

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>Domestic Abuse Policy Update</b>
<b>FOR CONSIDERATION BY</b>	Personnel Board – 20 <sup>th</sup> September 2023
<b>WARD</b>	None Specific
<b>LEAD OFFICER</b>	Sally Halliwell – Head of HR and OD

## **RECOMMENDATION**

That Personnel Board approves the revision to the Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy for line managers and staff and so that the Council can progress its accreditation with the DAHA (Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance).

## **SUMMARY OF REPORT**

The Domestic Abuse Policy will set out what Wokingham Borough Council employees can expect from the Council when they are experiencing or perpetrating domestic abuse. This will allow the Council to demonstrate that there should be confidence in reporting abuse and mitigate the adverse effects of domestic abuse in the workplace.

The policy revision and the separate guidance documents are required to meet accreditation from Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance which the Council is aiming to achieve in October 2023 as we have a requirement to provide clear guidance for staff affected by this.

This is a policy refresh to ensure we are delivering against the requirements for accreditation achievement and involved HR, Public Health and Community Safety.

## **BACKGROUND**

Domestic abuse is estimated to affect 1 in 4 women and 1 in 6 men during their lifetime, with 1 in 10 adults affected in the last 12 months. Based on the statistical likelihood of 5.5% of people experiencing domestic abuse in the past year, this would equate to 74 WBC employees being victims of domestic abuse in the past year. During their lifetime, 293 employees of WBC are statistically likely to be victims of domestic abuse.

Employers have a duty to safeguard the wellbeing of staff and the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 makes clear that employers should consider the impact of domestic abuse on their employees as part of their duty of care.

The policy and guidance sets out the support available to colleagues experiencing domestic abuse, how line managers and colleagues can spot the signs and offer support and provides information on additional support available from other organisations.

## **COSTINGS**

Domestic Abuse costs businesses an estimated £14 billion each year through decreased productivity, time off work, lost wages and sick pay.

This proposal will provide a clear framework for WBC's response to domestic abuse and non-financial costs will involve staff time in delivery and attendance at awareness raising sessions, completion of short e-learning module for all staff and workshop sessions for line managers.

Financial costs will be the production and dissemination of policy and guidance documents as well as posters to display in the workplace however these costs will be part of the Council's corporate budget that is built to deliver on its core responsibilities to its workforce.

## FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE RECOMMENDATION

	How much will it Cost	Is there sufficient funding	Revenue or Capital?
Current Financial Year (Year 1)	£0	NA	NA
Next Financial Year (Year 2)	£0	NA	NA
Following Financial Year (Year 3)	£0	NA	NA

### Other financial information relevant to the Recommendation/Decision

None

### Cross-Council Implications

None

### Reasons for considering the report in Part 2

N/A

### List of Background Papers

Domestic Abuse Policy and Support Guidance

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