

<b>BODY:</b>	<b>CABINET</b>
<b>DATE:</b>	<b>17 JULY 2003</b>
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	<b>PERSONNEL STANDARDS – CAPABILITY PROCEDURE</b>
<b>REPORT OF:</b>	<b>HEAD OF PERSONNEL</b>
<b>Ward(s):</b>	<b>All wards</b>
<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>To seek approval of the new procedure for dealing with issues of capability.</b>
<b>Contact:</b>	<b>Caroline Freeman, Head of Personnel. Telephone 01323 415106 or internally on extension 5106</b>
<b>Recommendations:</b>	<b>That Cabinet adopt the Capability Procedure in line with the requirements of employment law, local performance management objectives and HR best practice.</b>
<b>1.0</b>	<b><u>Background/Introduction</u></b>
1.1	During the Best Value Review of Personnel in 2000/01, a comprehensive review of our corporate Personnel Standards was recommended. Recent and emerging legislation and the demands of modern Human Resources management have also dictated that there should be significant changes in our corporate Personnel Standards.
1.2	Hitherto, a range of new and revised policies and procedures have been developed and introduced as part of that review. A common theme has been the emphasis on supporting the organisation in managing performance of its human resources.

1.3	This Capability procedure is new and builds on the previous scheme. This document is based on current best practice examples, taking account of local issues facing Eastbourne Borough Council on a regular or intermittent basis. This procedure falls within the second year of a three year programme to rework the Personnel Standards to meet changing organisational needs.
1.4	Copies of the Capability Procedure have been circulated to Cabinet and Shadow Cabinet members and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Committee only. A copy has been placed in the Members' Room and is available at the Town Hall Reception. A copy is also available on the Council's website at <a href="http://www.eastbourne.gov.uk/Reports/index.asp">www.eastbourne.gov.uk/Reports/index.asp</a> .
1.5	In accordance with our adopted practice for these revisions, you will note that we have also sought to take account of emerging equalities' legislation and of developments in employment law over the last few years.
2.0	<b><u>The Capability Procedure</u></b>
2.1	It is in the interests and duty of Eastbourne Borough Council to manage its human resources with the same care, attention and diligence that it reserves for financial and other material resources.
2.2	<p>We seek to ensure that any performance issues are dealt with under the appropriate mechanisms: in cases where there are doubts as to the capability of the individual to do a job, we:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· ensure that we have met our obligations as an employer in providing support, assessment, training and supervision</li> <li>· consider whether disciplinary or other action may be more appropriate in addressing the issues</li> </ul>

2.3	Our actions in addressing capability issues are informed by the knowledge that an individual's problems in meeting the requirements of the job impact on so many levels. There is personal difficulty and potential stress or unhappiness caused by the inability to meet the standards set. Teams and services also suffer when these situations arise. It is in the interests of all that swift and targeted measures are taken to resolve the issue.
2.4	This Capability Procedure seeks to achieve these objectives in a comprehensive and clear fashion It gives managers robust tools to support and enforce performance standards, whilst acknowledging their responsibilities in the process.
3.0	<b><u>Implications</u></b>
3.1	<b>Financial Implications</b>
	There are no direct financial implications. However, improvements to the advice and procedures used by the Authority can have indirect benefits in reducing the risk of Tribunal cases, in better supporting those who have responsibility for people management and, consequently, promoting more effective problem management and better relationships in the workplace.
3.2	<p><b>Human Resources Implications</b></p> <p>This is a further opportunity to make our advice, procedures and policies more relevant, accessible and useful to managers and employees across the Council's service. We continue to seek a balance between empowerment of managers and setting a clear framework within which decisions are to be made.</p>
3.3	The managers will be briefed on the new procedures and provision has been made in the Corporate Training Plan to provide relevant skills training in the coming year.

4.0	<u>Consultations</u>	
4.1	The Head of Personnel has consulted the UNISON Branch on this new procedure and their comments have been incorporated wherever possible. They accept the need for such a procedure and are supportive of its implementation.	
4.2	In addition, Heads of Service have had the opportunity to comment upon and influence the content of the procedure.	
5.0	<u>Conclusion</u>	
5.1	The suggested new policy reflects the Council's Corporate Plan and recognises within the Values our commitment to the support and development of staff to enable them to continuously improve our services. It adds value and provides important procedures to guide managers through the challenges of setting, monitoring and evaluating performance against agreed standards.	
5.2	<b>Joint Staffs' Committee reviewed this Procedure at its June meeting and recommends it to the Cabinet for adoption in Eastbourne Borough Council.</b>	

<b>CAROLINE FREEMAN</b> <b>HEAD OF PERSONNEL</b>	
<b>Background Papers:</b> <b>The following documents were used in preparing this report:-</b>	
Current Personnel Standards, Volumes I, II and III  ACAS good Practice guides  Sundry Professional journals, websites, booklets  National Employment Legislation  To inspect or obtain copies of background papers please refer to the contact officer listed above.	