

EAST HERTS COUNCIL

LOCAL JOINT PANEL – 30 SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT BY SECRETARY TO THE EMPLOYER’S SIDE

SMOKE-FREE WORKPLACE POLICY

WARD(S) AFFECTED: NONE

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**Purpose/Summary of Report**

Members are invited to consider the Smoke Free Workplace Policy and to make a recommendation or not, to Human Resources Committee.

**RECOMMENDATION FOR LOCAL JOINT PANEL:**

**That:**

(A)	the revised Smoke-free Workplace Policy be approved.
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1.0 Background

1.1 The revised Smoke-Free Workplace policy was considered at Local Joint Panel (LJP) on 11 March 2015. The policy had been updated to support the Council’s Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2013-18 and supported feedback received through managers and the Here to Help programme. A number of key changes were proposed which effectively introduced a totally smoke free environment within the Council’s premises from 1 January 2016.

1.2 At LJP, the Secretary to the Staff Side queried the enforceability of a total ban and how this might, from a wider perspective, create problems for managers. The Secretary to the Staff side suggested that a more positive approach to encourage employees not to smoke was less adversarial and more supportive.

1.3 The Chairman suggested that the matter be deferred to enable the Secretary to the Employer’s Side to:

- review the implications of a total no smoking ban;
  - consider ways in which smokers could be encouraged not to smoke; and
  - consider how the Council could influence service providers i.e. contractors in enforcing a total ban.
- 1.4 Further work has been completed following the suggestions above.
- 1.5 The implications of a total smoking ban have been reviewed. Reviewing a map showing the Council's boundaries at the Wallfields site has revealed that a total smoking ban on the Council's premises would mean that the nearest place that employees could go to smoke is on Pegs Lane. If employees smoked here, they would be in full view of the Bentley House Nursing Care Home and any passing traffic (pedestrian and vehicles) on this busy route. There would also be potential problems in disposing of cigarette butts here. These would have reputational issues for the Council.
- 1.6 A further implication of a total smoking ban at the Wallfields site is that employees are likely to take longer smoking breaks as they would have to walk further outside of the Council's premises. This would be a particular problem for front line employees where cover for those wishing to take a smoking break has to be provided.
- 1.7 Further consideration has been given to how the Council could encourage smokers not to smoke. In addition to the sources of information and advice already included in the policy, the Council could link in with National Initiatives such as No Smoking Day by displaying promotional leaflets and posters in its offices. It could encourage smokers to support each other to quit and set themselves challenges. It could also further promote Health and Wellbeing initiatives such as Step Jockey and the World Towers Challenge.
- 1.8 When contractors visit any of the Council's premises they are given a copy of the 'Contractor's Health and Safety Information' document dated June 2014. This document includes a paragraph which states that smoking is only permitted in the designated smoking areas. There are no reported issues of contractors not following this procedure.
- 1.9 Staff at the Buntingford depot, which is managed by Veolia, abide by Veolia's health and safety procedures which includes the

stipulation that smoking is only permitted in the designated area.

## 2.0 Report

### 2.1 **Key Changes**

2.2 All references to employees not being able to smoke anywhere on the Council's premises have been removed from the Policy however a sentence has been added that the Council is working towards a totally smoke-free environment by 1 January 2017.

Please see **Essential Reference Paper 'B'** for the revised Smoke-free Workplace Policy

## 3.0 Implications/Consultations

3.1 Information on any corporate issues and consultation associated with this report can be found within **Essential Reference Paper 'A'**.

## Background Papers

None

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