

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 18 OCTOBER 2012**SUBSTANCE MISUSE POLICY AND GUIDANCE****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to present and seek the Employment Committee's approval for the Council's proposed Substance Misuse Policy and Guidance.

Background

2. The County Council currently does not have a Substance Misuse Policy in place.
3. The County Council has a duty of care as an employer under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 to ensure the health, safety and welfare of its employees.
4. All employees have a responsibility to present themselves fit for work and be capable of carrying out their duties fully in a competent and safe manner.
5. Consultation with the Drugs and Alcohol Team (DAAT) and negotiation with trade unions commenced in May 2012 in order to create a new Substance Misuse Policy.

Key Points

6. A copy of the Policy is attached as Appendix A to this paper.
7. The purpose of the Substance Misuse Policy is to raise awareness for employees and managers and to provide a guidance framework to enable substance misuse by employees to be recognised by managers so that it can be handled in an appropriate, fair and consistent manner, whilst taking into account individual circumstances.
8. The fundamental principle of the Policy is that, by maintaining confidentiality, the Council can help employees experiencing substance misuse, make positive changes and increase their safety.

9. However, confidentiality can only be maintained as far as it is reasonably practical within the duties as an employer. The Council may involve other agencies or share information with the consent of the employee concerned, unless required to do so by law or the information is necessary for the protection of children or vulnerable adults.
10. The Policy highlights the responsibilities of employees and line managers as well as providing information about recognising potential signs of substance misuse whilst taking in account any reasonable adjustments which may be required to support the employee.
11. Whilst the Policy aims to create a supportive environment, reference is made to situations where transition to more formal policies such as Disciplinary, Capability and Attendance Management may be necessary.
12. The Policy also signposts staff to the County Council's Welling information pages, as well as provide a list of external organisations for employees to contact who require additional support and intervention.

Implementation

13. The Policy has been fully supported by the trade unions and the County Council's Drugs and Alcohol Team.
14. If approved by the Employment Committee, this Policy will become effective from 22 October 2012 and made available on the staff internal network for employees and managers to view before the Drugs and Alcohol Team hold their Alcohol Awareness Campaign, week commencing 19 November 2012.
15. The Policy's application will be monitored through ongoing discussions with Trade Unions, the Drugs and Alcohol Team and managers alike.

Recommendations

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

Background Papers

None

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

16. None

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Equal Opportunities Implications

17. An Equalities Impact Assessment is being undertaken.