

Modern Slavery Statement 2016/17

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires organisations supplying goods or services with a turnover of above £36 million to prepare and publish an annual 'Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement'. The Statement must set out the steps an organisation has taken, if any, during its financial year to ensure that slavery or human trafficking is not taking place in its supply chain. In addition to the Council's responsibility as an employer, it also acknowledges its duty as a Borough Council to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking as introduced by section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

What is Modern Slavery?

Modern slavery is an international crime, affecting an estimated 29.8 million slaves around the world. It is a growing global issue that transcends age, gender and ethnicities. It includes victims who have been brought from overseas and vulnerable people in the UK, who are forced to illegally work against their will across many different sectors such as agriculture, hospitality, construction, retail and manufacturing. In 2014, the Home Office estimated there were between 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims of modern slavery in the UK.

Our Policy

Tamworth Borough Council adopts a zero-tolerance position on known violations of anti-human trafficking and anti-modern slavery laws. We are committed to improving our practices and ensuring there is no modern slavery or human trafficking in any part of our business and in so far as is possible requiring our suppliers to hold similar ethos.

Our Structure

The Council is located in the south east corner of Staffordshire. The district covers 11.91 square miles, is the smallest of the eight Staffordshire districts and has a population of approximately 77,200. The Council's 2016/17 annual turnover was £70,788,000. The Council provides a range of services to residents, businesses and visitors. This includes waste collection and recycling, collection of council tax and business rates, housing, homeless support, parks and open spaces, planning and building control, street cleaning, promoting economic growth and regeneration, environmental health, leisure services, community safety and election administration. Services are delivered through a mixture of direct provision, commissioned services, contracted services, joint/shared services and partnerships.

Policies and Procedures

We have a number of policies and procedures in place that contribute to ensuring modern slavery does not occur in our business or supply chains, these include:

Safeguarding

The Council embraces its responsibility to develop, implement and monitor policies and procedures to safeguard the welfare of children and 'adults at risk' and has a comprehensive policy which all staff and councillors are required to read and work within. The Council works within multi-agency partnerships to protect and safeguard people and has identified two lead officers for modern slavery.

Recruitment

The Council currently has 443 employees and uses robust recruitment processes, in line with UK employment laws, including 'right to work' document checks and contracts of employment.

The Council operates a Job Evaluation Scheme to ensure that all employees are paid fairly and equitably. When the Council uses employment agencies to source labour it verifies the practice of any new agency it is using before accepting workers from that agency.

Code of Conduct

The Council's Employee Code of Conduct and Members' Code of Conduct makes clear to employees and members' the actions and behaviours expected of them when representing the Council. The Council strives to maintain the highest standards of employee and member conduct and ethical behaviour and any breaches are investigated.

Whistleblowing

The Council encourages all its employees, customers and other business partners to report any concerns related to the direct activities or the supply chain of the Council. The Council's whistleblowing procedure is designed to make it easy for employees to make disclosures, without fear of retaliation.

Supply Chains

The Council recognises that the organisation is exposed to greater risk when dealing with contractors and service suppliers. The Council has a wide range of suppliers delivering services across all directorates. The Council aims to reduce the risk of modern slavery in its supply chain by undertaking the following actions:

- Where appropriate require key contractors to have safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place, in addition to providing confirmation of compliance with the Modern Slavery Act
- Consider modern slavery factors when making procurement decisions
- Include modern slavery criteria in specification and tender documents where appropriate.
- Evaluate specifications and tenders

Employee Training

The Council wants its employees to understand more about this growing issue and how to report any suspicions they may have, whether in a work or

personal context. Information on Modern Slavery was incorporated into the Council's safeguarding policy and also included within Level 1 safeguarding awareness training in 2016. At present any concerns can be reported to the Safeguarding Officer.

Looking Forward

Going forward the Council will strengthen its approach to tackling modern slavery by:

- Ensuring modern slavery information is available to all staff
- Commissioning a bespoke modern slavery training session to all staff and members
- Developing a range of resources for staff and making this information available on our website
- Mapping supply chains to understand where modern slavery and human trafficking risk lies
- Undertaking risk assessments where deemed necessary
- Gaining better understanding of our suppliers structure, business and supply chains
- Identifying services that are more vulnerable to modern slavery and seeking assurance that their supply chain is free of modern slavery and human trafficking
- Considering how we seek assurance from small to medium – sized enterprises (SME) that they comply with the Modern Slavery Act.
- Identifying key performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of our procurement process Encouraging suppliers and contractors to take their own action and understand their obligations to the requirements.

This statement has been approved by the Council's Senior Management Team. It will be reviewed and updated within six months and thereafter reviewed and updated annually. The statement with associated actions will be reported to Audit & Governance Committee and Cabinet each year for monitoring and assurance purposes.



Andrew Barratt
Chief Operating Officer
November 2017

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