

Calderdale Council

Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement 2017/2018

This statement sets out Calderdale Council's 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. This statement relates to actions and activities during the financial year 1st April 2019 to 31st March 2020.

As part of Local Government, the Council recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to slavery and human trafficking. In addition to the Council's responsibility as an employer, it also acknowledges its duty as a Metropolitan Council to notify the Secretary of State of suspected victims of slavery or human trafficking as introduced by Section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

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 below sets out practices already in place at the Council and any committed actions set for 2017/18 in response to the introduction of Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Corporate Strategy clearly states its aim to support and develop the people it employs, growing their knowledge and skills, now and for the future.

Policies

The Council and its strategic partnerships regularly review strategies and policies with input from employees, team leaders, management teams, HR, unions and members (portfolio holder). This is to ensure that the Council's policies and procedures 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 2015.

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 Council strives to maintain the highest standards of employee conduct and ethical behaviour and breaches are investigated and, if appropriate, remedial action taken.

Recruitment

The Council's recruitment processes are transparent and reviewed regularly. This includes robust procedures in place for the vetting of new employees and ensures they are able to confirm their identities and qualifications, and they are paid directly into an appropriate, personal bank account.

Agency Workers

The Council uses only reputable employment agencies to source labour and verifies the practices of any new agency it is using before accepting workers from that agency.

Pay

The Council operates a job evaluation scheme which ensures that all employees are paid fairly and equitably. In addition to this, the Council has introduced the living wage.

Whistleblowing

The Council encourages all its employees, customers and other business partners to report any concerns related to the direct activities or the supply chains of the Council. The Council's whistleblowing procedure is designed to make it easy for employees to make disclosures, without fear of retaliation.

Councillors' Code of Conduct

The Council expects all Councillors to demonstrate the highest standards of conduct and behaviour. All Councillors are required to abide by a formal Code of Conduct. Breaches are investigated by the Monitoring Officer.

Councillors' Declarations of Interests

The Council expects all Councillors to record and declare personal and prejudicial interests.

Councillors' Induction and Training

Councillors are expected and encouraged to complete induction training on election, including equality and diversity training and Safeguarding training.

Safeguarding

The Council embraces its responsibility to develop, implement and monitor policies and procedures to safeguard the welfare of children and vulnerable adults and protect them from harm. The Council has a comprehensive policy which all staff and councillors are expected to read and work within. The Council works within multi-agency partnerships to protect and safeguard people. The Council has a dedicated e-mail address for staff to raise issues of modern day slavery.

Training

The Council has a programme of training that all employees should complete, including safeguarding awareness training. Particularly, in adults and children's social care the training enables officers in community-facing roles to identify and know how to report incidents of abuse and neglect, including modern slavery and trafficking.

Contractors and Service Providers

The Council expects its key contractors to have safeguarding policies, procedures and training in place including policies and statements required by the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Partnership Working

The Council works in partnership with a wide range of agencies to prevent neglect and abuse, to detect and report occurrences and to support victims.

High Risk Areas

The Community Safety Partnership has identified modern day slavery and human trafficking as one of its key priorities.

This statement has been approved by the Council's Corporate Leadership Team and the Portfolio Holder for Neighbourhoods and Communities and will be reviewed and updated annually. The statement and any actions included with it, will be reported to the Governance and Business Committee each year for monitoring and assurance purposes.