

# Report

Report to:	<b>Employee Issues Forum</b>
Date of Meeting:	<b>8 December 2020</b>
Report by:	<b>Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)</b>

Subject:	<b>Healthy Working Lives</b>
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## 1. Purpose of Report

1.1. The purpose of the report is to:-

- ♦ provide an update on Healthy Working Lives activity

## 2. Recommendation(s)

2.1. The Employee Issues Forum is asked to approve the following recommendation(s):-

- (1) that the contents of the report be noted.

## 3. Background

- 3.1. Healthy Working Lives (HWL) provides a national award framework that supports organisations in promoting health and wellbeing to employees. The Council has maintained the HWL Gold Award since September 2012.
- 3.2. The Council has promoted approximately 23 health topics. These topics are normally linked to national or world health days. Due to Covid-19, this year has been challenging in the delivery of information/events to employees, but it has also brought new ways of communicating to the forefront. It has allowed us, in some cases, to reach more employees. The following report provides an update on some key wellbeing activities that have been delivered over the past 12 months.

## 4. Cycle to Work Scheme

- 4.1. Cycle to Work has encouraged employees to opt for a healthier way of commuting to work. This year a record number of applications were received, with 240 employees applying to join the scheme, an increase of 158 applicants compared to last year. The scheme opens each year in June and closes at the end of August.
- 4.2. There has been a notable increase in employees purchasing electronic bikes, with approximately 30% opting for this choice.

## 5. Mental Health

- 5.1. Employees' mental health is a key focus for the Council. The importance of looking after our mental health continues throughout the year, alongside 3 key dates within the HWL calendar.
- 5.1.1. In early March, a Senior Leadership Mental Health Event was held for Grade 5 managers and above. This event was supported by the Trade Unions, Chief Executive and the Council's Mental Health Champion, Val De Souza.

- 5.1.2. This event focused on the importance of self care, noticing when you do not feel mentally well and acting on this rather than dismissing it. It also encouraged managers to not only to look after their own mental health but that of others.
- 5.2. The COVID-19 pandemic has no doubt impacted on the wellbeing of many, if not all of our workforce. Mental health communications have been important in reminding our employees of the support that is available both internally and externally. One support tool we have reminded employees of is Mindfulness.
  - 5.2.1. Mindfulness can be used to help self manage mental wellbeing. It has been promoted over the years in various ways to employees, but more recently on the lead up to World Mental Health day in October. An event called '5 days of mindfulness' was available to employees and provided 5 different live guided mindfulness sessions, each day. This was open to all employees.
  - 5.2.2. Approximately 100 employees joined these sessions. The feedback from employees was extremely positive. Due to this, more sessions will be put on in December which can be a particularly difficult month for some peoples' wellbeing.
- 6. Physical health**
  - 6.1. National Fitness Day was held on 23 September this year. This included three days of information for employees with a focus on staying active when working from home, healthy eating, and the importance of sleep.
  - 6.2. This day was delivered in partnership with South Lanarkshire Leisure and Culture, who also provided links to free online fitness classes.
- 7. Menopause**
  - 7.1. For World Menopause day last year, awareness training was made available to managers and employees. This was jointly funded in partnership with Unison. Building on this training, a Learn Online module was developed to provide information and education about Menopause for all employees and was launched on World Menopause day in October this year.
- 8. Employee Wellbeing Hub**
  - 8.1. A new Employee Wellbeing Hub intranet page was developed to provide support to employees during Covid-19 and beyond. It focuses on the NHS 5 Steps to Mental Wellbeing and provides support and signposting to various resources. The 5 steps outline the benefits of Connecting with others, Mindfulness, Getting Active, Learning and Giving.
- 9. HWL Review**
  - 9.1. Each year our wellbeing work is reviewed by HWL as part of maintaining our Gold Award. This year all reviews have been put on hold due to Covid-19.
- 10. Employee Implications**
  - 10.1. Employee wellbeing continues to be an important focus for the Council and the Healthy Working Lives agenda greatly contributes towards this. Providing information on different health topics, signposting to helpful resources and providing supportive events are all aimed at empowering employees to look after their wellbeing.

## **11. Financial Implications**

11.1. All financial implications are accommodated within existing budgets.

## **12. Climate Change, Sustainability and Environmental Implications**

12.1. The rise in numbers of employees accessing Cycle to Work contributes to a more environmentally friendly commute to work.

## **13. Other Implications**

13.1. There are no implications for sustainability or risk in terms of the information contained within this report.

## **14. Equality Impact Assessment and Consultation Arrangements**

14.1. This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy and therefore no impact assessment is required.

14.2. There was no requirement to undertake any consultation in terms of the information contained in this report.

**Paul Manning**

**Executive Director (Finance and Corporate Resources)**

11 November 2020

## **Link(s) to Council Values/Ambitions/Objectives**

- ◆ Fair, open and sustainable
- ◆ Excellent employer
- ◆ Focused on people and their needs

## **Previous References**

- ◆ None

## **List of Background Papers**

- ◆ None

## **Contact for Further Information**

If you would like to inspect the background papers or want further information, please contact:-

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