

COMMITTEE: ADMINISTRATION

DATE: 21ST JANUARY, 2004

SUBJECT: DISABILITY QUESTIONNAIRE

REPORT BY: HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

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IMPLICATIONS:

LEGAL	✓	COMMUNITY SAFETY
EQUALITIES	✓	ENVIRONMENT
FINANCIAL	✓	CONSULTATIONS
STAFFING		OTHER

WARDS AFFECTED: NONE

PURPOSE

1. To advise Administration Committee of the Disability Questionnaire to be issued to employees who have stated they have a medical condition of the Personal Verification Form as a pro-active measure, and to enable the Council to further meet its obligations to employees with disabilities.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. Administration Committee is recommended to support the issuing and processing of the disability questionnaire.

BACKGROUND

3. Currently employees are invited to declare that they have a medical condition on the annual Personal Verification Form. However, this information is not subject to any follow up by the Occupational Health Unit and therefore, the opportunity to review the allocation and provision of reasonable adjustments is currently missed, and as a caring employer the Council would want to proactively assist existing employees to continue in employment. Moreover, on the Personal verification Form, a number of employees state that they have a disability as defined by the Disability Discrimination act, but currently this information remains unchecked and not verified.

REPORT

4. The attached questionnaire has been devised following consultation with a number of interested parties e.g. the HR Forum, the trade unions and the Disability Challenge group, all of whom support this proposal.
The questionnaire will be issued to employees who have declared on the personal verification form that they have a medical condition. The form will be returned to the Occupational Health Team who will then assess the information provided in consultation with the employee and the line manager as appropriate. Line managers, employees and other appropriate professionals will be involved in any decisions to provide reasonable adjustments. This will allow at least an annual review of the provision of reasonable adjustments and the earlier monitoring of any employee whose condition may necessitate it.

PROPOSAL/OPTION

5. Administration Committee are recommended to approve the introduction of the follow up questionnaire as a pro-active measure to assist employees.

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6. The Disability Discrimination Act requires the Council to make reasonable adjustments/amendments wherever possible.
The Health and Safety at Work Act places a duty on the Council to safeguard its employees.

EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

7. Level 4 of the Equality Standard requires the Council to monitor reasonable adjustments.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

8. It is conceivable that some necessary reasonable adjustments will have financial implications if they are to be implemented. It is not possible to estimate any costs until the questionnaires have been returned and assessed. It should be noted that no provision for this is currently being made in the draft revenue estimates for 2004/5, and therefore, managers will have to meet any costs from within existing budgets. However, there is provision in the Council's draft capital programme for access in accordance with DDA requirements, and that should any major work appear to be required, that will need to be assessed and the possibility of external funding explored.

APPENDIX

9. Appendix A: Disability Questionnaire

LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972, SECTION 100D**

10. There are no background papers relating to this report