



HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE

AGENDA

DATE: Thursday, 7 July 2022
TIME: 7.30 pm
VENUE: Committee Room - Town Hall,
Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea,
CO15 1SE

MEMBERSHIP:

Councillor Chapman BEM (Chairman)	Councillor Calver
Councillor Griffiths (Vice-Chairman)	Councillor S Honeywood
Councillor Amos	Councillor Morrison
Councillor Baker	

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DATE OF PUBLICATION: Wednesday, 29 June 2022

AGENDA

1 **Apologies for Absence and Substitutions**

The Committee is asked to note any apologies for absence and substitutions received from Members.

2 **Minutes of the Last Meeting (Pages 1 - 4)**

To confirm and sign as a correct record, the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on Thursday 24 February 2022.

3 **Declarations of Interest**

Councillors are invited to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Personal Interest, and the nature of it, in relation to any item on the agenda.

4 **Questions on Notice pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 38**

Subject to providing two working days' notice, a Member of the Committee may ask the Chairman of the Committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties which affect the Tendring District **and** which falls within the terms of reference of the Committee.

The following Question has been submitted by Councillor Griffiths in relation to staff at Brightlingsea and Harwich Sports Centres:-

"In the event of any changes to the organizational structure or functions, which may lead to a change in role, or conditions of employment, can we have an undertaking that the HR Department will be involved at the start of the process, that any changes will involve consultation, and an undertaking from senior management that colleagues facing any such changes will not be subjected to any confidentiality clauses aimed at stopping discourse with colleagues, or family members relating to potential changes to their employment."

5 **Career Track - Oral Update**

The Committee will receive an oral update regarding the Council's Career Track service.

6 **Apprenticeships - Oral Update**

The Committee will receive an oral update on Apprenticeships.

7 **Report of Assistant Director (Partnerships) - A.1 - Workforce Update (Pages 5 - 12)**

To provide the Committee with an update on current staffing statistics.

8 **Report of Assistant Director (Partnerships) - A.2 - New Menopause Policy (Pages 13 - 30)**

To introduce the Human Resources & Council Tax Committee to the new Menopause Policy which is intended to be implemented by the Council in order to ensure that the Council remains compliant with employment legislation (*including the Equality Act 2010*), identified best practice and is in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy.

9 **Exclusion of Press and Public**

The Committee is asked to consider passing the following resolution:

“That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of Agenda Item 10 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A, as amended, of the Act.”

10 **Report of Chief Executive - B.1 - Market Forces Report for Posts within Governance (Pages 31 - 36)**

To put forward proposals for a Market Forces Supplement to support the retention and recruitment of officers within Election Services holding the Certificate of Association of Electoral Administrators and within Legal Services, Solicitors and Legal Executives holding the relevant practising certificates. Post qualification experience and up to date Compulsory Professional Development will be necessary for both services.

Date of the Next Scheduled Meeting

The next scheduled meeting of the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee is to be held in the Committee Room at the Town Hall, Station Road, Clacton-on-Sea, CO15 1SE at 7.30 pm on Tuesday, 11 October 2022.

Information for Visitors

FIRE EVACUATION PROCEDURE

There is no alarm test scheduled for this meeting. In the event of an alarm sounding, please calmly make your way out of any of the fire exits in the room and follow the exit signs out of the building.

Please heed the instructions given by any member of staff and they will assist you in leaving the building and direct you to the assembly point.

Please do not re-enter the building until you are advised it is safe to do so by the relevant member of staff.

Your calmness and assistance is greatly appreciated.

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**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX
COMMITTEE,
HELD ON THURSDAY, 24TH FEBRUARY, 2022 AT 7.30 PM
IN THE COMMITTEE ROOM, IN THE TOWN HALL, STATION ROAD, CLACTON-ON-
SEA, CO15 1SE**

Present:	Councillors Chapman BEM (Chairman), Griffiths (Vice-Chairman), Amos, Baker, Calver, Chittock, S Honeywood, Morrison and M Stephenson
Also Present:	Councillor P Honeywood
In Attendance:	Anastasia Simpson (Assistant Director (Partnerships)), Carol Magnus (Organisational Development Manager), Ian Ford (Committee Services Manager), Richard Bull (Corporate Finance Manager & Deputy Section 151 Officer), Katie Wilkins (Human Resources and Business Manager), Cathy Calder (Payroll, Payments & Business Manager) and Matt Cattermole (Communications Assistant)

84. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND SUBSTITUTIONS

There were no apologies for absence or notices of substitution submitted on behalf of Councillors on this occasion.

85. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED that the minutes of the last meeting of the Committee, held on Wednesday 5 January 2022, be approved as a correct record and be signed by the Chairman.

86. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Griffiths stated for the public record that he was a member of the GMB union and a Shop Steward but that he had no involvement with Tendring District Council in that capacity.

87. QUESTIONS ON NOTICE PURSUANT TO COUNCIL PROCEDURE RULE 38

No Questions on Notice had been submitted for this meeting of the Committee.

**88. REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (FINANCE & IT) - A.1 - FORMAL
CONFIRMATION OF COUNCIL TAX AMOUNTS FOR 2022/23 FOLLOWING THE
NOTIFICATION OF THE PRECEPTS FROM THE MAJOR PRECEPTING
AUTHORITIES**

The Committee had before it a report of the Assistant Director (Finance & IT) (report A.1) which set out and sought its confirmation of the final Council Tax amounts for 2022/23 including the precepts issued for 2022/23 by Essex County Council, Essex Police and Essex Fire.

Members were aware that, at its meeting held on 15 February 2022, Full Council had considered the Executive's Budget and Council Tax proposals for 2022/23 and as part of this process the Council Tax for District and Parish / Town Council Services had been approved at that meeting.

Members were also aware that, once the precepts were received from the major precepting authorities, the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee had the delegated responsibility to agree the total Council Tax for 2022/23. The total Council Tax for the year was made up of the District and Parish / Town Council amounts and the corresponding amounts agreed by the major precepting authorities. Legislation required this formal confirmation even though the process was dictated by legislative formulae and there was no actual judgement or choice to be made. The precepts from the major precepting authorities for 2022/23 had resulted in the final Council Tax amounts, as set out in Appendix C to the aforementioned report, for formal confirmation by the Committee.

It was moved by Councillor Amos, seconded by Councillor Baker and:-

RESOLVED that -

- (a) the precepts issued by Essex County Council, Essex Police and Essex Fire, as set out in Appendix A to item A.1 of the Report of the Assistant Director (Finance & IT), be noted.
- (b) the amounts of Council Tax for 2022/23 for each of the categories of dwellings, as shown at Appendix C to the aforesaid report, be confirmed.

89. REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (FINANCE & IT) - A.2 - EMPLOYER DISCRETIONS UPDATE

The Committee had before it a report of the Assistant Director (Finance & IT) (report A.2) which updated it on an amendment required to one of the Council's Employer Discretions, which related to the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) following the Officer Decision to introduce a new employee benefit, which was a Shared Cost, Salary Sacrifice, Additional Voluntary Contribution Scheme.

It was reported that, historically, employers had had no discretions about how the scheme rules were applied, as this had been dictated by the LGPS, and implemented by the administering bodies which, in this Council's case, was the Essex Pension Authority. When the scheme itself had changed, in 2008 & 2014, some decisions had been passed to the employing authorities themselves.

The Committee was informed that, under the LGPS (Administration) Regulations 2008, effective from 1st April 2008, all employers participating in the LGPS scheme were required to prepare and publish a written statement on how it would exercise the various discretions provided by the scheme.

Members were advised that the Council's current discretion relating to Additional Pension Contributions stated that no shared cost arrangement was permitted, in order to protect the Council from any additional costs. However, if the Shared Cost AVC was achieved by introducing a Salary Sacrifice arrangement, then the amount of pay

sacrificed was deemed to be the employer's contribution, and the direct contribution (of £1) was deemed to be the employee's contribution, hence it would not cost the Council more.

Indeed, by allowing employees to enter into a Shared Cost AVC, the Council would enable qualifying employees to save National Insurance contributions on the salary sacrificed amount, as well as reducing the National Insurance bill for the Council itself, as the Salary Sacrifice element would not be subject to deduction of neither employee, nor employer contributions.

It was therefore proposed by Officers that the wording in the discretion should be amended to:-

"The Council will pay shared cost AVC's where an employee has elected to pay AVC's by Salary Sacrifice. The amount of these employer shared cost AVC's will not exceed the amount of salary sacrificed by the employee. This is a Council discretion which is subject to the employee meeting the conditions for acceptance into the Salary Sacrifice shared cost AVC scheme and may be withdrawn or changed at any time".

It was moved by Councillor Baker, seconded by Councillor S A Honeywood and:-

RESOLVED that the Human Resources & Council Tax Committee approves the proposed amendment to one of the Council's Employer Discretions, as set out below:-

"The Council will pay shared cost AVC's where an employee has elected to pay AVC's by Salary Sacrifice. The amount of these employer shared cost AVC's will not exceed the amount of salary sacrificed by the employee. This is a Council discretion which is subject to the employee meeting the conditions for acceptance into the Salary Sacrifice shared cost AVC scheme and may be withdrawn or changed at any time".

90. REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PARTNERSHIPS) - A.3 - ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE AND REDUNDANCY POLICY REVIEW

The Committee had before it a report of the Assistant Director (Partnerships) (report A.3) which updated it on the review of the Council's Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy in line with employment legislation, identified best practice and changes relating to the Local Government Pension Scheme (Augmentation - Regulation 52).

It was reported that the purpose of the review of the Council's Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy was, principally, to incorporate changes made as a result of the amendments made to the Local Government Pension Scheme in relation to compensation payments for early release (Augmentation – Regulation 52). This regulation had been replaced by Regulation 31 – which was covered by this Authority's Pension Discretions.

The Committee was informed that there had been no substantial changes to the Policy apart from the deletion of wording in section 4.1 which detailed the discretion afforded to Councils to buy additional years' service for employees (Augmentation).

Members were advised that the document ensured that the Council adhered to current legislation and followed best practice, as outlined in the ACAS guidance on handling redundancy situations specifically:-

- Definition of Redundancy;
- Consultation; and
- Statutory Notification.

It was felt that the policy offered a fair and consistent approach to all employees of the Council. It gave clear guidance on what the expectations were of the employee and their manager in relation to dealing with an organisational change and redundancy situation.

Members were made aware that references to the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) had been added in section 2, section 3.5 and in Appendix A.

The Committee was further informed that the Policy had been updated to include the responsibilities of Assistant Directors which, for the purposes of this policy, mirrored the responsibilities of the Heads of Departments.

It was reported that Unison had been consulted on the revised Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy and had offered its agreement and support for the implementation of those proposals.

It was moved by Councillor M E Stephenson, seconded by Councillor Chittock and:-

RESOLVED that the Committee notes and endorses the content of the revised Organisational Change and Redundancy Policy.

The meeting was declared closed at 7.43 pm

Chairman

HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE

7 JULY 2022

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PARTNERSHIPS)

A.1 WORKFORCE UPDATE

(Report prepared by Katie Wilkins)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To provide Members of the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee with an update on current staffing statistics.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Staffing Statistics

The analysis of workforce data provides Members with statistics relating to the staff employed within the Council and how this compares to the Tendring District and national averages. This is a standard report that is provided to the Human Resources and Council Tax Committee periodically.

At the time of writing, Tendring District Council has 487 full-time equivalent (FTE) employees. The FTE figure equates to 708 employees in total (including casual workers and learners). This is made up of 368 full-time and 340 part-time staff.

As previously reported, amongst the fully contracted staff there are several employees who are undertaking external apprenticeships, including those at degree level (Level 6) and above.

Officers have recently achieved degrees in the following areas:

- Chartered Surveying
- Chartered Management
- Digital & Technology Solutions.

One employee is currently studying for a postgraduate qualification (Level 7) in Accountancy.

Other professional apprenticeships include Human Resources, Audit, Town Planning (*Technical Support*), and Operational Management. The above are only examples; this list is not exhaustive.

Tendring District Council has always encouraged organic progression (*growing our own*). However, we have several vacancies (*technical and non-technical*) that remain unfilled due to a lack of suitable candidates.

Of the current staffing structure, almost 80% of our posts are filled. It should be noted this is a snapshot figure, reflecting a specific moment in time; which comes after a significant restructure along one side of the organisation which will inevitably lead to new posts which need to be filled.

However, this recruitment challenge is a growing trend nationally and has been recognised by EELGA (East of England Local Government Association), who report that 78% of Councils have recorded recruitment and retention challenges. The Council have employed various additional methods of promoting vacancies, including specialist recruitment, streamlining recruitment processes, continuing to grow organically, and other innovative ideas, such as 'refer a friend'.

Some posts require qualified individuals that are increasingly scarce or where the market attracts higher pay scales than those currently adopted by Tendring District Council. This may have a detrimental impact

on the retention of the Council's existing staff and future recruitment opportunities. Therefore, we have engaged the services of EELGA to undertake an analysis of our recruitment practices and identify any areas where staff turnover may be problematic, specifically which posts and areas are experiencing problems.

EELGA will also evaluate solutions already in place, including recruitment practices and salary/terms and conditions on offer for these roles to see how they can be enhanced or developed.

The commitment of Tendring District Council employees 'to go the extra mile' continues despite the challenges identified above and should be noted.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the contents of this report be NOTED.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

Flexible working opportunities have also ensured that the gender balance of the workforce is in line with the district trend. Such positive profiles demonstrate our intention to '*recognise the diversity and equality of individuals*' as detailed in our '*Values*' within the Corporate Plan.

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

There are no direct financial implications.

LEGAL

The Council must ensure compliance with Employment Legislation, the Equalities Act 2010, and the Working Time Directive, including the amendments made as a result of COVID-19.

The Council has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure their health and safety at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and other related legislation.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

Human Resources work with a software package called Teamspirit. This database allows us to capture employee's personal data and enables regular monitoring of the workforce profile. As Teamspirit is also used by the Council's Payroll Services, the information is integrated between both employment and payroll functions. The database monitors the workforce, capturing data on all 'employees' which includes Career Track Learners and workers on Casual contracts.

Workforce Statistics

The Council's workforce of 708 staff (*of which, 515 are fully contracted staff, 16 are Apprentices in full-time employment, and 177 staff are engaged on a casual basis*).

Of our workforce, 406 are female* (57%) and 302 are male* (43%).

*The terms 'female' and 'male' throughout this report refers to how individuals have identified themselves.

Of the total workforce of 708, Tendring currently employs/engages 368 full-time staff. The gender balance of the full-time staff is: 190 males* (52%), 178 females* (48%), and 112 males* (33%) and 228 females* (67%) for the remaining 340 part-time staff.

It is encouraging to see from the statistics above that the Council has an equal gender balance. This demonstrates that the Council's employment practices support families and individual's work-life balance.

The Council has recently been recognised for its supportive family friendly policies and practices by being accredited by the Essex County Council Charter Accreditation Scheme for Family Friendly Employers. The application process involved an assessment of the Council's policies and procedures and case studies to show how the policies work in practice.

There are currently only 22 employers across Essex who have achieved this status to date. This includes local authorities, partner organisations such as universities and health, and private companies including HSBC.

Under legislation that came into effect in April 2017, UK employers with over 250 employees are required to publish their gender pay gap. The gender pay gap is a mathematical indicator of the gender balance within an organisation. It measures the difference between the average earnings of all male and female employees, irrespective of their role or seniority.

The Council's gender pay gap figures for 2021/22 have been calculated in line with the regulations set out in the gender pay gap reporting legislation using a snapshot date of 31 March 2021.

We are pleased to report that the figures demonstrate that our gender pay gap remains significantly lower than the most recently reported UK average in 2021 of 15.4%.

Tendring's figures for 2021/22 are as follows: -

The male* mean** hourly rate is 7.71% (£1.02) higher than the female* mean hourly rate.

The male* median*** hourly rate is 3.46% (£0.40) higher than the female* median hourly rate.

***The mean or average is determined by adding all the data points in a population and then dividing the total by the number of points.*

****The median is determined by arranging all the observations in order, from smallest to largest value, and the median is the middle value.*

The analysis of our gender pay gap figures tells us the following: -

- Reporting quartiles 3 & 4 (*which comprises both our non-senior and senior management*), are in keeping with the overall male/female ratio for the organisation and whilst reporting quartiles 1 & 2 show some variance, collectively they are in keeping with the overall gender balance within the organisation.
- Our data shows there is no material disparity at each pay level within the organisation.

Age Profile

As we are measuring a complete workforce, we can see a wider spectrum of ages across the organisation, with the employee age range being from 16 to 83. The highest proportion of staff falls within the 51 to 60

age brackets, with the next highest age range being 21 to 30 years. However, this is closely followed by the age range of 41 to 50 years. This indicates that the Council is retaining staff at all ages.

A summary of the above age profiles, by department, can be found in Appendix C.

Disability Profile

Of the 515 fully contracted staff (*excluding apprentices*), 19 have self-declared that they have a disability.

The Council is one of the only organisations in the Tendring district to be awarded *Disability Confident Leader Status, (*awarded to the authority in 2017 and most recently in May 2021*). This requires an employer to be Disability Confident as recognised by their peers, the local community, and disabled people. As a 'Disability Confident Leader', Tendring has made a commitment to support other employers in the district to become 'Disability Confident'.

**Disability Confident encompasses a number of voluntary commitments to encourage employers to recruit, retain, and develop disabled staff, such as offering work experience opportunities and implementing a flexible recruitment process. This replaced the Two Ticks Disability accreditation, which the Council was awarded since 1998.*

We will retain our Leader Status until April 2024, at which point we will again be required to go through the re-accreditation process.

Ethnicity Profile

Of those staff who have declared their ethnicity, 6 declared they were of an ethnic origin other than 'White British'. The 2011* Census statistics show that in Tendring 2.4% of residents declared themselves as being from a minority ethnic group.

**Census have confirmed that the first results from Census 2021 will be published on 28 June 2022, with formal publication of data within two years of the census.*

Sickness Absence

The reported absence figure for the Council in 2021/22 was 10.01 days absence per employee. Long-term absence was reported at 8.37 days and short-term absence at 1.64 days, which shows the rate to be slightly above the reported national level in local government for the same period. The CIPD's Well-being at Work Report 2020 reports a figure of 8 days per employee, and Xpert HR's Sickness Absence Rates and Costs Survey 2020 details an average number of days' absence per employee, for local government of 7.4 days. This level of long-term absence can mostly be attributed to several staff having had operations. This category of absence saw a significant rise in 2021-22, which is not unexpected given that most operations were cancelled during the height of the Coronavirus pandemic.

The Council's current absence figure of 10.54 days per employee demonstrates a slight upward trend in staff absence. This figure is broken down into 8.55 days of long term and 1.99 days of short-term absence.

Employees' general health and well-being continues to be supported through a fully funded Employee Assistance Programme (*which offers a holistic approach*), greater flexible working options, Corporate Gym Membership, flu vaccinations and access to an Occupational Health Specialist.

The authority is also committed to promoting the well-being of its employees. Including: working in partnership with a number of 3rd parties (*bulleted below*) to provide staff with a range of resources, training a number of Mental Health First Aiders and Livewell Champions amongst the workforce, and raising awareness amongst management and the general workforce.

- Provide (a 'Community Interest Company' with a focus on health);
- Health in Mind (provides access to a wide range of talking therapy treatments for adults with common mental health problems in and around Colchester and Tendring);
- Anglia Community Enterprise (ACE) (NHS Community Health Services, such as health checks, My Weight Matters);
- Remploy / Able Futures (funded by the Department for Work and Pensions, available to any employee with a mental health issue which may be affecting their work);
- Regional Employers (seeking best practice for managing absence).

In the coming months, the authority plans to reintroduce the offer of physical health checks for its staff, and as referenced in the Menopause Policy, a programme of training and support will be developed to support those who experience the menopause, their colleagues, and their line managers.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION

Profile of Tendring May 2020

Nomis Official Labour Market Statistics Report 2020

Xpert HR's sickness absence rates and costs survey 2022

CIPD Well-being at Work Report 2020 (Public Sector Summary)

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Staffing Data

Appendix B - A Summary of Highest Ratio Age Profiles by Department

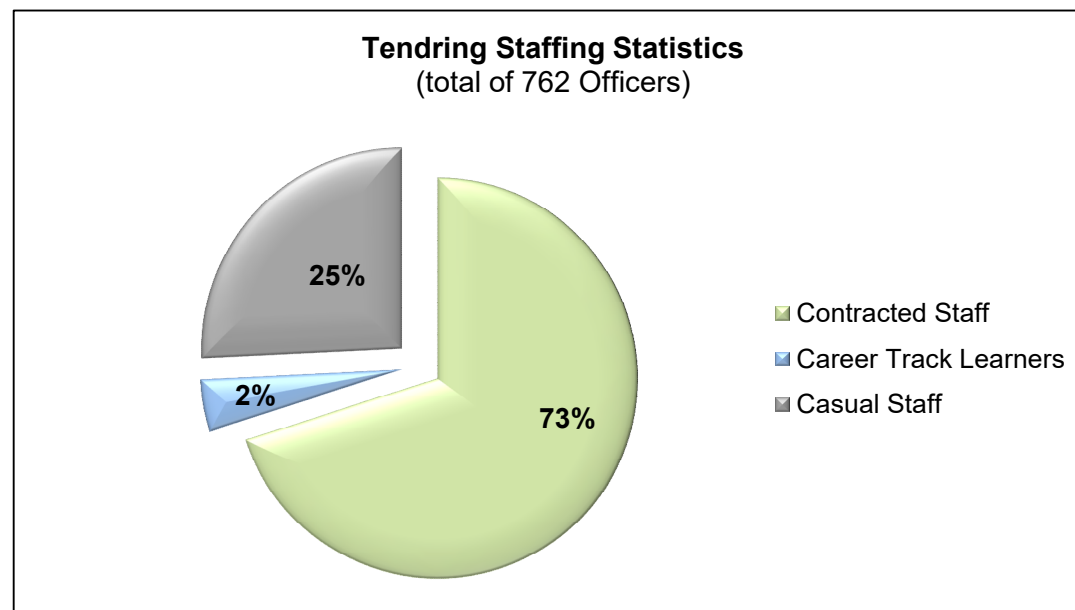
Appendix C – Infogram

Number of Employees (including Career Track Learners)

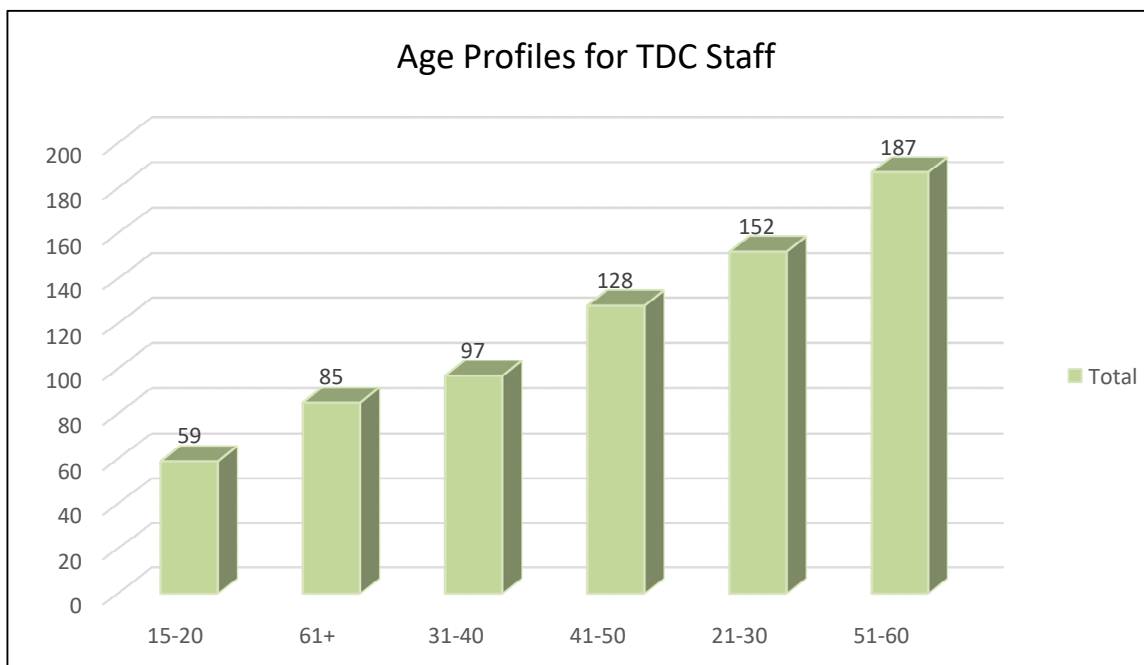
Total workforce	708	
Female	406	57%
Male	302	43%

Full Time	368	
Female	178	48%
Male	190	52%

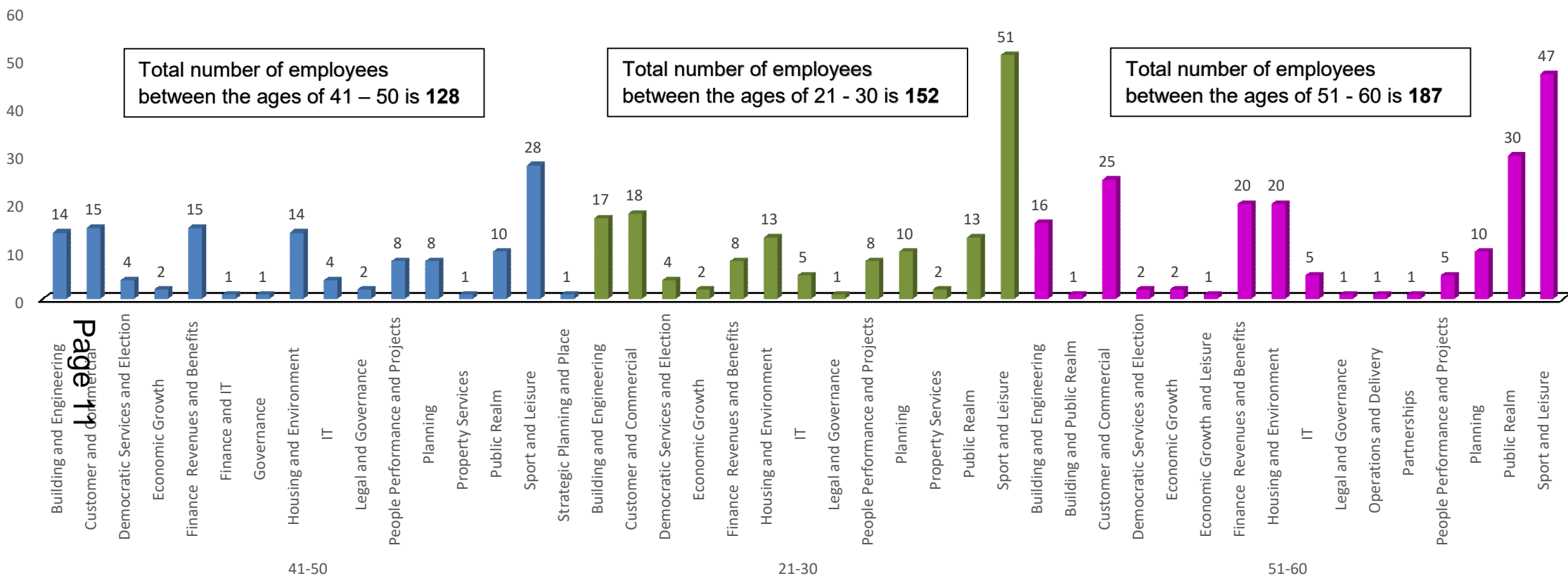
Part Time	340	
Female	228	68%
Male	112	33%



Age Profiles for TDC Staff



Highest Ratio Age Profiles (41-50, 21-30, 51-60) for TDC Staff Broken Down by Department



TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL STAFFING STATISTICS

TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL - 708 EMPLOYEES

APPRENTICES	FULLY CONTRACTED	CASUALS
16	515	177

GENDER PAY GAP

Significantly lower than national average



WORKFORCE

 57% female

 43% male

TOP 3 - AGE PROFILES

	51 - 60		187
	21 - 30		152
	41 - 50		128

DISABILITY

19 employees self-declared a disability



ETHNICITY

6 employees of an ethnic origin other than 'White British'



SICKNESS ABSENCE

Absence figures

8.55 DAY LONG TERM
1.99 DAYS SHORT TERM



HUMAN RESOURCES AND COUNCIL TAX COMMITTEE

7 JULY 2022

REPORT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR (PARTNERSHIPS)

A.2 NEW MENOPAUSE POLICY

(Prepared by Katie Wilkins & Karen Harges)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To introduce the Human Resources & Council Tax Committee to the new Menopause Policy which is intended to be implemented by the Council. The purpose of this policy is to ensure that the Council remains compliant with employment legislation (*including the Equality Act 2010*), identified best practice and is in line with the Council's Equality and Diversity Policy.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The purpose of implementing a Menopause Policy is primarily to ensure that staff who are experiencing the menopause are appropriately supported by the Council as their employer.

The policy aims to provide information about the menopause (*and references andropause*) for both staff experiencing the menopause and their managers, as well as colleagues and highlight the support available both from the Council and external agencies.

The Policy incorporates guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and is written in accordance with current ACAS guidelines.

The Policy sets out: -

- A clear definition of what is menopause, peri-menopause, post-menopause and andropause
- An overview of potential symptoms
- Responsibilities of both managers and employees
- Support available and additional resources for employees, managers, and colleagues

In line with the Council's commitment to Equality and Diversity the policy has been developed to be truly representative of all sections of society and ensure all staff feel respected and able to give their best.

In addition, it provides specific guidance to support managers' talking to their staff about the menopause and an advice sheet to support staff to talk to their GP about their symptoms and what support is available.

Unison has been consulted on the new Menopause Policy and has offered agreement and support for the implementation of these proposals.

The introduction of a Menopause Policy is only the start of a comprehensive suite of health and well-being activities including information, support and advice that is planned to be cascaded throughout the Council over the coming months. This will include support sessions for those experiencing the menopause, along with information sessions and training for both those experiencing the menopause, line managers and colleagues. The HR team plans to collaborate with all staff to identify the most appropriate support for staff experiencing menopause, which might include drop-in groups, one to one support sessions, and information briefings. Additionally, the promotion of self-help support and the Employee Assistance Programme.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended that the Human Resources & Council Tax Committee supports the implementation of the new Menopause Policy, which includes the programme of support for staff experiencing the menopause.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

This policy will ensure that the organisation continues to observe recognised best practice and employment legislation as a responsible employer

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

No specific risks have been identified. This is a policy needed to ensure best practice and continued legal compliance. This work sits within existing budgets.

LEGAL

The Council has a duty to ensure its Menopause Policy is compliant with employment law (*including the Equality Act 2010*), the constitution and best practice, in line with ACAS Codes of Practice and guidance.

In considering Policies, the Council must comply with the Public Sector Equality Duty in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010, which states:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to —
- (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it;
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

...

(3) Having due regard to the need to advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

(a) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;

(b) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

...

(5) Having due regard to the need to foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it involves having due regard, in particular, to the need to—

(a) tackle prejudice, and

(b) promote understanding.

(6) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others; but that is not to be taken as permitting conduct that would otherwise be prohibited by or under this Act.

(7) The relevant protected characteristics are—

- age;
- disability;
- gender reassignment;
- pregnancy and maternity;
- race;
- religion or belief;
- sex;
- sexual orientation.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

Menopause Policy

The Council's Menopause Policy is a new policy. It is part of a suite of health and well-being activities being introduced across Tendring District Council. The menopause is significant for many employees within the Council, whether it is as someone personally experiencing menopausal symptoms, or managing, working, or living with someone who is experiencing the menopause.

It is important for the Council, as an employer, to be aware of menopause symptoms and to support them equally. If an employee or worker is put at a disadvantage or treated less favourably because of their menopause symptoms, this could be discriminatory.

Menopause usually happens between 45 and 55 years of age. However, it can also happen earlier or later. Of those experiencing the menopause, 75% will experience some symptoms, and of those, 25% will experience severe symptoms. This may lead to absenteeism and performance issues. For many individuals, symptoms last about 4 years, but in some cases, symptoms can last a lot longer.

The menopause should not be taboo or 'hidden.' This policy aims to encourage employees to discuss their experience of the menopause openly and without embarrassment so that we can ensure individuals are supported effectively by managers and colleagues.

The policy aims to ensure everyone understands what menopause is, and so they can confidently discuss it and their experiences and feel supported.

The policy offers clear information and guidance to educate and inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause and how they can support staff at work.

It gives staff clear guidance on the symptoms of the menopause and the support available.

Finally, the policy aims to reduce absenteeism due to menopausal symptoms by encouraging staff to seek advice and identify when they might need support.

The Council is a responsible and caring employer and is taking this first positive step to show all staff that we are committed to supporting their needs as they experience the menopause.

CONCLUSIONS

The new Menopause Policy will ensure that the Council maintains its high standard of employment practices and has a policy that observes best practice and current employment legislation.

APPENDICES

Menopause Policy – June 2022



MENOPAUSE POLICY

**Issued by – Human Resources –
June 2022**

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A.2 APPENDIX

1. Introduction / Purpose

This policy for Tendring District Council applies to all staff and sets out how all staff experiencing menopausal symptoms are supported and helps colleagues and line managers understand how they can support employees experiencing such symptoms. It is part of a suite of health and wellbeing policies and activities designed to support our staff through their lives.

Anyone can be affected by hormonal changes during their lives for several reasons, including pregnancy, fertility treatment, gender transitioning, conditions needing hormone treatment, and menopause. These can bring about symptoms which could affect a colleague at work. This policy focuses on the menopause with reference to andropause.

Therefore, it is stated that the policy applies to anyone experiencing the menopause, regardless of their gender expression or identity.

This policy aims to ensure that we provide an inclusive and supportive working environment in the workplace and whilst working from home for individuals experiencing the menopause.

Tendring District Council has used guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and ACAS (*Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service*) guidance. The NICE guidelines set out the recommendations for medical professionals when treating menopausal individuals and for patients as to the treatment and guidance they should be offered.

In line with the Council's commitment to Equality and Diversity, this policy has been developed to be truly representative of all sections of society, and to ensure that all staff feel respected and are able to give their best.

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1.1 Overview

1.1 **Menopause** is defined as a biological stage that occurs in an individual's life. It occurs when an individual stops menstruating and reaches the end of their natural reproductive life. Usually, it is defined as having occurred when an individual has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.

1.2. **Peri-menopause** is the time leading up to menopause when an individual may experience changes, such as irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be years before menopause.

1.3. **Post-menopause** is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when an individual has not had a period for twelve consecutive months.

1.4. **Andropause** is used to describe aging-related hormone changes in men. Other terms include testosterone deficiency syndrome, androgen deficiency of the ageing male and late-onset male hypogonadism. Testosterone levels vary among men. In general, testosterone levels gradually decline throughout adulthood – about 1 percent a year after age 30 on average.



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1.2 Symptoms of Menopause

1.2.1. It is important to note that not every individual will notice every symptom, or even need help or support. However, 75% of individuals do experience some symptoms, and 25% of these symptoms could be classed as severe.

1.2.2. Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically, including, but not exclusively; low energy, hot flushes, poor concentration, headaches, panic attacks, heavy/light periods, anxiety, decrease in motivation or loss of confidence. Some individuals also have trouble sleeping. In addition, there may be physical changes, including increased body fat, reduced muscle bulk and strength, and decreased bone density. Swollen or tender breasts (gynecomastia) and loss of body hair are possible.

1.2.3 Tendring District Council is committed to providing an inclusive and supportive working environment for everyone who works here.

1.2.4. Menopause is part of many employees everyday life, and it is not always an easy transition. However, with the right support, it can be much better. While every individual does not suffer with symptoms, supporting those who do, will improve their experience at work.

1.2.5. Menopause should not be taboo or 'hidden'. The Council wants everyone to understand what menopause is, and to be able to talk about it openly, without embarrassment.

1.2.6. The changing age of the UK's workforce means that between 75% and 80% of those experiencing menopausal symptoms are in work. Research shows that many individuals are unwilling to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager, nor ask for the support or adjustments that they may need. Staff members may also be supporting the needs of others outside of the work environment.

1.2.7. This policy sets out the guidelines for members of staff and managers on providing the appropriate support to employees who are experiencing menopausal symptoms at work.

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2 General Principles

The aims of this policy are to:

2.1 Foster an environment in which everyone can openly and comfortably instigate conversations or engage in discussions about menopause and feel supported.

2.2. Ensure everyone understands what menopause is, can confidently have good and supportive conversations, and are clear on Tendring District Council's policy and practices, supported by Human Resources and, if applicable, Occupational Health.

2.3 Educate, support and inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause, and how they can support staff at work.

2.4 Ensure that staff suffering with menopausal symptoms feel confident to discuss it, ask for support and make requests for reasonable adjustments so they can continue to be successful in their roles.

2.5 Reduce absenteeism due to menopausal symptoms.

2.6 Assure staff that, as a responsible employer, we are committed to supporting their changing needs.

2.7 Promote the support available to all staff who have menopausal symptoms or to prepare staff for this stage by being open, positive, and supportive.

3 Responsibilities (Ownership and Accountability)

3.1 Members of staff:

All staff are responsible for:

- Taking a personal responsibility to look after their health;
- Being open and honest in conversations with managers, HR, and Occupational Health;
- If a member of staff is unable to speak to their line manager, or if their line manager is not supporting them, they can speak to a member of HR or a representative of their Union;
- Contributing to a respectful, supportive, and productive working environment;
- Being willing to help and support their colleagues;
- Understanding any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms.

3.2 Line Managers

See Appendix 1 for Managers' Guidance.

All line managers should:

- Familiarise themselves with the Menopause Policy and Guidance;
- Be ready and willing to have open and supportive discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversation and treating the discussion sensitively and professionally;
- Use the guidance in Appendices 1 and 2, signposting and reviewing together, before agreeing with the individual how best they can be supported, and any adjustments required;
- Record adjustments agreed, and actions to be implemented;
- Ensure ongoing dialogue and review dates;
- Ensure that all agreed adjustments are adhered to.

Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic, the Line Manager may:

- Seek further support from a member of the HR Team
- Discuss a referral to Occupational Health with HR for further advice;
- Refer the employee to Occupational Health;
- Review Occupational Health advice, and implement any recommendations, where reasonably practical;

3.3 Occupational Health

The role of Occupational Health is to:

- Carry out a holistic assessment of individuals as to whether menopause may be contributing to symptoms/wellbeing, providing advice and guidance in line with up-to-date research;
- Signpost to appropriate sources of help and advice (refer to Appendix 2 for more information);
- Provide support and advice to HR and line managers in identifying reasonable adjustments, if required;
- Provide support services (see Appendix 2 below).

3.4 Human Resources (HR)

HR will:

- Offer guidance to line managers on the interpretation of this Policy and Guidance;
- Attend training sessions support the development of briefing sessions for staff;
- Monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of this policy in respect of related absence levels and performance.

3.5 Employee Assistance (EAP)

The Employee Assistance service will:

- Provide access to 24/7 telephone counselling for all members of staff.
- Provide on-line (downloadable) advice sheets (see further links in Appendix 2).

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4 References and Associated Documents

4.1 Tendring District Council has used guidance from the National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) and ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service) guidance. The NICE guidelines set out the recommendations for medical professionals when treating menopausal women, and for patients as to the treatment and guidance they should be offered.

4.2 Self-management, with support from Tendring District Council managers and colleagues, will help to manage symptoms. Appendix 1 details some recommendations to support symptomatic individuals who may need advice and support.

Daisy Network, n.d. *Information and support on very early menopause*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.daisynetwork.org>.

FOM, n.d. *Advice on the menopause*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.fom.ac.uk/health-at-work-2/information-for-employers/dealing-with-health-problems-in-the-workplace/advice-on-the-menopause>

Health Assured, n.d. [Online] Available at: <https://healthassuredeap.co.uk>

NHS, 2018. *Menopause - Symptoms*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/symptoms>

NICE, Last updated: December 2019. *Menopause: diagnosis and management - NICE guideline [NG23]*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/About-this-information>

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists, n.d. *Menopause in later life*. [Online] Available at: <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause>

ACAS (Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration Service)
[ACAS guidance on Menopause](#)

Appendix 1: Managers' Guidance for colleague discussions

Managers' Guidance for colleague discussions

We recognise that every member of staff is different, and it is, therefore, not feasible to set out a structured set of specific guidelines.

All advice is given and written in accordance with the Faculty of Occupational Medicine (FOM) recommendations and best practice.

If an employee wishes to speak about their symptoms, or just to talk about how they are feeling (they may not recognise that they are symptomatic), or if an employee wishes to speak about a family member, please ensure that you:

- Allow adequate time to have the conversation;
- Find an appropriate room to preserve confidentiality;
- Encourage them to speak openly and honestly;
- Suggest ways in which they can be supported (see symptoms below) – hand out the Menopause Advice Sheet (Appendix 2);
- Contact Employee Assistance Programme for additional information and advice
- Agree actions, and how to implement them, so that all parties agree what has been discussed, and the next steps, before the meeting ends.
- Agree if other members of the team should be informed, when and by whom;
- Ensure that designated time is allowed for a follow up meeting. Do not rely on quick queries during chance encounters in the corridor.

Symptoms Support.

Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically, including, but not exhaustively or exclusively; support for staff should be considered as detailed below:

Hot Flashes.

- Request temperature control for their work area, such as a fan on their desk or moving near a window, or away from a heat source;
- Easy access to drinking water;
- Be allowed to adapt prescribed uniform, such as by removing a jacket;
- Have access to a rest room for breaks if their work involves long periods of standing or sitting, or a quiet area if they need to manage a severe hot flush.

Heavy / irregular / unpredictable Periods.

- Have permanent access to washroom facilities;
- Request an extra uniform (if applicable)

Headaches.

- Have ease of access to fresh drinking water;
- Offer a quiet space to work where practicable and possible

Appendix 1: Managers' Guidance for colleague discussions

Difficulty Sleeping.

- Ask to be considered for flexible working, particularly when suffering from a lack of sleep.

Low Mood.

- Identify a 'buddy' for the colleague to talk to – outside of the work area;
- Contact the Tendring District Council's Employee Assistance programme

Loss of Confidence.

- Ensure there are regular Personal Development Discussions;
- Have regular protected time with their manager to discuss any issues;

Poor Concentration.

- Discuss if there are times of the day when concentration is better or worse, and adjust working pattern/practice accordingly;
- Review task allocation and workload;
- Suggest coping mechanisms such as books for lists, action boards, or other memory-assisting equipment;
- Work together to agree solutions which are compatible to aid concentration / memory
- Offer quiet space to work where practicable and possible
- Reduce interruptions;

Anxiety.

- Promote counselling services provided by the Tendring District Council's Employee Assistance provider.
- Identify a 'buddy' for the colleague to talk to – outside of work their area;
- Signpost staff towards mindfulness activities such as breathing exercises or going for a walk during their break.

Panic Attacks.

- Identify a 'buddy' outside of work area;
- Signpost staff towards undertake mindfulness activities such as breathing exercises or going for a walk during their break

Discuss whether the member of staff has visited their GP. Depending on the discussion, this may be the next step suggested, particularly if the areas of difficulty are sleeping, panic attacks, or anxiety.

If they have visited their GP and are being supported by them, it may be helpful at this point to make an Occupational Health referral to give specific advice regarding the workplace.

Appendix 2: Menopause Advice Sheet – How to talk to your GP about menopause

If you are suffering from menopausal symptoms to the point where they're getting in the way of you enjoying life, it's time to talk to your doctor. Talking about symptoms can be hard, let alone if you feel rushed or unprepared. So, what can you do? We've put together some helpful, straightforward tips to help you get the most from your appointment.

Don't wait. It is all too common for individuals to feel they must simply 'put up' with menopausal symptoms as a part of life, but if they are affecting you, there are things you can do, and support available. There is no need to wait until symptoms feel unbearable.

Read the NICE guidelines. This stands for National Institute for Health and Care Excellence, and these guidelines are what your doctor will use to determine the type of conversation to have with you and treatments to offer. There are guidelines for patients, which are really useful to read before you see your GP, so you know what to expect.

Prepare for your appointment. It's easier for your doctor to understand what's going on if you provide them with all the information. That may sound obvious, but blood tests to say where you are on the menopause transition aren't always available or accurate – your hormones can fluctuate daily during this time. So, your doctor will be thinking about what to recommend for you, based on your symptoms.

Keep a list of your symptoms. your menstrual cycle, hot flushes, how you're feeling, and any changes you've noticed. Write them down and take them to your appointment. Your doctor will thank you for it, and it's more likely that, together, you'll find the right solution faster. And, if you have any preferences about how you manage your symptoms, tell them that too – for example, if you'd like to try hormone replacement therapy (HRT), or not.

Ask the receptionist which doctor is best to talk to about menopause. They are often the font of all knowledge at a surgery and can help you find the best person to speak to – it might not be your usual GP, it could be someone who has had special training in the subject.

Ask for a longer appointment. If you don't think your standard appointment will be long enough, try to book a double appointment, as some surgeries do offer this.

Don't be afraid to ask for a second opinion. If you don't feel you've received the help you need, ask to speak to someone else. Don't be put off; you know how you're feeling and how it's affecting you.

Ask if there is a menopause clinic in your area. Occasionally, there are regional clinics specifically devoted to menopause. If there is one in your area, and you think this would be helpful, ask for a referral.

Take your partner or a friend with you. The chances are you spend your life supporting others and, during menopause, it's your turn to ask them for support. Your partner, or a friend, will know how the symptoms are affecting you. They could support you at the appointment and also find out how they can continue to support you.

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Appendix 2: Menopause Advice Sheet – How to talk to your GP about menopause

They should:

- Talk to you about your lifestyle, and how to manage both your symptoms, and your longer-term health;
- Offer advice on hormone replacement therapy and other non-medical options;
- Talk to you about the safety and effectiveness of any treatment.

They should not:

- Tell you that it's just that time of your life. Yes, menopause is a natural stage, but please don't feel that means you should have to put up with every symptom without help;
- Tell you they do not prescribe HRT. It's up to you what you want to try, and for them to say whether it could be right for you, depending on your medical history;
- Impose unnecessary time restrictions, such as they will only prescribe this once, or for a year or two. This is an ongoing conversation, and if your symptoms persist, you will still need help to manage them.
-

Remember, your GP is there to help and support you, and you should feel comfortable and confident in talking to them about your symptoms, and any help you need. Don't think you have to struggle through menopause when there is help and support available.

All staff can access counselling by contacting the Employee Assistance helpline on 0800 243 458

The EAP website can be accessed as follows:

www.workplaceoptions.com

Click on 'Member Login' then enter -

Username: tendring

Password: employee



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