

MODERN SLAVERY

Scrutiny Report of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

November 2018



WIRRAL BOROUGH COUNCIL

Modern Slavery

SCRUTINY REVIEW

FINAL REPORT

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1. INTRODUCTION

As part of the Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee's Work programme, it was agreed to undertake a Task & Finish Scrutiny Review on Modern Slavery. The Review Panel comprised three Members of the Committee.

The report sets the methodology adopted for gathering the evidence, followed by the main body of the report which details the key findings of the review and the recommendations of the Review Panel.

2. MEMBERS OF THE TASK & FINISH REVIEW PANEL

Councillor Chris Carubia (Chair)



CHAIR'S PERSONAL STATEMENT

"Our objective in this review was to help the council to develop an appropriate policy and look at other potential responses to tackle Modern Slavery in Wirral. It was pleasing to see that, during the review, a strategy was developed and the Review Panel had an opportunity to study and add to it. It is important that Members retain oversight of Modern Slavery in Wirral, not only to fulfil their role, but also to ensure Wirral is doing its upmost to tackle it."

Other Panel Members were:

Councillor Christina Muspratt



Councillor Tom Usher



3. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY FOR THE REVIEW

3.1 Scope

A scoping meeting for the scrutiny review was convened and the agreed scoping document is included as Appendix 1 to this report.

3.2 Methodology

The scrutiny review was informed through:

- Meeting key frontline staff from areas which may interface with Modern Slavery.
- Attendance at relevant Modern Slavery conferences.
- Undertaking document reviews on local best practice.

The Review Panel also considered the draft Modern Slavery Strategy which was developed following the commencement of the scrutiny review.

4. OVERVIEW OF MODERN SLAVERY

Modern slavery is an umbrella term and captures a wide range of types of exploitation. According to the [National Crime Agency](#), these include:

- **sexual exploitation** - Sexual exploitation involves any non-consensual or abusive sexual acts performed without a victim's permission
- **Forced labour** – Forced / compulsory labour involves victims being compelled to work very long hours, often in hard conditions without relevant training and equipment, and to hand over the majority if not all of their wages to their traffickers.
- **Forced criminality** - victims can be forced to participate in a range of illegal activities including pick pocketing, shop lifting, cannabis cultivation, county lines exploitation and other activities. The Modern Slavery Act provides for a defence for victims who have been forced into criminality.
- **Domestic Servitude** - Domestic servitude involves the victim being forced to work in private households. Their movement will often be restricted and they will be forced to perform household tasks such as child care and house-keeping over long hours and for little if any pay. Victims will lead very isolated lives and have little or no unsupervised freedom. Their own privacy and comfort will be minimal, often sleeping on a mattress on the floor in an open part of the house.
- **Organ harvesting** - Organ harvesting involves trafficking people in order to use their internal organs for transplant
- **Child exploitation** - Persons under the age of 18 who get caught up in aspects of criminal exploitation. They are particularly vulnerable to exploitation by individual opportunists, traffickers and organised crime groups.

The Modern Slavery Act 2015, ("the Act"), gained royal Assent on 26 March 2015. Its stated purpose was to "tackle the worst exploitation" and consolidate various offences relating to human trafficking and slavery.

The Act established the role of an Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner with a UK-wide remit to encourage good practice in the prevention, detection, investigation and prosecution of modern slavery offences and the identification of victims.

The Act makes it incumbent upon any organisation with a turnover greater than £36m to produce a Modern Slavery Act Annual Statement and have an Anti-Slavery Policy.

There are two sections of the Act that immediately impact on the obligations for Wirral Council:

- Section 52 of the Act requires the Council to identify and refer modern slavery child victims and consenting adult victims through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM).
- Section 54 of the Act requires the Council to publish a statement of the steps it has taken to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any of its supply chains, or in any part of its business.

The NRM is the process by which victims of modern slavery, including human trafficking, are recorded. The NRM was extended to all victims of modern slavery - both children and adults - in England and Wales following the implementation of the Modern Slavery Act 2015.

5. FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Centre for the Study of International Slavery - Conference

To inform the scrutiny review, one member of the Review Panel and the Scrutiny Officer attended a conference hosted by the Centre for the Study of International Slavery and reported back to the panel. This conference was arranged to release a report entitled "[Fresh Start – Integrating Survivors of Modern Slavery](#)" which was developed by the Centre for the Study of International Slavery and City Hearts.

The Centre for the Study of International Slavery is a collaboration between the University of Liverpool and the International Slavery Museum. City Hearts works with up to 300 modern slavery survivors in the North West on a weekly basis. It provides a range of accommodation and support services including safe houses, outreach support services and long term support to over 120 survivors via 5 drop-in hubs across the North West. Survivors are offered counselling, welfare advice, and support to access employment.

The Fresh Start report provides an evaluation of a long-term support system for modern slavery survivors, set up by City Hearts. Members of the Review Panel noted the key point raised by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner at the conference regarding the current lack of medium and long-term support available to survivors of modern slavery. Under the National Referral Mechanism, support is provided to victims for a period of 45 days. After this period, support can cease abruptly and this has been described as a 'cliff edge' for survivors. At this point, survivors are at great risk of falling back into modern slavery due to the lack of meaningful support, access to housing, benefits and employment.

City Hearts has set up the Integration Support Programme as a sustainable solution to this challenge of long term support. Through collaboration with the business and voluntary sector, survivors are offered a clear pathway to a more stable and secure future through employment coaching and one to one support.

5.2 Merseyside Approach - 'Tackling Modern Slavery in the Liverpool City Region' Conference

A conference was held to gather all agencies and stakeholders from relevant statutory, voluntary, charitable and faith sectors in the Merseyside area with an interest in fighting modern slavery. The aim was to map the regional assets, understand potential gaps and to consider ways to co-ordinate activity and create a local network of practitioners. The Scrutiny Officer attended the conference on behalf of the Panel. Key speakers at the conference included:

[The Clewer Initiative](#)

The Clewer Initiative is a 3 year project that enables Church of England dioceses and wider Church networks to develop strategies to detect modern slavery in their communities, and help provide victim support and care. It is believed that the church is well placed within communities to tackle modern slavery.

[City Hearts](#)

The speaker acknowledged the range of good work going on to end modern slavery and stressed the necessity for more efficient joined up working between agencies.

[Medaille Trust](#)

The Medaille Trust is a charity founded by groups of Religious congregations in 2006 to work against human trafficking in response to the plight of thousands of people who are being trafficked into the UK each year.

The conference also allowed stakeholders to discuss mapping anti-slavery resources in the local system. A summary of the key ideas which were supported by all stakeholders included:

- Drawing up a local map showing responsibilities of organisations which aims

to avoid duplication and assist in identifying gaps. A requirement for a clear and consistent message from all organisations was agreed. As an example, it was noted that the major agencies involved in fighting slavery (The Gangmasters & Labour Abuse Authority, Modern Slavery Helpline, Crimestoppers, Stop the Traffik) have different contact telephone numbers and online reporting arrangements.

- Standard training should be in place to assist front line staff including NHS, Social Services, and GPs to spot signs of Modern Slavery and to understand referral processes. Stakeholders were informed that Merseyside Police offers free awareness raising training to local health providers and local authority staff in the region.
- The introduction of a regional scheme to recognise trades and businesses as “Slavery Free”. This could be used to raise awareness with the public and to promote good practice with local businesses. Similar ‘gold standard’ schemes exist in other industries, such as food standards or sports clubs.
- The development of a Merseyside wide network of key anti-slavery contacts across different agencies (including statutory and charitable, voluntary and faith sectors).
- A regional modern slavery awareness raising campaign should be considered alongside the National Crime Agency media campaign.

Members of the Review Panel endorsed these suggestions. Furthermore, these were also acknowledged by Wirral’s Strategic Commissioner for Environment, Community Services & Resilience and it is understood that a number of actions are being undertaken as a result. This includes developing a Regional Ethical Organisations Scheme in partnership with Wirral Chamber of Commerce which will carry a “Quality Mark” for businesses. Modern Slavery will form a part of this standard. Additionally, key contacts and networks are also being developed through the Safer Wirral Hub and the City Region and Partnership events on Modern Slavery.

5.3 Document Reviews - Local Authority Responses to Modern Slavery

The Review Panel reviewed a number of documents which gave examples of good practice by organisations across the U.K. in their response to Modern Slavery.

Merseyrail

In response to the Modern Slavery Act, Merseyrail has produced and published a Modern Slavery statement. The statement can be found on the Merseyrail website or via the public Modern Slavery registries mentioned previously. The statement outlines Merseyrail’s commitment to tackling the issue of Modern Slavery by ensuring their supply chains are slavery free.

<http://www.merseyrail.org/about-merseyrail/our-values-behaviours/merseyrail-s-anti-slavery-and-human-trafficking.aspx>

Bristol City Council

Bristol City Council has a dedicated webpage which helps users identify victims of modern slavery and human trafficking within the community. The website also gives advice on reporting suspicions and provides service users with a helpline number and online form.

Basildon Council

Basildon also has an advice page on their website for people worried about trafficking and modern slavery.

Nottingham City Council

Nottingham City Council’s Modern Slavery statement states that they have taken a number of steps to tackle modern slavery and have further steps planned. As a Council, Nottingham recognises that for certain members of staff, modern slavery training to raise awareness is invaluable and have taken steps to review their training policy.

Marks & Spencer

According to a report by the Business & Human Rights Resource Centre (BHRRC), Marks & Spencer are leading the way in terms of tackling Modern Slavery. The company now provides bespoke Modern Slavery training to all Marks & Spencer food suppliers. In addition, all UK Marks & Spencer food suppliers employing migrant workers are required to attend Stronger Together workshops, cascade the training within their supply chains. Over 200 attendees from the M&S supply base have taken part in this training to date.

Cheshire Modern Slavery Strategy

The Cheshire Modern Slavery Strategy was also reviewed by the Review Panel and the particular strong features of the strategy were highlighted:

Cheshire-wide Strategy

The Modern Slavery Strategy for Cheshire was published in 2017 by Cheshire East, Halton, Warrington, Cheshire West and Chester Councils and Cheshire Constabulary. These partners have worked collaboratively to develop a Pan-Cheshire strategy to address modern slavery in Cheshire over the next two years.

Succinct and Clear Message

The Strategy provides a brief explanation of modern slavery, the forms it can take, its impact on victims and statistics demonstrating the extent of the problem in the UK. There is also a short summary of the 2015 Modern Slavery Act and the powers and responsibilities this bestows on local authorities.

Case Studies & Ongoing Operations in Cheshire

The Strategy relates the issue to the local area with descriptions of operations to break-up slavery and trafficking activities in towns across Cheshire.

Simple Vision and Clear Priorities

The document contains a simple and unambiguous vision. This is underpinned by four priorities, aimed at embedding the Modern Slavery Act, raising awareness, supporting victims and prosecuting offenders.

Spotting Signs of Modern Slavery and Reporting

Finally, clear advice is provided on how to spot the signs of modern slavery and how to report suspicions.

The Panel was interested in how a partnership approach may be replicated in Merseyside to strengthen the message and increase the impact of anti-slavery initiatives. The clarity of message was noted, especially the use of local case studies to help readers put this into context within their community. The Review Panel also welcomed the simplicity of the vision and choice of universal priorities, together with advice regarding spotting slavery and reporting suspicions.

A number of local authorities publish annual Modern Slavery Statements on their websites, including Nottingham City Council, Essex County Council and Belfast City Council. The Panel also reviewed a Modern Slavery Policy and Statement produced by Telford & Wrekin Council, which outlines the Council's responsibilities and commits to a zero-tolerance approach to Modern Slavery. Both of these documents are published on the [Telford & Wrekin website](#)

5.4 Wirral's Frontline Services

In order to gather evidence of existing Wirral Council practice and to understand how the council could interact with Modern Slavery, the Review Panel sought to meet with key staff from a number of front line areas. Members spoke with representatives of the Council's Environmental Health, Trading Standards and Licensing departments and discussed the main areas where Council officers might encounter instances of modern slavery and human trafficking.

1. Cockle and Mussel picking

The North Western Inshore Fisheries and Conservation Authority (NWIFCA) are responsible for the cockle and mussel beds off Wirral's Northern coastline, whilst Natural Resources Wales (NRW) manage the cockle fishery within the Dee Estuary.

Both NWIFCA and NRW are responsible for issuing and managing permits for cockle and mussel fishing. Their primary aims are to manage the beds and secure the right balance between social, environmental and economic benefits to ensure healthy seas, sustainable fisheries and a viable industry. Wirral Council pays a precept to NWIFCA to manage the fishing beds and Wirral's Cabinet Member for Environment sits on the NWIFCA Board.

The Gangmasters Licensing and Labour Abuse Authority (GLAA) is responsible for the licensing and regulation of organised commercial shellfish picking and their role is to ensure that all businesses who provide workers on the cockle and mussel beds meet the employment standards required by law.

Wirral Council's primary interest is to ensure food safety once the catch crosses the high tide (mean high water) line, (i.e. once cockles and mussels are brought to shore they are considered by Wirral Council as food to be sold commercially). This would be considered as a low risk food assuming the shellfish are gathered from a classified (and thus microbiologically tested) bed. Issues around litter and the misuse of sites leading to the beds (i.e. Leasowe coastal car parks) are also a concern for the Council. At the start of the season an inter-agency meeting is arranged prior to the opening of the North shore beds. NIFCA, GLAA and Wirral Council attend this meeting. Information is shared between agencies, including details of the permit holders, and numbers of people on the sand etc.

2. Formal Requests from Merseyside Police for intelligence and multi-agency operations.

Merseyside Police make requests for intelligence or multi-agency operations including HMRC, utility companies, UK Immigration Service etc. Food hygiene and trading standards regulations can be used as a way of gaining access to premises to disrupt criminal activities. There are good working relationships between Wirral and other agencies including UK Border Patrol, HMRC and UK Immigration Services, but it is acknowledged that these relationships are largely informal. Each agency has their own resource issues and as a result often only acts on high profile or large scale operations. Merseyside Police leads on multi-agency operations.

3. Project Based Work

Multi-agency project work such as the 'Reduce the Strength' (RTS) and 'Eat Well Wirral' (EWW) campaigns have increased the knowledge and experience of Wirral staff in identifying indicators of criminal activity including modern slavery and trafficking. Through work with other agencies such as the Police, Wirral Officers are now more experienced in asking questions designed to unearth modern slavery or trafficking, such as asking workers questions about days off or normal working hours. It was accepted that outside of project work, no pro-active work or activity to target modern slavery took place. There was no dedicated resource for Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards teams to carry out operations or activity to detect Modern Slavery in Wirral businesses.

The Panel acknowledged the resource issue and was concerned that no systematic detection arrangements are in place regarding modern slavery in Wirral. Project work has helped to increase the knowledge and understanding of some Wirral staff, but detection remained largely 'hit and miss'.

4. Routine Operations

Officers visiting business premises, including fast food restaurants and off licences as part of routine inspections, report any obvious signs of modern slavery, such as multiple beds in rooms and other indicators. This is reported to the Police and then officers continue with their

routine work. It is acknowledged that this is not pro-active detection or prevention and it was also noted that officers who have not worked on multi-agency projects may be less experienced in spotting signs of modern slavery.

The language barrier can be an issue for officers as it can be difficult to capture and relay information to workers during inspections. To help with this, one officer has created a crib-sheet of basic questions in a number of different languages, based on the most common languages and nationalities that they encounter in Wirral.

Unregulated and Low-Priority Businesses. A number of business types are either unregulated (e.g. nail bars) or considered by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE) as low priority (e.g. car washes). HSE guidance to local authorities encourages a focus on high priority health & safety issues such as heavy machinery and working at heights. Due to staff capacity, officers are only able to inspect high priority areas. As a result, officers do not routinely visit these premises - even if there is an increasing perception that this type of business is known to operate Modern Slavery practices.

Staff Expertise. Due to the wide ranging responsibilities of Trading Standards and Environmental Health teams, and the impact of reduced staffing, it can be difficult to keep staff competency and expertise levels to a high level. Public safety areas such as gas safety and legionella are prioritised for training along with highly prescriptive requirements pertaining to food hygiene competencies. Networking with colleagues from neighbouring local authorities takes place, with Mutual Aid Agreements in place to aid with risk management and planning.

It was noted by the Review Panel that intelligence from Wirral Trading Standards and Environmental Health officers led to recent high profile prosecutions in Wirral and these staff have been recommended for commendations. Furthermore, as an outcome of the Review Panel's discussions, the Strategic Commissioner for Environment, Community Services & Resilience reported that Trading Standards, Licensing and Environmental Health now report into the Safer Wirral Hub. To further support intelligence gathering and connectivity with Modern Slavery, a police officer is now integrated 2 days a week to link investigation activity across modern slavery and associated crime and this was supported by the Review Panel.

5.5 Development of a Modern Slavery Strategy for Wirral

During the review, the Panel identified a requirement for Wirral Council to develop and publish a Modern Slavery Statement and accompanying policy / action plan to comply with the Modern Slavery Act. In addition, Wirral Council received a publication entitled 'Modern Slavery, A Council Guide' from the Local Government Association which is endorsed by the Independent Anti-Slavery Commissioner. This is a high level guide for councils in England and provides an overview of the steps councils can take to understand and tackle modern slavery within their area. The guide covers:-

- Identification and referral of victims
- Safeguarding and supporting victims
- Community safety and disrupting modern slavery crimes
- Public procurement (ensuring that council supply chains are slavery-free)

In response to the requirement to develop a Modern Slavery policy / statement, and to comply with the Modern Slavery Act 2015, Wirral Council officers moved forward to develop a Modern Slavery Strategy that was consistent with guidance produced by the LGA. It is noted that the guidance also details:

- The need to create awareness of modern slavery at all levels, including ward councilors, council staff, the public and the voluntary sector in terms of identifying and reporting it;
- The identification of training within councils at all levels to recognise the issues; and

- The role of overview & Scrutiny to challenge their councils to justify actions, or lack of them.

It was further agreed that the draft strategy would be presented to the Review Panel to conclude the review and a session was subsequently arranged for this. The draft strategy is included as **Appendix 2**. A summary of the key points raised at that session are detailed below:

- The draft strategy was developed consistent with LGA guidance. The Strategic Commissioner for Environment, Community Services & Resilience noted the Panel's endorsement of the strategy produced by Cheshire West and Chester and adopted key aspects of it. In addition, Wirral's strategy dovetails with both the Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside's Modern Slavery Strategic Group and the Merseyside Police Modern Slavery partnership initiative, 'Operation Sanctuary', without losing sight of localism for Wirral.
- The strategy has been shared with key agencies and officers, including Adult Care and Health, Children's Services, Public Health, Corporate Strategy, Early Help and Prevention, Community Safety, Housing Services and the office of the Police and Crime Commissioner for Merseyside, Merseyside Fire and Rescue Services and Merseyside Police. Environmental Health, Licensing and Trading Standards were also engaged as a result of initial feedback from Members.
- The strategy details a national picture for Modern Slavery, including the plan to tackle it and key statistics. At a local level, Wirral enforcement activity is detailed and it is noted that the number of offences has increased. Three offences were reported in 2016/17, eleven in 2017/18 and 12 in the first half of 2018/19. The increase is partly due to the complexity of the cases and the time taken for cases to come through but also increased awareness and coordination across agencies and communities.
- Members were assured that there will be appropriate governance arrangements in place. The Safer Wirral Partnership Board (SWPB) oversees a range of effective partnership processes to prevent and reduce criminal behaviour, and also to protect and safeguard potential victims. The Board will administer and deliver Wirral's obligations for Modern Slavery.
- In conjunction with the strategy, an Action Plan is being developed to show how Wirral is addressing the risk of Modern Slavery. Members suggested that this Action Plan is presented to a future Overview & Scrutiny Committee for scrutiny. Additionally, performance measures will be presented to Overview & Scrutiny Members as part of quarterly performance reporting. The Review Panel suggested that performance reporting should also be presented to Children & Families Overview & Scrutiny Committee as well as Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee.
- Although Members did not liaise with Wirral's Safeguarding Team, it was reported that the Lead Officer for Modern Slavery is a member of the Local Safeguarding Children's Board. The Adults Board has moved to a City Region Adults Safeguarding Board and has representation from Adults, Children's and Strategic Housing. This is a partnership of all members of the Safer Wirral Partnership Board and therefore will be engaged on Modern Slavery through this forum as well as having oversight of Wirral Councils Modern Slavery Work Plan.
- Members received assurance that those cases involving language barriers would be managed appropriately. The Wirral Family Safety Unit has access to translation/interpreting services for domestic abuse which could be utilised. There are also a number of multi-national officers that work in the Wirral Safer hub which cover a wide range of languages. The Modern Slavery Strategy will also be published in other languages and braille for wider circulation.
- The Review Panel noted that there was no reference to Women's Refuge as a key contact and there was concern that there may be a number of cases where females, particularly with poor English, may only want to speak to another female and to also seek immediate accommodation.

- In respect to cases where an individual may not feel comfortable contacting the Police, Members were informed that, nationally, the Salvation Army will be the lead for support. Their contact number was therefore included in the strategy and Wirral will be working with them closely.
- The Panel identified the need to ensure younger people were engaged when creating awareness about Modern Slavery. It was accepted by the Lead Commissioner for Communities and Resilience that there could be more focus on developing a strategy aimed at young people and liaising with schools to create awareness.
- Although raised as a concern, the Panel was assured that support mechanisms are in place for individuals to ensure they do not become trapped in the system again through safeguarding teams, and emergency accommodation. In terms of specialist accommodation, Wirral commissions a refuge and has successfully bid to put further accommodation units in place. Importantly, Members welcomed the option to move individuals outside of the area if appropriate, as is currently the case with Looked After Children.
- The Panel supports the '4 Ps framework' (Pursue, Prevent, Protect and Prepare) being adopted in the Strategy. It is noted that the strategy addresses the Modern Slavery Act's requirement for referring child victims and consenting adults through the National Referral Mechanism. All calls coming in to the MASH (Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub) / Safer Wirral Hub are coordinated by the SPOC (Single Point of Contact) who is a Police Officer embedded within the service.
- Members were assured that the Modern Slavery Act's requirement for the Council to publish a statement of the steps it has taken to ensure that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place within its supply chains, or in any part of its business, will be undertaken. Wirral's 'Modern Slavery Transparency Statement' will be signed by the Chief Executive of Wirral Council and the leader of Wirral Council. This will be published on Wirral's Website demonstrating Wirral's zero tolerance commitment and outlining the policies and steps it has taken ensuring that slavery and human trafficking is not taking place in any part of its supply chains or any part of its business.
- The Review Panel recognised the importance of community groups and other stakeholders in dealing with Modern Slavery from the scrutiny review and it is now understood that a launch event to raise awareness for these stakeholders is being planned for early 2019. This was welcomed by the Review Panel.

Recommendation 1

The work and contents of this report is considered before the draft Modern Slavery Strategy is referred to Cabinet for approval.

Recommendation 2

A Council webpage is developed to raise awareness of Modern Slavery, to provide a link to the Modern Slavery Strategy and advice on who to contact.

Recommendation 3

Overview & Scrutiny receives a report detailing the impact and effectiveness of the Modern Slavery Strategy and Action Plan in twelve months.

In undertaking this review, Members of the Review Panel identified a number of other areas that it considers appropriate to enable Wirral Council to strengthen its responsibilities to deal with Modern Slavery. With the immediate recognition of the requirement to develop a Modern

Slavery Strategy, the Review Panel believes this should complement the strategy moving forward for Wirral.

The requirement for dedicated Modern Slavery training

The Review Panel recognised the need for Modern Slavery training for appropriate staff and Members to raise awareness and to ensure responsibilities are understood. In particular, the training other organisations and local authorities have carried out to raise the profile and potential organisational impact on Modern Slavery was noted by Members. This is also highlighted by the LGA in its guidance document. The Review Panel recognises the responsibility of Members in relation to Modern Slavery. Therefore, there needs to be specific training in place for Members to identify instances of Modern Slavery, and how cases/referrals should be reported. It is suggested that Members of the Review Panel, in liaison with the appropriate council officer, identify how this training should be delivered to ensure it is appropriate for the role of an elected member.

Recommendation 4

To raise awareness of Modern Slavery in Wirral, it is recommended that:

- i) Dedicated training is provided to front-line staff, including multi-agency, and staff who may come into contact with Modern Slavery.
- ii) Dedicated Elected Member training is developed that is specific to the role of members. It is further recommended that the Review Panel is delegated to identify the specific requirements of the training and to ensure the needs of Members are met.

The Review Panel identified the need to ensure there is a regional response to Modern Slavery and to ensure that Wirral joins any regional anti-slavery multi-agency networks that emerge. This is essential in order to share ideas and good practice in combatting Modern Slavery. This was evidenced through feedback to the Review Panel of the outcomes of the Liverpool City Region conference. It is understood that Wirral Council's Modern Slavery Strategy will link to the wider City Region through the Safer Wirral Hub initiative. The Lead Officer for Modern Slavery and their team will engage with the Police and Crime Commissioner as well as the City Region Group in relation to protecting vulnerable people, of which Modern Slavery is part of.

Recommendation 5

It is recommended that Wirral explores all existing and emerging anti-slavery multi-agency networks with a view to joining them to in order to help combat Modern Slavery.

6.0 Conclusions

The Modern Slavery Panel set out this review with the objective to understand the implications of Modern Slavery for Wirral Council and its partners through exploring best practice for its implementation as well as understanding existing local detection, prevention and victim support arrangements. These objectives were achieved through a programme of activities including attending conferences on Modern Slavery, undertaking document reviews on local best practice and holding evidence sessions with key officers from front-facing services.

This review should enable an ongoing reporting line for Overview & Scrutiny with a dedicated Officer being responsible for ensuring the delivery of the Modern Slavery Strategy & Action Plan. Members will hold the Council and its partners to account over the effectiveness of services in place to protect Wirral residents from Modern Slavery which was required as an outcome from this review. Through the development and implementation of the Modern Slavery Strategy and accompanying Action Plan, Wirral will ensure compliance with the provisions of the Modern Slavery Act and will lead on efforts to tackle Modern Slavery within Wirral.

APPENDIX 1

Scope Document

Review Title: Modern Slavery

Responsible Committee: Environment Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Date: 4th September 2017

1. Contact Information:	
<p>Panel Members: Councillors: Christopher Carubia (Chair) Christina Muspratt Tom Usher</p>	<p>Key Officers: Mark Camborne, Lead Commissioner Community Services & Resilience Patrick Torpey, Scrutiny Officer Michael Lester, Scrutiny Officer</p> <p>Other Contacts: Not applicable at this stage</p>
2. Review Aims:	
<p>Wirral Plan Pledge/s:</p> <p>The primary pledge associated with this review is Wirral's Neighbourhoods Are Safe. Additional associated pledges:</p> <p>Reduce child and family poverty Vulnerable children reach their full potential Young people are ready for work and adulthood Children are ready for school Wirral residents live healthier lives</p> <p>Review Objectives:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. To understand the implications of the Modern Slavery Act for Wirral Council and its partners.2. To review and assess the emerging best practice in this field to inform how the Modern Slavery Act may be implemented by Wirral Council and its partners.3. To review existing local arrangements with regard to the prevention and detection of modern slavery and the support services offered to victims. <p>Scrutiny Outcomes:</p> <p>The Panel will present a series of recommendations designed to shape or influence Council policy on modern slavery.</p> <p>Members will hold the Council and its partners to account over the effectiveness of services in place to protect Wirral residents from modern slavery.</p> <p>Wirral Council becomes compliant with the provisions of the Modern Slavery Act and leads on efforts to tackle it locally.</p>	
3. Review Plan	
<p>Review Approach: Workshop, Evidence Day, Task and Finish? Task and Finish.</p>	

The review will be carried out through via a series of evidence gathering sessions with Wirral Council officers and other partner organisations.

The Panel will also review a number of briefing papers, documents and publications from local and central government, government advisory bodies and leading charities in the modern slavery / human trafficking field.

Review Duration:

(2 to 3 months expected)

Scheduled Committee Report Date:

July 2018

Scheduled Cabinet Report Date:

To be confirmed

4. Sources of Evidence:

Key Witnesses (subject to availability):

Expert Witnesses

- City Hearts - Phill Clayton, Regional Director of City Hearts.
- University of Liverpool / Centre for the Study of International Slavery – Dr Alex Balch
- Local Government Information Unit / Local Government Association

Wirral Council and Partner Organisations

- Wirral Council – Safeguarding (Adults & Children), Trading Standards, Licensing, Private Sector Housing Team
- Merseyside Police – (Supt. Tracey Hayes, Safer Wirral Hub)
- Wirral Registered Social Landlords

Supporting Papers / Documentation:

A number of briefing papers and supporting documentation will be reviewed by the panel, including:

- Modern Slavery Act 2015
- Local Authority guidance / policies / best practice on modern slavery
- City Hearts, University of Liverpool Fresh Start Report
- ATMG Hidden In Plain Sight executive summary
- Human Trafficking Foundation Report
- Salvation Army bulletin

Involvement of service users / public:

Not applicable for this review

5. Key Communications:

Cabinet Member:

The scoping document and final report will be shared with the relevant Cabinet Member.

Press Office:

Not applicable at this stage