1. **Background Information:**

1.1 Glasgow Community Safety Services (GCSS) is a charitable organisation formed by Glasgow City Council and Strathclyde Police to prevent crime, tackle anti-social behaviour and promote community safety in the city. GCSS has specific responsibility for taking forward work on violence against women on behalf of the Council. The key Glasgow services which support women out of prostitution are located within, and managed by, GCSS. In 2004 GCSS established The TARA (Trafficking Awareness Raising Alliance) Service to provide services to female trafficking victims.

1.2 Since 2004, the main aims of the TARA service have been to raise awareness of the issue of trafficking in women for commercial sexual exploitation, to better understand their needs, to continue to develop and provide a specialised support service and to provide existing organisations with advice and information so they can better support women to socially and vocationally integrate or reintegrate into their chosen communities. TARA has provided a direct service to women since 2005. There have been effective and close working relationships with colleagues across the Police Scotland, UKBA, Health, Social Work Services and voluntary organisations to achieve these aims.

1.3 The GCSS, trafficking support service, TARA, were requested by the Public Petitions Committee to respond to their second call for evidence. TARA provides support to women, aged 18 years and over, where there are concerns that they have been trafficked for the purpose of Commercial Sexual Exploitation and identified/recovered in Scotland. Support includes assistance to access:

- Safe accommodation
- Emotional and practical support
- Advocacy
- Legal advice
- Referral to the UK National Referral Mechanism (A UK model of identification and support for Victims of Trafficking (VoT))
- Risk, safety and care planning
- Support to disclose to Police Scotland and/or the Home Office

1.4 Due complexities regarding age assessments TARA has supported a small number of young women, who had been assessed as over 18 years, and therefore, expected to access adult services. In all of these cases TARA worked in partnership with other concerned professionals,
predominately immigration solicitors, to request a reassessment of age, with the majority being assessed as under 18 years old. These young women were then supported to engage with social work services in order to access age appropriate support. Further information on the service can be found here:


1.5 For the purposes of identification and support of Potential VoTs (PVoTs) a child is considered under 18 yrs. International obligations under the Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings, (implemented April 2009) and the EU Anti Trafficking Directive 2011/36/EU (implemented April 2013), place legal obligations on the Scottish Government, in particular, to provide Protection to VoTs and to Prosecute Human Traffickers. These legal obligations and the UK National Referral Mechanism (NRM) are clear that children are defined as under 18 years and therefore entitled to support from Local Authorities. Further information on the NRM can be found here –


1.6 A coalition of anti trafficking NGOs (of which TARA is a member) the Anti Trafficking Monitoring Group (ATMG) published a report, in June 2010, ‘Wrong Kind of Victim?’ on the UK Government’s efforts to protect child and adult VoTs in the UK and the implementation of the National Referral Mechanism. A copy of the report can be found here:

http://www.antislavery.org/includes/documents/cm_docs/2010/a/1_atmg_report_for_web.pdf

1.7 Glasgow City Council piloted the Children’s NRM and has substantial expertise on identifying and supporting trafficked children.

1.8 It is important to note that UK citizens, including indigenous children, may be trafficked. Indeed it is our understanding that the UK Human Trafficking Centre were involved in the cases of child sexual exploitation recently prosecuted in England.

1.9 Whilst TARA does not support children and/or young women under the age of 18yrs, an analysis of active cases on the 22.05.13, indicates that 14% of the women we are currently supporting were trafficked and exploited in systems of prostitution, both within and outwith the UK and Scotland, aged under 18 years old. GCSS considers that our experience of supporting adult women who survived sexual exploitation as a child may be of interest to the Committee.
2. Human Trafficking in Scotland

2.1 The recently published 2012 report on referrals to the NRM produced by the UK Human Trafficking Centre (UKHTC) suggests that:

- 31% of the UK total of child referrals for all forms of exploitation were for children.
- Of the 372 children referred from across the UK 26% were referred due to concerns around sexual exploitation. 22% of those children were identified as UK Nationals.

The NRM statistics for Scotland suggest that:

- 96 adults and children were referred by Scotland. This represents a 3% increase from the previous year and reflects 8% of the UK total.
- 29 were identified as children (30%)
- 9 (31%) were referred due to concerns they were trafficked for sexual exploitation. All 9 were girls and/or young women.
- All 29 were non UK nationals and referrals came from a variety of First Responders

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Child Referrals (Male and Female, all forms of exploitation)</th>
<th>Nationality/Country of Origin</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Vietnam</td>
<td></td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 China</td>
<td></td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Nigeria</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Romania</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Gambia</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Pakistan</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Sierra Leone</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Somalia</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Gambia (claimed) USA (suspected)</td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>29</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2.2 In recent years, as our understanding of human trafficking and the responses required have developed, there have been growing concerns regarding the external and internal trafficking of vulnerable women and girls to meet the increasing demands of our sex industry. The numerous cases of sexual exploitation of vulnerable girls and young women in England highlight the startling similarities of the methods used by the perpetrators to recruit, control and exploit vulnerable young women and children which, TARA would argue, meet the current definition of Human Trafficking that Scotland has adopted from the Council of Europe Convention.
3. Council of Europe Convention on Action Against Trafficking in Human Beings:

3.1 Article 4 – Definitions

For the purposes of this Convention:

a "Trafficking in human beings" shall mean the recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of persons, by means of the threat or use of force or other forms of coercion, of abduction, of fraud, of deception, of the abuse of power or of a position of vulnerability or of the giving or receiving of payments or benefits to achieve the consent of a person having control over another person, for the purpose of exploitation. Exploitation shall include, at a minimum, the exploitation of the prostitution of others or other forms of sexual exploitation, forced labour or services, slavery or practices similar to slavery, servitude or the removal of organs;

b The consent of a victim of “trafficking in human beings” to the intended exploitation set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article shall be irrelevant where any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) have been used;

c The recruitment, transportation, transfer, harbouring or receipt of a child for the purpose of exploitation shall be considered "trafficking in human beings" even if this does not involve any of the means set forth in subparagraph (a) of this article;

d "Child" shall mean any person under eighteen years of age;

e “Victim” shall mean any natural person who is subject to trafficking in human beings as defined in this article.

4. Written Evidence:

What barriers exist to identifying, disrupting or prosecuting child sexual exploitation (CSE) perpetrators? How might these be overcome?

4.1 The current societal context of the objectification of women and girls (and in some cases boys/young men) and recent concerns raised by the media, activist groups and NGOs regarding the premature sexualisation of girls impacts on how society views the behaviour of young women. It normalises premature sexual behaviour and masks indicators of sexual abuse, especially for young adolescent girls. Labelling young women, in particular those under 16 yrs as promiscuous, along with bullying from peers such as name calling e.g. ‘slut’, when in fact they may be sexually exploited brings an
additional burden of shame, stigma and ‘othering’ of these children making it harder for survivors and victims to speak out.

4.2 Very current debates around the influence and accessibility of pornography on developing attitudes to sex and the recent comments by the NSPCC regarding the use of child pornography and the links to abuse and murder of children should be considered pertinent by the committee to the issue of CSE.

4.3 The marketing by the sex industry of prostituted young women/ women exploited in pornography as being ‘barely legal’, ‘horny teens’ and ‘naughty school girls’ must also impact on how young women, and indeed boys and young men, are viewed by the ‘consumers/abusers’ and indeed by society as a whole.

4.4 TARA is of the opinion that the methods used by human traffickers to deceive, recruit, abuse a position of vulnerability, coerce and exploit adult women share many similarities with child sexual exploitation. For adult VoTs family collusion with traffickers and/or the cultural stigma around prostitution, sexual violence and wider violence against women impacts on women’s ability to disclose.

4.5 Many international reports on the trafficking and sexual exploitation of girl children and young women advise that a common technique used by traffickers is that of grooming, referred to as the ‘lover boy’ phenomenon. Vulnerable girls are targeted by an older young man who grooms them (and often their families) into believing that they have a loving boyfriend/girlfriend relationship. Very soon after trust is gained alienation, abuse and exploitation begins to occur. A helpful training tool on this is ‘My Dangerous Lover Boy’ Campaign developed by Eyes Open Creative and key partners. Further information on the campaign can be found here –

http://www.mydangerousloverboy.com

4.6 In TARA’s experience, family members may be complicit in recruitment and trafficking. For example we have supported a young Nigerian woman whose father wished her to travel to Italy in order to remit money back to him. The young woman was aware of the issue between Nigeria and Italy and the sexual exploitation of Nigerian women within their sex industry. When she refused her father became abusive. Whilst fleeing that abuse she was targeted by human traffickers and, unfortunately trafficked and exploited in prostitution in London before fleeing and seeking assistance in Scotland. Sadly, this is not an uncommon presentation to our service and is an example of the gendered nature of human trafficking and the global inequality that women face.

4.7 Whilst not experts, TARA would suggest that these complex family relationships, are even more difficult for children to navigate, impacting
on their ability to disclose abuse, self identify and/or provide testimony against the exploiters and perpetrators due to factors such as fear for their families, misplaced loyalty to the perpetrators and the ‘abuse of a position of vulnerability’.

4.8 The use of the term ‘position of vulnerability’ within international human trafficking definitions is defined by UNODC in their Guidance note as:

Abuse of a position of vulnerability occurs when an individual’s personal, situational or circumstantial vulnerability is intentionally used or otherwise taken advantage of, to recruit, transport, transfer, harbour or receive that person for the purpose of exploiting him or her, such that the person believes that submitting to the will of the abuser is the only real or acceptable option available to him or her, and that belief is reasonable in light of the victim’s situation.


4.9 It may be helpful for the Committee to consider this definition in terms of children are targeted by perpetrators and how that position of vulnerability is further used to discredit their accounts of sexual exploitation.

4.10 The continuing overt focus and reliance on ‘witness led’ approaches and the ‘credibility’ of PVoTs, including children, demonstrates that there is still much learning required for frontline staff in order to better understand the psychological impact on survivors of CSE and Human Trafficking, to challenge myths an stereotypes around ‘victim’ behaviour/presentation and their ability to build trust, disclose and give evidence against perpetrators. This was identified as one of the failures in the recent case in Rochdale and is common challenge when trying to tackle Human Trafficking

4.11 We would recommend the Committee access a report on the psychological impact of Human Trafficking for Sexual Exploitation ‘Stolen Smiles: a summary report on the physical and psychological health consequences of women and adolescents trafficked in Europe’ by Dr Cathy Zimmerman, London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2006. This is a simple yet excellent account of the affects on trafficking survivors and their mental health, which in turn impacts on behaviour, recall of traumatic events and bearing on the quality and coherence of their evidence.

4.12 In order to overcome these barriers TARA suggests:

- Greater awareness and training of professionals in order to improve understanding, identification and responses to children who are sexually exploited.
The promotion of the use of existing frameworks, such as Glasgow City Council’s, multi agency Vulnerable Young Person Procedures, to ensure the appropriate use of existing Child Protection Frameworks, including their application for vulnerable young people aged 16 and 17 years.

A review and redesign of the current National Referral Mechanism for child victims of human trafficking in order to ensure they reflect the current GIRFEC guidance and are relevant for child protection professionals to further promote their use.

Consulting and listening to the voices of survivors of child sexual exploitation on prevention and protection issues. Survivors have direct experiences which will help inform how we encourage trust, disclosure and continued engagement with all frontline professionals in order to assist children to recover from their abuse.

4.13 What difficulties exist around keeping looked-after children and young people (accommodated or at home) safe from CSE perpetrators? How might these be overcome?

4.14 We believe that one of the greatest challenges to keeping sexually exploited children safe from perpetrators comes when trying to break the influence that perpetrators hold over them. The psychological coercion and the abuse of a position of vulnerability is a significant challenge to professionals trying to encourage engagement and recovery. The use of mobile telephones can often act as a significant barrier to engagement as, in TARA’s experience, traffickers use mobile technology to continue to exert influence and/or threaten children and young people.

4.15 ECPAT UK produced guidance on providing safe accommodation for trafficked children and young people which can be found here –

http://www.ecpat.org.uk/content/principles-safe-accommodation-child-victims-trafficking

4.16 Of particular challenge in Scotland is accessing appropriate support and safe accommodation for young people (both indigenous and from outwith the UK) aged 16 and 17 in Scotland where there has been no previous involvement with social work services. Although TARA do not support those under 18yrs we are aware of inconsistencies across Scottish local authorities for young people aged 16 and 17 where there are concerns they may have been trafficked. Despite the Scottish Government issuing guidance on Safeguarding Trafficked Children and Young People, there is particular confusion on the implementation of the guidance and who is responsible for providing protection to this vulnerable group, which can result in a ‘patchy’ response across Scotland and/or the use of inappropriate ‘adult’ support services.

4.17 Arguments have been made that 16 and 17 years olds could be entitled to protection measures via current Adult Protection legislation and guidance. TARA has experienced significant difficulties accessing this support for adult women due to the high threshold test for implementation of the legislation and procedures. We would expect similar difficulties for young people aged 16 and 17.

4.18 In order to overcome the significant barriers to protecting looked after children from perpetrators we would recommend:

- Improved awareness raising and implementation of the ECPAT safe accommodation guidance for trafficked children and young people
- Specific operational guidance is produced for frontline staff on the appropriate response regarding perpetrators use of psychological coercion and the abuse of a position of vulnerability
- Strong and clear guidance from the Scottish Government on local authorities obligations to protect 16 and 17 year olds where there are concerns they may have been trafficked (external and internal) for child sexual exploitation.

4.19 What barriers exist to combating perpetrators’ use of online/social media? How might these be overcome?

4.20 TARA’s experience with adult women trafficked for commercial sexual exploitation has evidenced that in some cases traffickers use social media such as Facebook not only to recruit vulnerable women but also as a tool to continue contact with women and exert their influence. TARA includes the continued use of social media when safety planning with recovered women and advises them of the importance of ensuring their location is not divulged and that their security and privacy settings are at the highest possible level. TARA has an internal policy on the use of mobile telephones and social media which tries to assert the balance between safety and an adult’s rights to a private life. The most pertinent aspects of that policy for the committee are below:

**Mobile Telephones**

*Increasingly we are aware that women accessing the service often have access to many different mobile telephones, not including the phones issued by TARA, which may be used by traffickers to continue to exert their influence/control over her.*

*For safety reasons when women are referred to the project and are eligible for support, women should be encouraged to hand over their handset including the SIM card. In some instances we can agree to only the SIM card being given. We have no ‘powers’ to remove the phone/SIM from her (and will continue to support her if she refuses) but in the cases where they do provide the phones/SIM, the woman should sign her agreement and we should switch off and store the handset/SIM securely. No phone is to be accessed to check*
messages and/or numbers stored without the woman’s signed, explicit consent, or prior agreement from the relevant police force, as this would be considered a breach of her right to privacy.

If there are concerns that she has been controlled by her phone in the past and/or that there may be intelligence on the phone, advice should be sought immediately from the Service Manager, who will in turn seek guidance from the relevant police force. **On no account should the phone contents be accessed without agreement from the Service Manager.**

If, after 4 weeks, the woman has not spoken to the police and/or has not given her consent for the phone/SIM to be passed to the police then the phone should be returned to her. Again her signature to confirm the return should be sought. This should then be included in her safety plan and the date of return noted.

**Social Networking Sites**

More women are utilizing Social Networking sites in order to maintain contact with family and friends. In some instances traffickers have also tried to maintain/re establish contact with women through their ‘page’.

All safety planning should now include women’s use of such sites and ensure that her privacy settings are at the highest setting and that her geographical location cannot be viewed.

It should not be routine that we check women’s use of such sites without their explicit consent as they are entitled to a private life. However, if there are legitimate concerns around traffickers using pages to control the women, other safety concerns or concerns regarding her disclosure then an approach should be made to the Service Manager to discuss concerns and to seek agreement to check what can be viewed publicly.

The Service Manager’s agreement should be recorded in case notes as should any information relating to the initial concerns.

4.21 **If you have an example of good practice in relation to any of these questions, please describe it for us.**

4.22 Whilst TARA has endeavoured to include examples of good practice throughout this submission we would recommend that the committee take particular cognisance of the work on child trafficking undertaken by:

- Glasgow Child Protection Committee:
  - Establishment of child trafficking sub group
  - Multi agency approach within existing frameworks
Awareness raising and training programme established
- Central point of contact for guidance and advice for frontline staff

- **ECPAT:**
  - 10 Principles for the safe accommodation of child victims of human trafficking

- **London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine:**
  - Stolen Smiles report

- **Eyes Open Creative:**
  - My Dangerous Lover Boy Campaign

- **Anti Trafficking Monitoring Group:**
  - Wrong Kind of Victim and All Change: Preventing Human Trafficking in the UK – specific chapters on trafficked children and young people

- **The Scottish Commissioner for Children and Young People:**
  - ‘Scotland: a safe place for child traffickers’ 2011

- **The Scottish Government:**
  - Safe Guarding Children in Scotland who may have been Trafficked
  - Criminal Justice and Licensing (Scotland) Act 2010 (s88) raises age of automatic entitlement to special measures in cases involving Human Trafficking offences from 16 up to age 18 providing for special measures for child VoTs up to the age of 18 yrs.