



IASC advisory panel: Communications meeting minutes (12 May 2020)

Date: 12 May 2020
Time: 16.30 – 17.00 (Virtual meeting)

In attendance:

The Rt Revd Dr Alastair Redfern	Chair, The Clewer Initiative (Advisory Panel Chair)
Rt Hon Fiona Mactaggart	Chair, Agenda and Fawcett Society; former Co-Chair, All-Party Parliamentary Group on Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery
Julia Mulligan	Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, North Yorkshire
Sir Bernard Silverman FRS	Professor of Modern Slavery Statistics, Rights Lab, University of Nottingham
Dame Sara Thornton DBE QPM	Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner
Katherine Lawson	Communications Officer, IASC

Following agreement at the previous Advisory Panel meeting (21 April 2020), panel members convened in a smaller sub-group to discuss a specific issue: IASC communications.

The following issues were discussed:

1. Drafted policy on what is published on the IASC's [resources page](#)

The Communications Officer outlined a drafted policy on what the Commissioner publishes on the resources page of the website:

“The Commissioner’s website includes a resources page. This page is intended to act as a repository of useful resources related to MSHT including reports, guidance and information. The Commissioner is independent and reserves the right to determine which resources are published upon agreement with the owners of those resources.

The content of the page has been compiled from a variety of resources, and whilst the Communications Officer aims to update the website regularly the information listed on this page may change at any time. Where our site contains links to other sites and resources provided by third parties, these links are provided for information only and do not represent endorsement of those sites or resources.”



Panel members agreed this wording.

ACTION: Communications Officer to publish this policy.

2. Drafted policy on research requests

The Communications Officer outlined a drafted policy on managing requests for research support:

“We frequently receive requests for interviews and other forms of support for academic research. We are keen to support these where possible, however, we will prioritise doctorate level research that aligns with the Commissioner’s Strategic Plan.

In order to consider and most appropriately direct your request, we ask that you include the following information:

- Degree level
- Research title and a short summary
- Support required (e.g. interview) and what you hope to gain from this
- Which of the Commissioner’s strategic priorities you feel the research aligns with”

It was noted that this would be a useful policy to have on the website. Whilst there is a lot of good research taking place on modern slavery, it would be appropriate to prioritise doctoral (and post-doctoral) level research.

Panel members put forward suggestions:

- Consider using an online form for academics to submit requests, which would be easier to manage and would enable academics to submit links or documents supporting their request
- Add wording to make it clear that the Commissioner’s office does not have financial resources/budget to support academic research
- Add wording on supporting research which offers value for money/aligns with the Commissioner’s aim on maximising government investment in research
- Add wording to note that the Commissioner encourages joined-up thinking and will link academics within the research community where possible
- Insert a clause to request any citation of the Commissioner be cleared with the Commissioner ahead of publication and a copy/link to be provided to the office once published

ACTION: Communications Officer to re-draft this policy and explore using an online form.



3. Drafted publication scheme

The Communications Officer gave an overview of a drafted publication scheme. This will be published online and outlines what information the Commissioner publishes. The publication scheme is modelled on a scheme used by the Information Commissioner's Office.

It was noted that this is a long document, so it would be more accessible if this could be available as a downloadable document (which would be "screen readable") as well as on a webpage.

ACTION: Communications Officer to publish an online and downloadable version of the publication scheme.

4. Suggestions regarding independent evaluation of IASC communications

The Commissioner is seeking a pro-bono partner to assess reach and impact of communications. This is to ensure communications are sending the right message, to the right people, and having the desired impact: sharing the Commissioner's work, encourage sharing of good practice, and raising awareness of MSHT.

Panel members welcomed this idea and put forward some suggested partners.

It was suggested that there is potential to expand the reach of IASC communications to ensure this reaches new audiences, and this needs to be considered in the ways that communications are disseminated and framed.

It was suggested that the IASC communications strategy could be clearer with regard to the Commissioner's aims and key messaging.

ACTIONS: Communications Officer to explore potential partners for an independent evaluation of communications which can address the above issues.

Communications Officer to consider how to reach new audiences and contacts.

5. Re-worked logo

The Communications Office demonstrated re-worked logos (see document "Logos May 2020").

There was preference for a design which incorporates a banner to anchor the logo, and to use upper and lower case letters for readability. It was suggested that the word 'anti-slavery' could be emphasised. It was also suggested that a different font could give the logo more personality.

ACTION: Communications Officer to draw up new logo designs.