

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

24 SEPTEMBER 2018

REPORT OF DEPUTY CHIEF EXECUTIVE (CORPORATE SERVICES)

A.2 'TIME TO CHANGE' EMPLOYER PLEDGE ACTION PLAN (Report prepared by Katie Wilkins & Anastasia Simpson)

PART 1 – KEY INFORMATION

PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

To present the 'Time to Change' Employer Pledge Action Plan to Members of the Human Resources Committee.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

There is significant evidence to demonstrate that looking after the mental health of employees makes clear business sense; mental ill-health is the leading cause of sickness absence in the UK, costing an average of £1,035 per employee, per year (*1 in 4 British workers are affected by conditions like anxiety, depression and stress every year*).

The same evidence reports that tackling the stigma of mental ill-health can make a measurable difference to sickness absence rates, presenteeism levels, staff wellbeing, productivity and retention.

At its meeting on the 1st November 2017, the Human Resources Committee agreed with Officer proposals to start working towards the attainment of the 'Time to Change' Employer Pledge www.time-to-change.org.uk.

Officers have now developed a detailed action plan for submission to the 'Time to Change' organisation (*run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness*). The plan outlines the Council's current and proposed activity against the **7 key principles** of the pledge, in an attempt to establish change in how the workplace thinks and acts about mental health problems:-

1. Demonstrate senior level buy-in;
2. Demonstrate accountability and recruit Employee Champions;
3. Raise awareness about mental health;
4. Update and implement policies to address mental health problems in the workplace;
5. Ask your employees to share their personal experiences of mental health problems;
6. Equip line managers to have conversations about mental health;
7. Provide information about mental health and signpost to support services.

It is important to note that the action plan should be a 'living' document, which is reviewed regularly and edited as the organisation's plans evolve.

Following submission of the action plan, the 'Time to Change' team will provide detailed feedback within 4 weeks, to which, the Council will have 2 weeks to respond and resubmit the plan (if necessary). Once agreed, the Employer Pledge will be issued.

In achieving the Employer Pledge, the Council are able to demonstrate a commitment to not only change how we think and act about mental health in the workplace but also ensure that employees who are facing these problems feel supported.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

It is recommended:

- (a) that the contents of this report be noted;
- (b) that Members of the Human Resources Committee agree to the submission of the 'Time to Change' Employer Pledge Action Plan, to enable the Council to attain the Employer Pledge.

PART 2 – IMPLICATIONS OF THE DECISION

DELIVERING PRIORITIES

The Council's priorities include:

"Promoting healthier lifestyles and wellbeing" and "supporting improved community health".

FINANCE, OTHER RESOURCES AND RISK

There are no financial or other risks associated with the attainment of the 'Time to Change' Employer Pledge.

Any costs associated with the ongoing training of staff will be met from a designated budget for staff development.

LEGAL

Equalities Act 2010

OTHER IMPLICATIONS

None.

PART 3 – SUPPORTING INFORMATION

BACKGROUND

In November 2017 the Human Resources Committee agreed with Officer proposals to further develop the work around staff health and wellbeing through a focus on mental health. This included a commitment to:-

- Raise awareness and promote positive mental health in the workplace;
- Develop an action plan to include:
 - Training for staff and managers to increase understanding of mental health; what it is, what mental ill health actually means and recognising signs and symptoms.
 - Identify, initially 8 staff to be trained as Mental Health First Aiders (Training provider: Mental Health First Aid England).
 - Further development of the Intranet to enhance the information on mental health e.g. the mental health mapping tool, self-help and where staff can go for further support.
 - Continuation of the conversation around mental health through initiatives as part of TDC's livewell/workwell programme.
 - Signing the Time to Change Employer Pledge.

BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR THE DECISION
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Research Paper: The Management of Mental Health at Work, Dr Maria Hudson (<i>Essex Business School</i>).
APPENDICES
<ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ 'Time to Change' Employer Pledge Action Plan (Appendix A)