



Safer Communities Partnership Board 1st March 2024

Title	Draft Modern Slavery Strategy
Date of meeting	1 st March 2024
Report of	Chair of the Safer Communities Partnership Board
Wards	All
Status	Public
Urgent	No
Appendices	Appendix A – Draft Modern Slavery Strategy
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Summary

This report provides an update on the development of our Modern Slavery strategy in response to a council motion that was passed in October 2023. This is a high-level breakdown of what our strategy will cover and our next steps.

Recommendations

1. **For the Safer Communities Partnership Board to consider and note the progress being made in the development of our Modern Slavery approach at LBB**
2. **For the Safer Communities Partnership Board to discuss and input on proposals within this report and attached appendix**

1. Reasons for the Recommendations

1.1 *What is modern slavery?*

Modern slavery encompasses 1) human trafficking and 2) slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Modern slavery is a complex crime but can be understood as **deception or coercion for the purpose of exploitation**. This can take on many forms including labour exploitation, domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and criminal exploitation.

It can include the movement and/or recruitment of victims not only internationally but within local areas like Barnet. It can impact anybody of any age, gender or ethnicity but we are aware

that certain groups may be more disproportionately impacted i.e. asylum seekers, those financially vulnerable, children and young people and women and girls.

Looking at the Metropolitan Police dashboard, the data indicates that Barnet had 106 reported cases of modern slavery during periods of November 2021 to October 2022 and November 2022 to October 2023. All relevant national or neighbouring borough policies assume that the real-scale of cases is much higher and that this is due to poor case-logging and reporting, and a lack of awareness amongst emergency and front-line responders.

1.2 *Why now?*

In October 2023, a full council motion was unanimously passed to take steps to combat modern slavery in the borough. The motion highlighted key missing areas in our processes and service delivery, and it was agreed that a multi-agency approach was required and that this would sit under Safer Communities Partnership Board. Part of our approach entails the co-development of a modern slavery strategy and action plan with our partners. We hope that through this co-production, we will strengthen already existing processes and ensure better partnership working and join-up across the borough.

1.3 *Modern Slavery strategy*

This is a draft over-arching vision of how we combat modern slavery in Barnet. Most of the work outlined in this strategy is already existing but our aims are to create a better synergy between internal service areas and external partners focused on this work. We are proposing the following:

- Focus on three priorities: prevention, protection and prosecution
- Training to senior managers, front-line social workers, and partners
- Dedicated email address for reporting modern slavery
- Modern slavery referral mechanism pathway
- Annual statement to be published on the website

This is a draft strategy and whilst these additional interventions have been built on initial conversations with stakeholders, we are still in the process of engaging and co-producing the document and further activity.

2. Alternative Options Considered and Not Recommended

- 2.1** We could take a larger-scale approach in combatting modern slavery by resourcing a Modern Slavery lead or team, but as there does not appear to be a serious concerning problem in our borough and we are faced with financial controls, this is not currently a recommended option.

3. Post Decision Implementation

- 3.1** Not relevant to this report.

4. Corporate Priorities, Performance and Other Considerations

4.1 Corporate Plan

Our Plan for Barnet 2023-26 touches on elements associated with modern slavery i.e. “Everyone should feel safe in their homes and communities” as well as within subsequent corporate workstreams such as Reducing Poverty and Tackling the Gaps.

As we are bidding to become a Borough of Sanctuary and national data does show that sanctuary-seekers are vulnerable to exploitation (or have been victims of exploitation in their home countries), we have considered this draft strategy alongside of our Borough of Sanctuary strategy.

This links into many other strategies and interventions at the council, including:

- [Borough of Sanctuary Strategy](#)
- [Reducing Poverty](#)
- Vulnerable Adolescent Strategy (in development)
- [Safer Communities Strategy](#)
- [Our Plan: Caring for our Places, People and Planet 2023-26](#)
- [VAWG \(Violence Against Women and Girls\) Strategy](#)
- [Serious Violence Strategy \(co-produced with our VCFS and young people\)](#)
- [Modern Slavery Statement - Brent Cross Town](#)
- [Barnet Safeguarding Adults Board](#)

4.2 Corporate Performance / Outcome Measures

Under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, we are obliged to report modern slavery victims and refer them through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) and those who do not consent under 'Duty to Notify' (DtN) to the Home Office. The proposals outlined in the report will ensure we continue best practice, notify where modern slavery is identified and provide support.

4.3 Sustainability

Not relevant to this report.

4.4 Corporate Parenting

As part of our corporate parenting strategy, we already support care leavers who may have been victim to exploitation.

4.5 Risk Management

Once we start delivering on the implementation of this strategy, we will ensure that we add it to the corporate risk register and update regularly on mitigations and risk score.

4.6 Insight

We currently do not have any internal data capturing that has informed this report but have made use of external reliable data sources.

4.7 Social Value

Modern slavery victims are considered within our updated TOMs in our Social Value policy, meaning that suppliers who recruit victims of modern slavery are taken higher into consideration.

5. Resource Implications (Finance and Value for Money, Procurement, Staffing, IT and Property)

5.1 There are currently no financial implications planned with the activity proposed in the draft strategy.

5.2 In developing a supply chain statement, our procurement team may need to provide more support to our suppliers to ensure they are aware of modern slavery and exploitation.

5.3 We already have an existing whistleblowing policy but should we reference this in our strategy, this may lead to an abundance of cases being brought forward and officers at over-capacity.

6. Legal Implications and Constitution References

6.1 There are no current legal implications associated with the recommendations of the report.

7. Consultation

7.1 Further consultation is planned to ensure this is a partnership approach and all stakeholders are invested in combatting modern slavery.

7.2 Survivor consultation has been explored as a potential, but we do not currently have a clear understanding of any groups willing to engage on this strategy.

8. Equalities and Diversity

8.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment will be carried out as part of the development of the modern slavery strategy.

9. Background Papers

9.1 [Modern Slavery Act 2015](#)