



## Policy and Resources Committee - 6 November 2017

### ENC Modern Slavery Statement 2016-17

---

#### **Purpose of report**

This report provides Members with information about the obligations of the council under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and seeks approval of the council's first Modern Slavery Statement which outlines the steps taken to ensure human trafficking and slavery does not occur within the council or its supply chains.

#### **Attachment(s)**

Appendix A: ENC Modern Slavery Statement 2016-17

---

#### **1.0 Background**

- 1.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 (the "Act") is the first of its kind in Europe, and one of the first in the world, to specifically address slavery and trafficking in the 21st century. The Act consolidates the current offences relating to trafficking and slavery and specifies the duties incumbent on organisations.
- 1.2 The transparency in supply chains provision in the Act (section 54) means that every large commercial organisation has a responsibility to publish a statement about what it is doing to prevent slavery in its business and supply chain.
- 1.3 Although the Act's term "commercial organisation" may not immediately sound like it would apply to public sector bodies, if read in conjunction with Home Office Guidance, the wording and the purpose of the Act would suggest otherwise.
- 1.4 It is now clearer, even without the proposed forthcoming amendment to the Act which will make it explicit, to argue that local authorities are exempt from the requirements of Section 54, which are:
  1. A commercial organisation within subsection (2) must prepare a slavery and human trafficking statement for each financial year of the organisation.
  2. A commercial organisation falls within this subsection if it—
    - a) supplies goods or services, and
    - b) has a total turnover of not less than £36 million (an amount prescribed by regulations made by the Secretary of State).

#### **2.0 The statement**

- 2.1 The guidance notes that the Modern Slavery Statement must cover the prior financial year and must be refreshed annually. The statement must be published no later than September of each year. If the organisation has a website, it must publish the statement on the website and place a link in a prominent place on the website's homepage.
- 2.2 The statement must be signed off by the appropriate senior-level officers (e.g. the Chief Executive and the Leader of the council), following approval by this committee.

- 2.3 A slavery and human trafficking statement for a financial year is—
- a statement of the steps the organisation has taken during the financial year to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place—
    - a) in any of its supply chains, and
    - b) in any part of its own business, or
  - a statement that the organisation has taken no such steps.

2.4 The first draft statement for ENC can be found at Appendix A.

### 3.0 Equality and Diversity Implications

3.1 The statement itself has no impact on Equality and Diversity Issues as it is for information only. However, the act of working towards the eradication of slavery and human trafficking will have positive impacts for those vulnerable groups (by reason of their disability, age, religion or race, for example) who may be likely to be exploited.

### 4.0 Legal Implications

4.1 This is an information report for discussion. There are no legal implications arising.

### 5.0 Risk Management

5.1 These duties are enforceable by the Secretary of State bringing civil proceedings in the High Court for an injunction. Failure to produce this statement could lead to such civil proceedings.

### 6.0 Financial Implications

6.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

### 7.0 Corporate Outcomes

7.1 The information provided in this report demonstrates how the council is performing in relation to its Corporate Outcomes of:

- High quality service delivery
- Effective Management
- Members and staff with the right knowledge skills and behaviours

### 8.0 Recommendation

8.1 The Committee is recommended to consider and approve the attached Modern Slavery Statement for signature and publication.

<b>Legal</b>	Power: Modern Slavery Act 2015				
	Other considerations:				
<b>Background Papers:</b>					
<b>Person Originating Report:</b> Sharn Matthews – Executive Director 01832 742108 <a href="mailto:smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk">smatthews@east-northamptonshire.gov.uk</a>					
<b>Date:</b> 24/10/17					
<b>CFO</b> 23/8/17		<b>MO</b> 23/8/17		<b>CX</b>	



## **Modern Slavery Statement**

### **Introduction**

This statement sets out East Northamptonshire Council's actions to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to its business and to put in place steps aimed at ensuring there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business and its supply chains. This statement relates to actions and activities during the financial year 1 April 2016 to 31 March 2017.

As part of the public sector, East Northamptonshire Council recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking.

The Council is committed to improving its practices to combat and prevent slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities, and to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking.

### **Organisational structure and supply chains**

East Northamptonshire Council is a district council providing a range of services for its 98,000 residents, from council tax collection, waste collection, planning management and environmental protection. Other services, such as schools, social care and roads/transport links are provided by Northamptonshire County Council. Services are delivered both directly by the Council and through external contractors.

### **Countries of operation and supply**

The council operates in the United Kingdom.

We expect and request assurance that the practices of companies and organisations in our supply chain operating within the EU adhere to Article 4 of the European Convention on Human Rights, concerning the prohibition of slavery and forced labour.

Should the Council look to procure or import products or services from outside the EU which could pose an increased risk of slavery or human trafficking, it would undertake further consideration of supply chains in order to take account of potential risks.

East Northamptonshire Council expects all suppliers of goods or services to the council who meet the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to have their own policy relating to working practices or modern slavery, or for equivalent and sufficient evidence to be available to ensure their standards are in accordance with the council's expectations. We request that our suppliers ensure the same of their own supply chains.

These provisions are formalised through our recently adopted Procurement Strategy.

## Responsibility

The Council has a range of policies and processes which reflect our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity to prevent slavery and human trafficking in its operations.

**Policies:** Council policies are developed by officers employed by the authority and are then agreed by a relevant committee, which would include councillors, senior officers, and partner organisations where relevant.

**Risk assessments:** The responsible officer for human rights is the Chief Executive but all staff have a responsibility in identifying potential issues. Modern slavery risk analysis is provided by our colleagues in the Community Partnerships Team and nominated Safeguarding Officers who are actively developing strategies and safeguards around this.

**Investigations/due diligence:** We will refer any suspected or known incidents of slavery or trafficking to the relevant police authority via our Community Partnerships Team, which is our direct link with the police and the local Serious and Organised Crime Board, which has a responsibility for modern slavery.

As part of its safeguarding responsibility the council has previously commissioned safeguarding training for officers to help identify any signs of potential safeguarding incidents and to advise staff of the relevant referral pathways. Equivalent training for councillors is planned for the year 2017-18. We expect any colleague who may witness or suspect any wrongdoing to report their concerns to their manager, the police and the relevant safeguarding board.

Any investigations in relation to suspected or confirmed modern slavery will be conducted through partners such as the police.

**Specific policies which apply** (copies are available on request or via the council's website <https://www.east-northamptonshire.gov.uk/>):

- **Whistleblowing Policy:** The council encourages all its workers, customers and other business partners to report any concerns related to the activities of the council or its contractors. This would include any circumstances that indicate potential slavery or human trafficking. The council's whistleblowing procedure is designed to make it easy for workers to make disclosures, without fear of retaliation. Employees, customers or others who have concerns can raise these via either their manager or other nominated persons specified in the Policy
- **Employee Code of Conduct:** The organisation's code makes clear to employees the actions and behaviour expected of them when representing the organisation. The Council strives to maintain the highest standards of employee conduct and ethical behaviour, including when managing its supply chain.
- **Procurement:** The Council's Procurement Strategy and procurement procedures are laid out in Part 4.6 of the Constitution. The strategy identifies the role played by procurement in minimising the risk of social exploitation within the supply chain by ensuring the Council's ethical standards are met.

- **Safeguarding Children and Young People Policy and Safeguarding Adults Policy:** The council has two safeguarding policies, which are declarations of the council's commitment to safeguarding its residents, irrespective of age. These policies include procedures for delivery of a safe environment by officers of the council and for effective operation of its partnerships with other bodies, as the council is not an investigative or intervention agency.

Signed:

David Oliver, Chief Executive

Cllr Steven North, Leader  
Date: xx November 2017

## Action Plan

- 1. Performance indicators:** The council is reviewing its key performance indicators (KPIs) in light of the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- 2. Training and awareness-raising:** The council has already delivered training to staff and will deliver training to councillors. The council recognises that certain colleagues within the organisation may require more specific or in-depth training, depending on their job role, in order to raise awareness further and ensure compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Council will take steps to review this position and put appropriate training in place specific to modern slavery as an addition to training already provided in its existing policies.

This will include considering awareness of the following;

- the basic principles of the Modern Slavery Act 2015
- how employers can identify and prevent slavery and human trafficking
- what employees can do to flag up potential slavery or human trafficking issues to the relevant parties within the organisation, and
- what external help is available, for example through the Modern Slavery Helpline.

We will also make available information for all colleagues outlining our duties, potential warning signs and what to do if they have any concerns.

- 3. Policy updates:** As part of ongoing policy monitoring, relevant policies will be adapted to include specific references to the Modern Slavery Act, and detailed procedures and processes to ensure that requirement to prevent of slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities, and to ensure that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking is explicit in all relevant policies. This will include the council's Equalities/Inclusion Policy and its processes on employing Agency Workers.
- 4. Links with Businesses.** The council will use its contacts with business as an opportunity to provide community leadership by promoting awareness of the Act and encouraging compliance with its principles by businesses across the district

This statement is made pursuant to section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes East Northamptonshire Council's modern slavery and human trafficking statement for the financial year ending 31 March 2017.