

<b>Report title</b>	<b>Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse at Work Policy</b>
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<b>Department</b>	<b>Human Resources and Organisational Development</b>
<b>Exempt?</b>	No
<b>Exemption type</b>	Not applicable
<b>Reasons for exemption</b>	Not applicable.

**Purpose of report:**

**To resolve**

**Synopsis of report:**

**To consider a proposed new employment policy on Alcohol, Drugs and Substance Misuse (Appendix 1).**

**Recommendation:**

**That the proposed policy be approved, subject to consultation with UNISON.**

**1. Introduction**

1.1 As part of an initiative to modernise all our employment policies Human Resource have recently developed a new policy on how to deal with issues connected with the use of alcohol, drugs and substance misuse where this occurs within our workforce. This policy has been developed by the Council's Workforce Safety Lead within HR in liaison with the DSO's Health and Safety Officer. An older policy on Alcohol at Work has been circulated separately for Members to see the differences between the old and new policy. The main difference is that the new policy deals with Drugs and Substance Misuse and not simply Alcohol.

**1.2 Why has this policy been developed?**

There are various reasons. The use of alcohol and drugs on a recreational basis is part of our society but at times the misuse of alcohol and drugs can impact on employees' fitness to undertake their duties and can impinge on the health and safety of either themselves, their colleagues or members of the public. Consequently, we need to have a policy that sets out how we will deal with the various types of situations which can arise.

1.3 Sadly, there are also employees who become dependent on either alcohol or drugs. Employment law has a mixed approach to employees in this category, expecting that employers try to support employees to recover from such misuse while recognising that at times employees can place either themselves, their colleagues or the public at risk as a consequence. Therefore, this policy attempts to find a balance between these conflicting expectations. This proposed new policy is attached at Appendix One. Since the old policy was developed drugs and substance misuse have become more widespread, hence the new policy covers these aspects.

- 1.4 This policy is put forward for consideration by Members and will be subject to consultation with UNISON.

## **2. Policy Framework Implications**

- 2.1 Updating employment policies meets one of the aims of the Organisational Development Strategy 2022-2026.

## **3. Equality Implications**

- 3.1 An Equality Impact Assessment will be completed.

## **4. Legal Implications**

- 4.1 The Council has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work (Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974) and an ethical responsibility to support employee well-being.

## **Background Papers**

None stated.