

## SUMMARY



**WYCOMBE**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL

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

<b>Title of Report:</b>	Review of Modern Slavery Transparency Statement
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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><b>Proposed Decision/Recommendation:</b></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 &amp; Safety: No specific issues.</p>
<p>Monitoring Officer/ S.151 Officer Comments</p>	<p><b>Monitoring Officer:</b> Relevant legal issues are included in the report.</p> <p><b>S.151 Officer:</b></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:	<b>PSED</b> – 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.