APPOINTMENTS AND CONDITIONS OF SERVICE COMMITTEE

7 February 2020

Report of the Director of Organisation Development and Policy

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

1. Purpose of the Report

For the Committee to approve the Mental Health Policy.

2. Background Information

Part of the Council's Wellbeing Strategy was to adopt a Mental Health Policy.

The attached draft Mental Health Policy has been drafted with consultation and feedback from the Wellbeing Strategy Working Group, Human Resources Operational Group, Diversity and Inclusion Board, staff network groups, Mental Health Group, Human Resources Leadership Team and Trade Union representatives.

The Policy seeks to facilitate a working environment which promotes a culture of positive mental wellbeing through awareness, support, training and risk assessment.

The policy aims are:

- Ensure a supportive, non-judgmental culture where talking about mental wellbeing and mental health issues is conducted in an open and honest way.
- Promote positive mental wellbeing in the workplace.
- Ensure the mental wellbeing of all staff is supported and appropriate to their needs.
- Support individuals to improve and maintain their mental wellbeing; and identify and tackle workplace factors that may be negatively impacting their mental health.
- Provide timely and responsive support and assistance for staff experiencing mental health problems, relative to their needs.

Support for positive mental health in the workplace will include:

- Wellness Action Plans – to support employees and managers manage mental health impacts in the workplace.
- Work life balance- employees and managers recognising the need not to work excessive hours.
- Training and Development – providing a range of mental health development opportunities.

- Workplace risk assessment – use of the Health and Safety Executive Management Standards in respect of Mental Health.
- Occupational Health Service – Cognitive Behaviour Therapy support and suggested adjustments to working practices for consideration.
- Mental Health First Aiders – a network of trained mental health first aiders to provide signposting to other support.
- Access to Work – accessing the Department of Work and Pensions Access to Works scheme which provides support for workplace adjustments

The draft Mental Health Policy sets out the Council's positive approach to mental health wellbeing in the workplace to facilitate a culture of positive mental wellbeing and reducing sickness absence in the workplace due to mental health reasons.

3. Finance Considerations

There are no financial considerations in respect of the policy document.

4. Legal Considerations

Legal considerations have been taken into account. The policy supports the Council's approach to the Equality Act.

5. Human Resources and Other Considerations

In preparing this report the relevance of the following factors has been considered: the Council's Constitution, human resources, social care and equality and diversity.

6. Director's Recommendation

The Appointments and Conditions of Service Committee approves the Mental Health Policy.

Emma Crapper
Director of Organisation Development and Policy

DRAFT

MENTAL HEALTH POLICY

DERBYSHIRE
County Council

February 2020

Version History			
Version	**Date**	**Detail**	**Author**
0.1	26.04.2019	First draft	Luan Kay, James Creaghan, Amanda Elkin
0.2	21.05.2019	Update	James Creaghan
0.3	22.05.2019	Update	Luan Kay
0.4	22.05.2019	Update	Amanda Elkin
0.5	28.05.2019	Update	Sandy McKay
0.6	20.06.2019	Update	James Creaghan
0.7	21.06.2019	Update	Amanda Elkin
0.8	27.06.2019	Update	James Creaghan / Jo Hall
0.9	02.07.2019	Update	Sandy McKay
1.0	04.07.2019	Update	Amanda Elkin
1.1	14.08.2019	Update – comments from working group	Amanda Elkin
1.2	11.9.2019	Comments from network groups	Amanda Elkin
1.3	02.10.2019	Comments from mental health group and HR	Amanda Elkin
1.4	09/10/2019	Comments from HRLT and SMT	Lee Gregory
1.5	21/11/2019	Comments from Trade Union representatives	Lee Gregory

Links and Dependencies

- Attendance Management and Ill Health Capability Procedure
- Capability Procedure
- Code of Conduct
- Equality and Diversity Policy
- Harassment Procedure
- Leave Schemes and Flexible Working
- Mental Health Manager Guidance
- Medical Appointments
- Performance Management
- Redundancy Redeployment and Protection of Earnings
- Recruitment and Selection Procedure
- Stress Management Policy and workplace risk assessment
- Wellbeing Strategy

Mental Health at Work Policy

1. Purpose

The Council recognises the importance of good mental health and aims to facilitate a working environment which promotes a preventative approach to mental health and facilitates a culture of positive mental wellbeing through awareness, support, training and risk assessment.

The Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 states that employers must take all practicable steps to ensure the workplace is safe and healthy. The Equality Act 2010 places duties on employers, such as considering reasonable adjustments for people with disabilities.

The aims of this policy are to;
- Ensure a supportive, non-judgmental culture where talking about mental wellbeing and mental health issues is conducted in an open and honest way.
- Promote positive mental wellbeing in the workplace.
- Ensure the mental wellbeing of all staff is supported and appropriate to their needs.
- Support individuals to improve and maintain their mental wellbeing; and identify and tackle workplace factors that may be negatively impacting their mental health.
- Provide timely and responsive support and assistance for staff experiencing mental health problems, relative to their needs.

2. Scope

This policy applies to all employees of the Council except those employed in schools where the Governing Body performs the function of the employer.

3. Key principles

- To enable a culture where positive mental wellbeing is promoted and where mental health is discussed in an open and honest way.
- Recognise that communicating in a positive and supportive manner will contribute to good mental wellbeing.
- To ensure that managers and employees understand what appropriate support is available for people experiencing mental health problems in the workplace.
- This policy will facilitate individuals experiencing mental health. difficulties to be supported in a fair, empathetic and consistent manner

so that employees can achieve and maintain a satisfactory level of attendance at work.
- To provide signposting to appropriate support for employees who want or need mental health support.
- Reasonable adjustments should be considered for employees where relevant, in accordance with the Equality Act 2010.

This procedure is in accordance with legislative requirements and ACAS guidance.

The Council will not tolerate stigma or discrimination of any kind; and will hold in confidence any information shared unless it concerns the safety of employees, vulnerable adults or children.

4. About Mental Health

What is mental health?

Mental health is the way we think and feel and our ability to deal with ups and downs. Mental Health is something we all have. When we enjoy good mental health, we have a sense of purpose and direction, the energy to do the things we want to do, and the ability to deal with the challenges that happen in our lives.

Reference: Mental Health Foundation

Facts and figures about mental health
- 1 in 4 people will have a mental health problem in any given year
- 3 out of 4 adult mental health problems start by age 18
- 9 out of 10 people experience stigma and discrimination
- 80,000 adults in Derbyshire have a common mental health disorder
- Self-reported wellbeing in Derbyshire is similar to England, but potentially 128,000 adults in Derbyshire report feeling very anxious
- Between 60-70% of people with Mental Health problems are in work. Mental Ill Health is estimated to cost UK businesses £35 billion annually and is the leading cause of sickness absence in the UK - (Society of Occupational Medicine: 2018)

Benefits of good mental wellbeing
The promotion of positive mental wellbeing supports employees to;
- Realise their full potential
- Cope with the pressures of life
- Work productively
- Have positive relationships
- Make good choices
- Have better physical health

- Have reduced sickness absence from work

Recognising the signs of mental ill health
Everyone's mental health varies, and one way to recognise if circumstances are changing in someone's health, physical, emotional or mental, is maybe to be aware of how people usually behave, and if patterns have changed. Any noticeable changes in behaviour may potentially be indicative of a change in levels of wellbeing. For example, an employee may start coming in significantly earlier and staying later at work, or may be starting to isolate themselves from colleagues.

Time to Change
The Council supports the Time to Change campaign. This outlines our commitment to reducing stigma and discrimination, to raising awareness about mental health, to better understanding mental health from the viewpoint of our employees and to enabling a supportive environment. The campaign has worked to encourage open and honest discussions around mental health and illness, to dispel the myths and misunderstandings around mental health and to provide the support necessary to help employees during times of ill health.

There are three key messages;
- 1. Mental health problems are common
- 2. People can, and do, recover
- 3. Anyone can be affected

---

5. Prevention/reducing mental ill health in the workplace for employee and managers

---

There are a number of approaches to supporting mental health in the workplace. Some are general principles, some are focused on support available at the Council, and others on support that is available in other settings.

a) General Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles
b) Support in the Workplace
c) Support in Other Settings

General Mental Health and Wellbeing Principles

Five Ways to Wellbeing - Evidence suggests there are 5 steps we can all take to improve our mental wellbeing.
  o **Connect** – connect with the people around you: your family, friends or colleagues.
  o **Be active** – Find an activity that you enjoy and make it a part of your life.

o **Keep learning** – learning new skills can give you a sense of achievement and a new confidence.
o **Give to others** – even the smallest act can count, whether it's a smile, a thank you or a kind word.
o **Be mindful** – be more aware of the present moment, including your thoughts and feelings, your body and the world around you.

Look after your physical health
- o Eat healthily and drink sensibly
- o Take regular physical activity
- o Find time to relax

Take notice of your mental health
- o It's normal to experience ups and downs
- o It's not unusual to find coping difficult at times
- o It's OK to seek support

Support in the workplace

Wellness Action Plans (WAPS) (Appendix A)
WAPS are a voluntary process to help employees and their manager (or an allocated person) through open dialogue, to be aware of early signs and symptoms of their mental health and wellbeing changing, identify things that may exacerbate symptoms and develop methods to mitigate the onset. The plan explores what support would be beneficial from the manager to help the employee to effectively manage their mental health in order to assist work performance and ongoing recovery and ultimately to keep mental health stable.

Work life balance
The pressure of work is a pressing challenge to the mental health of employees. The time spent at work can have an effect on people's lifestyles, which can link to overall wellbeing. Managers should ensure that their staff are not working excessive hours and be open to reasonable requests from employees seeking to improve their work-life balance.

Training and Development
The Council has a range of training courses available to managers and employees that focus on mental health and wellbeing. For more details, see Appendix C or the Councils on-line training platform at https://derbyshire.learningpool.com/

Workplace risk assessment
It is important that workplaces are set up in a manner that firstly protects workers from getting ill and secondly prevents the exacerbation of existing mental health problems. The Health and Safety Executive has developed the "HSE Management Standards" which cover 6 key areas of work that should be properly managed (http://www.hse.gov.uk/stress/standards/index.htm)

Occupational Health Service (01629 536969)
Contact your GP or 111

Contact the OH service via your manager The CBT service is a self-referral service made through phoning occupational health. Sessions are a stop-gap until counselling can be agreed via a GP. Counselling requests are made via managers. OHU assessments can to help identify what adjustments could be beneficial to support an employee's mental health.
Mental Health Networks and Champions Mental Health Champions – training is available for employees to become a mental health champion within their department or site. The role involves raising awareness and delivering positive messages related to mental health and wellbeing. Mental health Champions will become part of a supported Council-wide network.
Mental Health First Aiders Training is available for employees to become accredited mental health first aiders to be a point of contact for colleagues in relation to mental health. Mental health first aiders will become part of a supported Council-wide network.
Elected Member Champions Elected Members Champions take a lead role in promoting mental health awareness and reducing stigma.
Access to work Disabled employees can access a government scheme named the Access To Work Scheme. This provides funding to help employers best support disabled people in the workplace. A full guide on Access to Work can be found at: **https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/access-to-work-guide-for-employers/access-to-work-factsheet-for-employers** For more information please contact the Disability Employment Service on 01629 532440. For any employee with a long term health condition, or disability, an Occupational Health assessment will need to be completed to ensure the support and adjustments required for an employee are fully assessed. After this, any recommendations can be discussed with the employee and manager. Occupational Health also manage a Corporate Access Budget which can provide funding for equipment, adjustments and support for those employees needing it. For further information, please refer to the Council's Equality Act (2010) guide which can be found at **https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/working-for-us/equal-opportunities/equality-act/equality-act-2010-and-employment.aspx**

Council Network groups
The Council employee networks have a powerful impact on the Council and your involvement can help employees feel included and promote positive change within the workplace.
The council supports four Employee Networks:
    o Black and minority ethnic group (BME)
    o Disabled workers group (DWG)

○ Lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender group (LGBT) ○ Women's network
Trade Unions   The Council recognises a number of trade unions, including UNISON, GMB, UNITE.
Support in other settings
GP and Primary Care – Can refer into therapies, mental health services, prescribe medication or link to other non-clinical support

Talking therapies – People can self-refer or be referred by a health professional. These are group sessions, awareness courses or counselling sessions using different techniques, including cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). There are 3 providers in Derbyshire
        ○ Trent PTS https://www.trentpts.co.uk/
        ○ Talking Mental Health Derbyshire https://www.derbyshirehealthcareft.nhs.uk/services/talking-mental-health-derbyshire/interested-talking-therapy
        ○ Insight https://www.insighthealthcare.org/our-services/talking-therapies/find-a-service/derby-and-derbyshire/

• Self help and Support Services – there are a range of tools and resources to support people managing their own mental health and wellbeing. Online, smartphone apps, links to community support opportunities via social prescribing
• Live Life Better Derbyshire Services – available across the county to support people with complex issues they may face (housing, debt etc.) or lifestyle support like stopping smoking, losing weight or becoming more active. People can self-refer https://www.livelifebetterderbyshire.org.uk/home.aspx

---

6. Supporting mental wellbeing at work – guidance for managers

Let's talk
A positive culture and communication in the workplace is key, and for managers it is important to listen, be empathetic, supportive, address discrimination and be non-stigmatising in their approach and proactively address stigma where observed. Line managers play an important role in modelling and reinforcing a positive culture within the workplace.

As an organisation we will challenge stigma attached to mental health illness, and we will do this by;
   • Having open and honest conversations about mental wellbeing whilst being respectful of any boundaries the individual wishes to keep in terms of the detail of their mental health
   • Discussing mental health in team meetings as a standing agenda item
   • Discussing mental health in individual meetings between managers and employees.

- Supporting the national Time To Change programme

Day to day support

Ensure there is time for team members to discuss their health in private where they won't be interrupted. Be supportive and open. Handle conversations in a positive and supportive manner. Thank the employee for sharing their discussion with you. Give them as much time as they need and arrange a follow up if required. If the employee has not sought medical help from their GP, encourage them to do so.

Remember a whole team can be effected by a team member's mental health. Open discussions can improve support across the whole team who also may feel the impact of their colleague's ill health.

Ensure all employees with a mental health issue have a Wellness Action Plan (WAP) in place (Appendix A), and that this is agreed between the manager and the employee.

Be prepared to consider reasonable adjustments. Occupational Health can provide more detail about suitable adjustments in the workplace, via a referral form/appointment for the employee. Adjustments could include, but are not exclusive to;

- Flexible working and changes to start/finish times for fixed hours workers
- Part time working
- Occasional working from home
- Workplace assessments
- Temporary Changes to duties
- Changes to base location to allow closer working to home/reduced travel
- Further training and development
- Mentoring/coaching
- Consideration of different ways of working
- Counselling Services
- Phased return to work
- Change to role duties/redeployment to different role based on the Occupational Health report

Dealing with acute Mental Health episodes

- Talk to occupational health, health and safety, and HR for support and advice.
- You may consider recommending the employee visits their GP
- Remain safe yourself and use the employees' Wellness and Recover Action Plan to contact the employees emergency contacts where necessary.

- Remember all conversations are held in strict confidence, with information being given to others only with the consent of the employee, or where there is an immediate safety concern.
- Contact mental health first aiders

Support during absence
The Attendance Management procedure provides clear guidance on how to progress employees through periods of absence. However, please remember that with absence related to mental health that adjusting visits to people's home, providing regular support and help and contact will assist not only with attendance but with a person's mental health, which may worsen should contact reduce.

Managers should ensure they liaise with Occupational Health services, human resources, and trade unions as needed to support individuals in the workplace.

7. Legal Considerations

All employers have a legal responsibility under the Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of their employees. This includes both physical and mental health, though it is only the risks caused by work activities that an employer can control. The Council also has obligations under the Employment Rights Act 1996, Protection from Harassment Act 1997, Working Time Regulations 1998 and Equality Act 2010.

If a mental health problem has long-term effect on a person's normal day to day activity, then it is likely that the person will be defined as disabled under the Equality Act 2010. An employer should make reasonable adjustments where appropriate to minimise any disadvantages experienced by disabled people. Reasonable Adjustments can be but need be recommended by Occupational Health as part of an in-service medical or workplace assessment. Any adjustments should be reviewed on a regular basis to ensure they continue to meet the needs of the individual, team and service.

The Council can only provide some of the support needed to help a person with mental health concerns. Employees should always seek the advice of their GP, or other primary care services.

8. Training

It is recommended that all staff complete a minimum level of mental health training. There are various training options available. A full list of training is

available in Appendix B. Contact the Learning and Development team for further details, or visit https://derbyshire.learningpool.com/

E-learning for all employees – Mental Health Awareness
- Managing Mental Health Awareness (training for managers)
- Mental Health Awareness (training for employees)
- Resilience
- Stress Awareness
- Equality and Diversity for Managers – information and guidance

9. Responsibilities for Monitoring

For Employees
- Take notice of your mental health and wellbeing
- Register with a GP
- Communicate with colleagues and managers
- Take appropriate steps to maintain good mental health and minimise sickness absence from work
- Reflecting on the impact their own behaviour can have on colleagues

For Managers
- Regular one to one/supervision sessions between managers and employees
- Wellbeing discussions management and employee meetings
- Discussions at return to work/absence review meetings
- Reflecting on the impact their own behaviour can have on colleagues

For the Council
- Review attendance metrics regularly, and action plan health interventions as necessary
- Employee surveys to seek information and feedback on the mental health and wellbeing of employees
- Regular review of the approach to Mental health across the Council
- Learn and share best practice with other organisations

10. Further reading and resources

Information and links can be found on the DCC webpage
https://www.derbyshire.gov.uk/social-health/health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing/mental-health-and-wellbeing.aspx

- Mental Health Foundation resources
Evidence based guides on sleep, exercise, mindfulness, stress management, later life and anxiety

www.mentalhealth.org.uk/howto

- MIND
The website contains information, links, contacts and guidance
https://www.mind.org.uk/

- Healthy Working Lives
NHS resources for supporting mental health at work
www.healthyworkinglives.com

- Access to work
Government funded scheme to support employers to make reasonable adjustments to work
www.gov.uk/access-to-work

Appendix A

Wellness Plan (WAP) Template

1. What helps you stay mentally healthy at work? (For example: taking a lunch break, keeping a to do list)

2. What can your manager do to support you to stay mentally healthy at work? (For example: regular feedback and supervision, explaining wider developments in organisation)

3. Are there any situations at work that can trigger poor mental health for you? (For example: conflict at work, organisational change, something not going to plan)

4. How might stress / poor mental health difficulties impact on your work? (For example: find it difficult to make decisions, hard to prioritise work tasks)

[   ]

5. Are there any early warning signs that we might notice when you are starting to feel stressed/ mentally unwell? (For example: changes in normal working patterns, withdrawing from colleagues)

[   ]

~~**6.** What support could be put in place to minimise triggers or to support you to manage~~
symptoms? (For example: extra catch-up time with line manager)

[   ]

7. If we notice early warning signs that you are feeling stressed or unwell – what should we do? (For example: talk to me discreetly about it, contact someone that I have asked to be contacted) Please include contact names and numbers if you would like your line manager to get in touch with someone if you become unwell.

[   ]

Contact name 1: _____ **Number** _____

Contact name 2: _____ **Number** _____

8. What steps can you take if you start to feel unwell at work? (For example: take a break from your desk and go for a short walk, ask your line manager for support)

[Steps...

  1)

  2)
]

9. Is there anything else you would like to share?

```

```

Employee Signature: _____ **Date** _____

Manager Signature: _____ **Date** _____

Date to be reviewed _____

Mental Health flowchart for Managers

It is a manager's job to create a culture where discussing mental health is normal, accepted and looked at as part of a person's overall health and wellbeing. Look at the Council's wellbeing strategy.

DAY TO DAY SUPPORT

Managers should

- Assess and manage the demands placed on employees
- Allow employees some control in how they carry out their work
- Provide support
- Promote positive relationships
- Provide Signposting to mental health support in the workplace

Remember, adjustments can be made which include flexible working, part time work, changes to duties in the short term, mentoring, coaching, , Counselling, phased return to work. For more options, contact your HR team.

Urgent Situation

I'm Worried

Ongoing Care and Support

Support the employee to contact their GP or to ring 111 who will decide best approach. Managers should encourage the employee to be open about their health and to agree ongoing support either with their GP or another support mechanism. In addition employees should be offered access the Council's counselling service. Make time to talk to the employee.

Make time for a conversation with the employee, or raise concerns in an empathetic way and listen to the person. Explain support is available via
1) Departmental HR
2) Occupational health
3) Counselling service
4) GP
5) Council mental health first aiders
6) Council wellbeing strategy
7) Create a WAP

1) Maintain a positive approach to wellbeing
2) Meet regularly with your employee
3) Offer ongoing support
4) Create a WAP if you need a plan for ongoing mental health support
5) Be available
6) Refer employee to Occupational Health should their health change

Mental health Flowchart for Employees

During Work Hours

- **Urgent Situation**

  Phone your GP as they know your medical history. Tell your manager so workplace support can be arranged. A longer term plan should be agreed, including you talking to your GP, and perhaps arranging counselling either through occupational health or your GP

- **I'm Worried**

  Talk to someone you trust. You should consider telling your manager and also contacting your GP if you feel your mental health is changing. The Council has a Counselling Service, which you can self-refer to, in confidence, on 01629 536969. Consider joining council network

- **Ongoing Care and Support**

  Make it a priority to look after your mental health and wellbeing. If you have an on-going mental health condition, you may already have support in place. Support includes meetings with your manager, arranging a WAP to help you manage, and seeing OHU. Consider joining council network groups

Outside of Work hours

- **Urgent Situation**

  Seek immediate help either via someone you trust, your GP, Contact 111, Talk to someone immediately if you feel you may harm yourself, the Samaritans are always available on 116 123 or email joe@samaritans.org

- **I'm Worried**

  Contact your GP and discuss your concerns. They will help you decide what support may help. If you feel able to, when back at work, discuss your concerns with your manager so they can help you plan the right support, MIND on 0300 123 3393

- **Ongoing Care and Support**

  Outside of work, you can access Talking Therapies and your GP can provide support. There are self-help groups such as MIND and the Samaritans. Friends and family can also be a source of ongoing support

16

Council-wide Wellbeing Training and L&D Activities

A number of training and L&D activities have been identified across departments.

Face to face Training
Health &Safety: • Personal Safety • Stress Management – managers • Coping with Stress - employees **General:** • Diversity Allies training • First Aid Training (via OHU) • Mental Health Awareness • Suicide Awareness and Prevention Training • Mental Health First Aid • An Introduction to Positive Behaviour Support • Employee personal resilience, mindfulness and stress management training • Manager Attendance Management Training • Diversity and Wellbeing Events calendar **Leadership and Management** • Providing effective supervision • Leading a team

On-line Training Via Derbyshire Learning Pool https://derbyshire.learningpool.com
- https://dnet/working_for_us/core_systems/training/workplace_elearning/default.asp training on SAP and how to access reports and record sickness –via DNet and SAP Workplace.   - Equality Act   - Equality and Diversity for Managers – information and guidance   - Autism Awareness   - Deaf Awareness   - Dementia Awareness   - Domestic Abuse Awareness   - Drug and Alcohol Abuse Awareness   - Get Active and Healthy   - Hate Crime   - Health and Safety – healthy lifestyles, Intro to H&S, Intro to management of H&S   - LGBT Awareness   - Managing Mental Health Awareness   - Office Safety   - Personal Safety   - Smoking Awareness   - Stress Awareness   - Transgender Awareness   - Working Safely   - Mental Health Awareness