

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

CABINET

MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2019-20

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

1.1 This report presents a statement that sets out the steps that the council has taken to prevent slavery or human trafficking within its business operations and supply chain.

1.2 This statement relates to actions and activities undertaken during the financial year 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020.

1.3 Cabinet is invited to consider and approve the statement for publication.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

2.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires commercial organisations to publish an annual modern slavery statement if the criteria below is met:

- is an incorporated or formed "body" or a partnership
- carries on a business, or part of a business, in the UK
- supplies goods or services
- has an annual turnover of £36 million or more

2.2 Councils, as non-commercial organisations, are not required to produce annual statements but a number do so on a voluntary basis as part of their safeguarding and place leadership roles. It is anticipated that the production of a statement will at a future point become mandatory for councils through an amendment to existing legislation.

2.3 Councils have a key role to play, alongside their local partners, in tackling modern slavery, both to understand how exploitation is adapting locally and in the identification and support of victims. Modern slavery intersects with many different aspects that councils are engaged with in delivering their roles. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) provides a framework to identify, refer and record potential victims of modern slavery. As the place leader for North Lincolnshire and a provider and commissioner of a broad range of local services, the council discharges

its formal role as a first responder in identifying and referring potential adult or child victims of modern slavery to the NRM.

- 2.4 Recognising our safeguarding and place leadership role and wider modern slavery responsibilities, a voluntary statement for the period 2019-20 has been produced (appendix) to set out the actions and activities that the council has undertaken to help prevent slavery or human trafficking in its business activities and supply chain.
- 2.5 Our council plan sets out our ambition, role, priorities, values and outcomes for North Lincolnshire. This includes the priority of keeping people safe and well and the council's role in prioritising the most vulnerable.
- 2.6 During the period of the statement eighty-eight contractors were awarded contracts with a value over £5,000. The council's procurement processes robustly test for modern slavery at tender evaluation stage in line with government guidelines. In addition suppliers have provided additional assurance on compliance as part of the council's contract management requirements.
- 2.7 The council's workforce comprises around 3,000 employees. Its human resources policies include recruitment processes which adhere to safe recruitment principles and standards. In addition the council has a comprehensive programme of training including safeguarding and modern slavery awareness, which are mandatory for all employees to complete.

3. OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

- 3.1 Option 1 – do not approve the Modern Slavery Statement 2019-20.
- 3.2 Option 2 – approve the Modern Slavery Statement 2019-20.

4. ANALYSIS OF OPTIONS

- 4.1 Option 1 – not approving the Modern Slavery Statement will inhibit the council's ability to demonstrate its commitment to preventing slavery or human trafficking within its business operations or supply chain.
- 4.2 Option 2 – approving the Modern Slavery Statement demonstrates the council's place leadership role in prioritising the most vulnerable in line with its priority of keeping people safe and well.
- 4.3 By approving a modern slavery statement on a voluntary basis is considered good practice. Through its work with partners and local business the Council will continue promote the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act.

5. **FINANCIAL AND OTHER RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (e.g. LEGAL, HR, PROPERTY, IT, COMMUNICATIONS etc.)**

5.1 This statement voluntarily meets the requirements of Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

6. **OTHER RELEVANT IMPLICATIONS (e.g. CRIME AND DISORDER, EQUALITIES, COUNCIL PLAN, ENVIRONMENTAL, RISK etc.)**

6.1 This statement demonstrate the council's leadership role in prioritising the most vulnerable in line with its priority of keeping people safe and well.

7. **OUTCOMES OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT (IF APPLICABLE)**

7.1 Not applicable

8. **OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION AND CONFLICTS OF INTERESTS DECLARED**

8.1 There are no conflicts of interest associated with this report

9. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

9.1 That cabinet considers and approves the publication of the modern slavery statement 2019-20.

9.2 That cabinet endorses steps to invite local organisations to promote their commitment to the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

DIRECTOR OF GOVERNANCE & PARTNERSHIPS
AND
DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN & COMMUNITY RESILIANCE

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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Modern Slavery Act 2015

Modern Slavery Statement

2019-20

The purpose of this statement is to set out our commitment to recognising our duties as a council under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, which introduced changes in UK law to increase transparency in employment practices and supply chains to ensure that they are free from modern slavery.

As a local authority with a workforce of around 3,000 people we have a responsibility to our residents to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. In addition to our responsibility as an employer, we acknowledge our duty as the place leader and the first responder for North Lincolnshire in identifying and referring potential adult or children victims of modern slavery to the Secretary of State in line with the National Referral Mechanism, as introduced by section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Our council plan sets out our ambition, role, priorities, values and outcomes for North Lincolnshire. This includes the priority of keeping people safe and well and prioritising the most vulnerable.

As a unitary authority we provide a wide range of statutory and discretionary services to residents, businesses, visitors and the wider public and consequently purchase a wide range of goods and services from third party suppliers to support this.

During 2019-20 eighty-eight contractors were awarded competitively procured contracts with a value over £5,000. We test for modern day slavery in our procurements processes in line with government guidance and in addition have engaged with suppliers to outline our expectations in ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking within our supply chain, including obtaining assurance on supplier compliance.

We have a wide range of published policies and procedures covering the extent of our responsibilities.

These are subject to regular review to take into account national and local policy changes and new or revised legislation. Any impact on the workforce is considered within HR policies and procedures.

Our recruitment processes are robust requiring operational practice that adheres to safe recruitment principles. This includes strict requirements in respect of identity checks, work permits and criminal records/DBS checks. This safe recruitment principle is supported by our Recruitment and Selection policy.

Our multi-agency safeguarding policies and procedures also provide guidance in relation to managing potential cases of slavery and human trafficking for employees

We have a comprehensive programme of training for employees with some aspects being mandatory for all to complete regardless of their job role. This includes Equality & Diversity and Safeguarding Awareness training. Training enables our workforce in community-facing roles to identify and know how to report incidents of abuse and neglect, including modern slavery and trafficking.

We will continue to build on our current approach to make improvements to ensure the safety of all people in North Lincolnshire. We will work with partners to ensure that modern slavery is addressed at a strategic level. We will continue to conduct ourselves as place leaders in a manner that sets a strong precedent and helps to reduce the extent of modern slavery in North Lincolnshire.

This declaration is made with reference to Section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes the North Lincolnshire Council anti-slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2020.