

**Report to: Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee**

**Subject: Adoption of a Substance Misuse Policy**

**Date: 11 September 2013**

**Author: Service Manager; Organisational Development**

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

To ask the Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee (ACSC) to authorise the formal adoption of a Substance Misuse Policy as described in Appendix 1.

### **2. Background**

The Council does not currently have a formal policy to allow for the testing of drug or alcohol misuse. Although supportive, “common-sense” management of employees who have declared problems with alcohol or drug use has been possible in the past, where an employee has not been so open, management of such cases has proven to be more problematic. This is of particular concern where an employee carries out safety-critical work. In order to give managers the tools that they need to properly manage such issues, the policy presented with this report has been drafted.

The policy, shown at Appendix 1, is designed to be both supportive of employees where there is a wish to engage with the Council in order to try to ensure that substance misuse does not have a detrimental effect on their work performance or on the health and safety of themselves or others, and also to be clear about the potential conduct issues that may arise when substance misuse has been detected through testing. Testing is proposed through two possible routes, firstly on a “with cause” basis where there is reasonable suspicion of substance misuse or where an accident or incident has occurred and secondly on a random basis for certain safety-critical jobs. A list of safety-critical jobs is proposed in the policy. It is not anticipated that there will be a high frequency of random testing.

The policy draft presented has the support of Senior Leadership Team and was endorsed at the Joint Consultative and Safety Committee (JCSC) of 27 August. Should the adoption of the policy be supported by this committee, this will form a substantial change to the terms and conditions of certain employees (those in safety-critical jobs) and it is planned that these employees will be written to formally with 12-week notice of contractual variation as well as confirming the support that is available should an employee declare a particular problem.

Appendix 2 does not part of the formal policy document but shows guidance that is proposed for managers to help recognise signs of substance misuse and to assist with the wording to be used when introducing a substance (drug or alcohol) test.

### **3. Recommendation**

The Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee is **recommended** to approve the implementation of the Substance Misuse Policy shown at Appendix 1 with effect from 1 January 2014.