

MSDC MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

REPORT OF: PETER STUART
Contact Officers: Emma Sheridan BUL Community Services Policy and Performance
Mandy Cunningham, Community Safety & Safeguarding Manager
Wards Affected: All
Key Decision: Yes
Report to: Scrutiny Committee for Community, Customer Services and Service Delivery

March 2022

Purpose of Report

1. This report seeks the views of the Scrutiny Committee on the attached draft Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Transparency statement for 2022/23. To comply with the forthcoming changes to the Modern Slavery Act, the Council will be required to produce an annual modern slavery and human trafficking transparency statement to ensure that steps are taken to eradicate modern slavery in our work, including our supply chains. If support the statement can be recommended to Council for adoption.

Recommendations

2. **The Scrutiny Committee are recommended to:**
 - (i) **Review and comment as appropriate on the attached draft Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Transparency Statement for 2022/2023;**
 - (ii) **Refer the Statement on to Council for adoption**
-

Background

3. The Transparency in Supply Chains Provision (s.54) of the 2015 Modern Slavery Act requires commercial organisations with an annual turnover of £36m or more to report annually on their actions to identify, prevent and mitigate modern slavery in their supply chains.
4. Local Authorities are not currently legally obliged to publish statements to comply with this provision, although in September 2020, the UK Government announced new measures to strengthen the transparency provisions of the Act. This includes the requirement for public sector organisations with a budget of £36m and above to produce annual transparency statements and report on steps taken to prevent modern slavery in their own business and supply chains.
5. The Modern Slavery (Amendment) Bill is currently in progress and as part of best practice, many public sector organisations are in the process of preparing and uploading approved statements on the public national registry.
6. In October 2020, The Council undertook a pledge to do everything in its power to become a slavery free community. Our pledge includes the removal of slave-based labour from our supply chains.

7. Over the past few months, the Council has been working closely with the Shared Procurement Service on a draft statement for 2022/23 and was produced in accordance with Home Office and LGA guidance. The final version has been cleared with Legal services.

Policy Context

8. The proposal supports the Council's corporate priorities of supporting Strong and Resilient Communities and Effective and Responsive Services.

Other Options Considered

9. This will be a statutory requirement in due course. Although we are not yet legally required to do this, it is considered to be best practice to take action now to eradicate modern slavery within our supply chains and it is in accordance with our Modern Slavery Pledge.

Financial Implications

10. Minimal. Some increased workloads for staff working in procurement and community safety but most of this will be led through the shared procurement service in Horsham.

Risk Management Implications

11. Implementation may marginally increase the workloads of some staff, particularly those who procure services. However, they will be supported by the shared procurement service and if mitigation is considered at the outset, this should eliminate issues further down the line.
12. There will be a training need for some staff – appropriate training will be identified and offered to any staff who require it. The Community Safety Team work closely with modern slavery professionals and can arrange this if needed.

Equality and Customer Service Implications

13. This proposal will affect people of all ages including service users and employees of the council and service users and employees of any commissioned services as well as the wider community. There are no identified negative impacts on people with protected characteristics and this duty will help to identify and help those who are more vulnerable and may be victims because of a protected characteristic. An equality impact assessment is attached.

Background Papers

- Draft Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2022/23. Attached as Appendix A
- Equality Impact Assessment Attached as Appendix B.