



## Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council

Forward timetable of consultation and decision making

Ethical Governance and Personnel Committee

15 February 2023

Wards affected: all wards

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### Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2022-25

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Report of Director (Community Services)

#### **1. Purpose of report**

- 1.1 To present for approval the updated Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2022-25. (Appendix 1)

#### **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the policy and procedure is approved.

#### **3. Background to the report**

- 3.1 Employment is vital to earn an income and financial security helps maintain social connections which help with maintaining a person's health and wellbeing. For individuals experiencing domestic abuse, the workplace itself can also be a place of safety and respite from the abuser, and a place where they can make the arrangements they need and contact specialist services.
- 3.2 Domestic abuse not only impacts on the well-being of victims, but it affects the financial strength and success of the organisations for which they work. Seventy-five per cent of those experiencing domestic abuse are targeted at work and it is often possible for perpetrators to use workplace resources such as phones, email and other means to threaten, harass or abuse their current or former partner (CAADV (Corporate Alliance against Domestic Violence )2012).
- 3.3 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 aims to protect those persons who experience domestic abuse and to strengthen measures to deal with those who bring about domestic abuse. The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory definition of domestic abuse is 'the behaviour of one person towards another where: both people are

aged 16 or over and are personally connected to each other and the behaviour is abusive’.

- 3.4 The council’s current and first Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure was approved in 2017 by the council’s Ethical Governance and Personnel Committee.
- 3.5 The new Domestic Abuse Policy and Procedure 2022-25 (Appendix 1) is based on best practise policies from other organisations held by the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA), advice and guidance from experts within DAHA and Public Health alongside best practise policy researched via the council’s HR department. Revisions also reflect legislative changes, in particular the Domestic Abuse Act 2021, and changes to domestic abuse support and partner agencies.
- 3.6 This policy and procedure is for all staff.
- 3.7 The policy and procedure supports Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council’s commitment to tackling domestic abuse within the workplace and its commitment to ensure the safety of its employees.
- 3.8 The policy and procedure aims to be a practical guide to employees and managers on how to effectively respond to domestic abuse within the workplace and how to support employees affected by domestic abuse.
- 3.9 The policy and procedure, on approval, will continue to be supported by a relevant training programme for employees and managers.
- 3.10 Within the policy and procedure the importance of using specialist services to support employees is stressed.
- 3.11 Consultation on the updated policy and procedure has taken place with the council’s safeguarding team, the council’s domestic abuse outreach team, HR, Public Health, SLT, Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and the recognised trade unions. Any comments received have been considered and incorporated as appropriate.
- 3.12 The main changes of note to the policy include:
  - relevant updates to legislative information
  - updates and additions to contacts and support pathways
  - inclusion of relevant hyperlinks for further information and direct access to other documentation
  - addition of further perpetrator guidance
  - a section on employer and employee duties
- 3.13 The policy and procedure will be formally reviewed again in 2025 alongside being refreshed annually to ensure accuracy.

3.14 A robust domestic abuse training programme for staff and managers will support these policies.

#### **4. Exemptions in accordance with the Access to Information procedure rules**

4.1 The report is to be taken in open session.

#### **5. Financial implications [CS]**

5.1 None arising directly from this report. The training programme will be met from existing budgets.

#### **6. Legal implications [MR]**

6.1 Set out in the report.

#### **7. Corporate Plan implications**

7.1 This report relates to priority ambitions of Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2022-25, namely:

People: helping people to stay healthy and protected from harm.

#### **8. Consultation**

8.1 The policy and procedure has been subject to full consultation with the council's safeguarding team, the council's domestic abuse outreach team, HR, Public Health, SLT, Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA) and the recognised trade unions.

#### **9. Risk implications**

9.1 It is the council's policy to proactively identify and manage significant risks which may prevent delivery of business objectives.

9.2 It is not possible to eliminate or manage all risks all of the time and risks will remain which have not been identified. However, it is the officer's opinion based on the information available, that the significant risks associated with this decision / project have been identified, assessed and that controls are in place to manage them effectively.

9.3 No risks identified.

#### **10. Knowing your community – equality and rural implications**

10.1 The policy and procedure is for all staff.

10.2 The policy and procedure aims to support and protect all staff who are affected by domestic abuse irrespective of their age, culture, disability,

gender, gender identity, language, racial origin, socio-economic status, religious belief, marital status, pregnancy or maternity and/ or sexual orientation.

## **11. Climate implications**

11.1 Work will be delivered to limit carbon impact where possible, for example using virtual methods of engagement and paperless systems.

## **12. Corporate implications**

12.1 By submitting this report, the report author has taken the following into account:

- Community safety implications
- Environmental implications
- ICT implications
- Asset management implications
- Procurement implications
- Human resources implications
- Planning implications
- Data protection implications
- Voluntary sector

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### **Background papers:**

#### **Appendix 1 – Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy and Procedure 2022-25**

On approval the documents will be available on the council's intranet

Contact officer: Rachel Burgess 01455 255746  
Executive member: Councillor S Bray  
Councillor M Mullaney