

## Agenda Item: 19

**Executive Board**

**15 July 2009**

**KJ**



### Policy Updates

#### Summary

This report outlines key changes to the Corporate Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy and our Recruitment and Selection Policy. The report also introduces a new policy called Employment Screening. This provides a summary document outlining how we ensure that the Council undertakes all the necessary employment checks and ensures compliance with current and forthcoming legislation.

#### Recommendation

**That Executive Board agrees the following policies as attached:**

- Corporate Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy
- Recruitment and Selection Policy
- Employment Screening Policy

#### a) Reasons for Recommendation

It is recommended that the Executive Board agrees the Corporate Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy as this articulates EDDC's zero tolerance stance and demonstrates support for all staff in this situation.

It is recommended that the Executive Board agrees the Recruitment and Selection Policy and the Employment Screening Policy to ensure legal compliance.

#### b) Alternative Options

Not to agree these policies.

#### c) Risk Considerations

That the Council is challenged in an employment tribunal for lack of compliance and that there are costly claims as a result.

#### d) Policy and Budgetary Considerations

None

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### 1 Corporate Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy

1.1 The Corporate Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy has been updated to articulate the Council's zero tolerance approach to domestic violence and our commitment to training. The policy includes practical advice and guidance to managers to help them take a pro-active stance where it becomes apparent that there are domestic violence issues.

1.2 The policy will also identify Contact Officers (these will be staff volunteers who receive special training). Contact Officers will be available to staff who would like support but who do not feel comfortable discussing issues with their Line Manager.

1.3 The policy is supported with a managers' guide which contains helpful guidance as well as details of the Against Domestic Violence and Abuse Helplines, Women's Aid and other important contacts. These contacts have been made available to staff through posters and the intranet.

## **2 Recruitment and Selection Policy**

2.1 This policy has been revised to incorporate a mandatory requirement for managers to use work based tests and personality questionnaires during the recruitment and selection process. The policy also confirms that all managers must have attended our in house recruitment and selection training before being involved in this activity.

2.2 These changes are intended to facilitate a more rounded recruitment process which does not rely on interview questions alone and one which requires candidates to demonstrate skills and abilities in job related activities.

2.3 EDDC is working hard to develop a people based culture and good people management is at the heart of all we do. For this reason, the policy now requires that all recruitment for people managers includes a personality questionnaire which will highlight leadership and managerial styles and preferences. These are used widely in both the private and public sector.

## **3 Employment Screening Policy**

3.1 This policy brings together details of all checking that we are required to undertake in relation to our existing and prospective employees and 'workers' (interims, temps and agency workers). This is a complex legislative area and there are significant risks including health and safety implications and heavy financial penalties for employers who do not make adequate employment checks.

3.2 From October 2009, the old vetting and barring system known as the VBS will be replaced by a streamlined scheme run by the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA). The ISA promises to provide 'the toughest ever scheme.'

3.3 It is creating two new lists: people barred from working with children and people barred from working with vulnerable adults. The lists will replace the current List 99, the Protection of Children Act List ('PoCA'), the Protection of Vulnerable Adults List ('PoVa'). Those people on the existing lists will have their cases reviewed by the ISA to assess whether they should remain barred under the new scheme.

3.4 Far more people will be required to register with the ISA than are currently required to have CRB checks. It is estimated that around 10 million people will fall under the scope of the new scheme including 4 million volunteers.

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### **Legal Implications**

The reports refer to a raft of legislation, some of which is expected to change from time to time. The policies should be kept updated in line with these changes, for example in respect of the type of activities subject to regulation by the Independent Safeguarding Authority.

### **Financial Implications**

This report has no direct financial implications.

## **Consultation on Reports to the Executive**

Consultation has taken place with UNISON.

### **Background Papers**

- ❑ Corporate Domestic Violence and Abuse Policy
- ❑ Recruitment and Selection Policy
- ❑ Employment Screening Policy

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Executive Board  
15 July 2009