

## SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**REPORT TO:** Employment & Appeals Committee  
**DATE:** 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017  
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**WARD(S):** All

### PART I FOR INFORMATION

#### EMPLOYEE WELLBEING PROGRAMME UPDATE

##### 1 Purpose of Report

To provide an update on the staff initiatives introduced to support the Employee Wellbeing agenda, as part of the wider Workforce Strategy.

##### 2 Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to resolve that the Employee Wellbeing Programme update be noted.

##### 3 Supporting Information

Since the last Staff Wellbeing update in January 2015, this corporate project has been re-launched due to the original project group members declining. Volunteers were sought from existing employees to join the newly formed 'Employee Wellbeing Project Board'.

##### Update on Wellbeing Initiatives

Over the last 2 years, the group has developed 3 strands to concentrate on and these are listed below along with the relevant initiatives to encourage staff to consider their own wellbeing:-

- **Physical Activity:** This includes a range of exercises which have been commissioned for employees either before work, lunchtime or after work. The most popular sessions are – Yoga; Pilates; Netball; Football, Bike rides and more recently the Midday Mile and Table Tennis. Where possible these sessions are free of charge although there is a small fee where venues are required for activities. In addition we have led a Rounders and Football tournament and the annual Pedometer Challenge which encouraged staff to engage in some healthy competition between different teams. Particular success of our mixed netball tournament that competed at Bisham Abbey and placed 3<sup>rd</sup> out of 7 teams.

An Active Bingo card was introduced to reward staff for undertaking different activities over the period with some fun prizes for those that got a line or a full house. Posters encourage staff to participate in these activities and also to make small lifestyle changes, e.g. 'take the stairs'. We have also developed good partner arrangements with national schemes such as; Get Active Programme and Workplace Challenge whereby we can take advantage of resources to support staff and encourage them to get active.

- **Healthy Eating:** Our public health team and members of the Employee Wellbeing Board have supported this initiative and provided some useful tools and contacts to promote and run some informative events, including Diabetes Awareness; Health Checks, Healthy BBQ Week and Let's Get Healthy workshops which focused on sugar intake and healthy hearts. Sessions on drinking awareness and calorie intake from alcohol have also been held in multiple locations. In addition we have used Grapevine to regularly publicise healthy eating recipes provided by Wellbeing Champions and useful links e.g. British Heart Foundation and Slimming World. All initiatives have been well attended by staff and have been an 'eye opener' for some.
- **Mental Wellbeing:** There is a stigma attached to Mental Health and therefore this has been the most problematic area to tackle and promote. However, we have promoted national initiatives and events, for example Mental Health Awareness Week, Time to Talk, and World Mental Health Day. We have also worked with our own Community Mental Health team and promoted mental health resources and stress control workshops which staff can attend in their own time. Grapevine has had regular articles with contributions from the Community Mental Health Team, promotion of online mental wellbeing resources, as well as information on the mental wellbeing benefits of physical activity. The Employee Wellbeing Board provides a range of activities and has additionally supported council wide social events such as Christmas Jumper Day which contribute to a sense of wellbeing. Furthermore we have promoted our Employee Assistance programme which is a confidential counselling service for staff who may wish to use this service.

Following a successful series of introductory resilience training sessions in 2016, the Council joined a National Resilience Pilot in January. The intention is to pilot the delivery of mindfulness-based resilience training for Council employees. The pilot will be evaluated by the Wellbeing At Work Research Team at Kingston Business School which focuses on key business and organisational issues that impact on the well-being of people at work. The research is also being fed into the What Works Wellbeing Centre, a government-sponsored team set up by Gus O'Donnell to provide an evidence base for what works in enhancing resilience and wellbeing in the public services.

Participation in the pilot is an opportunity for Slough Borough Council to take a lead on the implementation of an innovative approach to improving employee effectiveness and wellbeing.

Each of these three priority strands (physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellbeing) is supported by articles in Grapevine. In the period May 2015 – April 2016, 29 articles relating to employee wellbeing were included in Grapevine. In the period May 2016 to date, more than 30 wellbeing related articles have been published.

### **Other Initiatives**

Finally the Employee Wellbeing Project Board has successfully implemented Smoke Free from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016 which now means that all Council sites are smoke free and smoking is not permitted at any time during the working day.

### Future Initiatives

Following feedback from the staff survey regarding employee wellbeing events, to encourage staff involvement the Employee Wellbeing Board has recently developed a staff survey to establish what else staff would be interested in being involved in or what they do / don't like. The results of this survey are currently being analysed and the board is keen to develop some future initiatives to engage the entire workforce.

The Employee Wellbeing Board also seeks to support and promote other health related initiatives such as CW4S (Cardio Wellness 4 Slough).

The Employee Wellbeing Board has used Grapevine articles to promote the importance of an active lifestyle and in 2017 hopes to host a 'Get SBC Moving' day encouraging staff to put this message into practice:

*Healthy, happy and here*