



RECORD OF DELEGATED DECISION (OFFICER)

1. Decision Reference No.	CEX255
2. Name/Title of Officer	Dawn Garton – Director for Corporate Services
3. Email address of Officer	dgarton@melton.gov.uk
4. Title / Subject Matter:	New Policy – Supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse
5. Type of Decision:	Public
6. Key Decision?	No
7. Decision Taken: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. That the new policy on supporting employees experience domestic abuse and the supporting information in the appendices is approved and implemented in line with usual HR processes2. Approval of 10 days of Safe Leave to be available to employees in support if they are experiencing domestic abuse and the leave of absence policy to be amended to reflect this.	
8. Reasons for Decision: <p>The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 placed extra duties on local authorities to enact their responsibilities under this legislation. As a result a number of employee related actions have been identified which included introducing training for all employees and internal communication and engagement with the workforce.</p> <p>As part of the commitment towards the Domestic Abuse Act, LCC have paid for district councils to achieve accreditation via the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance (DAHA). This involves a set of key policies, procedures and set of standards for council officers to work towards. Accreditation is to be renewed every 3 years and will ensure common practices across the different teams at MBC</p> <p>Currently the council does not have a separate policy on supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse. In order to meet the criteria for the accreditation for DAHA and policy does need to be in place and communicated.</p> <p>The new policy has been developed in consultation with Unison and DAHA both of whom made a valued contribution to the final version of the policy and supporting information</p> <p>The purpose of the policy is to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• support employees experiencing domestic abuse;	

- ensure employees have the confidence to raise issues with their manager and to reassure employees that the council will take their concerns seriously
- aid managers seeking to help team members experiencing domestic abuse;
- enable employees experiencing domestic abuse to remain productive and at work;
- assist colleagues of those experiencing domestic abuse; and
- reinforce our corporate social responsibility objectives by demonstrating that we value, and are prepared to support, staff during difficult periods.

“Safe Leave” has been introduced into the policy which allows employees to take up to 10 days of paid leave during the holiday year. The purpose of the safe leave is to allow employees experiencing domestic abuse the access help and support. It is proposed that safe leave would be recorded in a similar way to compassionate leave and would not therefore impact on an employees sickness absence record or annual leave entitlement. Safe leave would be in addition to the compassionate leave entitlement and not an either or.

9. Authority / Legal Power:

Chapter 2.4 of the Constitution is the Officer Scheme of Delegation. Section 12.1 allows that Chief Officers are delegated authority to take any decision in relation to the functions within their area of service responsibility. This includes, but is not limited to, the ability to exercise within approved budgets, all matters of day to day administration and operational management of the services and functions for which they are responsible, take all necessary action to achieve and implement the objectives and actions set out in approved policies, strategies, plans and decisions of the Council, sign licences and notices and place orders for goods and services relevant to their service areas and increase fees and charges in line with the Financial Procedure Rules. For clarity this includes all operational Human Resources matters relevant to their area of responsibility. It is therefore considered that the Director for Corporate Services has authority to approve the new policy for employees

10. Background Papers attached?

Yes – new policy on supporting employees experiencing domestic abuse

11. Alternative options available / rejected:

1. The Council does not develop and implement a policy on support employees experiencing domestic abuse. This option has been discounted because the council wants to create a supporting working environment where people feel valued and safe to raise any concerns they may have and secondly the policy is required to receive the accreditation to the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance

12. Implications:

Legal	<p>Section 84(4) of the 2021 Act requires persons exercising public functions to have regard to the guidance in the exercise of those functions. Some organisations may also have specific statutory duties to safeguard victims of domestic abuse.</p> <p>Statutory guidance has been issued under section 84 of the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 ('the 2021 Act'). It is intended to increase awareness and inform the response to domestic abuse. It also conveys standards and promotes best practice.</p> <p>A policy will set out how the Council intends to respond to Domestic Abuse.</p> <p>[Legal Approval – 23 November 2022]</p>
Finance	<p>There are no direct financial implications associated with this policy.</p> <p>It will be for each service area to manage within existing budgets were possible to manage any associated work requirements where staff take any "Safe Leave" as with usual staff absences / leave within day to day operational management.</p> <p>[Finance Approval – 20 October 2022]</p>
HR	<p>The policy has been developed in consultation with Unison and DAHA. Communication to all employees will be required as well and ensuring line managers have the skills and knowledge to implement the policy. Full training on Domestic Abuse awareness will be rolled out and made mandatory to all employees.</p> <p>[HR & Communications Approval – 20 October 2022]</p>
13. Signature of Decision Maker with authority to sign	Signature redacted Dawn Garton Director for Corporate Services
14. Consultation with:	Councillor Ronnie de Burle Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance, Finance & Resources
15. Date:	24 November 2022

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