

Place and Resources Overview Committee

7 June 2022

Report re Modern Slavery Transparency Statement

For Recommendation to Cabinet

Portfolio Holder: Cllr J Haynes, Corporate Development and Transformation

Local Councillor(s):

Executive Director: A Dunn, Executive Director, Corporate Development

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Report Status: Public

Brief Summary:

The Transparency in Supply Chains Provision (TISC) section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act (MSA) requires commercial entities with an annual turnover of £36m or more to publish annually a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and for this to be added to the government-run online modern slavery statement registry.

This report submits the proposed Dorset Council's Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for financial year 2021-22.

Recommendation:

The Place and Resources Overview Committee is asked to consider the contents of this report and recommend the proposed Modern Slavery Transparency Statement to Cabinet (date 26th July 2022).

Reason for Recommendation:

A forthcoming legislative change to the Modern Slavery Act, section 54, will result in a mandatory requirement for any local authority with a budget of £36m, and above, to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement on an annual basis.

1. **Modern Slavery Act**

1.1 The Modern Slavery Act was introduced in 2015 to provide victims of modern slavery with greater protections and police with greater powers.

1.2 Modern Slavery encompasses:

- slavery
- servitude
- forced and compulsory labour
- and human trafficking

There is no typical victim of slavery – victims can be men, woman, or children of all ages and nationalities.

1.3 Definitions of Modern Slavery for purpose of the Act:

- ‘slavery’ is where the ownership is exercised over a person
- ‘servitude’ involves the obligation to provide services imposed by coercion
- ‘forced or compulsory labour’ involves work or service extracted from any person under menace of a penalty and for which the person has not offered themselves voluntarily
- ‘human trafficking’ concerns arranging or facilitating the travel of another with a view of exploiting them. It is irrelevant whether the person consents to the travel. Both modern slavery and human trafficking are crimes.

2. **Our Commitment**

2.1 The Council is committed to opposing Modern Slavery and recognises the role it can play as a public sector organisation in its identification and disruption.

2.2 As such, the Council has a zero-tolerance approach to any form of Modern Slavery and is committed to acting ethically with integrity and transparency in all that it does, whether alongside our internal work force or externally with partners and suppliers.

3. **Protocol and Guidance for Modern Slavery**

3.1 Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act places a duty on all local authorities, the police (including the British Transport Police), the National Crime Agency and Gangmasters Licensing Authority to notify the government

using the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) if they believe a person may be a victim of human trafficking or slavery.

- 3.2 The Council has worked with partners across Dorset to develop the local Modern Slavery Protocol, which sets out how to deal with any potential cases of modern slavery and links to the mandatory responsibilities to notify cases through the NRM. [Protocol and Guidance for Modern Slavery - Dorset Council](#)

4. **Staff Training Available**

- 4.1 A safeguarding learning pathway is available to staff via the Dorset Learning Hub which provides a basic overview of what safeguarding is and how we all can work together to protect the rights of others. This includes the Home Office Modern Slavery e-learning training and links to local protocols.

[Safeguarding learning pathway | Dorset Council](#)

- 4.2 A learning pathway in respect of Modern Slavery and Commissioning, Procurement and Contract Management is available via the Dorset Learning Hub – Commercially Minded.

[Modern Slavery and Commissioning, Procurement and Contract Management | Dorset Council \(learn.link\)](#)

This learning pathway provides some background on the Modern Slavery Act and the considerations of the Act in terms of engaging with suppliers and their supply chains, whether through commissioning, or procurement, or contract management.

5. **The Transparency in Supply Chains Provision (TISC)**

- 5.1 The Transparency in Supply Chains Provision (TISC) section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act requires commercial entities with an annual turnover of £36m or more to publish annually a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and for this to be added to the government-run online modern slavery statement registry.
- 5.2 Local Authorities are currently under no legal obligation to publish a statement, but this is soon about to change therefore the Local Government Association (LGA) has asked all Local Authorities to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and add it to government modern slavery statement registry by 30th September 2022.

[Add your modern slavery statement to the statement registry - GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk)
(www.gov.uk)

5.3 This report provides, for consideration to Place & Resource Committee, the Council's first Modern Slavery Transparency Statement. Seeking input and recommendation to Cabinet.

6. **Financial Implications**

6.1 Not applicable. This is a report in respect of a statement which reflects on the Council's current position and outputs for financial year 2021-2022 regarding modern slavery.

7. **Climate Implications**

7.1 Not applicable. This is a report in respect of a statement which reflects on the Council's current position and outputs for financial year 2021-2022 regarding modern slavery.

8. **Well-being and Health Implications**

8.1 Not applicable. This is a report in respect of a statement which reflects on the Council's current position and outputs for financial year 2021-2022 regarding modern slavery. Future outputs or initiatives will need to consider well-being and health implications in their delivery.

9. **Other Implications**

9.1 None

10. **Risk Assessment**

10.1 HAVING CONSIDERED: the risks associated with this decision; the level of risk has been identified as:

Current Risk: LOW
Residual Risk: LOW

11. **Equalities Impact Assessment**

11.1 At the time of writing this report, the Modern Slavery Group are carrying out an Equalities Impact Assessment and the initial indications are that this first statement will have a positive impact, i.e., the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.

12. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Dorset Council Modern Slavery Transparency Statement

Note: *The Statement is referring to the Dorset Council Plan 2020 – 2024 as in place at the time of the writing of this report. The Plan may be subject to a refresh therefore the Statement's reference to the Plan may have to be amended accordingly.*