Cyngor Cymuned
Trefriw
Community Council

SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

This policy was re-adopted at a meeting on
8th September 2026
and will be reviewed in September 2029
or sooner should legislation dictate

Where individual employees are suffering from the misuse of drugs including alcohol they will be treated sympathetically. Trefriw Community Council (TCC) view the effects of the misuse of drugs which cause problems at work as a condition which calls for help and requires treatment.

Councillors and other colleagues should provide sympathetic support, help and encouragement whenever employees acknowledge that they have a problem and are prepared to co-operate in their own rehabilitation. Anyone who thinks they have a problem is advised to seek help voluntarily as soon as possible.

1. Misuse of drugs (including alcohol)

Many drugs (and glue sniffing) are unlawful and possessing (unless they have been prescribed by a doctor), supplying and producing them is a criminal offence.

- it is an offence to have illegal drugs on TCC premises
- it is also an offence knowingly to allow them to be used, supplied or produced on TCC premises
- TCC take a very serious view of any employee manufacturing, supplying or trading in illegal drugs, whether at work or not
- taking drugs / alcohol during working hours (whether at home, on TCC premises or elsewhere) is not permitted

These actions will always be regarded as a serious disciplinary matter, normally leading to dismissal via our Discipline and Grievance Policy.

While the personal misuse of drugs /alcohol outside work for TCC is not in itself a disciplinary offence, it will be a disciplinary matter if this results in an employee being under the influence of drugs / alcohol at work, or if it adversely affects a person's behaviour at work, or if public confidence may be affected.

The Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 divides illegal drugs into three classes according to their perceived danger:

- **Class A** includes drugs such as heroin (diamorphine), cocaine (including crack), methadone, ecstasy (MDMA), LSD, and magic mushrooms
- **Class B** includes drugs such as amphetamines, barbiturates, codeine, cannabis, cathinones (including mephedrone) and synthetic cannabinoids
- **Class C** includes drugs such as benzodiazepines (tranquilisers), GHB/GBL, ketamine, anabolic steroids and benzylpiperazines (BZP)

2. Recognising the symptoms of drug misuse

Some drug misusers will not admit to having a problem until they reach an advanced stage of dependency and often there are no obvious signs that a person is abusing drugs, either on an occasional or on a regular basis.

Drug users may deliberately conceal the fact so that it goes undetected until it reaches an advanced stage.

Councillors, colleagues and friends need to be alert to spot the effects of drugs on behaviour.

Some possible signs of drug misuse:

- hyperactivity
- fall in performance
- increased absenteeism or erratic timekeeping
- increased lack of care in personal appearance
- worsening relationships with colleagues
- unexplained minor ailments
- unusual or erratic mood changes or behaviour
- financial difficulties (or unexplained sudden apparent wealth)

The above are possible signs and may arise from many other causes, so Councillors and colleagues need to be very careful in identifying apparent problem cases.

3. The Council's responsibilities

Drugs may affect efficiency at work and Councillors and colleagues are well placed to detect any misuse.

If any member or employee of TCC notice any deterioration in performance they should be aware of the possibility that drug abuse may be the cause and be prepared to act appropriately.

Delay in obtaining treatment is likely to make matters worse.

If any member or employee of TCC suspects a drug problem they should tell the Staffing Committee Chair in confidence. The Staffing Committee Chair will discuss the matter with the individual in a sympathetic manner to:

- tell them why they are concerned and ask for the person's comments,
- encourage them to recognise their need for help, and to seek that help and
- offer the assistance of a Trade Union representative
- encourage the member of staff to seek medical advice

TCC will make sure that any employee with a drug problem which affects their work gets advice, information and, if necessary, help in getting treatment. Employees who think they may have a problem are encouraged to seek help as early as possible.

TCC will encourage employees who begin a course of treatment to continue, despite relapses or weakening. The aim is to help the individual through advice and professional treatment.

If the individual refuses help or discontinues it after a while, consequential lapses in performance or behaviour are likely to result in performance management or disciplinary action.

Time off will be allowed for treatment under our sick leave provisions.

Cases will be treated on their merits, in the light of professional advice, and sympathetic consideration will be given to further treatment under the normal sick leave provisions, although this cannot be continued indefinitely.

The person may have to attend a day clinic or attend regularly at a drug counselling centre and the Council will sympathetically consider time off for this.

The Council will maintain confidentiality about an individual's problem, subject to the provisions of the law but if employees are to be properly helped it must be recognised that some of the facts may have to be disclosed to others.