

## **MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT 2021/22**

### **REPORT OF THE CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**



**For Approval**

#### **1. PURPOSE OF REPORT**

- 1.1 To seek Members' approval of the Authority's Modern Slavery Statement attached as Appendix 1.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 To approve the Authority's Modern Slavery Statement attached as Appendix 1 for publication.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 According to the Modern Slavery Act 2015, modern slavery can include:
- debt bondage
  - human trafficking
  - forced labour (through threats carried out physically or mentally)
  - employers controlling or 'owning' employees with actual or threatened abuse (mental and physical)
  - being traded as a property or commodity
  - having constraints placed on movement or being physically constrained.
- 3.2 A modern slavery statement sets out the steps organisations are taking to prevent modern slavery in both their businesses and supply chains. It is required by certain commercial organisations under The Modern Slavery Act 2015.
- 3.3 The requirements for organisations to publish a statement is based on the following criteria:
- it is a 'body corporate' or partnership, wherever incorporated or formed
  - it carries on a business, or part of a business, in the UK
  - it supplies goods or service
  - it has an annual turnover of £36 million or more

- 3.4 The Home Office have produced some 'statutory guidance' under the Act, which states at paragraph 3.14 *"Even if the legislation does not apply we would encourage all businesses to be open and transparent about their recruitment practice, policies and procedures in relation to modern slavery and to take steps that are consistent and proportionate with their sector, size and operational reach."*
- 3.5 The Government consultation 'Transparency in Supply Chains' has recommended that reporting requirements should apply to public bodies but this requires an amendment to Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Government are looking towards mandating organisations to file their statements with a central registry; this is voluntary at the present time.
- 3.6 The concern is that the volume of public procurement and supply chains in general, disguise practices that hide modern slavery and that is the reason why there was a positive response to the consultation by public bodies to be included in the reporting requirements. There is a Private Members Bill before the House of Lords (by Lord Alton of Liverpool) which does seek to raise the profile of this issue by seeking amendments to the Act. However, it is more likely that the Government will introduce legislation to include the public sector given previous ministerial announcements. It is more a question of when rather than if.
- 3.7 Cleveland Fire Authority has well embedded and wide ranging safeguarding arrangements across its service delivery, recruitment and selection and procurement activities and has previously made voluntary statements relating to its stance on Modern Slavery.

#### **4. CLEVELAND FIRE AUTHORITY'S MODERN SLAVERY STATEMENT**

- 4.1 In line with its safeguarding arrangements Cleveland Fire Authority has prepared its Modern Slavery Statement 2021/22 attached at Appendix 1. It covers the six reporting areas recommended by the Home Office, these being
- organisation structure and supply chains
  - policies held in relation to slavery and human trafficking
  - Due diligence processes
  - Risk assessment and management
  - Key performance indicators to measure effectiveness of steps being taken
  - Training on modern slavery and trafficking

- 4.2 Over the next year we will be developing our key performance indicators to give us a clearer picture of the impact of our arrangements.

**IAN HAYTON**  
**CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**

**KAREN WINTER**  
**ASSISTANT CHIEF FIRE OFFICER**  
**STRATEGIC PLANNING AND RESOURCES**