

South Lakeland District Council
Human Resources Committee
Tuesday, 10 September 2019
Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy

Portfolio:	Cllr Eric Morrell
Report from:	David Sykes, Director of Strategy, Innovation and Resources
Report Author:	Dawn Bradley, Human Resources Advisor
Wards:	Not applicable
Forward Plan:	Not applicable

1.0 Expected Outcome

- 1.1 That the Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy is approved for implementation. The impact of this will be to raise awareness of mental health, remove the stigma associated with mental health and to improve the wellbeing of staff by building resilience.
- 1.2 It is anticipated that the benefits of implementing this policy will be reduced levels of sickness absence, reduction in staff turnover and an increase in productivity.

2.0 Recommendation

2.1 It is recommended that the Human Resources Committee:-

(1) approves the Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy and Procedure attached as Appendix 1 for implementation.

3.0 Background and Proposals

- 3.1 The Council is committed to creating a safe and healthy working environment that promotes the health and wellbeing of its employees. It is committed to working with employees, employee representatives and trade unions to develop a culture and environment where employees are healthy, motivated and focussed. This will have a positive impact on providing the best possible services for our residents.
- 3.2 The aim of this policy is to prevent and address mental health issues among our employees, creating a supportive environment and a healthy and happy workplace where everyone is treated fairly.
- 3.3 The Health and Safety Executive reports that one in four people in the UK will have a mental health problem at some time. At South Lakeland District Council 649.64 days were lost in the reporting period 2018/19 due to mental health related conditions, including work related stress, representing 16.87% of days lost. It is the second main cause of days lost due to sickness.
- 3.4 The Council already provides a comprehensive range of support for employees who have a period of ill health relating to mental health, such as return to work meetings, an employee assistance programme, counselling, flexible working options and

occupational health. The policy brings all of the support together in a toolkit and also provides further support options such as a wellness action plan and a talking toolkit.

3.5 If the policy is approved it will have an implementation date of 1 October 2019, and will be supported by an awareness raising campaign, comprising of workshops for all employees, a poster campaign and publicity on the staff health and wellbeing pages. This will be an ongoing campaign, including references to national campaigns such as Time To Talk Day, Mental Health Awareness Week, etc.

3.6 In the future consideration will be given to signing up to nationally recognised accreditations such as Mindful Employer and signing the Time to Change Pledge.

4.0 Consultation

4.1 Health Advocates and Change Champions, who are internal staff groups, have been consulted and have provided their input into the development of this policy.

4.2 The Joint Consultative Committee has also been consulted and have endorsed the policy.

5.0 Alternative Options

5.1 The alternative is to not have a policy and risk not building resilience in the organisation, having a negative impact on sickness absence levels, and therefore staff morale and productivity.

6.0 Links to Council Priorities

6.1 A clear policy ensures that the council continues to work towards the Council Plan by ensuring excellence and openness.

7.0 Implications

7.1 Financial, Resources and Procurement

7.1.1 There is no financial cost in implementing this policy and the benefits to implementing the policy should be an overall reduction in sickness absence and the overall cost to the Council.

7.2 Human Resources

7.2.1 The aim of the implementation of the policy is to reduce sickness absences levels and increase productivity through a healthy, motivated and focussed workforce.

7.3 Legal

7.3.1 There are no legal implications involved in the implementation of this policy.

7.4 Health, Social, Economic and Environmental

7.4.1 Have you completed a Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment? Yes (attached at Appendix 2)

7.4.2 Summary of health, social, economic and environmental impacts: the policy will have a positive impact on health and wellbeing.

7.5 Equality and Diversity

7.5.1 Have you completed an Equality Impact Analysis? Yes (attached at Appendix 3)

7.5.2 Summary of equality and diversity impacts: the policy has a positive impact on the Council's equality and diversity principals and commitments.

Risk

Risk	Consequence	Controls required
The new Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy is not approved.	Mental wellbeing is not promoted and the management of mental ill health is not consistent.	Implementation of the policy.

Contact Officers

Kerry Johnson-Metcalf, Lead HR Specialist, 01539 793299
kerry.johnson-metcalf@southlakeland.gov.uk

Dawn Bradley, HR Advisor, 01539 793174
dawn.bradley@southlakeland.gov.uk

Appendices Attached to this Report

Appendix No.	Name of Appendix
1	Mental Wellbeing at Work Policy
2	Health, Social, Economic and Environmental Impact Assessment
3	Equality Impact Analysis

Background Documents Available

Name of Background document	Where it is available
n/a	n/a

Tracking Information

Signed off by	Date sent
Legal Services	29/8/19
Section 151 Officer	29/8/19
Monitoring Officer	20/8/19
CMT	N/A

Circulated to	Date sent
Lead Specialist	20/8/19
Human Resources Lead Specialist	20/8/19
Communications Team	N/A
Leader	N/A
Committee Chairman	N/A
Portfolio Holder	N/A
Ward Councillor(s)	N/A
Committee	N/A
Executive (Cabinet)	N/A
Council	N/A