

Cabinet

26 July 2022

Report re Modern Slavery Transparency Statement

For Decision

Portfolio Holder: Cllr J Haynes, Corporate Development and Transformation

Local Councillor(s): Cllr

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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.

On 7th June 2022, Place and Resources Overview Committee received and considered a report which set out the proposed Dorset Council Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for financial year 2021-22.

The committee considered the issues arising from the report and during discussion, the following areas were covered:

- The statement was reviewed on an annual basis
- The requirement for a generic point of contact on the Community Safety website
- Strengthening of word within paragraph 2.1 of the report to set out the role the Council ‘must’ have in this area

- Clarification of the wording in paragraph 8.1 of the report with regard to wellbeing issues
- Further information to be included with regard to how the Council looked at issues around supply chains.

Place and Resource Overview Committee recommended that the proposed Modern Slavery Transparency Statement be approved, (subject to the amendments requested by the Place and Resources Overview Committee as set out above).

Committee papers: [Minutes details on public web site](#)

Refer to Appendix 1 – Extract from minutes of Place and Resources Overview Committee. (This also provides a summary of the amendments in response to the recommendation of Place and Resource Overview Committee).

Recommendation:

Cabinet is asked to consider the contents of this report and recommend publication of the proposed Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for financial year 2021-22.

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 must 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. **Our Supply Chain Due Diligence**

- 4.1 Whilst there are laws in place which punish instances of modern slavery, the public sector can use its extensive buying power to identify and manage the risk of modern slavery in their supply chains.
- 4.2 Approximately 51% of the Council’s annual budget is spent on buying external goods, services and works. It is therefore important that we continue to review and assess our commissioning, procurement, and

contract management process to ensure we take into consideration the different risks associated in our supply chains, including modern slavery and human trafficking, and that we seek to mitigate risks. Knowing the risk of modern slavery guides the approach to contract management and how to work with the supplier to identify and mitigate risk.

- 4.3 Staff training is available in respect of reviewing modern slavery risk within supply chains (paragraph 5.2 refers).

5. **Staff Training Available**

- 5.1 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](#)

- 5.2 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. It includes an assessment tool to review the level of modern slavery risk against:

- industry type
- nature of workforce
- supplier location
- context (in which the supplier operates)
- commodity type
- business / supply chain model

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

- 6.1 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.

- 6.2 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.

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7. 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.

8. 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.

9. Well-being and Health Implications

- 8.1 Publishing annually a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement supports well-being and health implications within the Council's supply chains and wider communities, by ensuring transparency of the Council's policy and approach to responding to and mitigating Modern Slavery risk.

10. Other Implications

- 9.1 None

11. Risk Assessment

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

Current Risk: LOW
Residual Risk: LOW

12. Equalities Impact Assessment

11.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment indicates that the Council Modern Slavery Transparency Statement will have a positive impact, i.e., the proposal eliminates discrimination, advances equality of opportunity and/or fosters good relations with protected groups.

13. **Appendices**

12.1 Appendix 1 – Extract from minutes of Place and Resources Overview Committee. (This also provides a summary of the amendments in response to the recommendation of Place and Resource Overview Committee).

Appendix 2 – 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.*

13. **Background Papers**

13.1 7th June 2022 Place & Resource Overview Committee papers

[Minutes details on public web site](#)