

**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE - 18 OCTOBER 2012****DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY AND GUIDANCE****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present and seek approval for the Council's proposed Domestic Abuse Policy and Guidance.

**Background**

2. The County Council currently does not have a Domestic Violence or Abuse Policy.
3. From April 2011, Domestic Violence Homicide Reviews became a statutory requirement under Section 9 of the Domestic Violence, Crime and Victims Act (2004). Therefore, employers are encouraged to carry out reliable record keeping regarding the support and information provided to employees.
4. The County Council also has a duty of care under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees.
5. Consultation with the Domestic Violence department and negotiation with trade unions commenced in July 2012 in order to create a new Domestic Abuse Policy.

**Key Points**

6. A copy of the Policy is attached as Appendix A to this report.
7. The purpose of the Policy is to increase awareness of the signs and indicators of domestic abuse and to provide appropriate information and guidance to support an employee experiencing domestic abuse as well as assist the perpetrators to address the consequences of their abuse on others.
8. The fundamental principle of the Policy is that, by maintaining confidentiality, the Council can encourage employees to discuss their situation and consequently help an individual experiencing domestic abuse make positive changes to reduce the level of risk to themselves and others. However, the Policy also recognises that confidentiality can only be

maintained as far as is reasonably practical within our duties as an employer (ie. consent of the employee to divulge information is required unless we are required to do so by law or the information is necessary for the protection of children and vulnerable adults).

9. The Policy also highlights the responsibilities of employees and line managers as well as identify possible workplace adjustments that may be made to support the employee to change their circumstances to increase their safety as well as their efficiency/attendance at work (if applicable).
10. The Policy also signposts staff to the County Council's Domestic Violence Home Page, as well as list additional support mechanisms/organisations for employees to contact.

### **Implementation**

11. The Policy has been fully supported by the trade unions and the County Council's Domestic Violence department.
12. If approved by the Employment Committee, this Policy will become effective from 22 October 2012 and the Domestic Violence department will launch this new Policy as part of Domestic Violence week in November 2012.
13. The Policy's application will be monitored through ongoing discussions with Trade Unions, the Domestic Violence department and managers alike.

### **Recommendation**

The Employment Committee is asked to approve the Domestic Abuse Policy and Guidance for implementation from 22 October 2012.

### **Background Papers**

None.

### **Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure**

14. None

### **Officers to Contact:**

Lucy Littlefair, Corporate HR Manager  
Tel: 0116 305 6333  
Email: [lucy.littlefair@leics.gov.uk](mailto:lucy.littlefair@leics.gov.uk)

### **Equal Opportunities Implications**

15. An Equalities Impact Assessment is being undertaken.