

London Borough of Enfield

Council

Meeting Date 25.01.23

Subject: Enfield Modern Slavery Strategy 2023-28

Cabinet Member: Cllr Alev Cazimoglu

Executive Director: Tony Theodoulou

Key Decision: Non-Key

Purpose of Report

1. The Enfield Modern Slavery Strategy 2023-28 aims to be a handbook for professionals and members of the public to help understand the types of modern slavery, what the council aims to do, who has been affected and what can be done to put a stop to this crime.

Proposal(s)

2. To approve the report.

Reason for Proposal(s)

3. The London Borough of Enfield is at the forefront of tackling this crime and supporting survivors to recovery, as statutory modern slavery first responders, by being providers of social housing and safeguarding services for adults and children, and through our disruption activities via England's first Modern Slavery Team in a local authority.

4. London has been identified as a hub for county lines and criminal exploitation, with Enfield seeing its transport links being used to facilitate this awful crime. It is particularly important that councils are engaged with one another to help provide a targeted and coordinated response to see crimes reduce overall.

Relevance to the Council Plan

5. Good homes in well-connected neighbourhoods- The Modern Slavery Team works in local neighbourhoods to help disrupt criminal activity that will have a negative impact on our local communities.

Safe, healthy, and confident communities- by targeting the gang masters in the UK and overseas we can, jointly with the police target the root of this heinous crime.

An economy that works for everyone- by fulfilling our statutory duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, the council has worked to ensure that our contracts

are ethical and robust to mitigate the risks of modern slavery being in our supply chains.

Background

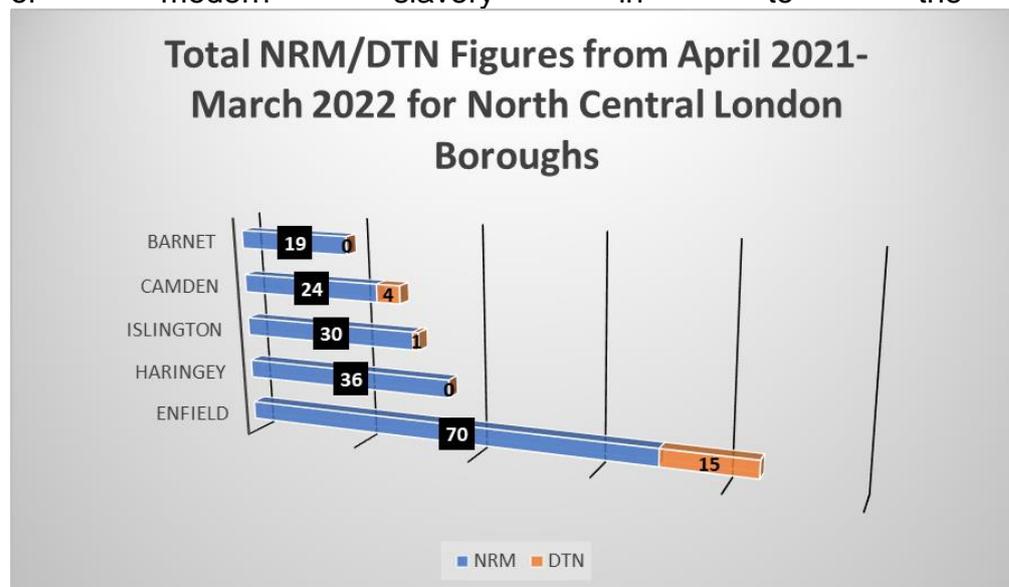
6. Modern slavery is a heinous crime that affects all communities of all ages, genders, and nationalities. Modern slavery has become a high priority in recent years, with the Government identifying it as ‘the greatest human rights issue of our time.’ It continues to be the fastest growing international crime, the second largest source of illegal income for organised criminality and targets the very fabric of our society. It can take many forms, some well-known - such as sexual exploitation, labour exploitation and domestic servitude - others less well recognised, such as organ harvesting, forced and sham marriage.

Main Considerations for the Council

7. There have been 106 referrals received into the team between 1st April 2021 - 31st March 2022. These referrals have come from a number of different sources including Housing, Social Care teams, Anti-Social Behaviour teams, Business Rates team, Youth Justice Service, NHS partners, Police (both local and central) and third sector charities and organisations such as Victim Support and Enfield Women’s Centre.

8. Strong pathways have been forged within Enfield Council to ensure a swift response to potential victims. The team arranged housing for 8 potential victims of modern slavery in partnership with our Enfield Council Housing colleagues, to bridge the gap between the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) referral and the NRM support commencing following the positive reasonable grounds decision.

9. The below graph demonstrates how the Modern Slavery Team and the action plan associated with the previous strategy have helped support potential victims of modern slavery in to the NRM.



Safeguarding Implications

10. In Enfield, all cases of potential modern slavery are treated as possible safeguarding cases under s.47 Children Act 1989 and s.42 of the Care Act 2014. This is to ensure consistency with our response to the crime and to safeguard vulnerable children and adults in line with the local authorities First Responder duties and obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015

Public Health Implications

11. Safeguarding of adults at risk is recognised as a significant public health issue; preventing abuse and promoting of choice will increase wellbeing within these populations.

12. The strategy highlights the importance of the Modern Slavery Team working with local people and partners to promote an approach that concentrates on improving the quality of life for the adults concerned; being safe is only one of the things people want for themselves and there is a wider emphasis on wellbeing. The strategy emphasizes prevention of abuse and work within services that provide care to evidence engagement with those who use services.

Equalities Impact of the Proposal

13. A robust EQIA has been completed and determined that the strategy will not adversely impact any groups. This strategy should have a positive impact on all individuals and the team will work closely with local charities and our partners to ensure that all groups are supported. Safeguarding activity is provided for children and families until the children are 18. For adults, safeguarding applies where there are care or support needs. The EQIA has demonstrated the importance of data collection and sharing with our partners to help target resources and to ensure that we can work with community-based support to provide the most appropriate support to the potential victims.

Environmental and Climate Change Considerations

14. There are no Environmental and Climate Change Considerations.

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision and related work is not taken

15. By publishing a strategy, Enfield Council continues to demonstrate its commitment to meeting our legal duties under the Modern Slavery Act 2015. The Strategy helps to provide members of the public with a tool that can help educate and signpost Enfield residents with appropriate ways of responding to wider concerns,

Risks that may arise if the proposed decision is taken and actions that will be taken to manage these risks

16. There is a risk that members of the public will not know what the signs/causes of modern slavery are and that Enfield residents will not know how to raise their concerns. It is also important to demonstrate how the local authority

utilises our resources in combating this crime and targeting our efforts on prosecuting offenders.

Financial Implications

17. There will be no changes to the current funding requirements. The team continues to function with a part time Team Manager and two full time Modern Slavery Investigators.

18. There are two PO1 posts which cost £100k (on current pay scales), with on costs and £20k training costs, totalling £120k as a result of this scheme.

19. This funding has been factored into the long-term financial plan.

Financial Implications provided by M Johnson 20/10/22

Legal Implications

20. Local authorities have a statutory duty under the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to notify the Home Office when they come across potential victims of modern slavery. The duty is discharged by either referring a potential victim into the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) where they are a child or consenting adult, or by notifying the Home Office where an adult does not consent to enter the NRM. As a first Responder Organisation, local authorities have responsibility for identifying potential victims and making referrals into the NRM.

21. Local authorities also have a statutory duty to safeguard child victims of modern slavery under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and vulnerable Adults at Risk under section 42 of the Care Act 2014.

22. In addition, under the Children Act 2004 local authorities and their partners (Police, NHS etc) have a duty to co-operate with a view to improving the well-being of children and to protect them from harm and neglect. Under s.11 of the Children Act 2004 a local authority and its partners have a duty to ensure that their functions are discharged having regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

23. There are also general co-operation duties under the Care Act 2014 between local authorities and their partners with regards to exercising functions under the Act with regards to people who have a need for care and support.

24. The Modern Slavery Strategy compliments the statutory duties above, demonstrates how the council is fulfilling its legal requirements and tackling modern slavery with its partners in the borough.

Legal implications provided by I Deuchars on 26/07/22

Workforce Implications

25. There are significant staffing challenges across adult social care nationally, regionally, and locally. The care sector has vacancies caused by changes in employment patterns, particularly increased competition for domiciliary care staff.

26. We have Social Work and Occupational Therapy vacancies across all teams. The staffing pressures are resulting in increased caseloads for current staff at a

time when demand is also increasing, as seen in the Safeguarding Adults concern figures. We are also predicting 25% increased demand for Care Act 2014 assessments because of the social care reforms enacted from April 2023. The rising demand will compound our current difficulties concerning recruitment and retention of permanent staff.

Workforce Implications provided by D Williams 15/08/22

Property Implications

27. There are no property implications.

Other Implications

28. NA

Options Considered

29. NA

Conclusions

30. Throughout the Modern Slavery Team's first year (2020) the focus was on establishing pathways with other council departments for making referrals and sharing information. We became core members of various multi-agency partnership working meetings where cases of modern slavery and human trafficking are often discussed. This resulted in a helpline being established for professionals and members of the public to contact our team to discuss any cases or queries of concern. We have published a Modern Slavery Statement and have established single point of contacts within each department in Enfield Council.

31. We have been collecting data that has come through to our team from various sources to create a map which is able to plot key areas for the team to target and help identify trends within the borough. This includes data on the numbers of referrals received, location of concerns, types of exploitation, victim information i.e., age, ethnicity, perpetrator information and figures for the numbers of NRM and DtN referrals made to the Single Competent Authority.

32. Training and awareness raising continues to be a key part of our team and we continue to deliver training sessions both internally and externally to partner agencies/third sector organisations. During the period of 1st April 2021-31st March 2022 the team have delivered a total of 17 training sessions to 455 attendees

33. We will continue to work with a multi-agency approach to share relevant information to help aid information gathering and potential investigations/prosecutions.

34. Enfield Modern Slavery Strategy 2023-28 aims to build upon Enfield's good practice. Enfield Council continues to lead the way in the fight against modern slavery and the strategy helps to deliver that message to the borough.

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Date of report 1st October 2022

Appendices
Enfield Modern Slavery Strategy 2023-28

Background Papers

The following documents have been relied on in the preparation of this report: