

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment & Appeals Committee **DATE:** 24 January 2013

CONTACT OFFICER: Kevin Gordon, Assistant Director Professional Services

AUTHORS: Karen Stoneham, HR Business Partner)
(For all enquiries) (01753) 875781

WARD(S): All

PART 1 **FOR INFORMATION AND DECISION**

Update on Wellbeing Strategy

1 Purpose of Report

This report provides an update on progress made on the Wellbeing Strategy, since the last report of 30 October 2012.

2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to Resolve that the ongoing Wellbeing Initiatives set out in the report be noted.

3 The Sustainable Community Strategy, the JSNA and the Corporate Plan

Sustainable Community Strategy Priorities

- Health and Wellbeing – the initiatives outlined within this report will encourage staff to improve their health and wellbeing.

Corporate Plan 2012/13

The Wellbeing Strategy updates outlined within this report meet the Corporate Plan's objectives as follows:

1. Improve customer experience by improving the physical, mental health and wellbeing of staff, which will increase productivity, performance and provide a greater customer experience;
2. Deliver high quality services to meet local needs by increasing attendance at work, which will in turn increase productivity and improve morale of the workforce. This will result in an improved customer satisfaction level from the community on services provided;
3. Develop new ways of working by introducing a change in how managers deal with sickness absence which will ensure consistency in approach and issues are promptly resolved with specialist advice and support;

4. Develop a skilled and capable workforce by ensuring that all managers are trained in the new sickness absence policy and develop their management skills to deal with performance management issues effectively and consistently;
5. Improvements in performance management will result in an overall reduction of working days lost, an associated reduction in agency costs and achieve value for money.

4 **Other Implications**

(a) Financial

The 2012/2013 budget allocation of £5,000 has been spent on delivery of initiatives in this Invest to Save Project.

The Council are currently reporting an annual 10 fte days lost per employee. The actions / proposals included in this report anticipate and aim towards a reduction to 6 fte days by 2014/2015.

(b) Risk Management

Risk	Mitigating action	Opportunities
Legal	We have met the statutory consultation timescales with our Joint Trade Unions and have complied with the Green Book Conditions.	
Property	None	
Human Rights	None	
Health and Safety	None	To encourage all staff to consider their working environment, their responsibilities for their own health and safety and worklife balance.
Employment Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All staff are affected by the Employee Wellbeing Initiatives and have been invited to participate. • The Sickness Absence Policy has been reviewed with our Trade Unions and statutory consultation timelines have been met. However this review does not affect any of their employment rights. 	
Equalities Issues	None	The review of the sickness absence policy has been conducted with representatives from the Disability Forum to ensure that our disabled staff are

		treated fairly and consulted with the group.
Community Support	None	
Communications	A Communications Plan has been established supported by the Wellbeing Project Group and CMT to ensure that all Wellbeing Initiatives are corporately advertised to all staff.	The Communications Plan will be continually updated as initiatives are completed / developed.
Community Safety	None	
Financial	None	Reduction from 10 days lost due to Sickness to 6 days lost which will give the Council a financial saving and increase productivity levels.
Timetable for delivery	April 2013 – launch of new sickness absence balanced scorecard. Ongoing programme of Wellbeing Initiatives.	
Project Capacity	None	
Other	None	Need to work with specialist experts (e.g. Occupational Health, NHS and PCT)

(c) Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications

We have met the statutory consultation timescales with our Joint Trade Unions and have complied with the Green Book Conditions.

(d) Equalities Impact Assessment

An Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken for the Wellbeing Strategy update and is attached as Appendix A.

(e) Workforce

All staff are affected by the Wellbeing Strategy and the unions are members of the Wellbeing Project group.

5 Supporting Information

Wellbeing Initiatives

- 5.1 Further to the last Employment and Appeals Committee on 30th October 2012, the Wellbeing Project Group have met and have produced a project plan.
- 5.2 The group have been successful in delivering the following initiatives:-

- Health Kiosk where staff could find out information about their Health, Including body mass index, blood pressure etc, held on 5 different staff sites for three weeks in September. Over 70% of the workforce accessed the kiosk. A six month follow up in March 2013 is planned.
 - Health Fair – 2 and 17 October 2012 – This was a successful event and 78 people attended. An update report is attached.
 - Leisure activities – Feel Good Factory – free taster sessions in September 2012 of which 208 sessions were taken up.
- 5.3 The Occupational Health contract is in place and has a proactive approach to encourage early intervention and appropriate management action. See Appendix B. The last six month reporting period shows that there have been an average of 27 management referrals as opposed to previous providing showing an average of 23 referrals. There has therefore been a small increase and it is anticipated that referrals will continue to increase over the next quarter as the absence management process becomes further embedded within the Council. Monthly contract meetings are held with the provider to monitor effectiveness and delivery outcomes.
- 5.4 Training on the new policy has been made a mandatory requirement for all managers. All seven training sessions are fully booked and an additional six have been added to the programme, in summary a total of 113 staff have attended (40%) Further training requirements will be assessed as part of the project plan.
- 5.5 In support of the new Sickness Absence Management Policy a new, interactive, guidance for managers document has been produced and will be released in February 2013. It will form part of the manager’s portal on the council’s staff insite with an aim of being more user friendly and easy to use. In addition, a manager’s “How to do” sheet has also been created to provide managers a quick and speedy reference to absence management.
(Draft attached at Appendix C)
- 5.6 A sickness absence balanced scorecard has been developed to support the Council to capture and measure management data to enable managers to efficiently and effectively manage absence. The scorecard measures the level of compliance by managers with the new policy, providing a check that management action in the form of sickness management meetings, referral to Occupational Health and pay stoppages have been carried out The pilot study undertaken in one Directorate in late December proved to be successful and received positive feedback. Amends are being made and the new scorecard will be rolled out to all Directorates. It is anticipated that the results of the Scorecard will be available to share at the next Committee meeting.
- 5.7 A Communications Plan has been developed to ensure that any Wellbeing Initiative is publicised corporately and linked to the Wellbeing Strategy.
- 5.8 The Wellbeing Project Group are scheduled to meet on 31 January 2013 to discuss ongoing plans and future initiatives to include:-
- **“Pace along with your Pedometer!”** an internal “fun” competition to encourage staff to walk more, take the stairs instead of the lift, burn off those calories and reduce our carbon footprint. This will be open for all teams of the Council to take part in. We are currently seeking corporate sponsors for the supply of the Pedometers and prizes for the team that has “clocked” up the most miles!
 - **Super Bowl League** – setting up of teams to play ten pin bowling.

- **Ice Karting Grand Prix**– setting up of teams to take part in local Grand Prix.
- Further promotion of activities already taking place to encourage more participation.

5.9 Summary of outcomes and benefits

On reflecting on progress to date the following benefits will be achieved;

- Meaningful, accurate and up-to-date reporting on absence management in the form of the Sickness Absence Balanced Scorecard. This will identify areas that are subject to increased sickness and require additional support re management of the process to ensure consistency in application throughout the Council.
- Appropriate and effective management training to develop management skills and competences in dealing with sickness absence issues.
- Manager's Guidance and resources to improve knowledge and understanding of the process to enable effective and efficient management of absence.
- Proactive management of absence by early referral to Occupational Health to quickly address any ongoing health issues which may result in long term absence.
- Future initiatives planned for the wellbeing of staff promotes a positive and supportive environment, improves moral, attendance, productivity and the overall psychological contract of the employee with the employer.

Healthy, Happy and Here

6 **Appendices (attached)**

Appendix A – Occupational Health Management Information

Appendix B – Update on Health Fair – October 2012

Appendix C – Manager's "How to Do" sheet