



**Open Report on behalf of Les Britzman
Director of Fire, Rescue and Public Protection**

Report to:	Public Protection and Communities Scrutiny Committee
Date:	27 October 2020
Subject:	Modern Slavery

Summary:

This report provides an overview of both the current and impending statutory requirements placed upon Lincolnshire County Council within the Modern Slavery Act 2015. In addition, the report provides an overview of how Lincolnshire County Council is supporting the work of the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership in relation to Modern Slavery.

Actions Required:

Members of the Committee are invited to consider and comment on the contents of this report, and the Councils role in meeting its statutory requirements within the Modern Slavery Act 2015 as well as driving forward the Modern Slavery agenda across Lincolnshire.

1. Background

Modern Slavery is an umbrella term that encompasses slavery, servitude, forced or compulsory labour and human trafficking. A complex and often hidden crime, it is very difficult to obtain a true understanding of the scale of the issue, with estimates stating anywhere from 10,000 to upward of 100,000 victims across the UK at any one time.

In March 2015 the Government enacted The Modern Slavery Act 2015 which placed a number of statutory responsibilities upon Local Authorities including;

- **Section 43** - stated that specified Public Bodies (including Local Authorities) have a duty to cooperate with the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. It is the role of the Anti-Slavery Commissioner to encourage good practice in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of slavery and human trafficking offenses, as well as in the identification of victims.

- **Section 52** - placed a duty on Local Authorities to identify and refer Modern Slavery child victims and consenting adult victims through to the National Referral Mechanism (Local Authorities also have a 'Duty to Notify' the Home Secretary of adults who do not consent to entering the National Referral Mechanism).

In addition, **Section 54** of the Act required commercial companies with an annual turnover above £36 million, and carrying out a business, or part of a business, in the UK, to develop a Modern Slavery Statement.

In July 2018, the Home Secretary commissioned an independent review of the Act with the aim being to consider the operation and effectiveness of, and potential improvements to, provisions within. That review recommended that the **Section 54** requirement be extended to the public sector, and following a consultation to identify the size and type of public sector organisations that should be brought into scope, the Government published their response in September 2020 which confirmed that the **Section 54** 'Transparency in Supply Chains' of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 would be extended to Local Authorities and other public bodies, which have a budget of £36m or more.

As such Lincolnshire County Council will be mandated to report on - on a new Government run reporting service - the steps taken to prevent Modern Slavery in their supply chains and the areas that must be covered within will also be mandated. At a minimum that will include;

- the organisation's structure, its business and its supply chains;
- its policies in relation to slavery and human trafficking;
- its due diligence processes in relation to slavery and human trafficking in its business and supply chains;
- the parts of its business and supply chains where there is a risk of slavery and human trafficking taking place, and the steps it has taken to assess and manage that risk;
- its effectiveness in ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in its business or supply chains, measured against such performance indicators as it considers appropriate;
- the training about slavery and human trafficking available to its staff

The Government also confirmed that Modern Slavery Statements will require sign off by the accounting officer, chief executive or equivalent role and approval from the senior management body.

At time of writing the report all of the information is to be presented to the Corporate Leadership Team with a number of recommendations made to ensure that Lincolnshire County Council continues to meet its requirements within the Act.

Modern Slavery is currently a core priority for the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership. As a member of that Partnership Lincolnshire County Council is a key contributor, providing resources including a Community Safety Strategy Coordinator, to coordinate the work of the partnership and drive the Modern Slavery agenda forward.

Key areas of activity for the partnership, which have been informed by both partners and the recommendations within the Safeguarding Adults Review '*Learning from the Experience of Large-Scale Modern Slavery in Lincolnshire*' commissioned by the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Adults Board include;

Ensure all partners receive training and are able to recognise the signs of Modern Slavery

In conjunction with the Lincolnshire Safeguarding Children Partnership and Adults Board training team a new online e-Learning course entitled '*Understanding Modern Slavery*' has been developed, that is due to be launched in October 2020 and will be available to both Lincolnshire County Council staff and partners across Lincolnshire.

A Modern Slavery Charter has been developed, outlining 6 steps, which are applicable to all partners and the intention is for this to be launched in January 2021.

Raise awareness of Modern Slavery and reporting mechanisms with the public and partners through a communications strategy

In partnership with The Clewer Initiative - an initiative launched in 2016 by the Church of England to help raise awareness of Modern Slavery - Lincolnshire specific resources have been developed to raise awareness of Modern Slavery amongst both professionals and local communities. Those resources will be available in October 2020.

In addition, a social media campaign led by Lincolnshire County Council will run the week leading up to Anti-Slavery day which is Sunday October 18th. Alongside the campaign, the National Crime Agencies 'Invisible People' exhibition will be in situ outside Lincoln Cathedral. The campaign will be supported by partners and will culminate on Anti-Slavery day with Lincoln Cathedral being illuminated yellow to 'shine a light' on the issue.

Improve our understanding and identification of Modern Slavery through improved intelligence capture and exchange

In conjunction with Lincolnshire Police, a Police Partnership Operation Report has been developed which allows partners to share information with Lincolnshire Police when they have information relating to vulnerable children or adults. Whilst not explicitly in relation to concerns around Modern Slavery it provides a mechanism for partners to pass information to Police that isn't necessarily a crime or a safeguarding concern.

Nationally there is information available via The Home Office that helps to inform the understanding of what Modern Slavery looks like across the UK. However, that data isn't broken down at a local level and as such work is underway between the Community Safety Strategy Coordinator and Lincolnshire Police to better understand the issues locally in terms of the victim(s) profile including age,

nationality and gender as well as the different types of exploitation i.e. labour exploitation, sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation. The intention is for that initial piece of work to have been completed by November 2020.

Ensure all victims of Modern Slavery identified are safeguarded

Introduced in 2009 to fulfil its obligations under international legislation, the National Referral Mechanism is the framework for identifying and providing support to victims of Modern Slavery across the UK. That service is commissioned by The Home Office and provided by The Salvation Army. Whilst offering protection to victims it is recognised that there are a number of gaps within the current provision specifically in respect of adults who aren't afforded the level of protection offered to children within domestic legislation. Therefore, local organisations who are considered 'First Responder Organisations' with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 - of which Lincolnshire County Council is one - are working together to develop a victim response pathway for adults; that are not safeguards victims but also ensures statutory requirements are met which in turn will help to improve the understanding of the issue locally.

2. Conclusion

It is hoped that the information in this report demonstrates to the Committee how Modern Slavery intersects with many areas of business; from initial referral and identification of victims, to providing support services to victims, to community safety and disruption activities, to ensuring supply chains are free from Modern Slavery.

It is also hoped that the information demonstrates the amount of work being undertaken in relation to Modern Slavery being carried out by the Safer Lincolnshire Partnership and the pivotal role that Lincolnshire County Council has in delivering this work.

3. Consultation

a) Risks and Impact Analysis

Not Applicable.

4. Background Papers

The following background papers as defined in the Local Government Act 1972 were relied upon in the writing of this report.

Document title	Where the document can be viewed
Safeguarding Adults Review Learning from the Experience of Large-Scale Modern Slavery in Lincolnshire	https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/downloads/file/2067/overview-report-sar-large-scale-modern-slavery-in-lincolnshire-final

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