

Browne Jacobson collaborates with The GLAA and University of Nottingham to tackle modern slavery and human trafficking

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Browne Jacobson has joined up with **The Gangmasters and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA)** and the **University of Nottingham's Rights Lab (UoN)** for a thought-provoking discussion on modern slavery.

The discussion which took place at the firm's Nottingham office, was led by **Browne Jacobson partner and employment specialist, Raymond Silverstein** and included leading experts dedicated to combating modern slavery and human trafficking, including **Ian Waterfield, Head of Enforcement** at the regulatory body **The GLAA**, and **Professor Alexander Trautrim** and **Dr Caroline Emberson** of the world's largest group of modern slavery researchers at **The UoN's Right Lab**.

The session included a lived experience of working with modern slaves from Browne Jacobson **Legal Assistant Kelsey Richardson**, whilst the firm's legal experts which included, **Knowledge Director, Emma Grant, Partner Rachel Whitaker and Partner and Head of the firm's Government Sector, Peter Ware** outlined the key obligations of an organisation in relation to the Modern Slavery Act and procurement practices. The session was attended by senior leaders responsible for publishing their organisation's modern slavery statement, compliance, procurement and outsourcing, safeguarding and risk managers across multiple areas within the public and private sector.

Raymond Silverstein commented: "Browne Jacobson is a firm with ESG at the forefront of its business agenda, so we are proud to have partnered with The GLAA and UoN's Rights Lab to deliver this powerful and engaging session to help cut through the ongoing issue of modern slavery. It is important we keep bringing people together across broad spectrums of business and community to talk and educate each other on it, as it is an issue that isn't going away anytime soon.

"It is estimated by the United Nations that over 50 million people worldwide are in modern slavery, and according to the Government, around 10,000 people are experiencing modern slavery conditions in the UK today. These shocking figures illustrate that severe human exploitation is still very much a real and longstanding issue in many parts of modern society, despite the introduction of The Modern Slavery Act in 2015. We know perpetrators are becoming increasingly sophisticated in their approach to labour abuse. Now more than ever, it is imperative that organisations be as vigilant as possible.

"Transparent discussions like this one today are extremely useful for public and private sector organisations, who are procuring services. Not only does it help guide them in playing their part as a responsible business in combatting modern slavery, but also gives clarity around the importance of them knowing that their supply chains are also fully compliant in the matter and the risks to them if they aren't."

Ian Waterfield added: "Modern slavery is a global problem and international crime, affecting millions of people worldwide, including many victims within the UK.

"We work with partner organisations who are helping to target, dismantle and disrupt serious and organised crime, so we are pleased to have teamed up with Browne Jacobson who are advising businesses across the labour market on how to be fully equipped in dealing with the prospect of modern slavery infiltrating their operations.

"We are also pleased to continue our relationship with the UoN's Rights Lab who are carrying out cutting-edge research to help put an end to modern slavery. The practical steps and important messages they share allow the business community and those who are not

procurement experts to become part of the solution in tackling forced or compulsory labour.”

Professor Alex Trautrim said: “I am delighted to have been part of this crucial discussion and to share some of our knowledge on the issue of modern slavery.

“The eradication of modern slavery by 2030 is part of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and individuals, communities, businesses, national governments, corporations, and intergovernmental organisations have a responsibility to help achieve this ambition, so it is vital that this complex issue remains a key priority for us all, particularly businesses and organisations that are under pressure to procure better value, more cost-effective services from third parties.”

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