



THE ROYAL BOROUGH OF  
KENSINGTON  
AND CHELSEA

## Transparency in Supply Chains: Modern Slavery Statement

*(To publish December 2021 for the period April 2020 – March 2021)*

### 1. Introduction

1.1 Modern slavery is a violation of human rights and is defined within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Act categorises offences of Slavery, Servitude and Forced or Compulsory Labour and Human Trafficking and includes:

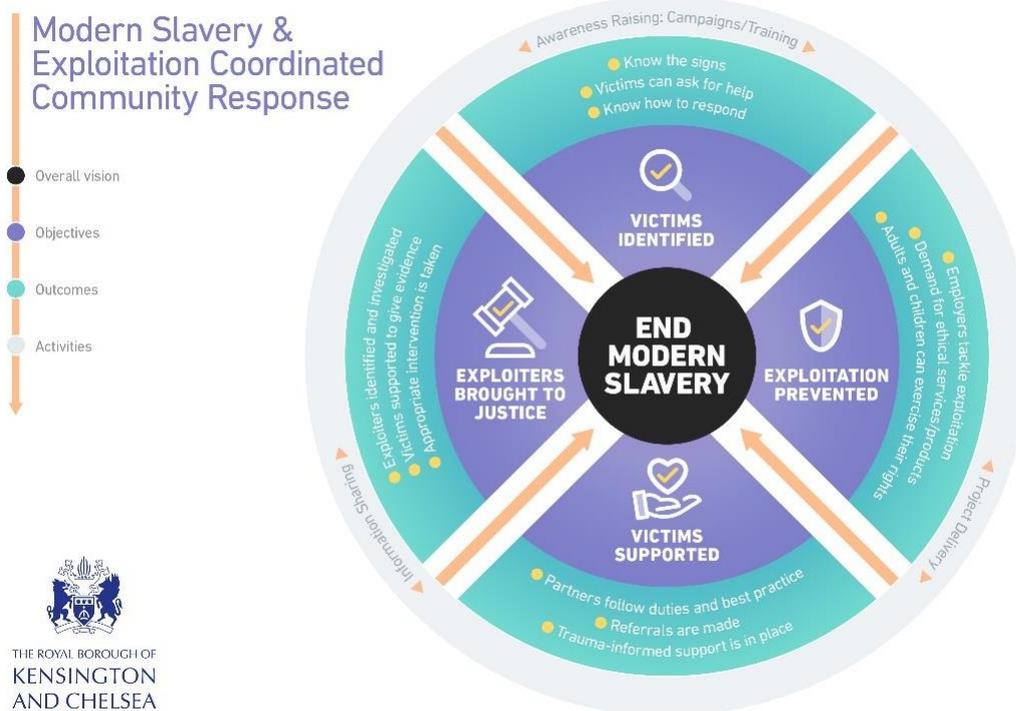
- **Forced labour** – Coerced, deceived or forced into working for little or no pay
- **Sexual exploitation** – Coerced, deceived or forced into providing sexual services
- **Domestic servitude** – Coerced, deceived or forced into working within a home environment for little or no pay
- **Criminal exploitation** – Coerced, deceived or forced into criminal activities (including begging, stealing and growing or selling drugs)
- **Forced or sham marriage** – Coerced, deceived or forced into marriage
- **Organ harvesting** – Coerced, deceived or forced into removing internal organs for another person's gain

1.2 Modern slavery is often hidden in plain sight, making it hard to identify victims/survivors. Victims/survivors may be of any age, gender or ethnicity. Exploiters often target the most vulnerable in society, such as people who are homeless or escaping conflict, poverty or abuse. Exploiters may be organised criminal gangs or individuals who spot an opportunity to take advantage of a person's vulnerability. Victims/survivors may be unable to escape because of fear for their own lives or the lives of their family. They may also be unable to escape because the exploiter has trapped them in debt, or they don't know who to turn to or trust. Modern slavery can have severe consequences on victims/survivors mental and physical health and wellbeing, with potential lifelong implications. Victims/survivors will often require specialist support over extended periods of time to recover from their experiences of exploitation.

1.3 Modern slavery is a global human rights issue, and exploitation in supply chains can occur in the UK or internationally. Estimations of the scale of modern slavery suggest there are 100,000 victims in the UK<sup>1</sup>. The National Referral Mechanism (NRM) is the UK Government's system used both to record and support victims of modern slavery, and in 2020 10,613 referrals were made. Nearly half of UK referrals to the NRM in 2020 were for children, who by virtue of age are more vulnerable to exploitation. Data from the local multi-agency partnership Modern Slavery & Exploitation (MSE) Operational Group, suggests there were at least 56 victims of modern slavery identified as being recruited or exploited in the Royal Borough of Kensington and

Chelsea in 2020. These cases include child criminal exploitation through drug trafficking known as 'county lines', domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and forced labour. Due to modern slavery being a 'hidden' crime, the barriers for victims/survivors seeking support and the systems used to record cases at a local and national level, it is difficult to provide exact data on the number of cases.

- 1.4 The Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires commercial organisations with an annual turnover of more than £36 million to report on the steps they have taken to ensure that modern slavery is not taking place in the business or its supply chains. Although as a local authority, the Council is exempt from this requirement, the Council has chosen to publish an annual statement to provide transparency and demonstrate commitment to tackling modern slavery.
- 1.5 This statement is one area of work within the Council's wider strategic approach. The Council has been proactively responding to modern slavery since it launched the EU funded European Communities Against Trafficking project in 2013. The Council has adopted a coordinated community response to modern slavery, acknowledging that it is everyone's responsibility to tackle the crime and work together to prevent it from happening. The Council has an established multi-agency partnership, proactive campaigns, referral pathways, regular training and a dedicated member of staff coordinating the work related to modern slavery and exploitation. Modern slavery is embedded within the Violence Against Women and Girls strategy and response, whilst acknowledging it affects people of all genders.
- 1.6 All staff within the Council have a responsibility to tackle modern slavery. Some departments are more likely to come across cases due to their line of work and as such, different teams have specific functions and responses. A Modern Slavery Adult Referral Pathway sets out the clear steps that professionals should follow if they come across a case of modern slavery. Under section 52 of the Modern Slavery Act, as a local authority, the Council has a duty to notify the Secretary of State about suspected victims of slavery. For adults, Adult Social Care and the Housing department are 'First Responders' for the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and are trained on how to make NRM referrals. Children who are potential victims of modern slavery are safeguarded by Family Services. Modern slavery is a priority for the Community Safety Team which develop and maintain the multi-agency partnership and who have worked with the Procurement team, and were supported by Human Resources, to develop this statement.
- 1.7 This year, and in partnership with Westminster City Council, the Council has published its modern slavery strategy: [Ending Modern Slavery: Our Strategic Coordinated Community Response 2021-2026](#). The strategy was co-produced by partners, including survivors and residents. It sets out the vision of the Council and its partners for ending modern slavery and details how we can all work together to achieve this.
- 1.8 The Modern Slavery Strategy is structured across four key objectives: Victims Identified, Victims Supported, Exploiters Brought to Justice and Exploitation Prevented.



1.9 The Modern Slavery Statement sits within the Exploitation Prevented objective and describes the actions that are being undertaken to understand the risk of modern slavery across the Council. Mechanisms are in place which mitigate the risk of modern slavery in the Council's supply chains. Any cases identified within business or supply chains will be responded to via provisions in place under the Victims Supported and Exploiters Brought to Justice objectives of the Modern Slavery Strategy.

## 2. Preventing modern slavery within the Council

2.1 The outcome Exploitation Prevented theme of the Strategy includes ensuring that employers tackle exploitation. As an employer, the Council is not exempt from this requirement and has put in place the following measures:

- Providing a code of conduct for employees which sets out both the expectations of staff and the organisation.
- Being an accredited Living Wage Provider, ensuring all its employees, directly and indirectly, are paid in line with the London Living Wage. Suppliers of services to the Council and its residents are required to verify that they pay the London Living Wage and that they have processes in place to ensure this requirement is reflected throughout their supply chains.
- Working with a managed service provider to monitor employment through regular audits. The provider is verified and monitored by Human Resources to ensure they comply with equality law and measures are in place to provide equal opportunities and prevent bullying, harassment and discrimination regarding all protected characteristics in line with the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED). The provider publishes their own annual Modern Slavery Statement, which includes ensuring new staff are trained on modern slavery and performing random checks to identify where

agency workers may be sharing bank accounts. In 2020 they reported no breaches of the Modern Slavery Act.

- Providing a whistleblowing process with a confidential channel for reporting concerns and investigating any breaches of policies and procedures. Reporting channels include an external confidential reporting line for staff and contractors to raise concerns about wrongdoing, fraud and corruption. Whistleblowing referrals are overseen by the Corporate Anti-Fraud and Human Resources teams. The outcome of investigations raised through whistleblowing are reported to the Audit and Transparency Committee. The Council's whistleblowing policy is reviewed annually in November by the Audit and Transparency Committee. There have been no whistleblowing concerns or referrals raised in 2020 in relation to modern slavery.

### **3. Preventing modern slavery within the Council's supply chains**

- 3.1 The Council acknowledges the influence it has through its buying power and the need to ensure that buying decisions and purchasing practices consider ethical and environmental elements when determining best value. Part of this responsibility is ensuring suppliers understand and act in accordance with Council values, outlined in [the Council Plan](#), and take modern slavery and exploitation seriously. This will be achieved against two of the Council's main priorities – to support and safeguard vulnerable residents, and to make Kensington and Chelsea a safer borough.
- 3.2 The Council is currently updating its approach to commissioning and procurement to embed responsible procurement throughout its processes, with the aim of ensuring that suppliers adhere to the Council's values. Contract and commissioning terms and conditions have been reviewed, and a supplier code of conduct developed to embed values in service and project delivery to ensure modern slavery and exploitation are addressed throughout the procurement process. The code and other resources will be published on the Council's forthcoming internal intranet pages.
- 3.3 The Council's supply chains include areas which are at a higher risk to modern slavery and exploitation, such as but not limited to cleaning and construction. The council has a responsibility to be an ethical employer and procurer and encourage suppliers to investigate their own practices and supply chains to ensure they mitigate the risks of modern slavery.
- 3.4 Contract management is devolved across the Council. A practical, risk-based approach to managing supply chains will be achieved by identifying key high-risk areas and working with suppliers to monitor and mitigate these risks where practical. As a Contracting Authority, the Council undertakes procurement in compliance with the UK Public Contract Regulations 2015. The Standard Selection Questionnaire asked in all competitive tenders includes a requirement to declare and evidence (where applicable) compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Council's due diligence and reviews include:
  - Requiring suppliers covered by the Act to self-certify that they comply with the Modern Slavery Act, as part of the tender process.
  - Including provisions in all new contracts requiring compliance with the Modern Slavery Act and enable contract suspension/termination in the event of a breach where deemed necessary.

- Introducing action plans/sanctions where areas of poor compliance and/or performance are identified.

3.5 The Council will review and map its supply chains and conduct a phased risk assessment of primary and secondary suppliers and contractors in high-risk areas. The Council is committed to ongoing due diligence and will work with suppliers to put in place measures to try to reduce and mitigate the risk of modern slavery and exploitation. As part of this commitment to transparency within the supply chains the Council will put requirements in place for lead contractors to demonstrate compliance at the pre-qualification stage, within their organisations and their supply chains in high-risk areas. An effective monitoring and declaration process will be established with the Council's suppliers so that learning is sustained and shared.

#### **4. Responding to modern slavery & exploitation within the Council and its supply chains**

4.1 Whilst the Council hope not to encounter modern slavery or exploitation within the organisation or supply chains, the Council see fit to set out the response in case this were to occur. The Council takes a coordinated community response to tackling modern slavery and the objectives of Victims Supported and Exploiters Brought to Justice would be applicable if modern slavery were to be identified.

4.4 The Council's Procurement and Community Safety Teams work together with relevant partners such as; Adult Social Care and Family Services, specialist Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), Metropolitan Police; National Crime Agency, Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority, the Internal Fraud department, Trading Standards, Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenues and Customs to ensure victims access support, crimes are investigated and exploiters are brought to justice.

4.5 The Council will terminate a contract with any organisation which knowingly exploits its workforce and refer them to relevant law enforcement agencies. If the Council identifies suppliers that unwittingly exploit their workforce, or have an increased risk of exploitation, the Council is committed to working with these organisations to help improve their practices and ensure employees are protected.

4.6 As part of the Council's ongoing commitment, a toolkit of due diligence assessment documents and training will be developed, which will relate to work on tiering and risk assessing of services. Two resources identified include the [Modern Slavery Assessment Tool](#) and resources from the [Government Commercial College](#).

#### **5. Training**

5.1 A total of 283 professionals were trained by the Council from April 2020 – March 2021. The number of professionals trained is lower than the previous year due to the Covid-19 pandemic and personnel changes. Training across the borough will continue in the year 2021- 2022, with an offer of regular sessions available.

5.2 Training is provided through live sessions by the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Coordinator. The training is available to a range of professionals who work in public facing rolls across the borough, including council employees, statutory and non-statutory partners. The training provides knowledge of the following:

- Definitions of modern slavery
- Types of exploitation
- Indicators of modern slavery
- Barriers to disclosure victims/survivors face
- Referral pathways and legal duties

5.3 Child exploitation training is delivered by the Modern Slavery and Exploitation Coordinator through the Local Safeguarding Children Partnership, providing professionals with knowledge of how to safeguard children and young people affected by modern slavery and exploitation.

5.4 Specialist training on responsible procurement and modern slavery within supply chains is a priority action for the Council in 2021- 2022. Additionally, the Council will seek training accredited through Government Commercial College training programme(s) for Contract Management and modern slavery which will complement monitoring processes.

## 6. Action Plan

Completed Actions 2020 – 2021		Lead	Due Date
1	Publish the 2019 - 2020 statement on the Council's website and communicate the statement widely across the Council's supply chains and businesses in the borough, encouraging other businesses to also mitigate the risk of modern slavery in their business and supply chains.	Communications, Procurement and Community Safety Teams	Completed December 2020
2	Managers are using the approved managed service provider for recruitment. Any other agencies are set up within the compliant framework.	Human Resources and Procurement	Completed March 2021
3	A supplier code of conduct is developed for suppliers with guidance to operate ethically, embed values in service and project delivery, and ensure modern slavery and exploitation are addressed throughout the procurement process.	Procurement	Completed September 2021
4	Requirements are put in place for lead contractors with the aim of mitigating the risk of exploitation in the Council's supply chains. Contract and commissioning terms and conditions are reviewed to ensure they reflect the Council's values and response to modern slavery.	Procurement and Legal Teams	Completed August 2021

<b>Actions for 2021 – 2022</b>		<b>Lead</b>	<b>Due Date</b>
1	Publish the 2020 - 2021 statement on the Council's website and communicate the statement widely across the Council's supply chains and businesses in the borough, encouraging other businesses to also mitigate the risk of modern slavery in their business and supply chains.	Communications, Procurement and Community Safety Teams	December 2021
2	Review and map the Council's supply chains and conduct a thorough risk assessment of primary and secondary high-risk contractors.	Procurement and Community Safety	January 2022
3	Develop a training programme for commissioning and contract managers to train staff on modern slavery and ethical procurement.	Procurement and Community Safety	March 2022
4	Provide market engagement, supplier development and supply chain management incorporating best practice, ensuring the Council's suppliers put measures in place to mitigate the risk of modern slavery and exploitation.  Supplier development sessions are delivered for suppliers to develop their ability to report and escalate concerns, and for the Council to disseminate information and share best practice.	Procurement, Human Resources and Economic Development	March 2022 and on-going
5	High-risk supply chains used by the Council are supported to use the Modern Slavery Assessment Tool (MSAT) or complete a modern slavery questionnaire to assess compliance.	Procurement	2021 - 2022
6	Deliver a strategic review of modern slavery in policies and procedures in line with the Council's responsible procurement policy.	Procurement and Leader's Office	2022 - 2023
7	Following the risk mapping exercise, conduct a deep dive into a high-risk sector.	Procurement and Scrutiny	2022 - 2023
8	Commit to only commission organisations with a Modern Slavery Statement or businesses that complete a self-assessment outlining their ethical practices.	Procurement and Leaders Office	2022 - 2023

### **Advice and Support**

In an emergency, call 999.

If you have concerns about modern slavery, you can contact the Modern Slavery Helpline 24/7 for help and advice: 08000 121 700.

The Council's internal Modern Slavery Adult Referral Pathway can be found on KCnet.

A local directory of survivor support services can be found at: [www.angelou.org/human-trafficking](http://www.angelou.org/human-trafficking)

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<sup>i</sup> Justice & Care and The Centre for Social Justice, (2020) *It Still Happens Here*