

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL

Staffing Committee

Date of Meeting: 26 October 2017
Report of: Head of Strategic HR
Subject/Title: Wellbeing in Work

1. Introduction

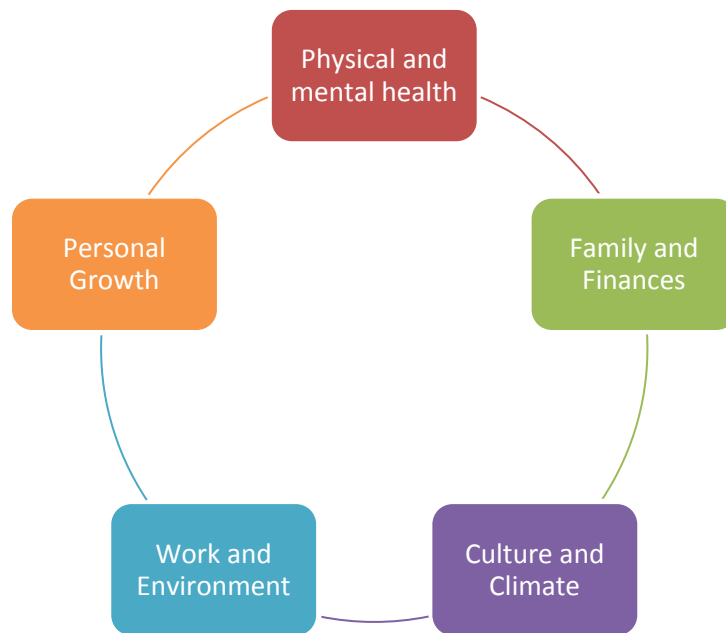
Building from the findings of the Staff Survey in 2016 and the recent findings from a series of staff focus groups, a programme of work has been initiated to improve staff wellbeing and resilience, to ensure our workforce are engaged and performing at the highest level.

Workplace Wellbeing relates to all aspects of working life, from the quality and safety of the physical environment, to how workers feel about their work, their working environment, the climate at work and work organisation. Workers well-being is a key factor in determining an organisations long-term effectiveness.

Employee Wellbeing covers several aspects of the way that employees feel about their lives including their job and their relationships with the people around them. Research shows that employers can have an influence on an individual's overall sense of wellbeing in the way that they run their organisation. Healthy, happy and motivated people will go that extra mile, give great customer service, take fewer days off sick and provide commitment and creativity.

2. Framework and programme

The Council has developed a Wellbeing in Work framework, which focuses on five interconnected areas which together support and strengthen employee wellbeing:



A desk top review has been completed to identify the topics currently in place, and to inform a monthly planned programme of communication and initiatives.

The desk top review has highlighted that the Council already has a wide range of policies, practices and initiatives which provide a strong foundation from which to build. The focus of the wellbeing in work framework and programme is to further improve, connect and sustain wellbeing within the workplace.

3. Wellbeing drivers

Each member of staff has a personal responsibility for their own wellbeing and to support and encourage others to do so. Alongside of this, the Council has an important role in bringing together the many components of strengthening wellbeing in work and embedding a positive, caring culture. Key drivers are:

- To improve levels of employee wellbeing and engagement
- To build individual, team and organisational resilience
- To prevent and reduce levels of absence
- To help improve productivity and performance
- To support the ongoing development of a positive organisational culture

4. Programme launch

The Wellbeing in Work 2017 programme will be launched during October 2017 and will position the Council's commitment to Wellbeing in Work, outline the broad range of policies and practices already in place and will signpost what is coming next.

This will be followed in November by a monthly Wellbeing in Work newsletter to all staff. Each edition will have a section dedicated to one of five wellbeing in work

areas alongside hints, tips and other helpful information. The aim of this newsletter is to both remind staff of what is already in place alongside of introducing timely and relevant new initiatives.

5. Sustaining the programme

To support, inform and shape the wellbeing in work programme two groups are being established:

- **wellbeing in work staff forum** - will meet quarterly to help shape, inform and sustain a programme of wellbeing initiatives. Staff in front line roles will be encouraged to take part.
- **wellbeing in work contributors' group** - will bring together services which contribute to the wellbeing programme on a quarterly basis.

6. Dignity at work

Following a recommendation from the Re-assurance Project, work is well underway to develop an e-learning module for all staff to increase understanding of what dignity at work represents, how to prevent issues arising. This mandatory learning module will be launched later this year.

7. Employee Assistance

As part of the Council's ongoing commitment to supporting wellbeing in work Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) has recently changed supplier. Known as Workplace Wellness, an independent and confidential helpline is available 365 days per year with a 24 hour service either online or over the telephone providing support in the following areas:

- Debt management and budgeting – creditors, financial health check.
- Emotional support – poor work/life balance, bullying, illness, crisis, anxiety, loss, self-confidence, workplace pressure.
- Family relationships - communication, marriage, co-habitation, coping with teenagers.
- Health and wellbeing - problems sleeping, fitness, weight management, alcohol, nutrition.
- Work and career issues – change, team dynamics, work overload, conflict.

In general, the usage of the EAP has increased over the past two years. There were a total of 501 calls to the EAP provider in 2016/17 and there have been 492 calls in 2017/18, to date.

The usage of categories Mental Health and Legal advice have both more than doubled in the last year highlighting areas to focus on as part of the Wellbeing in

Work programme. The number of face-to-face counselling referrals are broadly the same as last year, with the number of telephone sessions increased.

8. Wellbeing performance indicators

Indicators of the impact of strengthening Wellbeing in Work will comprise measures including:-

- Usage of the Employee Assistance Programme
- Uptake from Rewards Centre and salary sacrifice schemes
- Attendance / completion of courses.
- Days absence per Full Time Equivalent employee
- Trends in reasons for absence
- Staff Survey results and overall trends in employee engagement.

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