

## **Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council – Modern Slavery Transparency Statement**

### **Introduction**

This statement sets out Basingstoke and Deane Borough Council's ('the council') actions to understand all 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 and its supply chains.

The council recognises its responsibility to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of human trafficking as introduced by Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015, as well as its general responsibility to take a strong approach to any allegations of modern slavery and human trafficking.

The council is committed to preventing slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities and to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and human trafficking. The Statement sets out practices already in place at the Council, and committed actions moving forward.

### **What is modern slavery?**

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking, slavery, servitude and forced labour and can include:

- sexual exploitation;
- labour exploitation;
- forced criminality;
- organ harvesting;
- domestic servitude;
- debt bondage.

Anyone can become a victim of modern slavery, with particularly vulnerable groups including:

- unaccompanied, internally displaced children;
- children accompanied by an adult who is not their relative or legal guardian;
- young girls and women;
- former victims of modern slavery of trafficking.

### **Partnerships**

The Council works in partnership with a wide number of agencies in order to combat modern slavery, including:

- Safer North Hampshire Community Safety Partnership;
- Hampshire Constabulary;
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership.

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The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership's main objectives include:

- to raise awareness of modern slavery;
- to combat modern slavery by working in partnership;
- to identify and support victims of modern slavery;
- to pursue perpetrators of modern slavery.

The full Partnership strategy is available on the website at [www.modernslaverypartnership.org.uk/partnership](http://www.modernslaverypartnership.org.uk/partnership).

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership provides guidance, training and best practice to partners across the county, ensuring all organisations are equipped to tackle this issue.

At a local level Safer North Hampshire work with Hampshire Constabulary to identify and manage any victims or perpetrators of modern slavery. Safer North Hampshire operate under the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and the duty to prevent crime and disorder, which includes modern slavery and trafficking. A monthly meeting, the Vulnerabilities Operational Group tracks individuals of note as well as resulting actions.

### **Policies**

The council reviews its policies and procedures on an ongoing basis to ensure they remain compliant and fit for purpose. The following policies and procedures are considered to be key in meeting the requirements of the Modern Slavery Act.

- **Safeguarding**

The council is committed to safeguarding the welfare of children and vulnerable adults. It has a comprehensive Safeguarding Children and Adults Policy, which all staff and councillors are expected to read and adhere to. The council carries out regular safeguarding training for all staff, has safeguarding leads within departments and participates in multi-agency partnerships to protect and safeguard people.

- **Recruitment**

BDBC has a robust and transparent recruitment and selection process, which seeks to ensure that all new workers that are recruited into the council are subject to requisite checks. Our offer of employment is subject to ensuring that all new employees are able to confirm identity, qualifications and are eligible to work in the United Kingdom as well as following up references. The Council safeguards agency workers by ensuring agencies used are reputable and have appropriate policies in place to safeguard workers.

- **Pay**

The Council operates a job evaluation scheme to ensure employees are paid fair and equitably, taking into account The Equality Act 2010 and the National Joint Council for Local Government Services. The Council's pay policy is based on fairness, affordability, consistency, flexibility, market rates and to encourage and reward achievement.

- **Employee Code of Conduct**

The Council's Employee Code of Conduct makes clear to employees the actions and behaviours expected of them when representing the Council. The Employee Code of Conduct promotes a high standard of conduct based around honesty, professionalism, conscientiousness, accountability and respect to maintain public confidence in services provided, with any breaches thoroughly investigated.

- **Whistleblowing**

The Whistleblowing policy forms part of the Council's corporate governance arrangements to ensure that employees are confident in the reporting and investigation of malpractice including fraud, corruption, and unethical conduct.

- **Members Code of Conduct**

The Members Code of Conduct emphasises Members responsibilities with regard to dealing with residents and all members of the community in a fair manner, putting the public interest first.

## **Supply Chains**

It is a priority for the Council to ensure ethical trading, responsible sourcing and prevention of modern slavery and human trafficking throughout its supply chains.

The council is committed to:

- full transparency of its supply chain;
- ensuring people who provide products and services used by the Council are treated fairly, and their fundamental human rights protected and respected;
- ensuring new suppliers understand the Council's requirements before commencing any work, and that existing suppliers comply with these requirements.

The council procures goods, services and works from various suppliers which is governed by the Council's Contract Standing Orders and related Terms and Conditions. The council is also aligned to integrating the policies of the National Procurement Strategy for Local Government in England 2018.

The council requests evidence of Modern Slavery compliance on all tenders, and where applicable, will request evidence of suppliers having adequate Modern Slavery policies and procedures.

In addition to complying with the required statutory standards for safeguarding and modern slavery, the council may impose additional, specialist safeguarding clauses in contracts where it is deemed relevant. Suppliers may be requested to agree the council's Standard Safeguarding Contract Clauses.

The council will seek to carry out a random audit of suppliers each financial year by requesting copies of policies. This audit will be conducted by the Community Safety Team in partnership with the safeguarding leads.

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If a current supplier is found to meet all statutory requirements but has policies that are lacking or could be improved we may look to work in collaboration with them to improve these, or alternatively suggest an appropriate agency who can assist. Should the council have serious concerns around a suppliers policies and the safety of those working for them, this should be immediately referred to the council's Procurement team as well as the Contract Manager and a suitable escalation process followed.

Any violations or safety concerns will be reported to the appropriate authorities including:

- Hampshire Constabulary - <https://www.hampshire.police.uk/>
- Hampshire County Council Children/Adults Services - <https://www.hants.gov.uk/socialcareandhealth>
- The Home Office - <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/modern-slavery>
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership - <http://www.modernslaverypartnership.org.uk/>
- Barnardos - <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/>

## Training

All council staff are encouraged to attend face to face Safeguarding Training and all staff are required to complete an annual e-learning package on safeguarding children and vulnerable adults. All staff are also encouraged to familiarise themselves with the Safeguarding Policy itself, and discuss any concerns with Safeguarding leads. Policies and the list of Safeguarding leads can be accessed by the Council intranet, Inform.

Councillors are also encouraged to access the e-learning package and face to face training to assist them in carrying out their duties both within the Council, as well as when out working in the community for their constituents.

## Review

This Transparency Statement will be reviewed and updated every 3 years by the Community Safety Team.

## Reporting of concerns

All Modern Slavery concerns raised by council staff, councillors and volunteers will be reported via the National Referral Mechanism.

The advice to residents and communities if they are affected by slavery, or suspect someone is at risk, is to:

- call 999 if it is an emergency
- call 101 for non-emergencies
- call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111
- call the Modern Slavery Helpline on 0800 012 1700
- report online via the Modern Slavery Helpline website: <https://www.modernslaveryhelpline.org/report>

Appendix 1

<b>Document Control</b>		
<b>Version</b>	<b>Amended by</b>	<b>Next update</b>
1	David Lipscombe, Community Safety Team Leader	