

DEVELOPING A POLICY ON CRIMINAL RECORDS BUREAU (CRB) CHECKS

The Human Resources Manager presented this report, which recommended the development of a policy on Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) Checks for Councillors. She explained that the Human Resources section was responsible for the CRB check policy for officers but no policy existed for councillors. Whilst relevant staff were subject to a CRB check before being offered employment there could be no such requirement for Councillors who were elected by the District's residents and were not employees of the Council. She concluded that the development of a policy had to be a member-led process.

Enhanced or standard checks

It was suggested that there could be a two-tier system with enhanced checks for Chairmen and Cabinet members and standard checks for others. The Human Resources Manager responded that enhanced checks were usually demanded only for those who work specifically with children or vulnerable adults. She advised that standards checks were sufficient for all Councillors.

Viewing the results of checks

The Human Resources Manager explained that the officer who receives the results of the checks also has to be responsible for administrative tasks, such as checking a Councillor's identification. It was therefore suggested that the Chief Executive and his PA should be responsible for the process.

Councillors who refuse to submit to a check

It was understood that members were most likely to be in contact with children and vulnerable adults whilst working with residents in their wards. It would be impossible for the Council to prevent councillors who refused to submit to the check, from continuing to carry out this work. It was suggested that the only action the Council could take in these circumstances was to exclude councillors who refuse to submit to a check from any work in an official capacity with children, young people or vulnerable adults.

Non-transferability of checks

The Human Resources Manager explained that unfortunately the results of checks carried out by another organisation, such as the County Council, could not be shared with another local authority, so those councillors with a dual role would have to submit to two tests.

It was suggested that all those standing for election in 2007 should be informed that all successful candidates will be subject to a standard CRB Check.

The Committee **RECOMMENDED** that Cabinet develop a policy on CRB checks which

- (a) will subject all newly elected Councillors to a standard CRB Check
- (b) will encourage all existing Members to agree to a standard CRB Check
- (c) will ensure the results of the CRB Checks be first reviewed by a manager of appropriate responsibility.