



**FOR PUBLICATION**

**DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**Thursday, 3 November 2022**

**Report of the Director - Organisation, Development & Policy**

**Revised Wellbeing Strategy**

(Cabinet Member for Corporate Services & Budget)

**1. Divisions Affected**

1.1 Not Applicable

**2. Key Decision**

2.1 This is not a Key Decision

**3. Purpose**

3.1 To seek approval to publish and implement the revised Wellbeing Strategy, aligned to the Council's People Strategy.

**4. Information and Analysis**

2.1 A well thought out, structured and comprehensive wellbeing strategy benefits an organisation. It helps to:

- attract new people to the organisation
- engage, motivate and retain employees
- create a healthier, more inclusive culture
- lower sickness absence
- improve performance and development
- improve productivity and success

“Creating an environment to promote a state of contentment which allows an employee to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation”

(Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, 2016)

Our employees spend a considerable amount of time at work so promoting and investing in employee wellbeing will have positive outcomes both for our employees and the Council. Studies have shown there is a relationship between the psychological wellbeing of employees and positive organisational outcomes, such as reduced levels of sickness absence as well as enhanced productivity and performance.

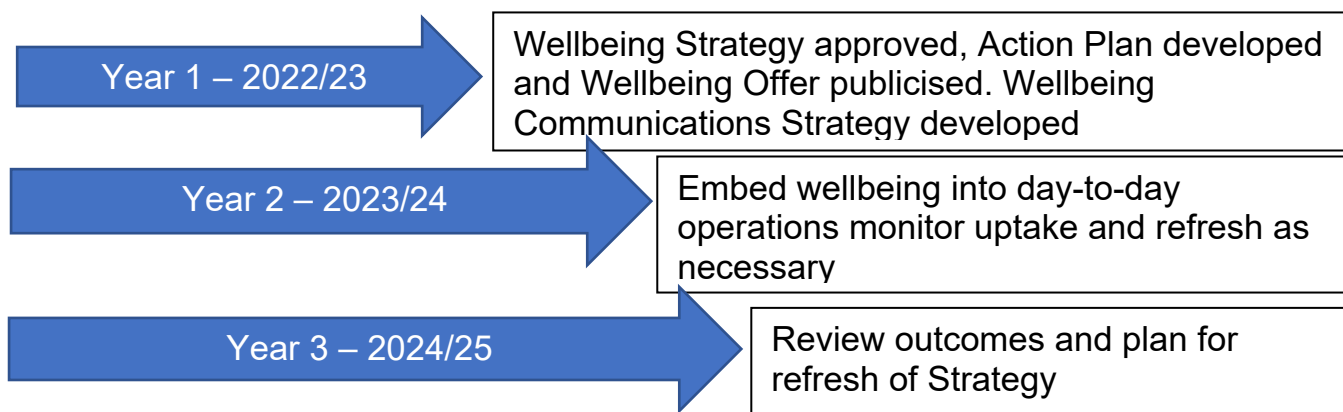
- 2.2 The initial Council Wellbeing Strategy was approved and published in June 2019 aligned to a Wellbeing and Attendance Management Project Action Plan which predated the Wellbeing Strategy. These set out a number of suggested actions and responsibilities but there was no overall ownership of the strategy or measurement of progress. As a result, wellbeing related activity was undertaken across various departments however this lacked co-ordination to ensure a council wide consistent wellbeing offer.
- 2.3 Since the publication of the initial strategy and associated action plan the pandemic coupled with a restructure of the Council’s HR function has impacted on the both the strategy and its implementation. To further support employee wellbeing, the restructure of HR created a centralised Health Safety and Wellbeing function within the HR Team. This has enabled clear ownership of the strategy and central co-ordination of the evolution of the future strategy and associated action plans.
- 2.4 The COVID-19 pandemic began just as the new Health Safety and Wellbeing function was formed and continued far longer than anyone anticipated. The pandemic highlighted the importance of employee wellbeing not just within the workplace but on a national level. As a result, this refocused the work of the Health Safety and Wellbeing team to ensure the organisation was able to continue functioning and deliver services safely and in line with COVID-19 legislation and guidance to our residents.
- 2.5 An assessment of the action plan undertaken in July 2020 identified that a number of interventions within the plan had been achieved. These included development of the Mental Health Policy and mental health first aider network. In conjunction the initial action plan was reviewed and a revised plan developed to focus holistically on health, safety and wellbeing and practical steps that could be realistically taken to achieve improvements when considering the pandemic. The revised action plan

contained the actions required to deliver the aims of the Wellbeing Strategy within three core areas which complement each other and enable greater clarity and more clearly defined targets:

- Systems
- Resources/People
- Data

A separate Sickness Absence Delivery Plan was also developed and intrinsically linked to the overall action plan to focus on delivering outcomes against the same key themes (systems, data and people). Finally, Corporate Management Team agreed to implement a Wellbeing Challenge Group at senior management level to oversee the delivery of the actions and ensure health, safety and wellbeing performance is considered at senior management meetings

- 2.6 In terms of the overall Wellbeing Strategy, the last 12-18 months has further identified that the Council's approach to wellbeing needs to consider additional areas of wellbeing aligned to current national issues such as financial wellbeing (i.e. cost of living challenges facing many employees) and as such it is timely to review the Wellbeing Strategy. Refreshing the Wellbeing Strategy also allows us to better align this to the People Strategy and the Council Plan. This will ensure the Wellbeing Strategy is regularly refreshed moving forward and considers developments in wellbeing initiatives and support.
- 2.7 The Wellbeing Strategy has been reviewed to ensure it reflects the wider and developing drivers of wellbeing. The proposed strategy is shown in Appendix 2. It will be based on the following 5 key pillars of wellbeing:
- Physical Wellbeing
  - Emotional Wellbeing
  - Financial Wellbeing
  - Social / Moral Wellbeing
  - Digital Wellbeing
- 2.8 The Action Plan to support the revised Wellbeing Strategy detailing specific wellbeing interventions will be developed for each of the 5 wellbeing pillars during the first year of the Strategy and will be implemented up to 2025. Once developed it will be reviewed and refreshed as required based on the data collected and any identified needs of the workforce.
- 2.9 The timeline for the implementation of the strategy is as follows:



- 2.10 To oversee the implementation of the revised strategy and action plan the Wellbeing Challenge group has been reinstated, consisting of Wellbeing Champions from the Senior Management Teams of each department. We also have an existing wellbeing project group consisting of key officers involved in wellbeing related activities and working groups aligned to each of the 5 wellbeing pillars. These groups are initially looking to review all the existing wellbeing related activity the Council currently provides and to ensure there is a strategy for communicating this to our workforce as one coherent wellbeing offer. These groups will also look to identify any shortfalls in current wellbeing provision to inform the action plan.
- 2.11 A further development in wellbeing delivery across the council arising out of the pandemic has been the involvement in the Derbyshire System Wellbeing Group. This involves collaboration with public sector colleagues across Joined Up Care Derbyshire to deliver system wide support where possible and share best practice. In addition, we will continue to work closely with Public Health.
- 2.12 The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 Section 2(1) states *“It shall be the duty of every employer to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare at work of all his employees.”* The revision of the wellbeing strategy and its subsequent implementation will help the Council demonstrate it is fulfilling, as far as is reasonably practicable, its legal duty to ensure the health of its employees.

## 5. Consultation

- 5.1 Information from the employee engagement surveys undertaken in the last 12-18 months has informed the progression of the wellbeing strategy. Further input was sought from senior leaders in April 2022 to support how leaders and the organisation can enable employee wellbeing. In addition, following the recent employee engagement survey results, the Council has participated in the Vitality Britain's Healthiest Workplace survey to gain further insights into employee wellbeing across our workforce..
- 5.2 Regular discussion regarding the strategy and associated actions is held with joint trade unions through both the wellbeing workstream and updates provided quarterly via Corporate Joint Committee.
- 5.3 The strategy was shared with Improvement and Scrutiny Resources Committee on 12<sup>th</sup> May 2022 as part of the consultation process and was supported by the committee.

## **6. Alternative Options Considered**

- 6.1 An alternative option would be to keep the existing Wellbeing Strategy in place. Should the Wellbeing Strategy not be refreshed and reviewed as proposed in this report, the Council may be at risk of not ensuring the strategy remains current and aligned to both employee and organisational need.

## **7. Implications**

- 7.1 Appendix 1 sets out the relevant implications considered in the preparation of the report.

## **8. Background Papers**

- 8.1 Wellbeing Strategy approved by Cabinet in June 2019

## **9. Appendices**

- 9.1 Appendix 1 – Implications
- 9.2 Appendix 2 Revised Wellbeing Strategy.

## **10. Recommendation(s)**

That Cabinet:

a) Approve the revised Wellbeing Strategy and its timeline for implementation.

**11. Reasons for Recommendation(s)**

11.1 To ensure the wellbeing strategy remains current and the associated actions support the reduction of sickness absence levels and promote the overall wellbeing of the Council's workforce.

**12. Is it necessary to waive the call in period?**

12.1 No

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## **Implications**

### **Financial**

- 1.1 Aside from the wellbeing strategy now being focused on financial wellbeing, any funding requirements for the deployment of the strategy will be considered in line with the development of initiatives.

### **Legal**

- 2.1 Legal implications are as outlined in the report. The reported is submitted for Cabinet consideration as health and safety functions in relation to employees are a matter for the executive in accordance with the Local Authorities (Functions and Responsibilities) Regulations 2000.

2.2

### **Human Resources**

- 3.1 Human Resources implications are as outlined within the report

### **Information Technology**

- 4.1 Information Technology implications are as outlined within the report

### **Equalities Impact**

- 5.1 There has not been equalities impact identified within the report and this will be considered throughout the development of the actions plans aligned to the 5 pillars of wellbeing. Employee network group members also participate in the project group, and this is being considered further to ensure all groups are represented where appropriate.

### **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

- 6.1 The wellbeing strategy is a key enabler for deployment of the Council's People Strategy and aligns to the Council Plan.

### **Other (for example, Health and Safety, Environmental Sustainability, Property and Asset Management, Risk Management and Safeguarding)**

- 7.1 There have been no other implications in the report

