

<b>TITLE</b>
<b>Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy</b>
<b>DATE</b>
31/03/2026
<b>LEAD OFFICER.</b>
Harry Steer, Employee Relations Consultant & Policy Lead
<b>1 Summary description of the proposed change</b>
What is the change to policy / service / new project that is being proposed? How does it compare with the current situation?
<p>The proposal updates the Council’s Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy. The revised policy:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• broadens scope to include employees, elected officials, contractors and service users (except schools)</li> <li>• aligns with Domestic Abuse Act 2021 definitions, explicitly recognising children as victims and including economic abuse</li> <li>• strengthens equality and inclusion commitments, including a wider list of relevant characteristics</li> <li>• replaces the previous “appointed contacts” model with trained Domestic Abuse Champions, expanding support options and clarifying workplace safety measures</li> <li>• adds specific guidance on managing perpetrators who are Council employees, including operational safeguards and misconduct actions</li> <li>• introduces GDPR/DPA-compliant data handling requirements</li> </ul> <p>This represents a modernisation and expansion of the previous policy, improving alignment to statutory duties and strengthening support for affected staff.</p>
<b>2 Summary of evidence used to support this assessment</b>
E.g. Feedback from consultation, performance information, service user. E.g. Comparison of service user profile with Medway Community Profile
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Domestic Abuse Act 2021 statutory definitions and guidance (recognition of children as victims; economic abuse).</li> <li>• Updated national and local prevalence statistics referenced in the policy.</li> <li>• Public Health expertise and research.</li> <li>• Feedback from managers using the former policy, highlighting the need for more structured guidance and clarity.</li> <li>• Consultation with Trade Unions, staff forums and interest groups.</li> </ul>

# Diversity impact assessment

**3 What is the likely impact of the proposed change?**  
 Is it likely to:  
 Adversely impact on one or more of the protected characteristic groups  
 Advance equality of opportunity for one or more of the protected characteristic groups  
 Foster good relations between people who share a protected characteristic and those who don't  
 (insert Yes when there is an impact or No when there isn't)

Protected characteristic groups (Equality Act 2010)	Adverse impact	Advance equality	Foster good relations
<b>Age</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Disability</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Gender reassignment</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Marriage/civil partnership</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Pregnancy/maternity</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Race</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Religion/belief</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Sex</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	No	Yes	Yes
<b>Care experience</b>	No	No	Yes
<b>Other (e.g. low income groups)</b>	No	Yes	Yes

**4 Summary of the likely impacts**  
 Who will be affected?  
 How will they be affected?  
 Those most positively affected include:

- Any employees experiencing domestic abuse, who will benefit from broader support routes, safety planning options, and improved confidentiality procedures.
- Children and young people associated with employees, as recognition of children as victims strengthens safeguarding responses.

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- Groups disproportionately affected by domestic abuse, including women, disabled people and LGBTQ+ individuals.
- Recognition of increased dangers for pregnancy/maternity and low income individuals.

No negative impacts have been identified. All changes increase clarity, support, or statutory compliance.

## 5 What actions can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impacts, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations?

What alternative ways can the Council provide the service?

Are there alternative providers?

Can demand for services be managed differently?

Although no adverse impacts are identified, the following actions strengthen equality outcomes:

- Provide training for Domestic Abuse Champions.
- Ensure managers understand safeguarding, confidentiality limits and support pathways.
- Communicate the updated policy widely to ensure all staff know how to access support.
- Monitor usage patterns (anonymised) to spot any groups under-utilising support and adjust messaging accordingly.
- Keep signposting current, including local specialist services.

## 6 Action plan

Actions to mitigate adverse impact, improve equality of opportunity or foster good relations and/or obtain new evidence

Action	Lead	Deadline or review date
Launch communication plan for updated policy	Harry Steer	At policy approval
Update intranet pages and signposting	Harry Steer	At policy approval
Refresh statistics, legal references and support signposting	Public Health	Ongoing

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## 7 Recommendation

The recommendation by the lead officer should be stated below. This may be: to proceed with the change, implementing the Action Plan if appropriate, consider alternatives, gather further evidence

If the recommendation is to proceed with the change and there are no actions that can be taken to mitigate likely adverse impact, it is important to state why.

It is recommended to proceed with the policy update, as it enhances statutory compliance, widens support access, and improves safeguarding without creating negative equality impacts. Identified actions strengthen implementation but do not require alteration of the policy itself.

## 8 Authorisation

The authorising officer is consenting that the recommendation can be implemented, sufficient evidence has been obtained and appropriate mitigation is planned, the Action Plan will be incorporated into the relevant Service Plan and monitored

### Assistant Director

Samantha Beck-Farley, Chief Organisational Culture Officer

### Date of authorisation

31/03/2026