

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 2 DECEMBER 2010**PRESCRIPTION DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POLICY AND PROCEDURE****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****Purpose of report**

1. The purpose of this report is to seek Employment Committee approval to implement the Prescription Drugs and Alcohol Policy and Procedure. The Policy is designed to provide a framework to enable instances of prescription drugs and alcohol misuse to be recognised and handled in an appropriate, fair consistent manner.

Current Position

2. Currently there is no policy which specifically deals with prescription drugs and alcohol. Historically, these issues have been managed informally or as part of the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure. However, it is recognised that the misuse of prescription drugs and alcohol is a sensitive issue which requires more specific guidance for line managers to ensure that these issues are managed fairly and consistently.

Key Elements of the Policy and Procedure

3. The Council is committed to providing a safe and productive work environment and to promoting the health, safety and well-being of its employees.
4. The Policy aims to increase awareness and knowledge of the effects of excessive alcohol and drugs and their associated risks.
5. The Policy does not include illegal drug misuse. Known instances of illegal drug misuse will be viewed as misconduct and dealt with accordingly.
6. The Policy encourages employees to seek help by contacting their own GP, the Council's Wellbeing Service and their line manager in order to receive the appropriate support.
7. Once Occupational Health have identified a substance misuse problem and the employee accepts the opportunity to receive immediate help, the employee will be entitled to reasonable paid time away from the workplace to attend any medical appointments, counselling or support groups which will assist with their rehabilitation.

8. Managers will work closely with Occupational Health in order to obtain advice regarding the employee's suitability to continue working in their current role and possible adjustments, e.g. reduction in hours.
9. Although the Council advocates a supportive approach towards dealing with substance dependency there may be occasions where it will be necessary to instigate either the disciplinary, attendance or capability policy and procedure.
10. Employees must notify their line manager immediately, if through taking prescribed or over the counter medication, they experience side effects which impair their ability to undertake their duties safely and effectively.

Consultation

11. The Trade Unions and Worker Groups have been consulted on the development of the Prescription Drugs and Alcohol Policy and Procedure.

Recommendation

12. The Employment Committee is asked to note the content of the report and approve the Policy and Procedure.

Background Papers

13. None.

Circulation under Local Issues Alert Procedure

14. None

Equal Opportunities Implications

15. An Equality Impact Assessment has being completed for the policy and there are no significant issues arising.

Officer to Contact

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List of Appendices

Appendix – Prescription Drugs and Alcohol Policy