

## For publication

### Modern Slavery Statement – 2024/25 (GV000)

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| <b>Meeting:</b>           | Cabinet    |
| <b>Date:</b>              | 19.03.24   |
| <b>Cabinet portfolio:</b> | Governance |
| <b>Directorate:</b>       | Corporate  |
| <b>For publication</b>    |            |

#### **1.0 Purpose of the report**

1.1 To present for approval the council's modern slavery statement for 2024/25.

#### **2.0 Recommendation**

2.1 That the Chesterfield Borough Council modern slavery statement is approved for 2024/25.

#### **3.0 Reasons for recommendations**

3.1 To demonstrate and strengthen our commitment to prevent and reduce the impact of modern slavery.

#### **4.0 Report details**

##### 4.1 Background

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

- 4.2 Section 52 of the Act imposes a duty on public authorities, including district councils, to notify the Secretary of State (via the National Crime Agency) of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking.
- 4.3 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. On the introduction of the Act it was unclear if local authorities and other public sector bodies were covered by the requirement. Additional guidance later clarified that public sector bodies do not currently need to comply with this duty.
- 4.4 Chesterfield Borough Council recognises the huge impact that this crime has on vulnerable people and in our communities so we are committed to working with partner agencies to play our part in eradicating modern slavery. To demonstrate our commitment and highlight how we can help prevent exploitation, Chesterfield Borough Council like many local authorities including Derbyshire County Council and Derby City Council volunteered to develop and implement modern slavery statements from 2018/19 onwards.

#### 4.5 Modern Slavery Statement for 2024/25

The modern slavery statement for 2024/25 is attached at Appendix 1. The statement includes:

- Modern Slavery Act requirements
- The Modern Slavery Charter
- The standards we will meet and expect others we do business with to meet
- Procurement and supply chains
- How modern slavery links into our policies and plans
- Training and awareness raising
- Partnership working

- 4.6 In 2023/24 The Local Government Association (LGA) launched a Modern Slavery Network for local authorities. The network provides an excellent space for sharing knowledge and increasing awareness of modern slavery trends and impacts as well as experiences around identifying and supporting victims. We are actively engaged in this work and cascade learning via our internal safeguarding leads group, aspire intranet resources, online learning and through engagement in key partnerships for example Chesterfield Community Safety Partnership and Safer Derbyshire.
- 4.7 The statement will be reviewed annually and published on the council's website.

## **5.0 Alternative options**

5.1 The development of a Modern Slavery Statement is voluntary for local authorities so we could choose not to produce and publish a statement. This however is viewed as a backward step as we have previously made a commitment to produce annual statements and undertake key work to prevent and reduce modern slavery.

## **6.0 Implications for consideration – Financial and value for money**

6.1 Chesterfield Borough Council spends in excess of £40 million each year on supplies and services from other organisations to help us to deliver our Council Plan and provide over 50 services to our communities. Our Procurement Strategy and plans have clear commitments and actions to prevent modern slavery within our supply chains. This is part of our value for money assessment.

## **7.0 Implications for consideration – Legal**

7.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 consolidates various offences relating to human trafficking and slavery with section 52 of the Act imposing specific reporting duties for public authorities. Chesterfield Borough Council currently voluntarily complies with the provisions in section 54 of the Act regarding Modern Slavery Statements.

7.2 The Government have indicated that they would like to strengthen the legislation around Modern Slavery which is likely to have an impact on the future development of Modern Slavery Statements. We continue to monitor this situation and will make adjustments to our practices and reporting to achieve compliance as new legislation and guidance is developed.

## **8.0 Implications for consideration – Human resources**

8.1 Chesterfield Borough Council has a programme of mandatory safeguarding training for all employees and elected members. This includes content about modern slavery and human trafficking and enables them to identify and know how to report suspected or disclosed incidents.

8.2 We carry out inspections of food premises, other commercial premises, industrial buildings and domestic residential properties. Staff engaged in these activities receive a higher level of training to enable them to spot issues of concern relating to modern slavery and understand how to support and respond to concerns.

## **9.0 Implications for consideration – Council plan**

9.1 The actions and activities within the statement support and underpin the Council Plan and are a key consideration in the delivery of priorities.

## 10.0 Implications for consideration – Climate change

10.1 There are no specific implications around Climate Change.

## 11.0 Implications for consideration – Equality and diversity

11.1 Equality analysis of our approach to reducing modern slavery and its impacts has been considered and no negative impacts for protected characteristics identified. These arrangements make significant positive contributions to all groups but in particular younger people, people with disabilities and migrants who are disproportionately affected by modern slavery. This is reviewed annually as the statements are updated.

## 12.0 Implications for consideration – Risk management

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| Failure to respond to legislative requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 – section 52. | H | M | <p>Modern Slavery forms part of our Safeguarding Policy and procedures. This includes reporting responsibilities.</p> <p>Learning and development activity in place.</p> <p>Key partnership working with Derbyshire Safer Neighbourhoods Board, Derbyshire Adult Safeguarding Board and Derby and Derbyshire Safeguarding Children Board.</p> <p>Derbyshire Districts Safeguarding Partnership also in place to share intelligence, best practice and learning.</p> | M | L |
| Failure to comply with anticipated legislative changes – Modern Slavery Act S54.            | H | M | <p>Currently voluntarily complying with legislation.</p> <p>Extensive experience of similar reporting mechanisms through Gender Pay Gap reporting systems.</p>  | M | L |

### Decision information

|                            |             |
|----------------------------|-------------|
| <b>Key decision number</b> | <b>1225</b> |
| <b>Wards affected</b>      | <b>All</b>  |

### Document information

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| <b>Report author</b>  |
| Donna Reddish – Service Director Corporate  |
| <b>Background documents</b><br>These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when the report was prepared. |
| None  |
| <b>Appendices to the report</b>   |
| Appendix 1 – Modern Slavery Statement 2024/25   |