

RECORD OF DECISION MADE UNDER DELEGATED AUTHORITY

*PART 1 – PUBLIC DOCUMENT

Any interest to declare/ or conflict and any dispensation granted [if applicable] None

SERVICE DIRECTORATE: Resources

1. DECISION TAKEN

To approve the Council's annual Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for 2024 – 2025.

2. DECISION TAKER

Cllr Ian Albert, Executive Member for Finance and IT

3. DATE DECISION TAKEN:

15/11/2024

4. REASON FOR DECISION

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires that commercial organisations with a turnover of at least £36 million to publish a slavery and human trafficking statement on an annual basis. The Council does not meet the definition contained within the Act but considers that it is good practice to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement.

5. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED

The Council could choose to not publish a slavery and human trafficking statement. However, the Council supports the principles of the Act, so has chosen to publish a statement. The Council is bound by other provisions of the Modern Slavery Act.

6. CONSULTATION (INCLUDING THE EFFECT ON STAKEHOLDERS, PARTNERS AND THE PUBLIC)

The Council's internal Contract and Procurement Group (which includes legal representation) have reviewed the proposed Statement.

7. FORWARD PLAN

7.1 This decision is not a key Executive decision and has therefore not been referred to in the Forward Plan.

8. BACKGROUND/ RELEVANT CONSIDERATIONS

8.1 The Council has carried out the following actions in relation to Modern Slavery:

- Delivery of training to Officers and Councillors.
- Approved our first Modern Slavery Statement in June 2019 and updated each year since then.
- Approved becoming a signatory to the Charter against Modern Slavery in July 2019.

- Implemented actions to enhance our processes in relation to Modern Slavery, including use of a Modern Slavery Identifiers checklist (for all appropriate procurements) and a risk assessment tool (for higher risk contracts).
- 8.2 The changes for the 2024/25 Statement (compared with the 2023/24 version) mainly relate to updates to website links.
- 8.3 Following approval, as well as publishing on our website, we will also add our Statement to the Government register website.

9. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA 2015) applies to England and Wales and includes the offences of human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. The Act consolidated and simplified existing offences and establishes a legal duty under Section 52 for specified public authorities to notify the Home Office where there are reasonable grounds to believe a person may be a victim of modern slavery.
- 9.2 Section 54 of the MSA 2015 requires commercial organisations carrying out business in the UK, with a turnover of at least £36 million, to prepare and publish a slavery and human trafficking statement for each and every financial year. Whilst this does not apply to the Council, as detailed above we still choose to publish such a Statement.
- 9.3 The MSA created the role of the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner (the Commissioner) whose role is to act in the interests of victims and potential victims by ensuring that the law enforcement response to modern slavery is coordinated. 1 <https://shivafoundation.org.uk/>
- 9.4 Section 43 of the Act states that specified public authorities (including borough councils) have a duty to co-operate with the Commissioner. The Commissioner may request a specified public authority to co-operate with the Commissioner in any way that the Commissioner considers necessary for the purposes of the Commissioner's functions. A specified public authority must so far as reasonably practicable comply with a request made to it under this section.

10. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1. There are no financial implications relating to this decision.

11. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 Good Risk Management supports and enhances the decision-making process, increasing the likelihood of the Council meeting its objectives and enabling it to respond quickly and effectively to change. When taking decisions, risks and opportunities must be considered.
- 11.2 The actions and measures taken in the Council's updated Modern Slavery Transparency Statement should help to reduce the Council's risks in relation to Modern Slavery.

12. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 12.1 In line with the Public Sector Equality Duty, public bodies must, in the exercise of their functions, give due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation, to advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between those who share a protected characteristic and those who do not.

12.2 The Modern Slavery Transparency Statement is a positive step to raising awareness amongst Officers, Councillors and suppliers delivering services on behalf of the Council. The Statement supports the Council's commitment to eradicate slavery in any form.

13. SOCIAL VALUE IMPLICATIONS

13.1 *The Social Value Act and "go local" policy do not apply to this decision.*

14. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

14.1. There are no known Environmental impacts or requirements that apply to this decision.

15. HUMAN RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

15.1 There are no direct HR implications that relate to this decision.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

16.1 *None*

17. APPENDICES

17.1 Modern Slavery Transparency Statement 2024-25.

NOTIFICATION DATE

22/11/2024

Signature of Executive Member Decision Maker 

Date15/11/2024.....

Signature of Service Director: 

Ian Couper, Service Director: Resources

Please Note: that *unless urgency provisions apply* EXECUTIVE decisions cannot be implemented until 5 clear working days have elapsed after the decision has been taken to allow for scrutiny call-in.

Call-in does not apply to NON-EXECUTIVE DECISIONS