

CABINET

THURSDAY, 18 FEBRUARY 2021

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER REGULATORY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATEMENT 2019/20

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

PURPOSE

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

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Members:-

- Receive any verbal updates from the Audit and Governance Committee who were asked to endorse the statement on 11th February 2021
- Approve the Council's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2019/20 including recommendations as necessary

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 at the end of each financial year.

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 Council's actions to understand potential modern slavery risks related to its business and put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring 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.

The statement was included on the agenda for endorsement by the Audit and Governance Committee on 11th February 2021 and it is proposed that any verbal updates are included as necessary for approval of the statement by Cabinet for publication on the Council's website.

Legislation prescribes publication within six months of the end of any financial year. It is acknowledged that the Covid crisis has delayed publication for 2019/20.

The Audit and Governance Committee were asked to endorse the late publication and placed on the work program for an annual update at subsequent July meetings to ensure approval by Cabinet within six months of the end of the financial year.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

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

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

Jo Sands, Assistant Director Partnerships

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

Modern Slavery Act 2015

APPENDICES

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