

Title of meeting:	Cabinet
Date of meeting:	22 nd June 2021
Subject:	Modern Slavery Transparency Statement
Report by:	Corporate Strategy - Lisa Wills
Wards affected:	All
Key decision:	No
Full Council decision:	No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to provide context to the council's Modern Slavery Transparency Statement, progress against the improvement plan and seek approval to publish the statement on the council's website (appendix 1)

2. Recommendations

That Cabinet approves

- i) The Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for publication on the council's website (see appendix 1) and**
- ii) The programme of work set out in item 5 of this report.**
- iii) Full Council is asked to note the recommendations for information only**

3. Background

3.1 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 (MSA 2015) applies to England and Wales and includes the offences of human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. The Act consolidated and simplified existing offences and establishes a legal duty under Section 52 for specified public authorities to notify the Home Office where there is reasonable grounds to believe a person may be a victim of modern slavery.

3.2 Section 54 of the MSA 2015 requires commercial organisations carrying out business in the UK, with a turnover of at least £36 million, to prepare and publish a slavery and human trafficking statement for each and every financial year.

3.3 A review of the legislation published in May 2019 recommended that Government should extend section 54 requirements to the public sector and strengthen its public procurement processes. The council published first statement in advance of this recommendation in March 2019. This is the council's third published statement.

4. City Vision

Launched in April 2021, The City Vision sets out where Portsmouth wants to be by 2040. The Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement underpins two key ambitions - to be a healthy happy city and a city with a thriving economy. The programme of work set out below will help the council move towards these ambitions.

5. Social Value

There are clear links between preventing modern slavery and the Council's emerging Social Value Strategy. The new strategy and policy will help to identify modern slavery in local government supply chains, as well as improving opportunities for small businesses, and improved employment options for ex-offenders and care leavers, value for money, and social enterprise. Plans to pilot the integration of social value in procurement and commissioning processes will include making sure any risks associated with modern slavery are identified and mitigated.

6. Portsmouth International Port (PIP)

The multi-agency Solent Portal Maritime Security Group includes representatives from the Portsmouth International Port, Border Force, MOD, ferry operators, DFT and police. The group meets regularly to discuss security incidents, issues and threat levels, including human trafficking. Modern Slavery is now a standing agenda item.

Whilst Portico will publish a separate formal statement, key staff attend PIP management team meetings, share intelligence and training opportunities.

7. Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership

7.1 Portsmouth is therefore an active member of the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership. Senior managers responsible for adult and children's safeguarding are represented on the core group and other Council staff play an active role in supporting the relevant sub-groups and have been involved in the development of the most recent strategic plan (2020-23) available here:

https://www.modernslaverypartnership.org.uk/files/2115/9169/7447/Hamp_MSP_Strategy.pdf

7.2 Referral Pathway for victims - this has been updated recently (see appendix 2) and appears on both children and adult safeguarding website and as a link on the PCC website in the statement itself. Discussions with the Emergency Planning team have also taken place to update the local response to unplanned incidents. Where police operations are planned the existing protocol is now under review and further meetings are planned to explore options.

7.3 Training - staff from PCC's Learning and Development team have completed an e-learning package on behalf of the Partnership. This has been circulated across the county and will help to raise awareness among staff that do not necessarily work directly with residents and their families. The partnership has also developed a **one minute guide to modern slavery** (appendix 3)

7.4 Data analysis - in contrast to previous years, the national Modern Slavery & Exploitation Helpline has seen a decrease in the number of contacts received between 2019 and 2020. This is assumed to be a direct consequence of the COVID-19 pandemic and regional and national lockdowns. The Helpline experienced a decrease of 14% in calls, 8.6% in web reports and 52% in App submissions. However, referrals have more than doubled since 2017, up from 5,141 to 10,613 in 2020.

7.4.1 The Hampshire and IOW partnership co-ordinator has provided some helpful police data; reports to the national referral mechanism have increased in Hampshire from 49 to 61 (see table below).

	<i>Jan 20-March 20</i>	<i>Jan 21-March 21</i>
Hampshire Constabulary	15	16
Local authorities	12 (5 from PCC)	31 (10 from PCC)
Home Office Agencies	16	5
Third Sector	5	4
National Probation Service	1	Not included
Metropolitan police	Not included	5
Total	49	61

More detailed, and comparative information for Portsmouth has been requested from Police colleagues; this will provide a better understanding of the issues locally and enable more targeted action.

8. Programme of continuous improvement

8.1 A local Modern Slavery Steering group chaired by the Director of Corporate Services will take forward the improvement programme set out in the statement at item 10. This will be reviewed annually alongside the statement itself ensuring appropriate levels of awareness, response and enforcement across the relevant council directorates.

The programme of work, under the following headings will be implemented during 2022:

- i. **Strategic Leadership** - finalising corporate performance indicators including numbers of staff and councillors completing training, % of council contracts audited for compliance, number of referrals from Portsmouth to National Referral Mechanism, as part of a new corporate health monitoring process. Executive level 'champion' identified to drive continuous improvement and link to Social Value Strategy and City Vision.
- ii. **Working with partners** - continue to work in active partnership with the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership to support a consistent approach across the county. Support work to improve local data analysis and emergency planning procedures.
- iii. **Raising awareness** - continue to raise awareness of modern slavery by developing local communications campaign to compliment national Anti-Slavery Activity in October 2020.

- iv. **Develop and expand training** - commission universal awareness raising e-learning explaining the signs and impact of early childhood trauma, and exploitation on homeless people and vulnerable adults. Ensure increases in the number of non-social care staff accessing e-learning and/or face to face training on modern slavery.
- v. **Procurement and supply chains** - undertake a minimum of two supply chain audits and develop a longer term audit framework for high risk contracts. Develop a procurement strategy linked with longer term work on social value.
- vi. **Policies and processes** - review whistle blowing and recruitment policies in relation to modern slavery and trafficking.
- vii. **Enforcement and disruption** - continue to deliver community safety responses and disruption activities, improve local data gathering, working alongside partner agencies such as the police, fire and health services to understand how and where to target resources.

9. Reasons for recommendations

9.1 This *Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement* sets out the Council's current position and future plans to understand all potential modern slavery risks related to its business and to put in place steps to ensure there is no slavery or human trafficking in its own business and/or in its supply chains, and to protect and support victims.

9.2 It is important to make and sustain collaborative links with delivering the City Vision and the Social Value Strategy.

9.3 PCC Directors reviewed and approved the statement and programme of work on 27th April 2021. The Director of Corporate Services is the executive lead for the city.

9.4 The statement relates to activities during the financial year April 2020 to March 2021 and sets out a programme of work to be completed by the end of March 2022. For the avoidance of doubt, the statement also applies to Portsmouth International Port. Portico (previously known as MMD) will prepare a separate statement.

10. Integrated impact assessment (IIA) (to be updated)

An IIA has been completed and is attached.

11. Legal implications

The report sets out the basis upon which an public sector organisation is required to prepare and publish an annual statement relevant to the statutory requirements of the Modern Slavery Act 2014.

11.1 In March 2021 the Home Office issued a press release signalling a review of the national Modern Slavery Strategy in the light of ... *'an alarming rise in people abusing our modern slavery system by posing as victims in order to prevent their removal and enable*

*them stay in the country*¹. There is no indication at the moment that this review is likely to result in legislative change.

12. Director of Finance's comments

There are no financial implications arising from the recommendations and many helpful synergies. If there are actions arising from the programme of work that require additional resource, a further report will be brought to members.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix 1 Portsmouth City Council Draft Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2021/22

Appendix 2 Adult victim referral pathway - November 2020

Appendix 3 Data Infographic - Modern Slavery and Exploitation Helpline 2017-19

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location
Local Government Association - Tackling Modern Slavery - A council guide	LGA website https://www.local.gov.uk/modern-slavery-council-guide
Councillor Guide to Tackling Modern Slavery	LGA website https://www.local.gov.uk/councillor-guide-tackling-modern-slavery
The Local Government Association guidance re preparing transparency statements.	https://www.local.gov.uk/topics/community-safety/modern-slavery/transparency-statements.

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by:

¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/alarming-rise-of-abuse-within-modern-slavery-system>