

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Head of Personnel Services

Corporate Services Committee – 28 March 2007

Subject: Corporate Eyecare Procedures

1. Purpose

- 1.1** To update the Committee on proposed revisions to the Council's current procedures for eyesight tests for employees who are (habitual) display screen equipment (DSE) users and require spectacles exclusively for use with display screen equipment and seek their approval.

2. Background

- 2.1** The Council has a responsibility to employees under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations, to ensure that procedures are in place to protect them from ill-health or injury as a result of using such equipment. The Council's Procedures for Eyesight Tests for "Users" of DSE outlines procedures in relation to eye and eyesight tests. Where corrective spectacles are required solely for work with display screen equipment the Council currently contributes £60.00 towards the purchase of the spectacles, and meets the costs for the eyesight test.
- 2.2** No systematic evaluation or review was undertaken at re-organisation of either options or costs of the scheme, and the procedures for DSE users was simply an amalgamation of various practices from the merging authorities. In July 2006 the benefits of utilising Specsavers Corporate Eyecare Scheme was highlighted by an employee through the Council's "Bright Ideas" Scheme.

3. Main Issues

- 3.1** Under the requirements of efficient government it is vital that we continuously review the ongoing effectiveness and costs of our services; including services to employees, whilst ensuring statutory obligations under the Health & Safety (DSE) Regulations are met.

Current Scheme

- 3.2** The current procedures allow the "user" to choose their own preferred optician, with the Council contributing £60.00 towards spectacles solely and exclusively for DSE use. Employees can choose more expensive glasses but are required to meet additional costs themselves. The Council also covers the cost of the eye sight test which is an average cost of £17.00. Total average cost to the Council is approximately £77.00.

Specsavers Corporate Eyecare Scheme

- 3.3** Specsavers operate a corporate eyecare voucher scheme. Each voucher costs £17.00 and covers the cost of the eye and eyesight examination and single vision glasses from the £30 range – the range extends to over 15 frames. The employee can upgrade to spectacles from a higher price range than available with the voucher, but will be required to pay the difference themselves. The employee will also be entitled to a £20 Premium Club discount if they purchase glasses from the £99 range or above.

There are two local Specsavers (Dumbarton and Clydebank) and over 450 branches throughout the west of Scotland. All Specsavers Ophthalmic Opticians are registered with the General Optical Council, (GOC), the UK regulatory body for Opticians, and only fully qualified Ophthalmic Opticians are authorised to conduct a full eye and eyesight examination.

Comparison of Costs

- 3.4** There are approximately 2800 computer users within the Council. Experience has shown that in most working populations only a minority (usually less than 10%) will need special corrective appliances for display screen work. A comparison of the costs between the 2 schemes, based on a 10% figure of 280 employees, are shown below:

Table 1

Current Scheme	Total Cost	Specsavers Scheme	Cost
280 x £77	£21560	280 x £17	£4760

- 3.5** The anticipated cost of the scheme falls below the threshold for a tendering exercise to be undertaken, although a review after a 2 year period will be undertaken to assess costs. An indication of costs for a DSE examination and the provision of corrective appliances for DSE users was sought from local opticians. Two companies provided information and this is detailed at Table 2. However it can be seen that these costs are significantly higher than the corporate eyecare scheme offered by Specsavers.

Table 2

Company A	Company B	Specsavers
DSE Eye examination = £36.00	VDU Examination and Report = £24.00	DSE Eye examination and basic frame single vision lenses = £17.00
Complete frame and lenses to meet requirements £45.00 - £60.00	Basic frame and single vision lenses= £79.00	

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1** Trades Unions have been notified of the proposed changes at the Corporate Safety Committee on 14th September 2006 and no objections to the proposed changes were raised. Personnel has also written to the Trades Unions Convenors advising of the proposed changes and seeking formal comments. A report was also submitted to the Joint Consultative Forum on 1 March 2007.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** The introduction of the Specsavers voucher scheme would generate a significant amount of savings to the Council. The example used at table 1. identifies a potential saving of £16,800. The scheme would be administered by Corporate Personnel which would allow financial costs to be monitored.

6. Risk Analysis

- 6.1** The Council currently meets its statutory obligation to DSE users, and the introduction of Specsavers as the selected provider will still comply with the statutory obligation. Legal and Admin will be asked to review the terms of agreement provided by Specsavers to ensure there is no risk.

7. Conclusions

- 7.1** The introduction of the voucher scheme would enable the Council to meet statutory obligation to DSE users, and would also generate savings to the Council.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1** **The Committee is asked to approve the proposal to select Specsavers Opticians to provide a corporate eyecare scheme for employees who are defined as DSE users, with a further recommendation that the Scheme be reviewed 2 years after introduction.**

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Date: 15 March 2007

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Appendices: Not Applicable



Background Papers: Information from Opticians

Wards Affected: Not applicable

Eye Test Procedures for Display Screen Equipment (D.S.E.) Users



This document is available in large print, on tape, disc and by E-mail.
Please contact the Personnel Section on (01389) 737200

PERSONNEL SERVICES Quick Reference Associated Documents		
 INVESTOR IN PEOPLE	<p>Agreed xxxxxxxx Committee – date</p> <p>DRAFT VERSION</p>	 POSITIVE ABOUT DISABLED PEOPLE

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EYE TEST PROCEDURES FOR D.S.E. USERS

1.0 INTRODUCTION:

- 1.1 West Dunbartonshire Council recognises its responsibilities to its employees under the Health and Safety (Display Screen Equipment) Regulations. A copy of the Policy, Guidance & Procedures for Display Screen Equipment is contained within the Corporate Health & Safety Policy.
- 1.2 This document outlines the procedures to be followed by employees who are defined as "Users" and who require to undergo eyesight tests.

2.0 DEFINITION OF D.S.E. "USER"

- 2.1 "User" means an employee whose work activity requires the continuous use of display screen equipment, on a daily basis, for more than one hour at a time.

"Display Screen Equipment" (D.S.E.) generally means:-

- i) Computer terminals;
- ii) Desk top computers;
- iii) Portable laptop/notebook computers;
- iv) Separate monitors used in conjunction with typewriters;
- v) Micro-fiche.

3.0 EYE CARE VOUCHER SCHEME

- 3.1 Employees whose work activities fall within the scope of the above definition will be eligible for an eyesight test initially at their own request and at regular intervals thereafter (normally every 2 years). No further repeat payments towards the costs of spectacles solely for work with D.S.E. will be made within 2 years unless there is clear evidence of deteriorating eye sight which requires new spectacles.
- 3.2 The Council has selected **Specsavers** Opticians for providing eye and eyesight tests for (habitual) D.S.E. users and corresponding, spectacles exclusively for use with display screen equipment. The service will operate on the purchase of vouchers.

- 3.3** Each voucher costs £17.00 and will cover the costs of the eye & eyesight examination and glasses from the £30 range. An employee can upgrade to spectacles from a higher price range than available with the voucher, but will require to pay the difference themselves. The employee will also be entitled to a £20 Premium Club discount if they purchase glasses from the £99 range or above. Therefore with both vouchers an employee could choose to purchase spectacles from the £99 range which could cost them £49.
- 3.4** The vouchers are redeemable at any of over 450 Specsavers Opticians stores throughout the UK.

4.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF SCHEME

- 4.1** To assist in the administration of the Scheme it is essential that the appropriate paperwork is completed and authorised prior to a voucher being issued.

Completion of Authorisation Form (SAF/PER/EYE/1)

- 4.2** Employees who request an eyesight test should seek authorisation from their Manager. The employee must complete Part 1 of form SAF/PER/EYE/1 and pass to the Manager for authorisation.
- 4.3** The Manager must complete Part 2 of form, including details of the cost code/account code for recharging purposes, sign and date the form. The form should then be forwarded to Corporate Personnel Services, Council Offices, Garshake Road, Dumbarton to organise the issuing of the voucher.

Issuing of Voucher:

- 4.4** The purchase of vouchers, which will be in books of 5, will be arranged and managed by Personnel Services.
- 4.5** Each book of vouchers will have a unique serial code, so as to allow tracking, and an expiry date. The voucher will be removed from the book leaving a stub, which will be completed with the details of the employee receiving the voucher. Personnel will maintain a database of vouchers issued and will recharge Departments on a monthly basis.
- 4.6** On receipt of authorised SAF/PER/EYE1 form, Personnel will contact the employee to advise them that the voucher is available. The voucher should be collected by the employee, or nominated representative, who must provide proof of identify.

Appointment:

- 4.7** Employees should arrange an appointment with an appropriate branch of Specsavers Opticians, as soon as possible as the vouchers have an expiry date. The employee will be given appropriate time off work to attend, although arrangements should be made at times which will cause minimum inconvenience to the service.

After Issue:

- 4.8** Employees are personally responsible for the safe keeping of any spectacles which have been supplied by the Council, in the interest of health and safety, and in accordance with statutory requirements. The Scheme refers to D.S.E. 'users' only and the acquisition or renewal of any other spectacles required for normal use as a result of the eye examination is the responsibility of the employee.