

West Yorkshire Combined Authority Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

2023 - 2024

Paul Emmett / March 2023

“West Yorkshire Combined Authority is committed to developing robust strategies and approaches to ensure that slavery and human trafficking does not exist within our supply chains or at home in our communities. We believe that through collaborative action we can reduce the likelihood, mitigate the impact and support the survivors of modern slavery. The Combined Authority takes our responsibilities seriously to model the behaviours we expect to see, to challenge practises where they need to be challenged and to proactively increase awareness of slavery and trafficking to better allow others to recognize the signs and take steps to intervene. We will continue to publish our statement annually, reviewing the content at regular intervals to ensure it remains fit for purpose.”



Tracy Brabin
Mayor of West Yorkshire

This statement is made with reference to Section 54(1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes the Anti-Slavery and Human Trafficking statement for the West Yorkshire Combined Authority for the financial year ending 31 March 2023.

Organisation Structure and Supply Chains

The West Yorkshire Combined Authority brings together the local authorities of Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds and Wakefield with the LEP. Working in partnership, across West Yorkshire, we develop and deliver policies, programmes and services which directly benefit the people of West Yorkshire.

Our work is focused on seven Corporate objectives:

- Empowering our communities, towns and cities to thrive
- Building a sustainable, nature rich and carbon neutral region
- Creating an accessible, clean and customer focused transport system
- Supporting community safety and accountable, proactive policing
- Championing culture, sport and creativity
- Driving economic growth and innovation to enable good jobs
- Enabling a diverse, skilled workforce and accessible learning for all.



This means we:

Prioritise initiatives which drive inclusive and sustainable economic growth and prosperity

- Promote innovation, internally and across the region
- Give focus to tackling the climate and environment emergency through every initiative
- Drive towards an efficient, world class transport system
- Continue our focus on delivering world class policing and enhanced community safety
- Provide a consistent and unified 'voice of the region', enabling West Yorkshire and the Mayor to proactively influence in government.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) runs through all that we do. In 2021 we adopted our EDI vision, to be a leader recognised nationally for our focus and commitment to EDI. To support the delivery of this vision, we are developing an action plan that shows how we will embed the Local Government Equality Framework in our work, and this has been a key priority for 2022.

Our suppliers are chosen on a basis of cost and quality, fairly selected and chosen objectively, and we take our responsibilities to influence transparency within our supply chains seriously while promoting good employment practice.



Policies in Relation to Slavery and Human Trafficking

The key policies which pertain to modern slavery and transparency within our supply chains at West Yorkshire Combined Authority are our Procurement Strategy, which provides an overview approach to our purchasing and buying decisions, and Contract Standing Orders which consider individual purchasing activities in more granular detail. Individual Procurement Strategy documents are developed for each major procurement activity undertaken, which identify specific risks pertaining to Modern Slavery and guide our approach to mitigating risk and maximising opportunities.

Our Human Resources and Audit functions maintain policies on Whistleblowing and safe ways of working, providing mechanisms to raise concerns and escalate or investigate issues both internal and those within our supply chains. It is our intention to develop proactive ways of working with our suppliers to ensure they also support their employees through the adoption of similar policies, protections and mechanisms to develop a joined-up approach across our supply chain.

The Combined Authority works closely with West Yorkshire Police, ensuring our policy approach to Modern Slavery works in partnership with those utilised by the police force within our region. We collaborate with regional and extra-regional groups within the blue light services to support, maintain and promote Transparency in Supply Chains and are happy to encourage the adoption of similar policies and approaches with our peer contracting authorities.



Due Diligence Processes

All suppliers seeking to bid for open tenders must complete a mandatory supplier selection stage which disbars further participation for those organisations that have been found guilty of committing illegal acts, in keeping with the Public Contract Regulations 2015.

All frameworks used by the Combined Authority are vetted and considered ahead of use, ensuring they are compliant with the ethos, ethics and culture of the Combined Authority, and guidance is made available to contract managers to improve their capacity to prevent and respond to modern slavery.

The Combined Authority makes use of the TOMs framework provided by the Social Value Portal to capture and monitor social value within our supply chains, with the prevention of modern slavery being a focal point for suppliers seeking to work with the Combined Authority or our district partners.



Risk Assessment and Management

The Combined Authority ensures its procurements are conducted in compliance with the provisions set out in the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and is committed to combatting modern slavery. The Combined Authority takes steps to reduce the risk of modern slavery and human trafficking in our supply chains when buying goods and procuring services from external organisations and providers through transparent, auditable procurement processes and legally robust and compliant terms and conditions.

The Combined Authority works closely with the Police and Crime Commissioners surrounding our region and the Office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for West Yorkshire became part of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority on 10th May 2021 further reinforcing and supporting the building of those links.

We believe through establishing a joined up approach to modern slavery we are better able to mitigate the risk of modern slavery in our supply chains and better placed to remove the environment where modern slavery may exist within the communities we serve.



Measuring Effectiveness

The Combined Authority is committed to eliminating modern slavery. To support this ongoing commitment the Combined Authority will review and update this statement on an annual basis, will work with our delivery partners and providers to raise awareness and increase reporting of concerns as well as to support people in understanding the help which is available for victims.

The Combined Authority works in partnership with West Yorkshire Police and collaborates with local government authorities to ensure a joined-up approach, maximising the impact of our actions across the region. Where possible best practise will be shared and successes built upon, delivering a continual process of improvement and incremental progress year on year.



Training Provided

The Combined Authority supports our staff in training and development as part of our ongoing commitment to CPD. Alongside essential mandatory training we also provide allowance for staff to request training on other core matters to support their continued development and run a regular programme of training delivered internally by experts in the respective topics.

Modern Slavery Training is not currently a required training element in of itself however is covered in brief during the mandatory Equality, Diversity and Inclusion training delivered to all staff. It is the intention of the Combined Authority to provide a series of training sessions on Modern Slavery as a part of our optional training programme for all staff while reviewing the potential to make modern slavery training part of our mandatory suite of training modules for all staff.



Find out more

westyorks-ca.gov.uk

West Yorkshire Combined Authority

Wellington House

40-50 Wellington Street

Leeds

LS1 2DE

All information correct at time of writing