

# Adoption of Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for 2022/2023

MC/22/90

Date of meeting	17-18 October 2022
Contact name and details	Laura Kent, Legal Counsel lcp@methodistchurch.org.uk
Action required	For approval
Resolutions	90/1. The Council adopts the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for 2022/23, as set out in the report.  902. The Council delegates the approval of future Modern Slavery Transparency Statements to the Connexional Secretary, acting on behalf of the Council.

## Summary of content

Subject of aims	To review the Church's compliance with the Modern Slavery Act 2015.
Background context and relevant documents (with function)	MC/19/26 Adoption of Modern Slavery Statement MC/20/28 Modern Slavery Act 2015 - Transparency Statement MC/21/29 Adoption of Modern Slavery Statement
Consultations	Connexional Team Procurement Manager

## Introduction

- 1.0** Under section 54 of the Modern Slavery Act 2015 ('the Act') 'commercial organisations' with an annual turnover of £36 million or more are required to produce annual modern slavery transparency statements. Statements must outline steps taken to ensure that modern slavery does not feature in their businesses or supply chains.
- 1.1** The Methodist Council is not a 'commercial organisation' for the purposes of the section 54(2) of the Act. It nevertheless complies with the legislation voluntarily, given the Church's commitment to eradicating modern slavery.
- 1.2** The Methodist Council supervises the work which the Connexional Team does under Standing Order 303(2). It has adopted statements on the Connexional Team's behalf for the connexional years 2018/19, 2019/20 and 2020/2021.

## Modern slavery transparency statement for the connexional year 2022/23

- 2.0** The Home Office monitors compliance with the legislation. The Home Office Guidance issued notes that statements should ideally demonstrate year on year improvement.

- 2.1 The Legal and Constitutional Practice Team based in the Conference Office therefore consulted the Connexional Team's Procurement Manager in respect of changes made to procedures since the Council's approval of the 2020/21 statement in January 2021.
- 2.2 The Procurement Manager has noted that our procedures remain robust, consistent and at the highest standard in respect of Procurement and as a result she stated that the Connexional Team's procedures did not require adjustment as they have remained more or less unchanged.
- 2.3 The Statement for the year 2022/23 therefore remains largely unchanged.
- 2.4 The Council is asked to adopt the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement below for the year 2022/23.
- 2.5 Due diligence activities in relation to existing strategic suppliers will continue during annual business reviews to ensure that our suppliers regularly review and map their supply chain to identify and mitigate potential modern slavery risks related to their business.
- 2.6 The Legal and Constitutional Practice Team in the Conference Office is meanwhile keeping under review amendments that the Government has proposed to the Act. The date at which they will take effect is yet to be confirmed.
- 2.7 The Council is asked to consider whether to delegate the signing off of the Transparency Statements to the Connexional Secretary in future years. This would be on the understanding that, if there were any significant changes to consider, they would be brought back to the Council.

### **\*\*\*RESOLUTIONS**

- 90/1. **The Council adopts the Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for 2022/23, as set out in the report.**
902. **The Council delegates the approval of future Modern Slavery Transparency Statements to the Connexional Secretary, acting on behalf of the Council.**

# **Modern Slavery Statement**

## **Modern Slavery Act 2015 – Transparency Statement 2022 - 2023**

The Methodist Church is committed to working in partnership with others to see the eradication of slavery. As such, the Methodist Church has processes in place that validate, insofar as is reasonably practical, that any part of the Methodist Church only contracts with organisations that pay their staff the statutory new living wage or preferably the living wage according to the Living Wage Foundation. The Methodist Conference (the decision making body of the Church), has convened a task group that has worked on producing an on-line resource of practical materials to raise awareness of the issue among Methodists, to assist in individual and collective decision making, and to influence government policy at a local and national level in response to the reality of slavery and human trafficking.

### **Introduction to the Methodist Church**

The Methodist Council oversees the work of the Connexional Team which resources the wider Church in seeking to fulfil Our Calling. This statement is adopted by the Methodist Council in seeking to ensure that the supply chains procured and utilised by the Connexional Team do not support slavery or human trafficking.

## Supply chain

The Connexional Team has a procurement policy that requires as part of the tendering process that potential suppliers might be asked about: –

1. attitude to and deployment of the UK Living Wage;
2. compliance with legislation and codes of practice. Wherever possible, the Methodist Council only enters into contracts with organisations that are signed up to the Living Wage Foundation and where a supplier is not already signed up, will seek to ensure that the organisation becomes a member of the Living Wage Foundation within a fixed period of time.

In seeking to ensure that slavery does not take place within the supply chains procured and utilised by the Connexional Team further steps shall be taken which will include: –

- Ensuring that all suppliers to the Connexional Team are committed to abolishing slavery and checking their modern slavery statements where appropriate.
- The Methodist Council will not enter into contracts and if necessary will withdraw from an existing contract, if an organisation does not have in place a commitment to abolishing slavery.
- The Methodist Church will only do business with suppliers who have their own anti-slavery and trafficking statements, who enter into contractual warranties and who are willing to provide compliance and audit information.
- New contracts will include wherever possible the right to terminate for breach of the Act.

## Compliance with the Ethical (Investment) Policy

The Methodist Church complies with the Ethical (Investment) Policy of the Methodism Council and obtains advice when required from JACEI, CFB etc. JACEI submits an annual report to the Methodist Conference, where there is also an informal event where ethical investment can be discussed and a leaflet is published that looks at some of the issues that JACEI has dealt with over the last year. The annual reports can be found on the Methodist Church website here: [Ethical investment \(methodist.org.uk\)](https://www.methodist.org.uk/ethical-investment)

Our Policies reflect our commitment to acting ethically and with integrity in all our business and as part of our commitment to preventing modern slavery and human trafficking, colleagues have access to policies including whistleblowing and are encouraged to raise any concerns about their own treatment by the company, or individual colleagues, in confidence and without fear. The Church continues to maintain its on-line resource material aimed at raising awareness and helping to counter slavery.

The Policy will be reviewed to reflect public policy and legislative changes and is made pursuant to Section 54(1) of The Modern Slavery Act 2015 and constitutes our slavery and human trafficking Statement for the financial year ending 31<sup>st</sup> August 2023.

Regarding the adoption of this statement, please see Methodist Council Paper **MC/19/26**.

*Approved by the Methodist Council on **18 October 2022** and signed on its behalf by Mr Doug Swanney, Connexional Secretary on **xxxx***