

Cabinet

14 July 2022

Modern Slavery Statement

Recommendations

That Cabinet:

1. Approves the County Council's updated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the financial year 2021/22; and
2. Authorises the Strategic Director for Resources to publish the Council's Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement on the Central Government Registry alongside the estimated income for the Council in the year covered by the statement.

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1 Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires certain organisations to develop a slavery and human trafficking statement each year. The statement must set out what steps the organisation has taken during the previous financial year to ensure that modern slavery is not taking place in any part of its business or supply chain.
- 1.2 The organisations required to develop a statement include commercial organisations which supply goods or services and have a total turnover of not less than £36m. Whilst it is not clear whether this requirement currently applies to local authorities, the legislation defines a commercial organisation as a body corporate which carries on a business, or part of a business in any part of the United Kingdom. Therefore, it is likely that local authorities who provide some services directly and who have a turnover of £36m are required to have a statement. Statutory guidance states that statements should be published within 6 months of the end of the organisation's financial year.
- 1.3 As Warwickshire County Council is a body corporate that supplies services and has an annual turnover of over £36m, it is likely that it is required to produce a statement to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. In any event, it is good practice to do so and following an independent review of the Act in 2019 the Government consulted on measures to strengthen the regime and in September 2020 announced that the reporting requirements would be extended to public bodies which have a budget of more than £36m. These proposed amendments have not yet been made but "Modern Slavery" is listed as a potential subject of legislation in the 2022-23 Session.

- 1.4 Following the review in 2019 it was also announced that a central registry for organisations to publish their statements on would be developed. This service was launched in March 2021 and whilst it is not currently mandatory to publish statements on the registry it is strongly encouraged and Central Government plans to make this a requirement under the legislation for any organisation that is required to produce a statement under section 54 of the Act. The County Council published its statement on the Registry last year.
- 1.5 The Central Government Registry also asks for the turnover or budget of the organisation in the year covered by the statement. The options are:
- 1.5.1 Under £36 million
 - 1.5.2 £36 million to £60 million
 - 1.5.3 £60 million to £100 million
 - 1.5.4 £100 million to £500 million
 - 1.5.5 Over £500 million.

The County Council's estimated turnover for the financial year covered by the statement (2021/22) is over £500 million.

2. Financial Implications

- 2.1 There are no specific financial implications arising from the report. The actions and activity outlined within the Modern Slavery Statement can be delivered from within the County Council's existing resources

3. Environmental Implications

- 3.1 There are no specific environmental implications arising from the report.

4. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 4.1 Once the modern slavery and human trafficking statement is approved it will be published on the County Council's website and on the Central Government Registry within 6 months of the end of the County Council's financial year.

Appendices

Appendix 1 - updated Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for the financial year 2021/22

Background Papers

None

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The report was circulated to the following members prior to publication:

Local Member(s):

Other members: