

Local Joint Panel

Date of Meeting: 2 November 2021

**Report by: Head of Human Resources & Organisational
Development**

Report title: Domestic Abuse Policy

Ward(s) affected: None

Summary

RECOMMENDATIONS:

(a) That the Panel endorses the East Herts Domestic Abuse Policy for approval by the Human Resources Committee.

1.0 Proposal(s)

- 1.1 The proposals are set out in the recommendations above.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The draft East Herts Domestic Abuse Policy was written following on from recommendations made by the Hertfordshire Safeguarding Board at the 2019 Hertfordshire Safeguarding Adults Board (HSAB) self-assessment day.
- 2.2 The policy outlines the council's commitment to responding sensitively and effectively to those employees needing help and support should they experience domestic abuse, promoting the view that violence against people is unacceptable and will not be condoned.
- 2.3 The policy is underpinned by a commitment to the

principles of safeguarding children and vulnerable adults, a duty of care to the council's employees and equality and diversity

- 2.4 The policy aims to positively assist and support employees experiencing or surviving domestic abuse and assist managers in supporting staff where incidents of domestic abuse are reported.
- 2.5 Providing appropriate support to staff experiencing, or surviving, domestic abuse can reduce absences from work, assist in improving performance and help staff to feel valued and supported.

3.0 Report

- 3.1 Following on from feedback form the HSAB self-assessment day in 2019, the action to develop a Domestic Abuse Policy was added to the East Herts Council Safeguarding Action Plan.
- 3.2 The policy has been written by the Service Manager – Community Wellbeing & Partnerships, one of East Herts' safeguarding leads, in consultation with the East Herts Safeguarding Policy Group.
- 3.3 The Safeguarding Policy Group brings together the Head of Housing & Health as East Herts Safeguarding Lead, with the Head of HR & Organisational Development and the Executive Member for Neighbourhoods, who has responsibility for safeguarding, and, among other things, monitors the Safeguarding Action Plan on a quarterly basis.
- 3.4 The policy outlines East Herts Council's stance on domestic abuse, making it clear that verbal or physical by any council employee, on or off duty, is unacceptable.
- 3.5 The policy provides advice and guidance for staff with regards to how to handle cases of domestic abuse

sensitively and respectfully, supporting staff and keep them safe while ensuring the necessary information is recorded and actions taken.

- 3.6 UNISON has been consulted on the draft Domestic Abuse Policy and are supportive.

4.0 Implications/Consultations

Community Safety

The Policy has an important role to play in community safety issues as they relate to council employees.

Data Protection

Any information shared by a member of staff will be subject to the council's standard data protection policies.

Equalities

A separate equalities analysis has not been conducted as it is felt the overall equalities analysis of HR policies pertains to this proposed one.

Environmental Sustainability

There are no environmental sustainability implications arising from this report.

Financial

There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Health and Safety

The policy outlines arrangements that can be implemented to ensure the health and safety of staff surviving, or experiencing, domestic abuse.

Human Resources

The policy provides guidance and advice for staff on how to manage

domestic abuse concerns, how to support staff. This includes advice on support for staff from both EHC and line managers.

Human Rights

There are no human rights implications arising from this report.

Legal

There are no specific legal implications arising from this report.

Specific Wards

No

5.0 Background papers, appendices and other relevant material

- 5.1 The updated Domestic Abuse Policy is attached at Appendix 1.

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