Healthy Workplace Statement

Council of the
ISLES OF SCILLY

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Contents

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1.1 Everybody responds differently to the pressures generated by modern life. Employees at whatever level of responsibility work better when able to stay focussed and motivated.

1.2 Pressure can focus the mind and help create a sense of job satisfaction but excessive levels can lead to stress and potentially increased levels of anxiety, depression and absenteeism.

1.3 Recognising the importance of physical wellbeing is just as important. Back pain is the most common cause of sickness absence in the workplace and evidence demonstrates that regular physical activity can reduce the risk of many health conditions including heart disease, stroke and diabetes.

1.4 In promoting positive health and wellbeing, the Council of the Isles of Scilly aims to increase staff resilience and retain motivated employees. By having a healthy workforce the authority will be better positioned to fulfil potential, cope with challenges and deliver cost effective services.

1.5 The Council of the Isles of Scilly is mindful of the New Economic Foundation's "5 ways to wellbeing" that are designed to help employees find a positive work-life balance. These aspirations encourage staff to:

1.5.1 **Connect** with the people around you. Building relationships with the people you work with can support and enrich you.

1.5.2 **Be active** Exercising makes us feel good, take the opportunity to go for a walk, run or cycle. Even walking to a colleague's desk rather than sending an email can be beneficial.

1.5.3 **Take notice** Be aware of the world around you. Reflecting on experiences will help you to appreciate what really matters and where you role helps make a difference.

1.5.4 **Keep learning** Try new things, take on new responsibilities. Learning will challenge you, improve confidence and boost self esteem.

1.5.5 **Give** Try and support friends or colleagues. Volunteer or helping others to progress can be incredibly rewarding and creates connections with the wider community.

THE COUNCIL'S COMMITMENT

2.1 The Council of the Isles of Scilly aspires to be a fair, supportive and inclusive employer that values staff and assists them in developing personally and professionally. To achieve

this the Council of the Isles of Scilly is committed to promoting initiatives that support good health and wellbeing in the workplace.

2.2   The Council of the Isles of Scilly will take all reasonable steps to support both the physical and emotional health and wellbeing of employees. The Council recognises that staff wellbeing and performance are intrinsically linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

2.3   To encourage good health in the workplace, the Council of the Isles of Scilly aims to offer a range of evidence based health promotion initiatives designed to improve the wellbeing of all employees. To underpin this commitment will be a requirement to invest in staff training so that managers are better aware of both the signs and symptoms associated with anxiety as well as what they need to do to escalate concerns and minimise risks.

2.4   In order to monitor and improve health and wellbeing in the workplace, it will be necessary to identify positive and negative factors that currently contribute to either a sense of satisfaction or frustration. Staff surveys, focus groups and the Staff Consultation Group are potential mechanisms for gauging morale, collecting suggestions and improving communication between the wider workforce and Corporate Leadership Team.

2.5   The Council will adopt a holistic approach to supporting the health and wellbeing of all employees regardless of grade or working environment. The Council of the Isles of Scilly is mindful that individuals work across a variety of work environments including some who work from home. This statement aims to recognise these differences and promote general opportunities rather than specific examples.

2.6   The Council has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The Council will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

RESPONSIBILITIES

SENIOR MANAGEMENT AND LINE MANAGERS

3.1   Senior Management will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, including access to appropriate training. It will also seek to foster a healthy workplace culture by incorporating recognised good practice into line manager training and running initiatives that promote the benefits of good health and wellbeing.

3.2   Driven by the Corporate Leadership Team, line managers will be supported to put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Training will be made available through the Learning and Development Team in areas such as Managing Stress in the Workplace.

3.3   Line managers can ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

    1.3.1   Ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and the role profile.

    1.3.2   Keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload.

    1.3.3   Ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management.

    1.3.4   Making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams.

    1.3.5   Ensuring that work stations are regularly assessed by the employee to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose, using the H&S DSE assessment made available to all employees at induction.

    1.3.6   Promoting healthy workplace opportunities to all, including those that don't have regular access to emails.

EMPLOYEES

3.4   Employees can take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good healthy behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the Council if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, Human Resources or Occupational Health will be treated in confidence.

3.5   Staff can expect to be supported by the employer if they need to access specialist support services relating to factors that may impinge upon their performance in the workplace such as their working environment, inappropriate equipment or resources, excessive alcohol consumption, smoking cessation, learning difficulties, weight management or anxiety.

3.6   Synergy with other Council of the Isles of Scilly approved policies will need to be applied when considering how best some levels of support can be managed.

OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

3.7   Occupational Health will provide a comprehensive service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This includes preparing medical assessments of an individual's fitness for work following referrals from line managers and the HR department, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

3.8   Discussions between employees and the Occupational Health are confidential, although they are likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to Human Resources.

EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME PROVIDER

3.9   The provider of external employee assistance services, Care First, will alert the Council's management to clusters or "hotspots" of psychological risk in the Council, drawing on anonymised data provided by calls to its 24-hour helpline and information from face-to-face counselling with employees.

HEALTH PROMOTION INITIATIVES

4.1   The Council will develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting both physical and mental health and wellbeing. Budget resource will be limited, meaning activities have to offer clear outcomes and good value for money. Health and Wellbeing professionals from the Active Scilly and Learning and Library teams will have primary responsibility for leading these programmes, but line managers and employees will be encouraged to support and participate.

4.2   Employees will also be encouraged to participate in activities and initiatives that make use of council managed facilities and consideration will be given to offering discounted staff membership for use of the swimming pool, fitness suite or learning opportunities through a salary sacrifice type system. The timetable for implementing this will be influenced by the review of services provided by Active Scilly that is currently taking place. Consideration also needs to be given to timings, venues and how staff will access opportunities including whether they can attend during their normal working hours.

4.3   Workplace wellbeing services provided by the Council will include, but not be limited to:

4.3.1   Workstation assessments (via the self-assessment form).

4.3.2   Re-employment screening.

4.3.3   Flexible Working (where practical).

4.3.4   Fitness-for-work assessments.

4.3.5   Provide vouchers for eye tests for users of visual display screen equipment.

4.3.6   Post-incident support.

4.3.7   Offer of free Flu Jabs.

4.3.8   Access to a Cycle to Work Scheme.

4.3.9   Access to health promotion initiatives.

4.3.10 Access to training and workshops designed to improve knowledge and understanding of wider determinants of good health and wellbeing.

4.4 Lifestyle choices can impact significantly on an individual's health and wellbeing. Many factors, including fitness, weight, smoking and alcohol consumption can all impact on our ability to live a long and healthy life. The Council of the Isles of Scilly will support staff by delivering and promoting opportunities that seek to support or raising awareness of various health related issues.

4.5 Alongside an active lifestyle, a balanced diet is a key requisite for enjoying a healthy lifestyle. As an employer, the Council of the Isles of Scilly can offer weight management and diet advice as well as promote the importance of living well through our team of Healthy Living Assistants.

4.6 Communication and activities will be delivered in an inclusive and non-judgemental fashion in order to ensure that they convey an appropriate message and reflect other local and national campaigns.

4.7 Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

4.7.1 An employee assistance programme provided by Care First.

4.7.2 Procedures for reporting and handling inappropriate behaviour (for example bullying and harassment).

4.7.3 Special leave arrangements.

4.7.4 Opportunities for flexible working.

4.7.5 Support for workers with disabilities.

4.7.6 Council's grievance policy.

4.7.7 Consider salary sacrifice opportunities for staff using council managed leisure and recreation facilities.

Procedure for Managing Mental Health in the Workplace

5.1 Good mental wellbeing is essential for individuals as it improves resilience, confidence and capacity. It is also important for the organisation as it boosts productivity, enhances morale and promotes a more positive corporate image. Good mental wellbeing allows individuals to make more robust decisions, remain resilient and perform to the best of their ability.

5.2 Line managers in conjunction with Human Resources will:

5.2.1 Seek employees' views on stress in the workplace.

5.2.2 Identify additional arrangements to reduce the risk of work-related stress to as low a level as reasonably practicable, which could include changing working

procedures, providing information and training, improving communication, and changing working procedures.

5.2.3 Ensure that members of staff are consulted on arrangements for reducing work-related stress.

5.2.4 Encourage members of staff to inform their line manager of any concerns regarding stress.

5.2.5 Ensure that support, which may include, for example, confidential counselling, special leave and back-to-work assistance, is provided to members of staff who are suffering from stress at work.

5.2.6 Offer line managers training to help identify the symptoms of stress.

5.2.7 Encourage a culture in which stress is not regarded as a sign of weakness.

5.2.8 Ensure that the arrangements for reducing work-related stress are monitored and reviewed for their effectiveness.

5.3 Employees have responsibility to:

5.3.1 Inform their line manager (or suitable person) if they feel they are suffering from excessive pressure or stress at work.

5.3.2 Follow appropriate systems for work laid down for their wellbeing.

5.3.3 Support other colleagues in a non-judgemental fashion.

5.3.4 Participate in opportunities that are presented.

Relationship with other Policies

6.1 This Healthy Workplace statement should be read in conjunction with other policies and procedures covering attendance and health, including the following policies:

6.1.1 Health and Safety Policy.

6.1.2 Leave Policy.

6.1.3 Sickness Absence Policy.

6.1.4 Flexible Working Policy.

6.1.5 Bullying and Harassment Policy.

6.1.6 Equal Opportunities Policy.

6.1.7 Learning and Development Policy.