



STAFF WELFARE AND WELLBEING POLICY

1) PURPOSE

Staff welfare and wellbeing is about people working together to deliver safe and efficient services every day, to support the Town Council. Devizes Town Council aims at all times to provide a healthy and safe working environment – challenging, developmental and supportive for all staff.

Mental wellbeing is relevant for all employees, which means every member of staff can play a part in improving wellbeing in the workplace. By addressing mental health issues, the Town Council can improve the general wellbeing of employees, reduce absenteeism and presenteeism, lower staff turnover, increase productivity, and help promote the employment of those who have experienced mental health problems.

This staff welfare and wellbeing policy covers the following areas:

Mental wellbeing

Promoting mental wellbeing by:

- Providing information and raising awareness of mental health issues
- Promoting policies and actions that support mental wellbeing in the workplace
- Equipping employees with the skills to support their own mental health

Physical wellbeing

Encouraging good physical health by:

- Promoting physical activity across the business
- Supporting a healthy, balanced diet in the workplace
- Encouraging staff to drink 6-8 glasses of water a day

Management and leadership

- Equipping managers and leaders with the skills to: Identify and assist those with mental ill health
- Raising awareness of mental and physical wellbeing across the Town Council

Support for employees

Offering support to employees by:

- Creating a culture that supports the wellbeing of all employees
- Offering help, support and guidance to those with a mental health issue
- Assisting those returning to work after a period of mental ill health

Employment for those with mental health issues

Supporting those coming back to work by:

- Making any necessary adjustments to the role/environment
- Retaining and supporting staff who develop mental ill health

Aim of the policy

- To create a workplace culture that promotes and supports the health and wellbeing of all staff
- To support staff in regular physical exercise
- To encourage employees to make healthy eating choices

Objectives

1. Mental wellbeing

a) To create a supportive workplace culture, tackle factors that may have a negative impact on mental health, and ensure managers have the right skills to support staff

Policy actions:

- Deliver non-judgemental support to any staff member experiencing a mental health issue
- Deliver a thorough induction for all new starters, providing an outline of the organisation, the policies and the role they are expected to play
- Provide ways for staff to support their own mental wellbeing, for example through lunchtime activities and social events
- Offer employees flexible working hours for work life balance.
- Set realistic targets and deadlines for staff to prevent long working hours
- Deal with any conflict quickly and make sure the workplace is free from bullying, harassment, racism or discrimination
- Ensure all staff have clear job descriptions, objectives and responsibilities, as well as the training to do their job well
- Ensure good communication between managers, staff and teams

b) To provide support and guidance for any member of staff experiencing mental health issues

- Check how working conditions and the organisation's policies are having an effect on mental health
- Ensure staff members with mental health issues are treated fairly and without judgement
- Encourage staff to talk to, Human Resources, a counsellor or their GP.
- If a team member has been on long term sickness absence, ensure a gradual return to work with support at each stage
- Treat all matters relating to staff mental ill health in the strictest confidence, and only share information with prior consent from the individual concerned

c) To encourage the employment of people who have experienced mental ill health

- Show a positive attitude to employees and job applicants with mental health issues.
- Ensure that all staff involved in the recruitment process are aware of mental health issues and the Disability Discrimination Act
- Do not assume that those with a mental health issue will be more susceptible to workplace stress, or will necessarily take more time off than other applicants

d) To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue

- Identify workplace stress factors/scenarios.
- Provide training in good management practices

- Provide resources to help managers implement the organisation's workplace mental health and wellbeing policy
- Offer support through a confidential counselling service, or qualified mental health first aiders

2. Physical activity

a) To raise awareness of the importance of physical activity for managing stress and maintaining mental wellbeing

- Provide courses and talks on the ways that physical activity can help staff manage stress and back pain, as well as improving mental alertness and concentration

b) To recognise that workplace stress is a health and safety issue

- Provide information on local gyms, classes and sports facilities
- Encourage lunchtime activity groups, e.g., walking, kick about football games
- Provide details on the UK's Cycle to Work Scheme

3. Healthy eating

a) To raise awareness of the importance of healthy eating for both physical and mental wellbeing

- Provide information and resources on how healthy eating can contribute to mental health, for example, increasing levels of concentration and the ability to cope with everyday stresses
- Provide courses and talks on the benefits of healthy eating

b) To encourage and support staff in making healthier eating choices

- Provide food storage and preparation areas for lunchtime meals
- Provide easy access to cold water in all offices and work places
- Encourage staff to eat lunch away from their desks

Communication

All employees will be made aware of the workplace mental health and wellbeing policy - and the resources that are available to them. The workplace mental health and wellbeing policy will be included in the employee handbook, as well as in induction packs.

All staff will also be made aware of their own responsibilities in implementing the policy actions. Including, raising any issues or concerns, and seeking help from a line manager or Human Resources.

Reviewing and monitoring

The Human Resources department will be responsible for reviewing the workplace health and wellbeing policy, as well as monitoring its effectiveness.

The policy's effectiveness can be measured through:

- Feedback from staff
- Staff sickness, presenteeism and staff turnover levels
- Exit interviews
- Use of occupational health or counselling services
- Staff complaints or referrals

To ensure it stays relevant, the policy will be reviewed annually.