

Community Equality Impact Assessment

The Equality Act 2010 states that public bodies must have “due regard” to a variety of Equalities objectives (Equality Act 2010, Section 149) and consequently, Equality Analysis must be carried out to demonstrate that decision-makers are fully aware of the impact that changes may have on stakeholders.

The concept of ‘due regard’ was reinforced in 2012 during the review of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) which “requires public bodies to have due regard to the need to eliminate discrimination, advance equality of opportunity and foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities”

‘Due regard’ is dependent on the relevance and potential impact of the decision being considered. The greater the relevance and impact, the higher the regard due.

As an authority, we have made a commitment to apply a systematic screening process to new policy, strategy, functions or service development including reviews or changes to existing policy, strategy, functions or services.

This is to determine whether the proposals are likely to have a significant impact on different groups within our community.

This process has been developed, together with [full guidance](#), to support officers in meeting our duties under the:

- Equality Act 2010
- Public Sector Equality Duty
- The Best Value Guidance
- The Public Service (Social Value) 2012 Act

In addition, the guidance supports officers to consider our commitments set out in the [Thurrock Joint Compact](#) with the voluntary sector.

As well as supporting you to look at whether there is, or will be, a significant impact, the guidance will also consider ways in which you might mitigate this in the future.

About the service and reason for the development or review process

Name of service	Thurrock Partnership Modern Day Slavery Strategy 2022-2025
Lead Officer Contact Details	Michelle Cunningham

Why is this policy, strategy, function, or service development/review needed?

When the previous Thurrock MDS strategy 2017/2019 expired this priority was included was within the VAWG strategy, following consultation with Members it was requested that a new strategy to focus on this priority was developed.

This new strategy will be across 3 Boards offering strategic leadership. It will reflect the legislative changes and respond to the concerns that have emerged since the previous strategy. This strategy outlines the Councils' actions to understand and address all potential modern slavery risks in relation to our own business and supply chains and raising awareness within the borough of these crimes. This strategy and subsequent action plan will highlight and address any community or equalities anomalies. These will be incorporated within the three-year action plan.

1. Community impact (this can also be used to assess impact on staff although a cumulative impact should be considered)

1.1 What impacts will this policy, strategy, function, or service development/review have on communities and workforce?
Look at what you know? What does your research tell you?

Consider:

- National and local data sets – please see guidance
- Complaints
- Consultation and service monitoring information
- Voluntary and community organisations
- The Equality Act places a specific duty on people with ‘protected characteristics. The table below details these groups and helps you to consider the impact on these groups.

	Positive	Neutral	Negative	What are the positive and negative impacts?	How will benefits be enhanced and negative impacts minimized or eliminated?
Local communities in general	X			<p>Common nationality of potential victims in 2020 was UK nationals, accounting for 34% of all referrals. The second most referred nationality was Albanian (15%) followed by Vietnamese nationals.</p> <p>Tackling hidden offences across all spectres of society. This strategy has 2 priorities relating to empowering communities and increasing awareness & training for local partnerships. This will help identify and tackle MDS crimes within Thurrock.</p>	Improved engagement and awareness raising, resulting in increased identification of these crimes, empowering communities to be catalyst for societal change.
Age	x			Victims of modern slavery can be any age, gender,	Council is a key partner in terms of statutory safeguarding and

			<p>nationality and ethnicity.</p> <p>Evidence suggests that young males are identified in the NRM process as a result of child exploitation element of MDS. In 2020 criminal exploitation was the most common type of exploitation reported for child potential victims, whilst labour exploitation was most common for adult potential victims.</p> <p>The strategy seeks to support victims of all ages</p>	are First Responders in legislation.
Disability	x		<p>As victims are predominantly the most vulnerable members of society disability can be a factor in some cases – including people with a learning disability or mental health problems. People with learning disabilities are also at risk of being coerced or bullied or groomed into criminal exploitation/ modern slavery. They could also be isolated in their communities or they may be ineligible for support services</p>	The priorities in the strategy will raise awareness of this agenda and we can work in partnership with agencies to address any concerns raised
Gender reassignment		x	<p>No wide evidence that this protected characteristic is specifically affected Individuals themselves might be drawn into MDS.</p>	
Marriage and civil partnership	x		<p>No wide evidence that this protected characteristic is affected. Individuals themselves might be drawn into MDS.</p> <p>Forced marriage is now included in estimates of people in slavery by the International Labour Organization (ILO).</p>	<p>The statutory safeguarding measures apply to all who are experiencing MDS.</p> <p>This strategy will raise awareness of forced marriage as a form of slavery</p>
Pregnancy and maternity	x		<p>Research suggests that 1 in four women become pregnant while trafficked¹</p>	Thurrock can engage with local health services to help spot the

¹ Bick, D., Howard, L.M., Oram, S., Zimmerman, C. (2017) Maternity care for trafficked women: Survivor experiences and clinicians' perspectives in the United Kingdom's National Health Service. PLoS ONE12 (11): e0187856.

					signs and offer support.
Race (including Gypsies, Roma and Travellers)	x			<p>Anecdotal information suggests that Gypsies, Roma and Travellers could potentially be more susceptible to MDS crimes due to links with labour work which is common amongst this community.</p> <p>Victims of modern slavery can be transported to the UK from all over the world. People with language and cultural barriers, and those with little or no English, may be at more risk of exploitation.</p>	The priorities in the strategy will raise awareness of this agenda and we can work in partnership with agencies to address any concerns raised
Religion or belief		x		No wide evidence that this protected characteristic is affected. Individuals themselves might be drawn into MDS.	
Sex	x			Research suggests that females' victims are forced into sex for payment industry, whilst males are mostly found in forced labour settings	The priorities in the strategy will raise awareness of this agenda and we can work in partnership with agencies to address any concerns raised
Sexual orientation		x		No wide evidence that this protected characteristic is affected. Individuals themselves might be drawn into MDS.	
Any community issues identified for this location?	x			Borough wide project however it is known that low income/deprivation is a factor in becoming more vulnerable to these crimes.	Community awareness raising events will focus in wards of greater deprivation: Grays, Ockendon and Tilbury
Workforce	x			Any member of society could potentially get drawn into modern day slavery if they met some of the vulnerabilities identified in research.	The strategy has a training programme attached to it raising awareness of these crimes. this training is open to staff within the workforce and wider partnerships.

2. Consultation, data and intelligence

2.1 Please highlight the steps you have taken, or plan to take, to consult the whole community or specific groups affected by the policy, strategy, function, or service development/review e.g., on-line consultation, focus groups, consultation with representative groups? For further guidance please contact: consultations@thurrock.gov.uk
This is a vital step

Consultation with HEHC committee to develop the strategy

2.2 Please also provide details on the sources of data or intelligence you have used to inform your assessment of impact and how they have helped you to understand those that will be affected by the policy, strategy, function, or service development/review outlined?

- Modern Slavery Guidance for Wales and England (under s49) of the Modern Slavery Act 2015)
- Modern Slavery: Statutory Guidance for England and Wales
- Local Government Association – Modern Slavery guide
- Home Office, National Referral Mechanism Statistics: UK, End of Year Summary, 2020
- Open-source available research, ONS statistics, national crime agency and gov.uk
- <https://www.ilo.org/global/lang--en/index.htm>

Globally, nationally, and locally due to the hidden nature of modern slavery, its complexity and that it predominately driven by organised crime its prevalence is known to be difficult to evidence. The Office of National Statistics March 2021 concluded that there is no definitive source of data or suitable method available to accurately quantify the number of victims on modern slavery in the UK.

However, greater awareness, increases in reporting and improvements in police recording are likely to have contributed to the increases seen in potential victim numbers since the introduction of the Modern Slavery Acts across the UK in 2015.

The National Crime Agency has suggested that there are tens of thousands of victims in the UK at any one time. We do not have accurate data in relation to some characteristics e.g., sexual orientation

3. Monitoring and Review

3.1 How will you review community and equality impact once the policy, strategy, function, or service has been implemented? <i>These actions should be developed using the information gathered in Section 1 and 2 and should be picked up in your departmental/service business plans.</i>		
Action	By when?	By who?
Implementation of the strategy and delivery plan 2022-25	March 2025	CSP / ASgB / LSCP
Increase awareness across all professionals – in particular those working with our vulnerable residents	March 23 then ongoing	CSP / ASgB / LSCP
Partnership working with other agencies working with those vulnerable to MDS	Ongoing	CSP / ASgB / LSCP
Community awareness raising events will focus in wards of greater deprivation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grays, • Ockendon • Tilbury 	Oct 2022 TBC TBC	CSP
Improved data collection on those at risk of MDS used to inform future activity	March 2025	

4. Next steps

It is important to ensure that the information gathered is used to inform any council reports that are presented to Cabinet or Overview and Scrutiny committees. This will allow members to be furnished with all the facts in relation to the impact their decisions will have on different equality groups and the community as a whole.

Take some time to précis your findings below. This can then be added to your report template and the Equality and Diversity Implications section for sign off by the Community Development and Equalities team at the consultation stage of the report cycle.

Implications/ Customer Impact
Due to the very nature of this crime, that of a vulnerable person being exploited and completely controlled by someone else and one which is a global problem that transcends age, gender and ethnicities all aspects of the delivery of this strategy will support those that maybe disadvantaged due to their protected characteristic.

5. Sign off

The information contained in this template should be authorised by the relevant project sponsor or Head of Service who will be responsible for the accuracy of the information now provided and delivery of actions detailed.

Name	Role – for example, project sponsor, head of service)	Date
Bosa Osunde	Strategic Lead, Social Work Support	14/9/22