

Motion to council

To adopt the Charter against Modern Slavery

This council notes

- Though slavery was abolished across the then British Empire in 1833, including the UK, there are more slaves today than ever before in human history. Figures from the International Labour Organisation (ILO) suggest that there are more than 40 million people in modern slavery across the world, with nearly 25 million in forced labour.
- There were 5145 victims of modern slavery submitted to the National Referral Mechanism in 2017, a 35% increase on 2016. A rising number but still well below the 10,000 and 13,000 potential victims estimated by the Home Office.
- Modern Slavery is happening nationwide. Traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. This can include sexual and criminal exploitation.

This council believes

- That action needs to be taken to raise awareness of modern slavery and the fact that it is happening all over the UK.
- That the support for victims needs to go beyond the inadequate 45 days that is currently allowed.
- That councils have an important role to play in ensuring their contracts and supplies arrangements are set up to combat modern day slavery and exploitation.

This council resolves

To adopt the Charter against Modern Slavery to ensure our procurement practices don't support slavery.

(Charter included)

The Charter

(Ipswich Borough Council) will:

1. Train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery through the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply's (CIPS) online course on Ethical Procurement and Supply
2. Require its contractors to comply fully with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, wherever it applies, with contract termination as a potential sanction for non-compliance
3. Challenge any abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they don't rely upon the potential contractor practising modern slavery
4. 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
5. Publicise its whistle-blowing system for staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery
6. Require its tendered contractors to adopt a whistle-blowing policy which enables their staff to blow the whistle on any suspected examples of modern slavery
7. Review its contractual spending regularly to identify any potential issues with modern slavery

8. Highlight for its suppliers any risks identified concerning modern slavery and refer them to the relevant agencies to be addressed.
9. 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
10. Report publicly on the implementation of this policy annually.