

# Uttlesford District Council

## Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2025/26

This statement explains how Uttlesford District Council aims to understand and address all potential modern slavery and human trafficking risks related to its business. This statement is subject to annual review and will be published on the Council's website.

### **Commitment**

Uttlesford District Council as a public sector organisation, an employer and community leader is committed to undertaking a preventative approach to modern slavery and human trafficking within its corporate responsibilities, activities, operations and our supply chain.

### **Organisational Structure and Supply Chain**

Uttlesford District Council provides a large range of services to over 93,500 residents and over 5,000 businesses and organisations across the district.

Uttlesford is a thriving, predominantly rural district in north-west Essex close to both London and Cambridge, Uttlesford is well served by major road, rail and air links. The M11 runs through the district and Stansted Airport is located within its boundaries. To the south is the A120 and the main towns are served by the Cambridge to London rail line. However, due to its rural nature there are accessibility issues for those without private transport, especially in outlying villages.

Uttlesford District Council has 39 members, covering 22 wards and employs approximately 337 staff delivering a wide range of services for residents and businesses such as bin collections, providing council housing, planning building control, collecting council tax and business rates, supporting the local economy and businesses, restaurant inspections and running the Saffron Walden Museum. Uttlesford District Council does not deliver Children or Adult social care.

Uttlesford District Council's procurement service is delivered by Chelmsford City Council under a shared service agreement. Uttlesford District Council has aligned their processes and policies with Chelmsford City Council regarding managing the risks of Modern Slavery.

All suppliers taking part in Uttlesford District Council's procurement processes must state whether they are a relevant commercial organisation, as defined by section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 ("the Act"). If they are, they are required to confirm their compliance with the annual reporting requirements contained within Section 54 of the Act. Failure to meet these requirements is treated as grounds for mandatory exclusion.

The above approach, adopted by Uttlesford District Council, is in line with that developed by Crown Commercial Services, the executive agency and trading fund of the Cabinet Office of the UK Government and is utilised nationally across the public sector.

Uttlesford District Council has an expectation that any organisation with which it works, commissions or procures goods or services from, operates appropriate policies and practices in relation to modern slavery and human trafficking.

## **Our Responsibilities**

Uttlesford District Council has a corporate crosscutting role as an employer, community leader and procurer with responsibility to safeguard people within our communities across all our operations.

Uttlesford District Council works with Essex Police and other enforcement agencies as appropriate to share intelligence and work collaboratively to address issues relating to modern slavery or human trafficking.

## **Our Policies**

As a Council, there are a wide range of policies and processes in place that reflect our commitment to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking in everything we do.

All policies are subject to a robust assurance process and are subject to staff and union consultation. Councillors, senior officers and partner organisations may also be invited to comment.

### **Relevant Policies:**

- Employee Code of Conduct
- Whistleblowing Policy and Procedure
- Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy
- Safer Recruitment Policy
- Safeguarding Children, Young People and Adults Policy
- Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy
- Contract Procedure Rules

## **Multi-Agency Arrangements**

The Essex Safeguarding Adults Board (ESAB) is a statutory organisation that is committed to protecting an adult's right to live in safety, free from abuse and neglect. It collaborates with wider strategic partnerships in Essex to ensure that where safeguarding responsibilities spread across the organisations, there is a clear understanding of where responsibility lies or a robust joined-up approach. The Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) is a statutory body which acts as a mechanism for agreeing how relevant organisations in Essex co-operate to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and young people. As part of the Council's commitment to robust safeguarding provision, Uttlesford is represented on both the ESCB and the ESAB boards by a neighbouring council chief executive, representing the 12 districts in Essex and an Uttlesford officer. In addition, we have officer representation at both the West Essex Stay Safe board and the West Essex Partnership, of which ESCB is also represented at both these meetings.

## **Management Responsibilities**

The Council has responsibilities to its workforce, this includes employee health, safety and welfare. As part of the Council's commitment to the welfare of its workforce, any employee can raise concerns and have assurance from the Council that their concerns will be taken seriously.

The Council has an Employee Assistance program for all staff, which provides confidential support and advice for work and personal matters and includes support for victims of crime. Employees have access to 24-hour confidential support, 365 days per year.

### **Training and Raising Awareness**

To meet its statutory safeguarding responsibilities, the Council provides a regular programme of safeguarding training to all staff and members which includes Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking.

All members of the Procurement Team have successfully passed the Chartered Institute of Procurement and Supply – Ethical Procurement Test.

If any staff witness or suspect modern slavery or human trafficking is taking place they follow the internal safeguarding reporting process.

### **Due Diligence**

Uttlesford District Council is committed to and understands the vital role that procurement plays in this function. This includes due consideration and recognition of its duty when sourcing to ensure that effective employment practices are in place within the supply chain and that modern slavery and human trafficking practices will not be tolerated. Due diligence actions must always be carried out.

The contract rules require collaboration with the Procurement Team for high value and high-risk procurements to ensure, before awarding any contracts to prospective bidders, the Council meets its legal obligations under the Modern Slavery Act 2015, alongside adhering to the principles set out in the Governments National Procurement Policy and the Procurement Act 2023.

### **Performance**

In line with statutory responsibilities and related guidance for local authorities it may be required to notify the Home Office of a potential victim of modern slavery or human trafficking or make appropriate referrals to the National Referral Mechanism (NRM) for all children and consenting adults.

Uttlesford District Council has made no referrals to the NRM to date.

### **Declaration**

This statement is made pursuant to Section 54 (1) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes Uttlesford District Council's slavery and human trafficking statement for the term of the financial period 2025/26.