

SUBJECT:	UPDATED INTERNAL DOMESTIC ABUSE POLICY
DIRECTORATE:	COMMUNITIES AND ENVIRONMENT
REPORT AUTHOR:	FRANCECSA BELL – PPASB & LICENSING SERVICE MANAGER

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 To brief Policy Scrutiny Committee members on the revised Internal Domestic Abuse policy.
- 1.2 To seek the views of the Policy Scrutiny Committee on the revised policy prior to its consideration by the Executive.

2. Executive Summary

- 2.1 The City of Lincoln Council have a legal and moral obligation to ensure that the workplace is safe and in relation to supporting victims of Domestic Abuse. It is therefore necessary to have a clear policy setting out the council's response and responsibilities in relation Domestic Abuse which impacts our workforce whether as victims or perpetrators.
- 2.2 Attached to this report is a revised and updated version of the Council's Internal Domestic Abuse Policy.

3. Background

- 3.1 Domestic Abuse has risen on the national agenda over the last decade with new and widened definitions being introduced as well as specific Act's to tackle Domestic Abuse and set a framework for the support that victims can expect.
- 3.2 The City of Lincoln Council is committed to tackling Domestic Abuse and is a active statutory partner in the Domestic Abuse Board in Lincolnshire.
- 3.3 The City of Lincoln Council has an external safeguarding policy which sets out how we identify and support victims who may be among our customers. This function has been discharged by the Council's Public Protection and Anti-Social Behaviour (PPASB) service.
- 3.4 The Council's Internal Domestic Abuse Policy was last revised and updated in 2014 and so following changes in legislation and more detailed definitions being produced a policy refresh was required.

4. The revised Internal Domestic Abuse Policy

- 4.1 The revised policy can be found attached as appendix A.

- 4.2 A detailed definition has been provided in section 2 of the policy to reflect the current legal definition and the complex nature of domestic abuse.
- 4.3 The sections involving domestic abuse in the workplace have been reworded and updated for ease of reading to ensure they are robust and fit for purpose.
- 4.4 Section 7: safety at work has been added to provide guidance on what the council may do to support and keep safe victims of Domestic Abuse whilst they are in the workplace.
- 4.5 Section 9: recording of concerns has been added to set out how concerns will be recorded confidentially.
- 4.6 Section 11: raising awareness in the workplace has been added. This section sets out how the council will raise awareness of this policy and the support available for those experiencing Domestic Abuse.
- 4.7 Section 12: legislation has been added to the policy to set out the relevant legislation that related to domestic abuse and our obligations to protect our employees.

5. Strategic Priorities

5.1 Let's reduce all kinds of inequality

Domestic Abuse nuisance can disproportionately affect those most vulnerable within our communities including those within our workforce. This policy ensures the Council's response is relevant and effective.

5.2 Let's enhance our remarkable place

By ensuring that the council is a safe and supportive workplace can help to ensure that our employees feel safe and are supported with personal issues. This allows the council to lead by example and helps to enhance our remarkable place.

6. Organisational Impacts

6.1 Finance (including whole life costs where applicable)

There are no significant financial impacts associated with this policy. However legal challenge may result in legal expenses.

6.2 Legal Implications including Procurement Rules

The legal implications of this policy are ensuring that the council fulfils its statutory obligations in relation to both employment law and the Domestic Abuse Act.

6.3 Equality, Diversity and Human Rights

The Public Sector Equality Duty means that the Council must consider all individuals when carrying out their day-to-day work, in shaping policy, delivering services and in relation to their own employees.

It requires that public bodies have due regard to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination
- Advance equality of opportunity
- Foster good relations between different people when carrying out their activities

This policy seeks to ensure that both equality and diversity are considered at the point of disclosure of Domestic Abuse being made. The policy serves to ensure that no-one is unfairly impacted and that the support available can be accessed by all.

6.4 **Human Resources**

There are HR implications related to this policy. As a victim of Domestic abuse this will not affect employment rights and support will be offered.

As a perpetrator of Domestic Abuse this policy may be read in conjunction with other policies such as the code of conduct policy or disciplinary policy where appropriate.

6.5 **Land, Property and Accommodation**

There are no land, property or accommodation implications.

6.6 **Significant Community Impact &/or Environmental Impact**

There are no significant community or environmental implications.

6.7 **Corporate Health and Safety implications**

Domestic abuse may have a negative psychological impact on those who experience it as well as those who are disclosed to. Support for these individuals will be provided or signposted as appropriate.

7. **Risk Implications**

7.1 **(i) Options Explored**

No further options explored

7.2 **(ii) Key risks associated with the preferred approach**

This policy seeks to reduce risks associated with noise nuisance.

8. **Recommendation**

- 8.1 That Policy scrutiny committee consider and comment on the policy and refer to Executive.

Is this a key decision? No

Do the exempt information categories apply? No

Does Rule 15 of the Scrutiny Procedure Rules (call-in and urgency) apply?

No

How many appendices does the report contain?

One

List of Background Papers:

None

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