

APPOINTMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE – 3 APRIL 2018

Title of paper:	Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Framework	
Director(s)/ Corporate Director(s):	Alison Michalska - Corporate Director for Children and Adults	Wards affected: All
	Richard Henderson – Director of HR	
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Date of consultation with Portfolio Holder(s) (if relevant)		
Relevant Council Plan Key Theme:		
Strategic Regeneration and Development		<input type="checkbox"/>
Schools		<input type="checkbox"/>
Planning and Housing		<input type="checkbox"/>
Community Services		<input type="checkbox"/>
Energy, Sustainability and Customer		<input type="checkbox"/>
Jobs, Growth and Transport		<input type="checkbox"/>
Adults, Health and Community Sector		X
Children, Early Intervention and Early Years		X
Leisure and Culture		<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources and Neighbourhood Regeneration		<input type="checkbox"/>
Summary of issues (including benefits to citizens/service users):		
<p>Nottingham City Council is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all service users, particularly children, young people and vulnerable adults ('vulnerable service users'). The Council expects all of its workforce to share and support this commitment.</p> <p>The Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Programme, which commenced in 2015, has required changes to a number of Nottingham City Council policies and practices. Some policy changes are already in place. The timeline for these changes has been impacted by the Corporate terms and conditions review which has meant that some changes have needed to be phased.</p> <p>The Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Framework (SRWPF), which is an element of the wider Programme, seeks to provide guidance and clarity for all Council employees in their work with service users, and particularly vulnerable service users, in order to protect, as far as is practicably</p>		

possible:

- service users from harm by providing all working for the Council with guidance and clarity in relation to safer recruitment and working practices;
- Council employees from allegations of abuse where they have followed the advice and instruction in the Framework; and
- the Council from the associated risks to reputation and litigation

Recommendation(s):

It is recommended that ACOS note the implementation of the following which have been consulted on with both managers and the trade unions:

1	Part A of the Framework, Safer Working Practices , which will provide practical guidance for all managers and employees, with specific expectations for those in frontline services
2	Part B, Processes and Checks , which includes advice for managers in relation to safer recruitment practices at application, interview and appointment stages
3	That it is intended to add further sections to the Framework in the future to include a Relationships at Work Policy , referred to in the Framework, which is currently subject to consultation. In addition, a section applicable to other workers who are not employees of the Council such as casuals, agency workers and consultants.
4	The SRWPF addresses a number of key work strands within the wider Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Programme. This programme of work has been set out to address issues highlighted by recent Government reports and subsequent recommendations made by CLT based on lessons learnt.

1 REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 The Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Programme (SRWPP) consolidates into one programme the Council's response to the findings of Louise Casey's Report of Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council into child sexual exploitation (February 2015). The Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Framework (SRWPF) supports and fulfils a significant activity out of the workforce elements of the Council's Casey Action Plan, consolidating into one document a comprehensive set of manager and colleague expectations, supported by revised systems and processes to facilitate changed ways of working and safer working measures.
- 1.2 The SRWPF will form part of the People Management Handbook and will apply to all employees.

2 BACKGROUND (INCLUDING OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION)

- 2.1 The SRWPP commenced in October 2015, when the workforce elements of the Council's Casey Action Plan were determined. In addition, the recommendations (Lessons Learnt) identified by Corporate Leadership Team in July 2015, and ongoing, as a result of the Social Care Employee Records Review (Historical Records Review – HRR, October 2014 – June 2016) were incorporated into the SRWPP. Whilst not wholly restricted to Children's Integrated Services (CIS), initial implementation of parts of the SRWPP focussed predominately on piloting changes to recruitment and working practices within CIS.
- 2.2 The Social Care Employee Records Review (Historical Records Review (HRR), identified an initial 22 recommendations (Lessons Learnt) for changes to Council

policy and practice, with a further 8 additional recommendations during the course of the project. Where appropriate, and with significant consideration to employment legislation and other statutory regulations, these have been embedded into the SRWPP, of which the work contained in the SRWPF forms a significant part.

- 2.3 The proposed SRWPF provides guidance and clarity in relation to Council expectations with regards to working practices, all of which have been subject to thorough consultation with a representative group of managers from across the Council and with trade unions colleagues.
- 2.4 As part of SRWPP, a number of key Council policies contained within the People Management Handbook have been amended. Initially, it was intended for the SRWPF to form part of the Employee Code of Conduct. However, it was felt that a 'standalone' Framework would be more appropriate as this would clearly reinforce, for all managers and employees, the expectations and accountability for applying robust practices and decision making. It also provides for an accessible 'one stop' place for ease of reference.
- 2.5 Whilst interim changes to practice have initially been focussed within Children's Integrated Services, the changes to policy and working practices are intended to apply across the whole Council. Corporate Leadership Team has set out a clear directive that the SRWPF will apply to all services within the Council.
- 2.6 A programme will be put in place to reinforce and embed the SRWPF and to support managers, once this has been formally consulted on and noted by ACOS. Careful consideration will be given to the diverse nature of the Council's workforce in order to ensure that the essential messages are delivered and received.

3 OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED IN MAKING RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 As with other local authorities, the Council has a duty to respond to the findings of Louise Casey's Report. In addition, and in light of the fact that the Council had determined to undertake the HRR, it is appropriate that the Council act on the recommendations, to improve practice and promote robust processes and procedures. Not to taken action is not an option.

4 FINANCE COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING IMPLICATIONS AND VALUE FOR MONEY/VAT)

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

5 LEGAL AND PROCUREMENT COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (INCLUDING RISK MANAGEMENT ISSUES, AND LEGAL, CRIME AND DISORDER ACT AND PROCUREMENT IMPLICATIONS)

- 5.1 The Safer Recruitment and Working Practices Framework has been prepared in order to maximise compliance with the range of legislation as listed at Section in Section 2 of Part A of the Framework.
- 5.2 Further advice has been sought from the Data Protection Manager in relation to any implications of the General Data Protection Regulations 2018.

6 STRATEGIC ASSETS & PROPERTY COLLEAGUE COMMENTS (FOR DECISION RELATING TO ALL PROPERTY ASSETS AND ASSOCIATED INFRASTRUCTURE) (AREA COMMITTEE REPORTS ONLY)

6.1 None

7 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

7.1 Has the equality impact of the proposals in this report been assessed?

No

An EIA is not required because:
(Please explain why an EIA is not necessary)

Yes

Due regard will be given to any implications identified in it.

8 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS OTHER THAN PUBLISHED WORKS OR THOSE DISCLOSING CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT INFORMATION

8.1 N/A

9 PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS REFERRED TO IN COMPILING THIS REPORT

9.1 Report of Inspection of Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council – by Louise Casey 2015