



Drug and Alcohol Policy

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 The subject of alcohol and drug misuse and how it can impair performance, safety or interpersonal work relations is a matter for employers. All employers have a duty to ensure the health and safety of their staff and may fail if they permit staff to knowingly work under the influence of alcohol or drugs.
- 1.2 The purpose of this Policy is to help protect workers from the dangers of alcohol or drug misuse and to encourage those with a problem to seek help. In addition, the Policy sets out a procedure to ensure that all alcohol and drug problems are dealt with sympathetically, fairly and consistently.
- 1.3 This Policy applies to staff, members and co-opted members within Market Weighton Town Council including any contractors working for the organisation.

2.0 Policy

- 2.1 Staff may not consume alcohol or un-prescribed drugs (except drugs which may be bought over the counter for minor ailments) during their working day, including meal or rest breaks. Consumption of alcohol at work-related social events may be permitted at the discretion of the Chair.
- 2.2 Staff must not consume alcohol or take un-prescribed drugs (except drugs which may be bought over the counter for minor ailments) at any time before reporting for duty when their use may impair work performance when on duty.
- 2.3 Alcoholic drinks must not be brought onto Market Weighton Town Council premises unless permitted at the discretion of the Chair. The possession, use or distribution of drugs for non-medical purposes on Market Weighton Town Council premises is forbidden.
- 2.4 Staff should inform their manager of any prescribed drug that could have side effects and impact on their ability to work safely. Staff are responsible for keeping their prescribed medication in a safe place.
- 2.5 Possession of or dealing in drugs at work will be reported immediately to the police.

Market Weighton Town Council recognises that an alcohol or drug addiction may be an illness to be treated in the same way as any other illness. However, where appropriate, action will be taken under Market Weighton Town Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Any matters arising under this Policy will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

3.0 Dealing with Alcohol and Drug Misuse at Work

- 3.1 Problems with alcohol at work usually fall into two main categories: the individual who drinks inappropriately on occasions and the individual who consistently engages in inappropriate drinking.



- 3.2 Problems arising from the first category are likely to be straightforward cases of misconduct whereas drinkers in the second category are likely to have associated health, absence and long-term performance problems. However, even occasional drinking may be a response to an underlying problem such as stress.
- 3.3 It is not always easy for managers to distinguish between the two types of drinker or if an individual is taking un-prescribed drugs.
- 3.4 In addition, some of the symptoms of excessive alcohol intake and drug misuse can be similar to the effects of a range of medical conditions including diabetes and epilepsy. Consequently when dealing with problems caused by suspected alcohol or drug misuse, managers should arrange an appropriate assessment by Occupational Health and make a full investigation of all the circumstances before deciding upon the appropriate action.
- 3.5 Line managers should intervene at an early stage to avoid the need for later disciplinary action.
- 3.6 If a manager identifies or has good reason to suspect alcohol or drug misuse as the cause of a performance or conduct problem, then the individual may require help to overcome the problem. The manager should speak to the individual in private about their concerns and seek advice from Occupational Health and Human Resources. Managers should ask the individual's reasons for the poor performance and/or conduct and ask whether it could be due to a health or any other problem.
- 3.7 If the individual is drunk or may be under the influence of drugs then the manager will need to wait until the individual is no longer under the influence before taking any action, however in the meantime it may be appropriate to remove them from their duties temporarily. Referral to staff contact of employment and disciplinary and grievance procedures should be made.
- 3.8 Where an individual admits to a dependency problem then this will be regarded as an illness and assistance should be given to overcome this.
- 3.9 The manager (with advice from the chair of personnel) should set the individual reasonable objectives and review performance in line with these. The individual should be informed that continued employment will depend on reaching the agreed objectives and doing their best to overcome the problem as quickly as possible.

If an employee refuses to undertake or continue treatment, or the treatment fails, then the matter becomes one of performance and/or conduct and should be dealt with as a disciplinary issue in accordance with Market Weighton Town Council's Disciplinary Policy and Procedure.

Any member of staff who it is believed on reasonable grounds may be under the influence of alcohol and/or drugs whilst on duty may be suspended from work whilst the matter is investigated.

4.0 Drinking and Driving

- 4.1 The loss of a driving licence due to a conviction for driving while over the legal alcohol limit can have repercussions on continued employment. An individual who has a requirement to drive as part of their job may be dismissed, although consideration would first be given as to whether any alternative work is available.



5.0 Criminal Convictions

- 5.1 Staff must inform their manager if they are convicted of any criminal charge regarding the use or supply of drugs. It will be for the manager in liaison with the Chair of personnel to determine if any further action is required. Any information will be treated in the strictest confidence except in so far as it is necessary to inform other members of management.

6.0 Confidentiality

- 6.1 Every member of staff can be assured that any matters arising under this Policy will be dealt with in the strictest confidence.

7.0 Monitoring

- 7.1 The Town Clerk is responsible for monitoring the number of alcohol/drug related matters referred to Chair of Personnel, and disciplinary action taken where alcohol and/or drugs were involved.
- 7.2 All monitoring will be on an anonymous basis.

8.0 Communication

- 8.1 Market Weighton Town Council will communicate this Policy effectively to all staff and will ensure that all employees, managers and supervisors are aware of their responsibilities.

9.0 Responsibilities

- 9.1 All staff have responsibility to divulge any concerns that could affect the service provided or their performance at work. Staff should also inform the Town Clerk or Chair of Personnel, if they have concerns that a colleague may be misusing alcohol or drugs as this could impact on the service provided and/or the welfare of staff. All information will be kept in the strictest confidence except insofar as it is necessary to inform members of management who have a genuine interest in receiving such information.

Related Documents

Health and Safety Policy
Grievance and Disciplinary Procedure