

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee on 18th September 2025

Domestic Abuse Policy

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

| | |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Classification | This report is Public |
| Contact Officer | Peter Wilmot, HR Business Partner |

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To approve the implementation of a Domestic Abuse Policy to ensure that Bolsover District Council provides a safe, inclusive and responsive working environment for all employees. The policy formalises the Council's approach to recognising, responding to, and supporting those affected by domestic abuse whether as victims or perpetrators.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Domestic abuse is a pervasive societal issue with significant implications for affected individuals' mental and physical health, personal safety, and employment. Bolsover District Council recognises that some of its employees may be impacted by domestic abuse and that the workplace can play a crucial role in offering safety, stability and support.
- 1.2 The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 introduced a statutory definition of domestic abuse and a legal framework to better protect victims. Employers have a duty of care to safeguard their workforce. This policy affirms Bolsover District Council's commitment to upholding this responsibility.
- 1.3 Prior to this point, the policy has been the subject of consultation with the Council's Specialist Domestic Abuse Officer, Service Managers, Senior Leadership Team and on an informal basis, the Council's recognised Trade Union Representatives.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 The Domestic Abuse Policy includes the following key components:
 - Adoption of the statutory definition of domestic abuse under the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

- Recognition that domestic abuse can affect anyone—regardless of gender, sexuality, age or background—but that women and children are disproportionately affected.
- Clear guidelines for confidentiality and safe disclosure.
- Support mechanisms including time off for legal, housing or health appointments, access to counselling, and flexible working arrangements.
- Practical guidance for managers on identifying signs of abuse and supporting affected staff.
- A framework for dealing with employees who are identified as perpetrators of abuse, including the potential use of disciplinary procedures.
- Signposting to internal and external sources of support, including local helplines and domestic abuse services.

3. **Reasons for Recommendation**

- 3.1 **Legal Compliance** – Aligns the Council’s HR practices with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 and safeguarding best practices.
- 3.2 **Staff Wellbeing** – Promotes a supportive and trauma-informed workplace culture, improving morale, retention, and wellbeing.
- 3.3 **Organisational Reputation** – Demonstrates the Council’s commitment to social responsibility, equality, and community safety.

4. **Conclusion**

The implementation of this policy will reinforce Bolsover District Council’s standing as a responsible and compassionate employer. It ensures appropriate procedures and protections are in place to address a complex and sensitive issue affecting staff and the wider community.

5. **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

- 5.1 Not adopting a formal policy would leave a significant gap in the Council’s ability to appropriately support staff, respond to safeguarding concerns, and mitigate risks to wellbeing and performance. A lack of clear guidance could also expose the organisation to reputational and legal risks.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the Council’s Union Employee Consultation Committee approves the Domestic Abuse Policy as appended to this report.
2. That the HR Team takes steps to raise awareness of the policy among staff and management and provides training on how to identify and respond to domestic abuse in the workplace.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS:**Finance and Risk:** Yes ☐ No ☒**Details:**

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes ☐ No ☒**Details:** Ensures compliance with the Domestic Abuse Act 2021

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment:

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details: N/A**Staffing:** Yes ☒ No ☐**Details:** The policy will ensure any instances of domestic abuse are managed consistently and employees will receive the appropriate support.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

| | |
|---|---|
| Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i> | No |
| Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In) | No |
| District Wards Significantly Affected | (please state which wards or state All if all wards are affected) |
| Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> | Details: |

| |
|---|
| Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment. |
|---|

| |
|---|
| <p>This supports the Council's priority of '<i>promoting equality, diversity, and inclusion, and supporting and involving vulnerable and disadvantaged people</i>'.</p> |
|---|

| |
|-----------------------------|
| DOCUMENT INFORMATION |
|-----------------------------|

| Appendix No | Title |
|-------------|-----------------------|
| 1 | Domestic Abuse Policy |
| | |
| | |

| |
|--------------------------|
| Background Papers |
|--------------------------|

| |
|---|
| <p><i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i></p> |
|---|