



Standards Committee

Date: 28 January 2020
Time: 6.15 pm
Committee Room 2
Venue: District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe Bucks

Membership

Chairman: Councillor C Etholen
Vice Chairman: Councillor M Clarke

Councillors: K Ahmed, Miss S Brown, A Green, H McCarthy, G Peart, and J Savage
Parish Cllrs: A Cobden, T Nolan and Mrs H Stearn
Independent: G Houalla and C Morley

Fire Alarm - In the event of the fire alarm sounding, please leave the building quickly and calmly by the nearest exit. Do not stop to collect personal belongings and do not use the lifts. Please congregate at the Assembly Point at the corner of Queen Victoria Road and the River Wye, and do not re-enter the building until told to do so by a member of staff.

Filming/Recording/Photographing at Meetings – please note that this may take place during the public part of the meeting in accordance with Standing Orders. Notices are displayed within meeting rooms.

Agenda

Item		Page
1	APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE To receive any apologies for absence	
2	MINUTES To confirm the minutes of the last meeting held on 19 February 2019	
3	DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST To receive any disclosure of any pecuniary interests by Members relating to items on the agenda. If any Member is uncertain as to whether an interest should be disclosed, he or she is asked if possible, he or she is asked if possible to contact the District	

Item**Page**

Solicitor prior to the meeting.

Members are reminded that if they are declaring an interest, they should state the nature of that interest whether or not they are required to withdraw from the meeting.

4	SECOND ANNUAL REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE	1 - 10
5	REVIEW OF MODERN SLAVERY TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT	11 - 18
6	SUPPLEMENTARY ITEMS (IF ANY)	
7	URGENT ITEMS (IF ANY)	

**For further information, please contact Iram Malik 01494 421204,
committeeservices@wycombe.gov.uk**

AGENDA ITEM 4
Agenda Item 4
SUMMARY



Report For:	Standards Committee
Meeting Date:	29th January 2020
Part:	Part 1 - Open
If Part 2, reason:	N/A

Title of Report:	ANNUAL REPORT OF STANDARDS COMMITTEE
Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Kiran Khanna – Principal Solicitor & Monitoring Officer 01494 421264 kirankhanna@wycombe.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	All
Reason for the Decision:	This is final Annual Report of the current Standards Committee since its inception in 2012, which outlines the Committee’s work over the past year. This would have been the second annual report but due to the meetings having been postponed on two occasions and the timing of the new unitary, this is now the final annual report of the Standards Committee for Wycombe District. The first Annual was noted by full Council on 11 December 2017.

<p>Proposed Decision/Recommendation:</p>	<p>That Standards Committee approves the attached Final Annual report, noting the actions taken and refers to Full Council for noting.</p>
<p>Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications</p>	<p>The proposed decision supports the Council's overall governance arrangements, including the Local Code of Governance and its Progress objective in the Corporate Plan by supporting good governance practices.</p> <p>Risk: No specific issues</p> <p>Equalities: No specific issues</p> <p>Health & Safety: No specific issues</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer:</p> <p>(i)The Localism Act 2011 sets out the current provisions in relation to member standards and ethics, and the Standards Committee and associated processes fulfils this requirement.</p> <p>(ii)The publishing of the Annual Governance Statement (AGS), in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, is the formal reporting of the Council's governance arrangements and approval is undertaken by Audit Committee; this is an opportunity to report on the quality of those arrangements and identify any actions to improve upon them. Regulation 6 imposes a requirement, each financial year, to prepare an Annual Governance Statement and to conduct a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control required by Regulation 3.</p> <p>CIPFA/SOLACE issued guidance for, "Delivering Good Governance in Local Government Framework 2016".</p> <p>The Audit meeting has historically reviewed this and</p>

	<p>recommended some areas for improvement. The recommendation which was specific to Standards Committee was that there should be an annual report from Standards Committee to Full Council setting out the work carried out by Standards Committee in the preceding year, outlining the work programme of the Standards Committee over the past year, including training provided, the number of member conduct complaint referrals and outcomes, and any outside assurance in relation to operational processes. The principle of an annual report has already been endorsed.</p> <p>S.151 Officer:</p>
Consultees:	None required
Options:	There are no options other than to amend the content of the Annual Report and note that is the final report to the Standards Committee before the unitary takes effect in April 2020. The principle of an Annual Report has already been established
Next Steps:	Full Council will note the Annual Report when presented with Standards Committee's minutes on 23 March 2020.
Background Papers:	None.
Abbreviations:	

Appendices to this report are as follows: Appendix 1: The Annual Report of the Standards Committee.

FINAL ANNUAL REPORT OF
WYCOMBE DISTRICT COUNCIL
STANDARDS COMMITTEE
2018-19

Foreword by Councillor Carl Etholen, Chairman of Standards Committee

I am pleased to present this, the final Annual Report of the current Standards Committee since its inception in 2012, which outlines the Committee's work over the past year. This would have been the second annual report but due to the meetings having been postponed on two occasions and the timing of the new unitary, this is now the final annual report of the Standards Committee for Wycombe District Council. From April 2020 the new Buckinghamshire Council will be the substantive Council considering all Standards matters going forward. Wycombe District Council's Standards Committee has continued to play a key part in the Council's support for and promotion of high ethical standards and probity, and has scheduled quarterly meetings to fulfil this role. In this way it provides a vital contribution towards the Council's governance arrangements. As well as 8 WDC elected members, appointed in accordance with political proportionality, the Committee also includes 3 Parish Council co-optees, and its two Independent Persons, in non-voting roles. Since 2017, all of the Parish Council places have been filled. Work has taken place during the past year to recruit to a vacancy for one of the Independent Person roles, and this has been successfully completed, with the appointment, by Full Council on 16 July 2018, of Mr Christopher Morley until 12 May 2023. The term of office of Mr Gilbert Houalla, the existing Independent Person, was also re-confirmed until the same date. The position of Independent Person roles will be reviewed going forward to the new authority in April 2020.

I would like to thank all Members who have served on the Standards Committee during the time of Wycombe District Council and those officers who have supported the work of the Committee in presenting and considering reports.

Standards Committee Membership 2018-19

The Standards Committee consists of 8 WDC elected members, politically balanced according to representation, and appointed by their respective groups; the three co-opted representatives drawn from members of the Parish Councils in the District; and two Independent Persons who have been appointed by the Council. In accordance with the requirements of legislation, the Independent Persons and Co-opted members are non-voting. Nonetheless, they have full speaking rights and the ability to influence the Committee's work.

Parish Councillor Cobden has been in the role since 2015; Parish Councillor Nolan and Parish Councillor Stearn were appointed in 2017.

Under the Localism Act 2011, the Council was required to appoint one or more Independent Persons to assist in the Standards process, and chose to appoint two. The functions of the Independent Persons within the work of Standards Committee include that they must be consulted by the Authority before it makes a finding as to whether a member has failed to comply with the Code of Conduct or decide on action to be taken in respect of that member; they may be consulted in respect of a Standards complaint at any other stage; and they may be consulted by a member or a co-opted member of the Council against whom a complaint has been made.

Mr Gilbert Houalla was originally appointed in May 2013 to fulfil the role of Independent Person. Mr Chris Morley was appointed by Full Council as an Independent Person on 16 July 2018, until 12 May 2023, following recommendation from the Standards Committee; at the same time the tenure of Mr Houalla was also re-confirmed until 12 May 2023.

The Standards Committee is currently made up of the following membership:

- Cllr Carl Etholen (Chairman)
- Cllr Marten Clarke (Vice Chairman)
- Cllr Khalil Ahmed
- Cllr Suzanne Brown
- Cllr Tony Green
- Cllr Hugh McCarthy
- Cllr Graham Peart
- Cllr John Savage
- Cllr Alex Collingwood
- Cllr Richard Newman
- Cllr Richard Scott
- Cllr Rafiq Raja
- Parish Councillor Andy Cobden
- Parish Councillor Tim Nolan
- Parish Councillor Hilda Stearn
- Mr Gilbert Houalla (Independent Person)
- Mr Christopher Morley (Independent Person).

The Council's Monitoring Officer, together with the Deputy Monitoring Officers and other officers from Legal Services and Democratic Services, supports the Standards Committee in its work and Members to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer has a statutory role to ensure that the Council's decisions through its members and officers are lawful and supporting the Standards Committee's work, and handling complaints about alleged Member misconduct, forms a key part of the role.

Standards Committee Terms of Reference

Wycombe District Council's Standards Committee in its present format was first set up in July 2012, following the coming into force of the Localism Act 2011.

Members of the Standards Committee have a common interest in championing high standards of conduct amongst local politicians.

Its Terms of Reference, as set out in the Council's Constitution, are:

- To promote and maintain high standards of conduct by the Members and co-opted Members of Wycombe District Council.
- To assist Members and co-opted Members of the District Council to observe the Council's Code of Conduct.
- To advise the District Council on the adoption or revision of a Code of Conduct.
- To monitor the operation of the District Council's Code of Conduct, having regard to any national or local guidance.
- To consider and grant dispensations in respect of Member interests as provided in the Localism Act 2011.
- To advise, train or arrange the training of Members and Co-opted Members of the District Council on matters relating to the authority's Code of Conduct.
- To consider any matters referred to it by the Monitoring Officer (delegated to ad hoc Hearings Panel).
- To discharge the first four functions above in relation to Parish Councils within the area of the Wycombe District.
- To advise the Council on the adoption or revision of Codes of Conduct.

Standards Committee's work during 2018-2019

The items of business dealt with by the Committee are summarised in Appendix 1.

Some particular areas of importance covered in 2018-19 have been the appointment of a new Independent Person, with a number of update reports being required after the initial advertisement failed to yield any suitable candidates, although a second round was much more successful and resulted in a new appointment being successfully made; comment and update on two key pieces of work being done by the Committee on Standards in Public Life on intimidation of people in public life, and a review of local government ethical standards. Additionally, members have received a detailed update on a key Standards court case which involved a judicial review of the process a council used to attempt to resolve a complaint, and confirmation of training provided to town and parish council members through B&MKALC. Quarterly updates on current complaints have also been provided at each meeting. Whilst not mentioned in any Standards Committee report, additional refresher training for members on the topics of respect, and particularly conduct at meetings, was also provided by Hoey Ainscough, on 14 May 2019.

In 2012, following the implementation of the Localism Act 2011 and associated changes to the Standards regime, the Monitoring Officer was appointed to receive complaints of failure to comply with the Code of Conduct. The Monitoring Officer has delegated power, after consultation with an Independent Person, if appropriate, to determine whether or not a complaint merits formal investigation. Wherever practicable, the Monitoring Officer is able to encourage resolution of complaints without formal investigation.

The Standards Committee receives a regular report at each meeting on the discharge of this function. A list of all matters reported to Standards Committee in 2018-19 is at Appendix 2. The direction for future annual reports will be decided by the new Unitary Authority.

Under the provisions of the Localism Act 2011, the Standards Committee and in some circumstances the Monitoring Officer have power to grant dispensations. The grounds for granting a dispensation are:

- without the dispensation the number of persons prohibited from participating in any particular business would be so great a proportion of the body transacting the business as to impede the transaction of the business;
- without the dispensation the representation of different political groups on the body transacting any particular business would be so upset as to alter the likely outcome of any vote relating to the business;
- granting the dispensation is in the interests of persons living in the authority's area;
- without the dispensation each member of the Council's Cabinet would be prohibited from participating in any particular business to be transacted by the Cabinet;
- It is otherwise appropriate to grant a dispensation.

In 2018-19, no dispensations have been either applied for or granted.

Conclusion

The Standards Committee has continued to promote the principles and values of high standards of conduct and good governance across the Council. As the Shadow Buckinghamshire Council has now commenced its work, and will become the substantive Council which from 1 April 2020 will replace the existing county and district councils in Buckinghamshire, its work will continue until 31 March 2020. The Shadow Authority will consider a report on Standards on 27th February. From 1 April, its role will transfer to the new Buckinghamshire Council which will determine arrangement and processes to support standards in the future.

Appendix 1

Standards Committee agenda items 2018-19

5 June 2018

- Update on Independent Person vacancy/appointment
- Modern Slavery statement – annual review
- Update on role of the MO/Code of Conduct training to B&MKALC
- Quarterly update

9 October 2018

- Committee on Standards in Public Life – Government Consultation on Intimidation in Public Life
- Case law update Harvey v Ledbury Town Council 2018
- Quarterly update

19 February 2019

- Committee on Standards in Public Life – Local Government Ethical Standards Stakeholder Consultation and Report
- Quarterly Update
- July and December 2019 meetings postponed

28 January 2020

- Standards Committee Final Annual Report
- Modern Slavery Statement Annual Review
- Quarterly update

Appendix 2

Standards Complaints						
Complaints submitted under Localism Act procedure						
Ref No	Date Rec'd	Complainant	Against Councillor	Council	Outcome	Date completed
SC45	24/05/18	Mr C Leadbetter	Cllr M Detsiny	Lane End PC	Complaint not referred for investigation. Public benefit not served by further investigation.	13/07/18
SC46	11/12/18	Mr P Crotty	Cllr T Green	Wycombe District Council	Not referred for investigation	01/02/19
SC47	11/12/18	Cllr K Ahmed	Cllr T Green	Wycombe District Council	Not referred for investigation	01/02/19
SC48	11/12/18	Mr J Bajina	Cllr T Green	Wycombe District Council	Not referred for investigation	01/02/19
SC49	12/04/19	Ms T Betteridge	Cllr N Watson Cllr M Chadwick	Stokenchurch	Not Referred for investigation	05/07/19
SC50	31/05/19	Mr A Snowball	Cllr L Clarke	Buckinghamshire County Council	Matter referred to Sarah Ashmead MO at BCC	13/07/19
SC51	31/05/19	Mrs P Baron	Cllr M Marshall	Wooburn Parish Council	Complaint referred to Stage 2, investigated with Independent Person and guidance provided. Public benefit not served by further investigation	29/10/19
SC52	26/07/2019	Mr J Galatin	Cllr Walker	Longwick Parish Council	Complaint referred to Stage 2, investigated with Independent Person and guidance provided. Public benefit not served by further investigation	17/10/19
SC53	22/08/19	Mr J Gould	Cllr G Hall	Princes Risborough Town Council	Not referred for investigation	11/11/19

SC54	17/10/19	Mrs M Harris	Cllr T Nolan	Lane End Parish Council	Not referred for investigation	04/12/19
Ombudsman Complaint	04/03/19	Miss A Yearwood	WDC (Housing)	Wycombe District Council	Final Decision from the Ombudsman Office closing the case and upheld maladministration, no injustice. As recommended by the investigator, within two months of the date of the final decision, the Council agreed to review its procedures to ensure applications are informed of their rights for review of decisions made in relation to housing decisions. This has now been done.	11/09/19

Agenda Item 5

SUMMARY



WYCOMBE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

Report For:	Standards Committee
Meeting Date:	4 June 2019
Part:	Part 1 - Open
If Part 2, reason:	N/A

Title of Report:	Review of Modern Slavery Transparency Statement
Officer Contact: Direct Dial: Email:	Kiran Khanna 01494 421264 kirankhanna@wycombe.gov.uk
Ward(s) affected:	All
Reason for the Decision:	Preparation and publication of a voluntary Statement will continue to evidence that the Council takes seriously its role in preventing modern slavery, and has put in place robust steps to prevent it.

<p>Proposed Decision/Recommendation:</p>	<p>That Standards Committee approves the attached reviewed Statement and recommends to Council that it supports its publication.</p>
<p>Sustainable Community Strategy/Council Priorities - Implications</p>	<p>Risk:</p> <p>Equalities: The Equalities Act 2010 imposes a statutory duty on the Council (the Public Sector Equality Duty) to eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation and other conduct prohibited by the Act, advance equality of opportunity between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not and foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who do not. The Modern Slavery Act 2015 does not place a duty on the Council to publish a Modern Slavery Transparency Statement (though it has chosen to do so in order to show that it takes seriously the prevention of modern slavery). This voluntary publication also helps support its compliance with the PSED.</p> <p>Health & Safety: No specific issues.</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p>Monitoring Officer: Relevant legal issues are included in the report.</p> <p>S.151 Officer:</p>
<p>Consultees:</p>	<p>Officers across the Council in relevant services have been consulted in the review of the Statement.</p>

Options:	The Council may choose to accept the revised Statement, reject it or revise it before approval. However, no changes have been made since its previous revision, and officers across relevant services have not raised any need to make amendments.
Next Steps:	Following full Council's support, the Statement will be finalise and published. Future processes will be for the new Buckinghamshire Council to determine.
Background Papers:	None.
Abbreviations:	PSED – Public Sector Equality Duty.

Appendices to this report are as follows:

Appendix 1 – Modern Slavery Transparency Statement.

Detailed Report

1.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 came into force on 26 March 2015 and is aimed at preventing slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking, and protecting victims. The role of Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner was established. Larger commercial organisations with a turnover in excess of £36 million are under a duty under Section 54 to public a “slavery and human trafficking statement” (the Statement) for each financial year. Such Statements set out the steps the organisation has taken during each financial year to ensure slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains and in any part of its own business; or that it has not taken any such steps.

1.2 Councils are not under a duty to publish such a Statement. However the nature of the Council's business makes it good practice to publish a voluntary Statement so show it is serious about playing an important r4ole in preventing modern slavery in all its guises. Standards Committee approved the Council's first such voluntary statement on 8 February 2017 and its publication was supported by full Council. The Statement was reviewed by Standards Committee on 5 June 2018 and some minor amendments were made. As with the 2017 Statement, officers from the services covered were consulted. The amendments reflected:

- The fact that as well as being an employer, WDC is also the procurer/commissioner of services;
- There is a declaration of interest system in place for employees as well as elected members;

- Whilst Audit Committee as well as Standards Committee was initially anticipated as being involved in the annual review, this had not yet occurred, although other committees can be involved if necessary;
- The Council no longer has a managed service contract in place for agency staff;
- Regarding how complaints officers can help to identify possible issues and handle them appropriately, additional training was to be provided.

1.3 Consultation has again taken place; no issues for amendment have been identified. Standards Committee is therefore invited to approve the Statement with no further changes.

1.4 With regard to the future, the new Buckinghamshire Council will need to determine whether or not to continue to publish a voluntary Statement and this will be factored into preparatory work in due course.

Options

- Do nothing - Councils are not under a duty to publish such a Statement. However the nature of the Council's business makes it good practice to publish a voluntary Statement so show it is serious about playing an important role in preventing modern slavery in all its guises. It is recommended not to exercise this option.
- The Council may choose to accept the revised Statement, reject it or revise it before approval, noting consultation.
- No changes have been made since its previous revision, and officers across relevant services have not raised any need to make amendments. It therefore, recommended that the preferred option is to approve the Statement with no further changes.

Next Steps

Members to agree to approve the Statement and agree to publish a voluntary Statement prior to the publication of new Buckinghamshire Council in April 2020.

Agenda Item 5

Wycombe District Council

Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statement 2018/19

This Statement sets out the actions of Wycombe District Council (“WDC”) to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to its business and the steps it has taken that are aimed at ensuring that there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business or its supply chains. This statement relates to actions and activities during the financial year 1st April 2018 to 31st March 2019.

As part of Local Government, the Council recognises that it has a responsibility to take a robust approach to preventing slavery, exploitation and / or human trafficking in all its forms. Modern slavery in its wider sense is commonly accepted to include forced or bonded labour, human trafficking, child slavery, anything involving offences under the Protection of Children Act 1978 or the Sexual Offences Act 2003 and forced or early marriage. Whilst at the present time the Council is publishing this statement on a voluntary basis rather than under a statutory duty, it does so recognising that this is good practice as a public authority. The Council also recognises its responsibilities as an employer, and acknowledges its duties as a District 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 and to take action and work with other responder agencies under the Civil Contingencies Act 2004.

The Council is absolutely committed to doing all it can to prevent slavery and human trafficking in its corporate activities and to ensuring that its supply chains are free from slavery and/or human trafficking. The statement below sets out practices already in place at the Council in 2017/18 following the introduction of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Organisational Structure

This statement covers the activities of WDC across its Organisational Structure.

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. The Council’s Workforce Strategy, referred to below, explains how it does this.

Workforce Strategy

The Workforce Strategy is reviewed bi-annually (and its action plans annually) so that it stays relevant. The Strategy is supported by other policies, available on the Council’s Intranet, which are also regularly reviewed.

The Workforce Strategy has 5 themes, each with a supporting plan:

- 1) Organisational Development
- 2) Leadership Development
- 3) Skills Development

- 4) Recruitment and Retention
- 5) Pay and Rewards

Policies

The Council has a robust ongoing Policy Review Programme which has input from Employees, Team Leaders, Management Team, HR, Trade Union and Members. The Policy Review Programme is an ongoing key piece of work in the HR work plan 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.

Employee Code of Conduct

The Council's Employee Code of Conduct has been reviewed in 2015/16 and 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.

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 has a managed service contract in place for the provision of temporary agency staff. Where the need arises to source resources from alternative agencies, the Council will verify the practices of any new agency it is using before accepting workers from that agency.

Pay

The Council through its HR policies ensures that all employees are paid fairly and equitably.

Our Due Diligence Processes for Slavery and Human Trafficking: Employees

Recruitment systems are in place to prevent forced labour. Processes are in place for employees to report any concerns on human rights.

In this connection, "forced labour" is defined as all work and service which is extracted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the said person has not offered her / himself voluntarily.

Whistleblowing

The Council publishes its “Whistle Blowing” Confidential Reporting Policy as part of its Constitution. This encourages all its employees, and others the Council deals with who have serious concerns about any aspect of the Council’s work to come forward and voice their concerns, and lays out a process for doing so, which complies with the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998 so that if necessary employees may make disclosures, without fear of reprisal or victimisation.

Corporate Complaints system

The Council operates a complaints procedure to deal with complaints about its services, and this can be used to report community concerns such as overcrowding or issues which might reveal slavery or trafficking and which merit investigation or reporting to a partner agency.

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 Member Code of Conduct. Allegations of breaches are initially handled by the Monitoring Officer. Both the Code and Complaints Process are in the Council’s Constitution.

Councillors Declarations of Interests

The Member Code of Conduct expects all Councillors to record and declare both Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, and Non-Disclosable Pecuniary Interests.

Councillors Induction and Training

Councillors complete induction training on election, including mandatory equality and diversity training. Update training is also provided where appropriate.

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.

Training

The Council has a programme of mandatory training that all relevant employees and members must complete, including Safeguarding Awareness Training. Training enables officers in community-facing and regulatory roles to look out for, identify and report incidents of abuse and neglect, including modern slavery and trafficking to the relevant agencies.

Contractors and Service Providers

Where the Council awards a new contract for goods services or works in which there is a significant risk of modern slavery abuse the Council will seek reassurance that the Contractor has policies, procedures and training in place to detect and deter such abuse. The Council is also adding a whistleblowing clause to its standard terms and conditions in Contracts. Modern slavery does not occur in a vacuum and often it is orchestrated by organised crime groups. The Council therefore reserves the right to include enhanced probity checks / requirements at both the selection and award stages of procurement procedures, to ensure there no possibility of infiltration by these groups. The Council will work with central government and other organisations to keep abreast of and comply with best practice in its procurement arrangements.

Partnership Working

The Council works in partnership with a wide range of agencies with the aim of preventing abuse from taking place and where it is detected, to report via approved channels the instances of neglect and abuse and to support victims.

Emergency Planning

The Council has a duty to be part of the multi-agency response to the investigations into modern slavery and trafficking by providing assistance to victims (including facilitating and staffing the place of safety) when they are taken to such a place during these investigations.

This statement once approved by the Council's Standards Committee and supported by Full Council will be the Council's Modern Slavery Act Transparency Statements.

The Statement and any actions included with it will be reported to the Standards Committee and the Audit Committee each year for monitoring and assurance purposes. Going forward Buckinghamshire will be having its own Statement from April 2020.

Katrina Wood
Leader

John East
Acting Chief Executive
January 2020