

## ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

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| <b>COMMITTEE</b>          | Communities, Housing and Public Protection |
| <b>DATE</b>               | 30 <sup>th</sup> May 2024                  |
| <b>EXEMPT</b>             | No   |
| <b>CONFIDENTIAL</b>       | No   |
| <b>REPORT TITLE</b>       | Anti-Modern Slavery Statement              |
| <b>REPORT NUMBER</b>      | CORP/24/147                                |
| <b>DIRECTOR</b>           | Andy MacDonald                             |
| <b>CHIEF OFFICER</b>      | Lindsay MacInnes (Interim)                 |
| <b>REPORT AUTHOR</b>      | Sandie Scott                               |
| <b>TERMS OF REFERENCE</b> | 8.1 (General Delegation)                   |

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### 1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 To provide an update on the development of an Anti-Modern Slavery statement for Aberdeen City Council.

### 2. RECOMMENDATION(S)

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Approve the Anti-Modern Slavery statement as contained in Appendix 1.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 Following a Notice of Motion submitted by Councillor Ali to the Council meeting of 26 April 2023, the Council noted that modern slavery affects millions of people globally. The Council also noted that, whilst only specific parts of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 apply to Scotland, as a public body, it should uphold the highest possible ethical standards, and contribute to the elimination of this scourge on our society.
- 3.2 The Council instructed the Chief Executive to report to the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee on the current status of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 including any proposed legislative changes and a review of what other local authorities, across the UK, and other major public institutions (e.g. universities, charities, devolved/national governments etc.) have in place and the impact thereof.
- 3.3 The Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee reviewed a report on the current status of Modern Slavery Act 2015 on 6 July 2023 and instructed

- (i) the Chief Executive to develop an Anti-Modern Slavery statement that would be included as part of the normal policy review cycle, in areas such as:
  - a. Human Resources including:
    - i. Recruitment
    - ii. Use of temporary / casual / fixed-term staff
  - b. Partner organisations
  - c. Supply chain / Procurement, including:
    - i. IT procurement
    - ii. Use of consultants, contractors, suppliers, vendors
  - d. Capital Projects
    - i. Use of consultants, contractors, suppliers, vendors
    - ii. Materials
  - e. Whistleblowing
  - f. Training and development
  - g. Monitoring and enforcement; and
- (ii) report the statement back to Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee at the next appropriate time.

3.4 A draft Anti-Modern Slavery Statement is included in **Appendix 1** based on a review of statements published by other organisations.

#### 4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Whilst supply chain management is a key element in reducing global instances of modern slavery, there are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### 5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 Whilst the Council's wider statutory powers and duties may contribute to reducing modern slavery, there are no direct legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### 6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

#### 7. RISK

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is considered to be consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement.

| Category | Risks | Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level | *Target Risk Level (L, M or H)<br><br>*taking into account | *Does Target Risk Level Match |
|----------|-------|---|--|-------------------------------|
|----------|-------|---|--|-------------------------------|

|                              |                                 |     | controls/control actions | Appetite Set? |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|-----|--------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Strategic Risk</b>        | No significant risks identified | N/A | N/A                      | Yes           |
| <b>Compliance</b>            | As above                        | N/A | N/A                      | Yes           |
| <b>Operational</b>           | As above                        | N/A | N/A                      | Yes           |
| <b>Financial</b>             | As above                        | N/A | N/A                      | Yes           |
| <b>Reputational</b>          | As above                        | N/A | N/A                      | Yes           |
| <b>Environment / Climate</b> | As above                        | N/A | N/A                      | Yes           |

## 8. OUTCOMES

The proposals in this report have no impact on the Council Delivery Plan.

## 9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

| Assessment                               | Outcome                                   |
|--|---|
| <b>Integrated Impact Assessment</b>      | New impact assessment has been completed. |
| <b>Data Protection Impact Assessment</b> | Not required                              |
| <b>Other</b>                             | Not applicable                            |

## 10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 Public Protection Committee 9 May 2018: Thematic Report: Human Trafficking [Thematic Report - Human Trafficking Aberdeen City 2.pdf](#)
- 10.2 [Modern slavery - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](#)
- 10.3 [Tackling Human Trafficking in Scotland | Migration Scotland](#)
- 10.4 Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee 6 July 2023: [COM/23/211 Modern Slavery](#)

## 11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Draft Anti-Modern Slavery Statement

## 12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

|                      |                             |
|----------------------|-----------------------------|
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## APPENDIX 1

### Aberdeen City Council

#### Anti-Modern Slavery Statement

**Aberdeen City Council (“the Council”) commits to work with fairness and integrity in all aspects of its activity and as such has a zero-tolerance approach to slavery and human trafficking. Our Modern Slavery Commitments (“the Commitments”) set out what the Council commits to do to combat modern slavery in the Council’s activities.**

Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Human trafficking consists of three basic components: action, means and purpose of exploitation. All three components must be present in an adult trafficking case; for child trafficking the ‘means’ component is not required. In human trafficking cases, exploitation can take many forms, including sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and removal of organs. Some people may not be victims of human trafficking but still victims of modern slavery if they have been subject to slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour.

The objective of the Commitments is to confirm the effective steps the Council is taking to tackle modern slavery in its activities.

#### Commitment 1: Human Resources

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*The Council is committed to providing the highest standards of pay and conditions for our workforce with due respect to fairer work practices, including payment of the real living wage, fostering an environment where workers' views are actively sought, listened to and can make a difference, including a strong role for Trade unions, no inappropriate use of zero hours contracts; giving opportunities for all to learn, develop and progress and creating a healthy and safe environment where individuals wellbeing is actively supported.*

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The Council also has a delivery plan for several initiatives to promote and create a more diverse and inclusive workplace.

## Commitment 1a: Recruitment

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*The Council is committed to providing equality of opportunity for everyone in our recruitment and selection practices, by providing a positive and accessible environment, free from prejudice and unlawful discrimination while valuing the needs and rights of all individuals.*

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It is acknowledged that some candidates may face additional barriers to recruitment, and it is important therefore, that those involved in recruitment and selection comply with equalities legislation and the Council's Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy.

The Council is a Living Wage accredited employer and all Council roles, with the exception of those under SNCT terms and conditions and the Craftworker Agreement which have their own sizing schemes, are graded using the agreed Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees job evaluation scheme to ensure fairness and consistency, and satisfy the principle of equal pay for work of equal value.

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## Commitment 1b: Use of Casual / Relief Workers

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*The Council does not make use of zero hour contracts, and uses Relief/ Casual Workers as a mechanism to support our core workforce.*

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Relief / Casual Workers are all aligned to established roles, the salary grades having been graded using the agreed Scottish Joint Council for Local Government Employees evaluation scheme or in accordance with SNCT terms and conditions or Craftworker Agreement. The Council is a Living Wage accredited employer, and this includes our Relief Workers.

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## Commitment 2: Partner organisations

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*The Council is committed to engaging with its partners to promote and support their compliance with the Council's modern slavery statement, and to encourage them to adopt statements within their own organizations and supply chains.*

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The Aberdeen City Community Planning Partnership provides a forum for partner organisations to consider data across a range of outcomes and identify emerging issues. The Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan is a shared strategy for meeting population need and tackling shared priorities together. The plan sets out a programme of improvement activity, often targeted at the City's most vulnerable people and communities to ensure they receive the support they need to

reduce inequality in positive outcomes for people across the City. For example, people with protected characteristics, people that have had adverse childhood experiences and people that are vulnerable due to poverty, mental health, long term conditions and other circumstances.

Partners will benefit from being briefed on Modern Slavery as a specific topic going forward and this will be explored by Community Planning Aberdeen, including the availability of local data on this topic.

In relation to Tier 1 ALEOs, this will be reviewed through the ALEO assurance hub which seeks assurance on employment policies and practices.

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## Commitment 3: Supply chain and Procurement

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*The Council is committed to conducting all and any procurement activities in a fair and transparent manner, to avoid buying into supply chains that are susceptible to human trafficking and/or exploitation.*

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The Council's [Joint Procurement Strategy 2023-2026](#) and the [Sustainable Procurement and Community Benefits Policy](#) outlines the commitment to securing positive environmental, social and economic outcomes in all procurement activity where possible to do so (including below threshold procurements, all regulated procurements and frame work call offs), policy states at least 10% of award criteria should be allocated to Sustainable Procurement including Community Benefits and Fair Work Practices.

The Council consider that a bidder's employment practices and its approach to its workforce can have a direct impact on the quality of service it delivers and, sometimes, of the goods it supplies and works performed. Fair pay, including payment of the Living Wage, is one of the ways a bidder can demonstrate that it takes a positive approach to its workforce. Wherever it can be deemed relevant to quality of service or goods or delivery/performance of the contract, a bidder's employment practices and approach to the workforce it will engage to perform the contract is evaluated as part of the procurement exercise. A Method Statement has been developed reflecting the full range of protected characteristics under the Public Sector Equality Duty.

In addition, there are a number of mandatory and discretionary exclusions which are assessed using the Single Procurement document (SPD) which is applicable to all regulated procurement activity. The mandatory exclusions within the Single Procurement document (SPD) include criminal convictions relating to human trafficking and breaches of environmental, social and labour laws which ensures due regard is given to these areas in procurement activity.

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## Commitment 4: Capital Projects

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*The Council is committed to conducting all capital projects in line with the procurement processes, set out above.*

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The Council recognises the importance of awareness-raising for its contractors and suppliers to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in its operations and supply chains.

All Capital Projects follow the same procurement processes (3) and HR standards cited above (1).

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## Commitment 5: Whistleblowing

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*The Council is committed to investigating any allegations of modern slavery that are disclosed to the Council through its Whistleblowing Policy*

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The Council has a Whistleblowing Policy which provides workers who have serious concerns about malpractice or wrongdoing in the Council with a route to raising such issues within the organisation at an early stage and in an appropriate way.

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## Commitment 6: Training and Communications

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*The Council is committed to providing training and undertaking awareness raising campaigns for relevant employees to ensure that they understand modern slavery, are vigilant for signs of modern slavery practices and are aware of the issues, risks and appropriate action.*

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The Council recognises its duty to train relevant staff and raise awareness of modern slavery and acknowledge that staff understanding of the issues is key to the successful implementation of the commitments. The Council therefore commits to provide training and producing awareness campaigns on modern slavery for the following groups of employees that covers the definition, causes, indicators and impacts of modern slavery, as well as the council's policies and procedures for reporting and responding to any concerns or incidents.

- Frontline Customer Services
- Social & Community Services

The Council commits to providing tailored online training for employees who have direct responsibility or involvement in procurement, contract management, social care, housing, community safety, licensing and enforcement, which covers the risks and responsibilities related to modern slavery in their specific areas of work, as well as good practices and tools for due diligence, risk assessment and mitigation, and remediation.

The Council commits to providing training on modern slavery awareness and prevention into the induction and ongoing training of elected members and senior managers to ensure that they are fully informed and committed to the council's stance and actions against modern slavery.

The Council commits to participation in local, regional and national networks, campaigns and events on modern slavery, to share learning and good practice, and to collaborate with other stakeholders in tackling this global problem.

## Commitment 7: Monitoring and Enforcement

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*The Council is committed to monitoring compliance of these commitment statements through existing processes and Committees and may refer instances of modern slavery to the Police.*

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The Council has a number of existing processes which monitor compliance including the Risk Board, Audit, Risk and Scrutiny Committee, Community Housing and Public Protection Committee and Licensing Committee. If modern slavery is identified through any of the existing processes a report will be made to the appropriate Board and/or Committee. While there are contractual remedies if instances of modern slavery are identified as part of the procurement process, there may be instances when the matter needs to be referred to the Police.

The Council also has powers to license and regulate services include, but are not limited to, taxi operators and drivers, public entertainment, street traders, sex shops and sexual entertainment venues. The Council has the authority to deny a license where there is suspicion that the proprietor is complicit in criminal activity. Further provisions give local authority officers the right of entry and inspection; and license holders who are found to be conducting criminal activities are liable to conviction.

The Council also has duties to support vulnerable groups, which can mitigate against conditions that make people vulnerable to exploitation.