

Modern Day Slavery Act 2015- Statement from Croydon Council

Croydon Council takes the crime of Modern Slavery very seriously. The council recognises that modern slavery is often a hidden crime and requires a significant response from the community to help identify and combat. The council is committed to engaging the community as well as relevant stakeholders from the statutory sector such as the NHS, Police, and various teams from within the Council itself. This work also extends to the supply chain and multiple 3rd sector partners.

The below statement is made pursuant to Section 54 of the Modern Day Slavery Act of 2015. It aims to outline the work that Council are undertaking to identify and combat slavery.

The Croydon Context:

Croydon has a population of around 390 000 people. It covers around 9.5 square miles. Croydon Council spends approximately £1.1 billion per year on providing services, works and goods to residents.

This comprises of a significant array of different work including construction, property, equipment, facilities management and services for residents. These can be provided by the Council as well as an array of companies external to the Council.

Types of Slavery that Croydon Council has responded to:

Croydon Council has responded to help victims of slavery in past years. The most common forms of slavery to come to the attention of professional networks are forced labour, county lines and sexual exploitation.

Most referrals being dealt with by Croydon Council are that of County Lines whereby victims are forced or coerced to engage in illegal activities across borough boundaries. This is frequently associated with the drugs trade.

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Responses that the Council will consider:

The Council will always work with relevant partners such as the Gangmasters Labour Abuse Authority, Police, the Home Office and Trading Standards.

Where a child is involved a safeguarding assessment will always be made. Where an adult meets the Care Act (2014) threshold for eligibility then a safeguarding case will also be opened.

The Home Office operates the National Referral Mechanism (NRM). This, amongst other support, provides a series of safe houses that Croydon frequently refers survivors of slavery to. In this setting legal, psychological, and administrative support can be provided to a survivor.

Policies:

Recruitment- Croydon Council adopts safe recruiting practices which include reference checks and a variety of disclosure and barring checks (role dependant). Recruitment checks also include right to live and work in the United Kingdom, checks on qualifications and checks on identification.

Contracts- The council's standard terms and conditions include a clause on compliance with Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking Laws and policies and enables the council to terminate any contract with immediate effect by giving written notice to a Contractor if the Contractor commits a breach of the Anti-Slavery Policy or the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

Supplier adherence to our values:

We have zero tolerance to slavery and human trafficking. To ensure all those in our supply chain and contractors comply with our values we are going further than the Modern Slavery Act and have signed up to the Co-operative Party Charter Against Modern Slavery. We are working to ensure that the elimination of any risk of modern day slavery features in our supplier on-boarding processes and strategic sourcing practices (including sourcing plans and invitations to tender).

We continually monitor contracts for compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015 where applicable. Croydon Council can take strong legal action if contractors are engaging in Modern Slavery.

For more information about what Croydon expects from its suppliers, please visit www.valuecroydon.com

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Pan London Multi-Agency Safeguarding Policies and Procedures:

The Croydon Safeguarding Adults and Children Boards have signed up to the above document. As such safeguarding for adults and children takes place in accordance with the London wide document.

Code of Conduct:

Croydon Council employees sign a code of conduct at the point of joining the Council. This regulates the behaviour of staff in the work place as well as outside of work. Staff are always expected to operate within the law.

Pay:

Croydon Council is a London Living Wage employer and a London Living Wage Friendly Funder. All contracts awarded in and after 2014 specify that suppliers must pay the London Living Wage and this is monitored as part of our ongoing contract management with suppliers. As well as this we are working hard to negotiate with our existing suppliers where the contracts, were awarded before 2014, to become London Living Wage employers.

Whistleblowing:

As part of its commitment to ensuring integrity in relation to all aspects of its own working practices, the Council has a clear and comprehensive policy offering protection and support to individuals reporting on any malpractice which may be affecting human rights or otherwise unlawful acts within its own organisation.

Work being done:

- A comprehensive training package offered across the professional partnership
- Additional training being offered to the Third Sector
- Additional training given to Probation colleagues
- The launch of the internal *5 Steps* process for recording Council actions for all cases of suspected slavery
- MDS awareness training made mandatory for all Adult Social Care staff
- A joint Children and Adults Safeguarding Committee in place that reports to both Safeguarding Boards
- Seven SPOCS in Adult services and three in Children and Families to assist practitioners on cases of slavery
- Annual training rolled out to all commissioners in the council to raise awareness on Modern Slavery

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Work to be done:

Croydon Council and the Safeguarding Board partners are committed to the following:

- Inviting all estate agents and hotels in Croydon for training and awareness sessions
- Expanding the training offer to key contractors
- Expanding the *5 Steps* process across Housing and other Council teams
- Consider increased cross over work with the Community Safety Partnership
- Ensuring all tendered contractors adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery
- Highlight to our suppliers that contracted workers are free to join a trade union and are not to be treated unfairly for belonging to one

Training and awareness:

Croydon has sent 7 trainers to the ADASS “train the trainer” sessions and have embarked on a comprehensive training offer embedded within the Learning and Development framework. This is open, not only to Croydon staff but partners across the safeguarding partnership who deliver services in Croydon. There are also efforts to focus training on refuge collection staff and housing officers so that there is greater awareness across staff who come into contact with the community. Adult Social Care has made the modern slavery training course mandatory for all staff.

Modern Slavery helpline:

You can find out more about Modern Slavery, report a suspicion or get help and advice from [the Modern Slavery Helpline website](#). They provide victims, the public, statutory agencies and businesses access to information and support on a 24/7 basis.

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