

Report to: Finance, Resources and Corporate Committee

Date: 14 March 2022

Subject: **Commercial; Modern Slavery Statement**

Director: Angela Taylor, Director, Corporate and Commercial Services

Author: Paul Emmett, Procurement and Contracts Manager

Is this a key decision?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for call-in by Scrutiny?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information or appendices?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
If relevant, state paragraph number of Schedule 12A, Local Government Act 1972, Part 1:	
Are there implications for equality and diversity?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To seek approval of a Modern Slavery Statement for the Combined Authority.

2. Information

- 2.1 Section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 requires commercial organisations to produce annual modern slavery statements setting out the steps taken over the course of each financial year to prevent modern slavery in their operations and supply chains. The government has committed to extend section 54 of the Act to public bodies in England and Wales with a budget of £36 million or more. West Yorkshire Combined Authority is likely to fall in scope of these changes. Extending section 54 to public bodies will require legislative change and will be introduced as soon as parliamentary time allows.
- 2.2 All public bodies are being encouraged to produce and publish a Modern Slavery Statement covering the 21/22 financial year by 30 September 2022. This would be on a voluntary basis until the legislation comes into force but would allow the Combined Authority to lead by example and demonstrate support for this agenda. Many public bodies including City of London, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and several district councils, some within West Yorkshire, have already published modern slavery statements.

2.2 The proposed Modern Slavery statement, which can be found in Appendix 1, provides a brief overview of our organisation and our approach to tackling modern slavery, based on the headings provided in the official guidance. It follows the structural guidance issued and has a similar format to those published by similar authorities ensuring a likeminded and consistent approach.

2.3 The statement has been drafted to support and complement the Modern Slavery Statement for West Yorkshire Police. The draft has been circulated across the Combined Authority via the Social Value Steering Group and with Directors to obtain feedback and organisational wide commitment. All feedback has been incorporated into the final version attached.

3. Tackling the Climate Emergency Implications

3.1 There are no climate emergency implications directly arising from this report.

4. Inclusive Growth Implications

4.1 There are no inclusive growth implications directly arising from this report.

5. Equality and Diversity Implications

5.1 Victims of modern slavery are disproportionately from disadvantaged groups with the most common forms of exploitation, as reported in the UK Annual Report on Modern Slavery, being labour exploitation for adults and criminal exploitation for minors.

5.2 The most recent report reveals that 34% of referrals related to UK Nationals as victims with the proportion of child and male victims increasing.

5.3 Taking a proactive and very visible approach towards Modern Slavery, with a forward looking and progressive statement, would help to support our EDI commitments and support the development of a fairer more equitable society, reducing the barriers to progress for disadvantaged groups and minimising the chance of modern slavery or human trafficking issues being discovered within our organisation or our wider supply chain.

6. Financial Implications

6.1 There are no financial implications directly arising from this report.

7. Legal Implications

7.1 There are no legal implications directly arising from this report.

8. Staffing Implications

8.1 There are no staffing implications directly arising from this report.

9. External Consultees

9.1 There are no external consultees directly arising from this report.

10. Recommendations

10.1 That the FRCC approves the Modern Slavery Statement and that it is published externally on the Combined Authority website and the Modern Slavery register on the official .gov domain.

11. Background Documents

There are no background documents referenced in this report.

12. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Modern Slavery Statement