

Suggestion for Scrutiny Work Programme Form
(To be considered by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

Suggestion from:
Councillor Diane Hind
What would you like to suggest for investigation / review?
<p>West Suffolk Council Modern Day Slavery Statement and approach.</p> <p>Activities that modern day slaves could work in are farming, nail bars, hand car wash, restaurants, and factories although children can be associated with modern day slavery as a result of county lines activity</p> <p>Slavery is often hidden and can be difficult to identify, but someone in slavery might:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appear to be in control of someone else and reluctant to interact with others. • Not have personal identification on them. • Have few personal belongings, wear the same clothes every day or wear unsuitable clothes for work. • Not be able to move around freely. • Be reluctant to talk to strangers or the authorities. • Appear frightened, withdrawn, or show signs of physical or psychological abuse. • Be dropped off and collected for work always in the same way, especially at unusual times, for example, very early or late at night. <p>This Council and our partners can help to identify, refer, and support victims in our area, fulfilling our responsibilities for adult safeguarding, child protection and community safety and also has safeguards in place to ensure the procurement process complies with the Modern Day Slavery Act.</p>
What are the main issues / concerns to be considered?
<p>Our current statement is out of date and is currently being updated (an update will be provided in Members News to reflect activity undertaken in the past few months). Government announced in September that it requires councils to report on their activities in relation to modern day slavery. More guidance is awaited from government and the council will need to agree its response to this to ensure that its activities reflect our current practices and methods.</p>
Who is responsible for providing this service, or tackling the issue in question?
<p>Families and Communities Team (Community Safety) although it does also relate to procurement and contract management.</p>

Have you spoken to them, and if so, what was the response?	
I had a lengthy conversation with Davina Howes, Assistant Director (Families and Communities) and have also viewed the toolkits that are used to inform and educate staff.	
What are the Portfolio Holders view on this issue?	
Davina promised to inform Cllr Robert Everitt, Cabinet Member for Families and Communities who was on compassionate leave at the time; Davina has confirmed this has taken place.	
What would be the likely benefits and outcomes of carrying out this investigation / review?	
<p>We could be sure that the council's approach is fit for purpose, accurately represents our current practices and as importantly ensures that as far as possible we eliminate the potential for poor practices to occur within our own organisation and those of contractors and partners.</p> <p>Members will recall that this was included as a topic in the Community safety monitoring report presented to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2020. The Chair of the Western Suffolk Community Safety Partnership, Councillor Joanna Spicer though it an excellent idea that we had a motion to ensure our policy was robust and not just a tick box exercise. I agreed to submit a work programme form.</p>	
Estimated Committee and officer resource implications (e.g. research group, one-off report, dedicated meeting etc)	
Probably a one-off meeting to review the latest initiatives and objectives from the UK Government which we expect to receive shortly. If we select a small group to look at this now, we will be ready to convene a meeting once the new recommendations are in place and we can update the Statement. The working group might want to consider points such as whether to put a motion to Council about this topic.	
Suggested witnesses, documentation, and consultation	
Davina Howes will be best placed to provide the relevant update on new requirements and suggestions from government as well as clarifying exactly how WSC already deal with identifying, raising awareness, and effectively combatting in our own organisation and those of partners.	
Will this investigation / review contribute to one or more of the Council's Strategic Priorities? If so, which (please tick)	
Growth in West Suffolk's economy for the benefit of all our residents and UK plc	
Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active.	x
Increased and improved provision of appropriate housing in West Suffolk in both our towns and rural areas.	

Will this investigation / review contribute to the achievement of one or more of the commitments within the Council's West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2020-2024 Priorities? If so, which (please tick)	
Growth in West Suffolk's economy for the benefit of all our residents and UK plc.	
1. Encourage economic growth in West Suffolk that benefits our local economy, our workforce, our families and communities and our global and local environments by tackling climate change.	
2. Secure improve infrastructure and facilities to support new and existing communities.	
3. Invest in our towns, villages, and countryside areas by building their unique strengths	
Resilient families and communities that are healthy and active:	
1. Support communities to fulfil their ambitions to improve the lives of residents and the local environment.	
2. Work with partners to build resilience in families and communities, so that problems can be prevented at the earliest opportunity.	
3. Use our community, leisure public open space, countryside, and heritage assets so that they give maximum benefit to West Suffolk communities.	
Increased and improved provision of appropriate housing in West Suffolk in both our towns and rural areas:	
1. Ensure a variety of new housing is provided in appropriate locations, that meets the needs of current and future generations.	
2. Improve the quality of housing and the local environment for our residents.	
3. Support people to access suitable housing, including by working in partnership to addresses their wider needs.	

Will this investigation hit one of the essential elements of a scrutiny review when analysing potential scrutiny reviews? If so, which (please tick)	
Public Interest: The concerns of local people should influence the issues chosen by overview and scrutiny.	x
Impact (Value): Priority should be given to issues that make the biggest difference to the social, economic, and environmental wellbeing of the area, and which have the potential to make recommendations which could lead to real improvements. The outcome must also be proportionate to the cost of carrying out the review in terms of staff and councillor time.	x
Relevance: Overview and scrutiny must be satisfied that an issue identified for review is relevant and does not duplicate existing work being undertaken elsewhere by various Working Groups, Cabinet, partners etc.	
Partnership working or external scrutiny: The focus of scrutiny is moving towards joint action and community leadership, so anything which offers this opportunity should be given serious consideration.	

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Would you like to be involved in the investigation / review?	
Yes	
Date of request: 27 October 2020	Signed Councillor Diane Hind

Please return this form to the:

Democratic Services Officer (Scrutiny), West Suffolk Council, College Heath Road,
Mildenhall, Suffolk, IP28 7EY

Email: Christine.brain@westsuffolk.gov.uk

Update: February 2018 (Revised West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2018-2020)

Update: 1 April 2019 (New Logo – West Suffolk Council)

Update: February 2020 (Revised West Suffolk Strategic Framework 2020-2024)