



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 25 MAY 2023

UPDATE ON WELLBEING

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of the report is to update the Employment Committee on the approach being taken to wellbeing.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. Staff wellbeing is a key strand of the Council's People Strategy 2020-24 which was approved by the Committee at its meeting in February 2021.

Background

3. The Council has for many years had a comprehensive wellbeing offer, but this came into even sharper focus during the pandemic. Supported by feedback via staff wellbeing surveys, the offer was tailored to the circumstances that the organisation found itself in. Post pandemic, the priority has been to retain the key elements of the offer, and to tailor it again to a new and different set of circumstances. As an example, the cost-of-living crisis has created a number of new challenges to staff wellbeing which the Council is seeking to support.
4. The Council's current approach to supporting staff in respect of positive wellbeing but also to help to manage poor mental health and wellbeing is set out in the People Strategy.
5. There are a number of support mechanisms in place such as Mental Health First Aiders and a well-used and well-respected in-house counselling service, and in addition to this, a number of self-help packages have been developed to assist staff when needing advice on such matters as coping with bereavement.
6. An Officer Wellbeing Board has been established, membership for which includes representatives from each department and meets on a quarterly basis. The purpose of this Board is to ensure that the Council's wellbeing offer remains relevant in meeting the needs of the diverse workforce. Progress and achievements are regularly monitored.

Approach to Wellbeing

7. In developing an updated approach to wellbeing, input was received from all employee group representatives i.e. all departmental representatives, workers' groups, and trade unions. It is vital that the plan is co-designed and delivered to meet the diverse needs of the workforce.
8. The key factors contained within the action plan from a wellbeing perspective include:
 - i. Improving the quality of Annual Performance Review meetings, 1:1s and supervision for staff
 - ii. Endeavouring to build a culture of positive wellbeing
 - iii. Having good stress management processes in place
 - iv. Improving the information available on the intranet to include support on depression, anxiety, bereavement, and suicide
 - v. Creating a planned programme to increase the availability of mindfulness sessions for staff
 - vi. Signing up to Able Futures - a free service that supports staff who may be struggling with their mental health or any difficulties that are affecting their time at work. Staff can apply for mental health support and access guidance from a Vocational Rehabilitation Consultant.
 - vii. Launching an app-based solution from Wage stream which provides a facility for advice and support with good financial management
 - viii. Continuing to support the cycle to work scheme and 'choose how you move' to support staff in maintaining a healthy mind and body
9. In addition to the actions, there is a campaign calendar aimed at raising awareness across the organisation of key topic areas, including:
 - i. National Smile Month
 - ii. Alcohol Awareness week
 - iii. Breast Cancer awareness month

Resource Implications

10. There are no resource implications arising from the recommendations in this report. The group is made up of volunteers whose specific interest is in wellbeing. Each group member implements elements of the actions according to their departmental needs.

Recommendation

11. The Committee is requested to note the contents of the report and the work being undertaken in support of staff wellbeing.

Background Papers

Report to the Employment Committee on 4 February 2021 - People Strategy 2020-2024

<https://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CIId=212&MIId=6346&Ver=4>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

Equality Implications/Other Impact Assessments

An equality impact assessment of the overarching People Strategy has been carried out.

Human Right Implications

There are no human rights implications arising from the recommendations in this report.

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