

CABINET

THURSDAY, 21 OCTOBER 2021

REPORT OF PORTFOLIO HOLDER REGULATORY AND COMMUNITY SAFETY

MODERN SLAVERY AND HUMAN TRAFFICKING STATEMENT 2020/21

EXEMPT INFORMATION

None

PURPOSE

To approve the Council's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2020/21

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that Cabinet:-

- Approve the Council's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2020/21 which has been endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee

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.

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.

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 2020 to 31 March 2021 and (once approved) will be published on the Tamworth Borough Council website.

The statement was endorsed by the Audit and Governance Committee on 16th September 2021. There were no further recommendations and the statement, once approved by Cabinet can be published on the Council's website.

Legislation prescribes publication within six months of the end of any financial year.

The 2020/21 includes the following updates:

- Safeguarding training updates
- Update of any reported concerns discussed at the Tamworth Vulnerability Partnership
- Procurement update
- Ongoing plans for 2021/2022

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.

There are no criminal sanctions for failure to produce a statement, but the Government can seek a court injunction to require an organisation to produce one where they fail to meet obligations.

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