

DRAFT RESPECT & DIGNITY AT WORK PROCEDURE

INTRODUCTION

1. This report outlines the draft Respect & Dignity at Work Procedure to Members.

BACKGROUND

2. Following the audit of internal reporting mechanisms and the Fairness at Work Workshop in July 2006, we committed to further work, building on the outcomes of the day, with a view to developing a process which would ensure support to all those involved and have the confidence of staff.
3. Volunteers were sought from management, staff associations and support networks to work with the Deputy Chief Constable to take the work forward. At a meeting held in October 2006 the group agreed points for inclusion in a new procedure. These points form the basis of the proposed Respect and Dignity at work procedure which is radically different to the existing Grievance Resolution Procedure.

OUTLINE OF THE PROPOSED PROCEDURE

4. The purpose of the procedure is to ensure individual staff and their managers, who believe that they have been treated unfairly with respect to inappropriate behaviour, bullying, harassment, victimisation and hate crime or who are experiencing workplace conflict or dispute, have the opportunity to resolve the issue in a fair and just manner.
5. The objective is not to establish blame or punishment but to work towards a speedy effective resolution in order to maintain and promote positive work based relationships.
6. The emphasis is on taking action as soon as an issue has been identified, working with a trained Facilitator or Mediator to agree mutually acceptable outcomes.
7. All parties have a responsibility to undertake actions necessary to achieve and support an agreed resolution.
8. Intervention is offered at the informal and formal stages in an effort to prevent circumstances escalating and thereby helping to reduce the stresses and concerns which can be overwhelming for all involved.

9. The process is overseen by a Dignity at Work Co-ordinator who will play a key role in the recruitment, training and allocation of in house Facilitators and Mediators.
10. All parties have the right to be accompanied at all stages of the process.
11. Managers who identify an interpersonal issue or experience workplace conflict/dispute within their unit/section can use the procedure to access the services of a mediator to help re-establish positive working relationships.
12. Employees who carry out the role of Facilitator or Mediator do so in addition to their existing duties with the agreement of their Division/Branch. Prior to acting as Facilitator or Mediator they must meet the required standard at selection and training.
13. Where the formal procedure is instigated, the Facilitator will, wherever possible, be allocated from outside the Branch/Division.
14. Appeals will be considered by an Appeal Body consisting of the employee's Branch Manager/Divisional Commander, a senior member of the Personnel Branch and a member of the Police Authority.
15. A flow chart which maps the process is attached at Appendix 1.

KEY ACTIONS

16. If the revised process is adopted it will be necessary to pilot the process from October 2007 prior to full implementation in April 2008.
17. As the process differs significantly from previous methods of managing workplace dispute or conflict across the Organisation, extra emphasis is to be placed on publicity, briefings, training, and provision of guidance to all levels of staff.
18. The Key actions for completion prior to pilot and implementation are listed below:
 - i) prepare a business case for additional resources;
 - ii) recruit the Dignity at Work Co-ordinator;
 - iii) procure external Mediation services for use during pilot;
 - iv) recruit Facilitators and Mediators;
 - v) procure and deliver Facilitators and Mediator Training;
 - vi) develop and deliver briefings to Managers and Staff;
 - vii) develop guidance notes for Managers and Staff;
 - viii) evaluate Pilot;
 - ix) develop procedure to address issues raised relating to police regulations/conditions of service.
19. A full list of all actions to be completed prior to pilot and implementation is attached at Appendix 2.

RECOMMENDATIONS

20. It is recommended that Members:

- i) consider the draft procedure as a whole; and
- ii) take a view on the proposed changes to the Police Authority involvement in hearing appeals outlined at paragraph 14 above.

TIM S HOLLIS
Chief Constable

Contact Officer: Gill Spokes

Telephone: (01482) 808089

Background Papers: Draft Respect & Dignity at Work Procedure
Action Time Line

Ref: PERS/MSU/GS