

Babergh and Mid Suffolk Policy on Modern Slavery

Introduction

1.1 Modern slavery is a term used to describe human rights violations for the purposes of labour exploitation which is equally present in private and public supply chains.

1.2 Examples are:

- Forced to work through coercion, or mental or physical threat
- Owned or controlled by an employer, through mental or physical abuse or the threat of abuse
- Dehumanised, treated as a commodity or bought and sold as property
- Physically constrained or have restrictions placed on their freedom of movement.

1.3 Modern slavery may involve:

- Debt bondage or bonded labour, where when people borrow money they cannot repay and are required to work to pay off the debt and lose control over the conditions of both their employment and the debt.
- Human trafficking which involves transporting, recruiting or harbouring people using violence, threats or coercion.

2. Implementation of the Policy

2. Through their joint Policy on Modern Slavery the Councils will undertake the following actions to ensure that as far as possible their commissioning and procurement activity does not support modern slavery.

2.1 Senior Sponsor

2.1.1 Ensure that an appropriate ownership of the Policy is provided with senior sponsorship from a nominated Councillor and for operational delivery a member of the Council's Senior Leadership Team.

2.1.2 Undertake a regular review (at least on an annual basis) of the success of the operation of the Policy.

2.1.3 Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.

2.2 Education and Awareness

Ensure that those with responsibility for commissioning and procurement have in place relevant awareness and understanding of the principles of ethical commissioning and procurement. Training and guidance will be provided through the Councils' Commissioning & Procurement Team.

2.3 Whistle Blowing

Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery and where appropriate refer for investigation via the National Crime Agency's national referral mechanism any of its contractors identified as a cause for concern regarding modern slavery.

2.4 Competitive Sourcing

2.4.1 Use the Councils competitive sourcing processes through the inclusion of relevant clauses in the Councils' Terms and Conditions of Participation for Quotes and Tenders and in the Councils' Terms and Condition of Contract to:

- Communicate to bidders the requirement to acknowledge the Councils commitment to promoting respect for human rights and actively co-operate with the Councils in undertaking due diligence in their supply chains.
- Require suppliers to fully comply, where relevant with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and share with the Councils their Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement and where suppliers are not required to comply with the Modern Slavery Act to work with the Councils to voluntarily produce a statement.
- Highlight to its suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one.
- Require suppliers to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery.

2.5 Contract Management

Through its contract management practices:

2.5.1 To work with suppliers and review the supply chain for key contracts with product groups and source countries that represent the highest risk for modern slavery.

2.5.2 To highlight to its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.

2.5.3 Work with suppliers to mitigate the risks for modern slavery in their supply chains.