



North West Leicestershire - Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

1. Introduction

1.1 This statement sets out North West Leicestershire District Council's actions to understand potential modern slavery risks related to its business and to put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business or its supply chains. This statement relates to financial year 1 April 2022 to 31 March 2023.

1.2 As part of the public sector, the Council recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. The Council is committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities, frontline activities, and as far as practicable that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking. The Council also works with local safeguarding boards to share best practice and to enable effective communication between relevant bodies, including law enforcement, local authorities, health care bodies and local groups.

2. Organisational Structure and Supply Chains

2.1 This statement covers the activities of North West Leicestershire District Council, a Local Authority situated in the county of Leicestershire. The Council manages a wide range of services which are delivered both directly by the Council and through external organisations. This statement is designed to cover our statutory responsibility and discretionary services, including partnership working with other agencies and through commissioned work with external contractors. We recognise our key role in tackling modern slavery, this includes identification and referral of victims, supporting victims, disrupting activity, and ensuring our supply chains are free from modern slavery.

Countries of operation and supply

2.2 The Council only operates in the United Kingdom. Due to the nature of the Council's business, the risk of slavery and human trafficking is considered low, however the Council remains vigilant to any potential risks.

3. Responsibility

3.1 Responsibility for the Council's anti-slavery initiatives is as follows:

- Policies: These are developed by officers employed by the Council and are then agreed in line with the Council's Constitution.
- Risk assessments: These are undertaken by officers within the relevant service area with support from, Designated Safeguarding Officers (DSO's), Human Resources and the Finance and Procurement Service, as required.

- Investigations/ due diligence: Any concern regarding modern slavery or human trafficking should be raised with the line manager in the first instance.

4. Relevant Policies

The Council has the following policies in place to support its commitment to identifying and preventing slavery and human trafficking in its operations:

- Confidential Reporting (Whistleblowing) Policy – The Council encourages all its workers, customers, and other business partners to report any concerns related to the direct activities, or the supply chains of the organisation. The Council's Whistleblowing Policy is designed to make it easy for workers and suppliers to make disclosures, without fear of retaliation.
- Employee and Councillors Code of Conduct – The Council's Codes of Conduct makes clear to Members workers the actions and behaviour expected of them when representing the Council. The Council strives to maintain the highest standards of conduct and ethical behaviour. Any complaints of breaches are investigated, and action taken as necessary.
- Expectations of Suppliers – The Council is committed to ensuring that suppliers adhere to the highest standards of ethics. We expect our suppliers to provide safe working conditions where necessary, treat workers with dignity and respect, and act ethically and within the law in their use of labour. This includes the duties on the regarding Human Trafficking and Modern Slavery. Serious violations of these expectations will lead to the termination of the business relationship.
- Recruitment/agency workers – The Council recruits its workers via its in-house recruitment function. New workers are thoroughly and properly vetted for their eligibility to work in the UK in accordance with the guidelines and legislation in place at the time. Where agency workers are required, these are acquired through a managed service provider who verifies the practices of any new agency it is using before accepting workers from that agency.
- Safeguarding Policy – Our Safeguarding Policy and Procedure sets the Council's duty to spot the indicators of potential abuse amongst children and adults at risk of harm, which may include signs of trafficking or modern slavery. It sets out our approaches to report and managing incidents of concerns and sets out the systems and structures in place for managing issues raised. All workers receive mandatory training on these issues appropriate to their role.

5. Risk

5.1 Whilst the Council's activities are not considered to be in high-risk areas, as part of our initiative to identify and mitigate risk we:

- Require all Human Resources professionals to be suitably experienced/qualified in relation to recruitment procedures.
- Have in place appropriate procurement procedures and ensure that contracts with external providers have appropriate clauses

- Keep under review supply chain and contract procedures
- Ensure that in carrying out statutory functions, officers are aware of potential risks and have clear reporting lines.
- Ensure policies (as set out above) include, mitigate and manage areas where risks around Modern Slavery are likely to occur in the operation of our functions.

6. Training and Awareness- Raising

6.1 The Council recognises that certain workers within the organisation should be required to complete awareness training in relation to modern slavery and human trafficking. This is currently included within the mandatory training for all staff, and more focused training linked to safeguarding more generally for staff where their role means that they are more likely to come across such issues.

7. Our effectiveness in combatting slavery and human trafficking

7.1 We use the following to measure how effective we have been in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any part of our business or supply chains:

- Monitoring complaints and Confidential Reporting
- Monitoring training needs
- Feedback from monitoring of corporate contracts

Should this approach indicate anything of concern then this would be escalated through our reporting structures either covered in the above policies mentioned in this statement, and or via direct addressing through the Council's Corporate Leadership Team, as appropriate.

8. Approval

This Statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 March 23. This Statement will be reviewed and updated annually.

Signature 
 Chief Executive, Allison Thomas

Signature 
 Leader of the Council, Cllr Richard Blunt

Date: 16th November 2023

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