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Ms Andrea Woodside  
Kirklees Council  
The Democracy Service  
Civic Centre 3, Huddersfield  
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Reference: TRO/0017645/18

Dear Ms Woodside,

Thank you for letter of 23.11.2018 and for your engagement, and that of Kirklees Council, with this vital area.

Tackling human trafficking and modern slavery remains a top priority for this Government and we are committed to stamping out this abhorrent crime. This Government is determined to end this injustice and eliminate this exploitation in our communities and in the global economy.

As you will be aware, the UK is the first country in the world to require large businesses to report on the steps they are taking to eliminate slavery from their supply chains. This landmark legislation has helped to focus businesses and board rooms on the challenge of tackling modern slavery more than ever before, but the Government recognizes that more needs to be done and has commissioned an Independent Review of the Modern Slavery Act to consider the effectiveness and potential for improvement of provisions in the Act, including Section 54 (Transparency in Supply Chains requirements). The Independent Review is due to submit its report at the end of March 2019.

It is right that government should be subject to the same transparency requirements as businesses. In November last year, the Prime Minister announced that the Government will voluntarily publish a Transparency in Supply Chains statement setting out the steps we are taking to identify and prevent modern slavery in central government supply chains.

Meanwhile, the number of police operations and convictions for slavery and trafficking offences continues to rise. In December 2015 there were 188 police operations; today there are more than 1000 live operations. This increased activity has been supported by an £8.5m grant made by the Home Office in 2016 to improve police training and operational coordination.

The NCA has also recognised modern slavery as a key priority for law enforcement nationally, coordinating a series of multi-agency intensifications under “Project AIDANT” to target key thematic threats across the UK, aligned with coordinated activity across Europe. In the context of Brexit, the UK will continue our work with European partners to eradicate modern slavery no matter what shape our relationship with the EU takes.

You call for long-term support for victims of modern slavery. As part of a package of reforms to the support provided through the National Referral Mechanism (NRM), we are trialling the period of ‘move-on’ support for confirmed victims from 14 days to 45 days. This is in addition to the minimum 45 day period of support. During this extended period, victims will be supported safely and securely to move into their future community, either in the UK or overseas. To facilitate the process of confirmed victims transitioning into communities from the NRM, the Home Office and the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government are working with six local authorities to identify best practice for transitioning into communities and accessing local services; and as part of the new victim care contract, from April 2020, the Home Office will be introducing drop-in support, which victims will be able to access for up to six months providing weekly signposting and advocacy.

The Government has listened to the concerns that victim entitlements in England and Wales are not currently set out in domestic law. In October 2017, Ministers announced that they will exercise powers under Section 50 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 to set out victim entitlements in regulation and statutory guidance under Section 49 of the Modern Slavery Act.

Independent Child Trafficking Advocates (ICTAs) are a source of specialist support for trafficked children. They are an independent source of advice and support for trafficked children who can advocate on their behalf.

We have also invested an additional £2m to expand a revised Independent Child Trafficking Advocates (ICTA) model of provision into West Midlands, East Midlands and Croydon. This will mean, by April 2019, one third of all local authorities in England and Wales will have an ICTA service.

You will also be aware that the UK has introduced protections for Overseas Domestic Workers, removing the condition which tied a worker to a specific employer by allowing them to switch to a different employer within the 6 month validity of their visa. This provision was also extended to domestic workers employed in diplomatic households. We have also increased the period of leave which can be granted to an Overseas Domestic Worker found to be a victim of modern slavery from six months to two years. This is in addition to existing provisions for Discretionary Leave which are available to all victims of modern slavery.

I hope that the above provides insight into the Government’s strategy that will be useful for the council’s approach. The Government very much welcomes the engagement of local councils on modern slavery issues, including considering their own procurement and taking steps to protect against modern slavery risks. We will shortly be publishing detailed guidance to support organisations in producing statements, and you are welcome to [sign up to our contact database](#) to receive modern slavery reporting guidance and resources to

help you scrutinize your procurement processes. I hope these resources support the actions you are planning to take with your corporate procurement team, contractors and grievance process.

Kind regards,



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