’t been acted upon. I will be working to ensure that this situation does not continue.”

GLA Chief Executive Paul Broadbent told the conference that the authority was ever-hungry for more information on rogue operators and unlicensed gangmasters. “We can never have too much information and our advice will always be to call us if you suspect

anything is wrong,” he said. “Don’t assume someone has already told us or that we already know. We’d rather be told twice than not at all. “And please be assured that we will not ‘shoot the messenger’. The GLA will always endeavour to work with people to clean up our sector and will not seek to incriminate those who are trying to help and inform our work.” Planning is already underway for a further conference and also a series of workshops for the benefit of specific sectors of the supply chain.

Casting the intelligence net wider

The GLA is to address more than 30 health professionals in West Yorkshire in an innovative move to extend its information gathering network. A presentation will be given to a cohort of MSc Public Health Nursing Practice (Health Visiting) students, currently in placements across the county, to educate them in how to spot exploited workers. A substantial part of the Health Visitor’s role is around safeguarding children and families and it is common to encounter a worker within a family who is suspected of being exploited. The talk from the GLA will identify the indicators of forced labour and trafficking and explain how to follow up on suspicions and which agencies to contact. It is hoped this will be the first of many such events and the GLA will continue to look for similar opportunities in the future.

Events

Eden Project presentation

GLA Chief Executive Paul Broadbent was one of the speakers invited to address a Modern Slavery conference at Cornwall’s iconic Eden Project in March. The event was co-hosted by Chief Constable Shaun Sawyer, the National Policing Lead for Modern Slavery; the Bishop of Truro, the Right Reverend Tim Thornton, and Chief Executive of Cornwall Council, Andrew Kerr. It was held to raise awareness of the issue in Cornwall in the hope that it would increase reporting of the crime and improve the way victims of slavery are cared for. Also speaking was the newly appointed Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner, Kevin Hyland.

“National figures suggest an increase in reports of victimisation in the areas of forced labour, domestic servitude and sexual exploitation, with an estimated 10,000 to 13,000 victims of slavery currently in the UK,” said Mr Sawyer.

The event followed Operation Triage – the culmination of a joint enquiry by Devon and Cornwall Police in which eight suspected victims of human trafficking were rescued from addresses in Plymouth and Bodmin and eight people were charged with conspiracy to traffic people into the UK for the purposes of labour exploitation.

Derby University Seminar

Contemporary challenges and potential solutions in criminal investigation was the theme of a conference at Derby University addressed by GLA Chief Executive Paul Broadbent. Derbyshire Police Chief Constable Mick Creedon also spoke at the event along with academics from the university and a local criminal defence lawyer.

Operations

Norther Ireland arrest

A man suspected of acting as an unlicensed gangmaster in Northern Ireland was arrested in Lurgan by the GLA assisted by officers from the PSNI. The 39-year-old Romanian national was apprehended as part of the authority's ongoing investigations into unlicensed labour provision on fruit farms in County Armagh. He is suspected of supplying workers to pick apples and other fruit without a licence at various locations in the area – activities that require a GLA licence. He was released pending reports being submitted to the Public Prosecution Service.

Op Badsworth – three charged

Three people have been charged as part of a joint operation between Norfolk Police, Suffolk Police and the GLA. The charges follow arrests made in April 2014 by officers investigating people trafficking for the purpose of labour exploitation.

A warrant was executed in Great Yarmouth which resulted in a number of arrests. All the individuals were from the local area and involved in vegetable and meat processing. Konstantin Sasmurin, aged 32 and Linus Ratautas, aged 29 – both of Yarmouth Road, Caister - were each charged with acting as a gangmaster without a licence (s12 Gangmasters (Licensing) Act 2004); holding a person in slavery or servitude or requiring a person to perform forced/compulsory labour (s71 Coroners and Justice Act 2009); trafficking people for exploitation (s4 Asylum and Immigration (Treatment of Claimants, etc) Act 2004) and money laundering (s327 Proceeds of Crime Act 2002).

Evelina Perekriostovai, aged 22, also of Yarmouth Road, Caister, was charged with money laundering. All three were bailed to appear at Great Yarmouth Magistrates' Court.

Licensing and Legal

P & M Groundworks

A Rotherham gangmaster has been stripped of his licence by the GLA after demonstrating 'a total disregard for ensuring compliance with legal requirements'. Mr Peter Milewski was the person named as being responsible for the day-to-day running of P & M Groundworks, a company based in Westfield Crescent, Thurnscoe. The company had its licence revoked without immediate effect in March last year after the GLA found the director 'not fit and proper' to run a compliant business. P & M Groundworks provides workers to carry out daffodil picking and vegetable harvesting UK-wide.

During the hearing in Sheffield Mr Milewski admitted he was given access to all the necessary advice and guidance by the GLA but by his own admission 'could not be bothered to read it'.

The company director also admitted falsely reclaiming VAT for fuel and worker accommodation costs that were not incurred by his business. He claimed VAT back for rooms that had been paid for directly by his employees and also transported workers in a 16-seater minibus he was not licensed to drive. The court was also told that the company's records were insufficient to prove that workers were receiving the National Minimum Wage. The GLA's decision was upheld by the presiding judge.

Licence revoked for suspected NMW breach

A Dudley gangmaster who appeared to be paying agricultural field workers below the National Minimum Wage has been stripped of her licence by the GLA. Managing director Mrs Sahra Rizwan appealed against the authority's decision to revoke the licence of her company A N Recruitment Ltd in May last year. But all of the GLA's findings were upheld by an appointed judge at the Birmingham court and now the revocation has been triggered.

As well as finding evidence that showed the pea and sprout pickers she employed were not having their 'piece-rate' pay made up to NMW levels if they failed to reach it, the business failed a number of other GLA standards. The authority determined that managing director Mrs Rizwan – the Principal Authority named on the licence - lacked the competencies required to run the business compliantly. It was also discovered she was working for a firm of accountants three days a week, while one of her supervisors and the farmer she supplied her workers to dictate how much they would be paid.

Commenting on Mrs Rizwan's running of A N Recruitment Ltd, Judge Victoria Dean said: "The Principal Authority must remain compliant with the Licensing Standards at all times and is required and should be prepared to face the consequences if she is not. The appellant's failures, particularly in relation to the critical standards, are a serious dereliction of duty."

Media Coverage

Op Pheasant - Coverage resulted in the regional media for Cambridgeshire when this multi-agency initiative (involving the GLA) was shortlisted for a national award. Op Pheasant was instigated to tackle anti-social behaviour and exploitation among the migrant community in the Fenland area. The work was nominated for a Local Government Chronicle award and won, an achievement which attracted more local media coverage.

Northern Ireland Cross Border Forced Labour Conference – various Irish media covered the speech of Chief Executive Paul Broadbent at a conference on forced labour in Newry, Co Down in January. During his address, he criticised the recent sentence imposed on convicted illegal gangmaster Gheorghe Ionas, of Lurgan, who was fined just £500 – less than the cost of a licence – for exploiting fellow Romanian workers.

AN Recruitment appeal – trade titles the Recruiter, Horticulture Week and Fruitnet all run a piece on the GLA victory in the appeal lodged by An recruitment (see above)

GLA Conference – speeches at the authority's inaugural national conference received widespread coverage in the Recruiter magazine and website as they staffed the event. Also in attendance were BBC East Midlands (TV) who ran numerous pieces throughout the day including interviews with Paul Broadbent, Kevin Hyland, the Bishop of Derby and the two speakers from Derby University.

Norfolk charges - the Eastern Daily Press and local BBC radio and TV plus some trade titles cover the Op Badsworth development (see above) as three people are charged with GLA and trafficking offences.

Board changes - following the announcement of the GLA's new board an article from the TUC General Secretary Frances O'Grady appears in the Daily Mirror criticising the fact there is no worker representative on the board for the first time.

Modern Slavery – an interview with Paul Broadbent appears in a lengthy feature entitled 'Criminal cartels run thousands of slaves in Britain' in the Times' weekend supplement. An identical follow-up feature was also run in the Daily Mail.

Statistics

Quarter four 2014/15 – 1 January 2015 to 31 March 2015

Operational

• Application Inspections:	26
• Compliance Inspections:	14
• Licence Revocations:	5
• Workers identified as exploited:	216
• Ongoing Criminal Investigations:	84

Full year from 1 April 2014 to 31 March 2015

Operational

• Application Inspections:	104
• Compliance Inspections:	99
• Licence Revocations:	23
• Workers identified as exploited:	3,064
• Ongoing criminal investigations	84
• Total investigations tasked	384

Current GLA licences 2014-15:	954
Those with additional licence conditions:	7
Licences granted 2014-14	82
Licences refused	27
Licences revoked	23

Other notable achievements 2014-15

- Steps to recover £3.5m on behalf of workers
- Identification of £5.1m in proceeds of crime
- 100% of appeal success rate since 2010
- 22 convictions and 15 pending trial
- 32 organised crime groups identified/disrupted
- 86% of licence holders satisfied with GLA
- 93.6% of stakeholders believe GLA is doing a good or very good job

Finance

A challenging but balanced budget has been agreed with the Home Office for 2015-16.

Parliamentary Questions

2014-15	PQ Totals	Subjects				
Quarter		Finance	Operational	Powers	Staffing	Board
Jan - Mar	5	1	3	0	1	0
Oct - Dec	10	1	6	3	0	0
Jul - Sep	1	0	1	0	0	0
Apr - Jun	1	0	0	1	0	0
Total (financial year to date)	17	2	10	4	1	0

Other News

Acas Help Line

Worker information, advice and training services provider Acas has taken over the running of the Pay and Work Rights Helpline. The line changed hands at the end of the financial year with the number switching to 0300 123 1100.