

# **AUDIT AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

**THURSDAY, 11 FEBRUARY 2020**

## **REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR PARTNERSHIPS**

### **MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATEMENT 2019/20**

#### **EXEMPT INFORMATION**

None

#### **PURPOSE**

To endorse the Council's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2019/20

#### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

It is recommended that:

1. The Committee endorse the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2019/20 for approval by Cabinet
2. Approve an agenda item to be included in the Audit and Governance plan annually for update to the Statement each July (or the latest meeting in Quarter 2).

#### **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 imposes a legal duty on organisations, which supply goods and/or services from or to the UK and have a global turnover above £36 million, to publish a slavery and human trafficking statement covering each financial year.

The statement is due for publication by 30 September each year immediately following the end of the preceding financial year. The publication of the 2019/20 statement has been delayed due to the current pandemic, however it is proposed that the Committee note inclusion of the statement annually in subsequent July meetings to ensure timely publication.

Tamworth Borough Council adopts a zero-tolerance position on known violations of anti-human trafficking and anti-modern slavery laws and is included in Safeguarding policies and duties. 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.

The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement (attached as Appendix 1) sets out the continuing Council's actions to understand potential modern slavery risks related to its business and ongoing actions to ensure that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business, and its supply chains and relates to actions and activities during the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020 and (once approved) will be published on the Tamworth Borough Council website.

## **RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS**

Support of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 obligations is met from existing budget and staff resources through the Partnerships team

## **LEGAL/RISK IMPLICATIONS BACKGROUND**

The publication of an annual Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement is a requirement of the Modern Slavery Act 2015

## **SUSTAINABILITY IMPLICATIONS**

The legislation requires the Council to meet all obligations outlined

## **BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

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.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015 consolidates various offences relating to human trafficking and slavery. In broad terms:

- 'slavery' is where ownership is exercised over a person
- 'servitude' involves coercion to oblige a person to provide services
- 'forced and compulsory labour' is where a person works or provides services on a non-voluntary basis under the threat of a penalty
- 'human trafficking' involves arranging or facilitating the travel of a person with a view to exploiting them

Section 52 of the Act imposes a duty on public authorities, including district councils, to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking.

Section 54 of the Act imposes a legal duty on organisations, which supply goods and/or services from or to the UK and have a global turnover above £36 million, to publish a slavery and human trafficking statement each financial year.

The Council engages in commercial activity (statutory and discretionary) and 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. Its annual turnover is greater than £36 million.

## **REPORT AUTHOR**

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## **LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Modern Slavery Act 2015

## **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Tamworth Borough Council Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2019/20