

Report of	Meeting	Date
Director (Policy & Governance) (Introduced by the Executive Member for Resources)	Executive Member Decision	26/02/2018

## EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

- To present the new Emotional Wellbeing policy, formerly the Stress Policy, for Executive Member consideration and approval.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

- That the policy outlined is adopted.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

- This report seeks to highlight enhancements made to the provisions of support for employees experiencing illnesses associated with mental health, and improvements to the processes to be followed by managers.
- Analysis of 2016/17 absence data, focus group work with managers and employees, and review of the stress management policy, demonstrated that improvements were needed to effectively support employees.
- Research from Health and safety Executive (HSE), the National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE), and the Chartered Institute of Personnel Development (CIPD) was considered.
- An emotional wellbeing policy (appendix A) was developed to offer improved guidance and enhanced support.

<b>Confidential report</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No
<b>Key Decision?</b> Please bold as appropriate	Yes	No

<b>Reason</b> Please bold as appropriate	1, a change in service provision that impacts upon the service revenue budget by £100,000 or more	2, a contract worth £100,000 or more
	3, a new or unprogrammed capital scheme of £100,000 or more	4, Significant impact in environmental, social or physical terms in two or more wards

## REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION(S)

(If the recommendations are accepted)

7. The policies form part of the Human Resources updated policy framework that ensures that the Council adheres to current legislation and continues to be a proactive employer.

## ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED

8. Not to accept the updates to this HR policy would mean the Council is not in a position to effectively support employees who are experiencing poor mental health.

## CORPORATE PRIORITIES

9. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Involving residents in improving their local area and equality of access for all		A strong local economy	
Clean, safe and healthy communities		An ambitious council that does more to meet the needs of residents and the local area	✓

## EMOTIONAL WELLBEING POLICY

10. In response to high levels of absence in 2016/17 further analysis on the underlying causes was undertaken. This demonstrated that 845.87 days, over 24 occasions, were lost due to mental health. Of the 24 occasions, 9 were attributed to work and the remaining 15 to an external cause; including bereavement, home stressors, and diagnosed mental illness. Additionally, 2016 PDP data illustrated that 96 individuals reported some level of excessive pressure or stress at work. Focus groups with managers, employees, and union colleagues, demonstrated a lack of clarity and consistency around support for mental health problems. Managers did not perceive the Stress Management policy to be a useful tool in managing mental health.
11. Research by National Institute of Clinical Excellence (NICE) recommended a stepped care model when providing support for mental health; implementation of a stepped care model at Airedale NHS Trust reduced absence due to mental health by 32% in 12 months (Swann, 2008). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) were also consulted and their recommendation is that the Stress Managements Standards are incorporated into the risk assessment tool to identify foreseeable risks to emotional wellbeing and manage this risk.
12. A report to SMT in August 2017 made a number of recommendations of interventions to reduce the days lost due to mental health and better support employees in work and experiencing mental health problems. The overarching principle of the report was the adoption of a proactive person centred approach with practical tools for managers. The specific recommendations were to introduce an emotional wellbeing policy to incorporate the NICE stepped care model; enhance the provision of support to include computerised CBT and online mindfulness; implement a provision of paid compassionate leave in addition to bereavement leave; and deliver mental health awareness training for managers.
13. The Emotional Wellbeing policy is included at Appendix A. The objective of the policy is to provide guidance to managers on how to identify employees in need of additional support and the process to follow once they are identified. Once approved, managers will receive training on the new policy through toolbox talks delivered by HR Services.

### IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

14. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources	✓	Equality and Diversity	
Legal		Integrated Impact Assessment required?	
No significant implications in this area		Policy and Communications	

### COMMENTS OF THE HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES

15. Unison has been consulted and approved the changes to the policy

### COMMENTS OF THE MONITORING OFFICER

16. None.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
Hollie Walmsley	5372	23/02/2018	EMD HR Policies Feb 2018

Following careful consideration and assessment of the contents of this report, I approve the recommendation(s) contained in Paragraph 2 of the report in accordance with my delegated power to make executive decisions.



Dated 01/03/2018

**Councillor Peter Wilson**  
**Executive Member for Resources**