

Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2024/25

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Chesterfield Borough Council is committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities and ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking.
- 1.2 This Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement sets out the Council's actions to understand potential modern slavery risks related to its business and put in place steps that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human tracking in its own business, and its supply chains.
- 1.3 This Modern Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement relates to actions and activities during the financial year 1 April 2024 to 31 March 2025.

2.0 The Modern Slavery Act 2015

- 2.1 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
- 2.2 Section 52 of the Act imposes a duty on public authorities, including district councils, to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking. 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. The public sector is not covered by this piece of legislation however as Chesterfield Borough Council engages in commercial activities by providing services (statutory and discretionary), and its annual turnover is greater than £36million we have decided to produce an annual statement on a voluntary basis.

3.0 Standards

- 3.1 Chesterfield Borough Council will meet the following standards and also expects those with whom it does business, to meet these standards:

- To support every individual's human right to live free from abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment
- To promote ethical business and operational practices in corporate activity and the services delivered
- To take appropriate steps to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking part in any of its business or supply chains
- To take reports of witnessed, suspected or disclosed concerns of slavery and human trafficking seriously
- To take appropriate steps with relevant partner agencies to address actual instances of slavery and human trafficking.

3.2 In December 2018 Chesterfield Borough Council signed up to the Co-operative Party Charter against modern slavery. The charter recognises the important role that local authorities in the UK can play in reducing modern slavery, in particular through its procurement activity and supply chains. We are using the charter as an improvement tool to strengthen our policies, procedures and practices to maximise our impact particularly in the prevention of modern slavery.

4.0 Procurement and supply chains

- 4.1 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 for our communities. Examples of things we buy include waste collection services, energy, vehicles, catering products, building works, specialist consultancy support, seeds, equipment and IT software.
- 4.2 Chesterfield Borough Council procurement strategy sets out a clear vision and the key organisational outcomes that we aim to deliver. Our in-house procurement service strengthens the Council's capacity and expertise in procurement to successfully deliver this Strategy. Our procurement ICT system seeks to capture all the Council's procurement activity in one place to improve data quality and visibility of procurement activity and spend. Modern Slavery prevention is key throughout our strategy and systems.
- 4.3 Chesterfield Borough Council expects all suppliers of goods and services to comply with all applicable laws, statutes, regulations and codes including the Modern Slavery Act 2015. This includes having their own anti-slavery policy and statement (where applicable).

- 4.4 The Council's tendering processes require tenderers to confirm that they are compliant with the Act. Any bidder who fails to evidence their compliance with the required legislation are excluded from participating further in the tender process. Our contract terms include specific clauses to mitigate the risk of Modern Slavery in our Supply chains.
- 4.5 The Council also requires its contractors and sub-contractors engaged in activities with children and vulnerable adults to have safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place and to comply with the reporting procedures in the Council's Safeguarding Policy.

5.0 Policies and plans

- 5.1 Chesterfield Borough Council has a range of policies and plans in place which reflect its commitment to acting ethically and with integrity to prevent slavery and human trafficking in its operations:
- Vision and Council Plan - The Council's vision is 'Putting our Communities First' and our Council Plan includes a key objective of improving quality of life for our communities.
 - Safeguarding Children and Vulnerable Adults Policy and Procedure – sets out how the Council will safeguard and promote the welfare of children and vulnerable adults who come into contact with its services and activities. The policy covers how the Council should comply with the duty to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery and human trafficking.
 - Whistleblowing Policy – encourages all its employees to report concerns about any aspect of service provision, conduct of officers and others acting on behalf of the Council, or the supply chain. The policy is designed to make it easy to make disclosures without fear of discrimination and victimisation.
 - Employee Code of Conduct – is the ethical framework that employees work to, which makes clear the actions and behaviour expected of them when representing the Council. The Council strives to maintain the highest standards of employee conduct and ethical behaviour and breaches are investigated.
 - Members Code of Conduct – this code seeks to promote and maintain high standards of conduct and ethical behaviour and breaches are investigated.
 - Recruitment Policy – sets out robust procedures for vetting new employees, which ensures they are able to confirm their identities and qualifications. To comply with the Asylum, Immigration and Nationality Act 2006, all prospective employees are asked to supply evidence of their eligibility to work in the UK. References are also requested and followed up.
 - Procurement Strategy and documentation – these include modern slavery and safeguarding requirements.

- Equality and Diversity Policy and Strategy - sets out the Council's legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010 and the various ways the Council meets its duties.

6.0 Training and awareness

- 6.1 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. In addition, the procurement team undertakes annual training in ethical procurement and supply.
- 6.2 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. We also have key information about Modern Slavery reporting and support arrangements available via our Intranet so that staff can easily access this information while undertaking their duties.
- 6.3 Procurement training for all managers includes key content about modern slavery.

7.0 Partnership working

- 7.1 Chesterfield Borough Council has a strong track record of working in partnership with other agencies to respond to safeguarding, slavery and trafficking issues. This includes supporting the Derby and Derbyshire Modern Slavery Partnership via the Safer Derbyshire Partnership and the Organised Crime Partnership led by Derbyshire Police. We work with colleagues to develop a common understanding and partnership approach to the threats, vulnerabilities and risks relating to slavery and human trafficking. This approach is also applied to our strategic migration work locally, countywide and regionally.
- 7.2 We also work with a range of agencies to safeguard children and vulnerable adults. This includes supporting the work of the safeguarding boards, Chesterfield Children's locality partnership and district Councils safeguarding network.
- 7.3 The Local Government Association is supporting Councils to develop and improve their awareness and response to reduce modern slavery and identify and support victims of modern slavery. We are actively engaged in this work and have been making improvements to our training and guidance as we learn from other authorities and agencies.

This Modern Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement is approved by the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and endorsed by Cabinet. It will be reviewed and updated as necessary and published on an annual basis.