

The Arc
High Street
Clowne
S43 4JY

To: Chair & Members of the Union /
Employee Consultation Committee

Contact: Matthew Kerry
Telephone: 01246 242519
Email: matthew.kerry@bolsover.gov.uk

Thursday, 16th May 2024

Dear Councillor,

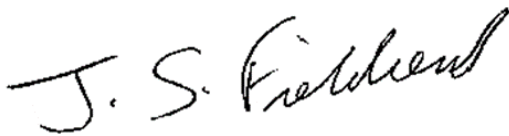
UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council to be held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Wednesday, 5th June, 2024 at 10:00 hours.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised on page 3 onwards.

Yours faithfully,



Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

**UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

**Wednesday, 5th June, 2024 at 10:00 hours taking place in the Council Chamber, The Arc,
Clowne**

| Item No. | | Page No.(s) |
|-----------------|--|------------------------|
| 1. | Election of Chair 2024/25 | |
| 2. | Appointment of Vice Chair 2024/25 | |
| 3. | Apologies For Absence | |
| 4. | Urgent Items of Business | |
| | To note any urgent items of business which the Chairman has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4(b) of the Local Government Act 1972. | |
| 5. | Declarations of Interest | |
| | Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of: | |
| | a) any business on the agenda; | |
| | b) any urgent additional items to be considered; | |
| | c) any matters arising out of those items; | |
| | and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time. | |
| 6. | Minutes | 4 - 7 |
| | To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 14 th March 2024. | |
| 7. | Quarter 4 Health & Safety Update: 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024 | 8 - 13 |
| 8. | Sickness Absence - Quarter 4 (January - March 2024) | 14 - 22 |
| 9. | Neurodiversity Policy Executive Report 2024 | 23 - 35 |

Agenda Item 6

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, the Arc, Clowne on Thursday, 14th March 2024 at 10:00 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Councillor Mary Dooley in the Chair

Councillors:- Rowan Clarke, Cathy Jeffery (from during Minute No. UECC14-23/24), Ross Walker, and Vicky Wapplington.

UNISON:- Liz Robinson (UNISON Convenor), Keeley Noakes and Violet Parker.

Officers:- Steve Brunt (Strategic Director of Services), Peter Wilmot (HR Business Partner), Alison Bluff (Governance and Civic Manager) and Matthew Kerry (Governance and Civic Officer).

UECC10-23/24 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Sally Renshaw, and Chris McKinney (UNISON).

UECC11-23/24 URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business to consider.

UECC12-23/24 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest made.

UECC13-23/24 MINUTES – 7TH DECEMBER 2023

Moved by Councillor Vicky Wapplington and seconded by Councillor Rowan Clarke

RESOLVED that the minutes of a Union/Employee Consultation Committee held on 7th December 2023 be accepted as a true and correct record.

UECC14-23/24 SICKNESS ABSENCE - QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER 2023 - DECEMBER 2023)

Committee considered the Sickness Absence Quarter 3 report presented by the HR Business Partner.

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Table 1 of the report showed a summary of the sickness absence levels within the Council for the October 2023 – December 2023 quarter period. The HR Business Partner noted the report presented background data, key trends, and actions which the Council was taking.

Attached to the report was a set of appendices and details on the proportions of long-term and short-term absences.

Absence for the Senior Managers Group was shown as 50% of the total absence for Joint Senior Managers, as this was split between Bolsover and North East Derbyshire District Council. For other employees the absences included were for Bolsover only (the employing authority).

The HR Business Partner highlighted that the average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 3 was 1.89 days. The 2023/24 projected outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee was 8.72 days. This would be confirmed when the Quarter 4 data was available.

It was also highlighted that in four of the Council's services, there had been no recorded sickness in Quarter 3, and a further six services had experienced less than 1 day per FTE.

However, stress/depression remained in the top three reasons for absence since 2019/20. There had been eight cases of absence due to stress/depression during Quarter 3, two of which were work related, and six none work related.

COVID-19 had accounted for 64 days lost, in comparison to 18 days lost in Quarter 2.

There had been 11 long-term sickness cases in this quarter, eight had been due to physical health ailments and six had been related to stress/depression (two of which were work related). Appropriate support and assistance were being provided to those who had returned to work and those who were planning to do so. Three had now returned to work, eight remained absent (1 of which, the Council was pursuing the ill health retirement route) and 1 had retired on ill health grounds.

Managers received support from the HR Advisor and were issued monthly sickness absence information. Managers were also able to access sickness information on their teams on a daily basis via the HR21 Self Service.

Councillor Cathy Jeffery entered the meeting.

Steps the Council had taken to support employees included:

- Mental Health awareness sessions were now available 'on demand' for all employees via Eric and had previously been delivered across the Council as part of the Council's quarterly corporate training programme.
- Awareness training explained that colleagues and managers were not specialists in mental health and their role was to listen to employees and signpost them to appropriate support.
- Mental Health awareness initiatives and possible support was continually publicised via Eric and the weekly bulletin. Recent examples of which included:
 - the Mental Health Map, which featured all the pathways and support options

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

- available in Derbyshire;
- Mental Health Awareness week – which promoted available guidance and support;
- SHOUT – an organisation which provided 24/7 confidential support to anyone struggling to cope.
- Cycle to Work Scheme was also available to encourage health and wellbeing and to address carbon emissions – the number of employees who had subscribed during 2023/24 would be reported in the Quarter 4 report.
- The number of employees subscribing to the Gym during 2023/24 would also be reported in the Quarter 4 report.
- Managers and employees had access to Occupational Health, Counselling, Physiotherapy, the Council's Employee Assistance Programme, and other support.
- Employees were signposted to incentives which were available via Leisure i.e.:
 - To encourage health and wellbeing staff could take up membership for Go! Active, which included gym, swim and classes for only £15 per month.
 - There was a Health Referral Programme (Physical Activity & Lifestyle Support) which was available to Employees residing within the Council's area – this was a programme aimed at changing behaviours and finding solutions to assist people facing daily challenges resulting in a concentrated approach regarding service users' health and wellbeing.

In response to a Member's query, the HR Business Partner advised that there were awareness sessions for managers to enable them to stay proactive when employees had issues of mental health. This in turn prevented time-off work being taken by staff, though for some, taking time off was necessary to recover. Counselling services were also available along with a 24-hour helpline where an adviser was available. Mental health first aid training was also available. The HR Business Partner highlighted that promoting available health and wellbeing services prevented mental health issues from developing.

The HR Business Partner noted that there was no 'one' solution to handle this type of health care, however, the Council had recently recruited an Employee Engagement Officer who would explore and manage this type of support. Managers were being trained via mental health awareness sessions to identify problems as soon as possible to enable staff to access the support they needed.

The Chair noted that the Council had specific measures and programmes in place, and that one of the services, Physical Activity and Lifestyle Support, had been successful.

A Member queried the guidance that managers were receiving to assist staff. The Strategic Director of Services advised that it was not uncommon for managers to notice the changes in their staff. While some staff would need to take time off and recuperate, others may prefer to stay at work.

In response to a Member's queries, the UNISON Convenor advised that UNISON was looking to use posters to promote mental health services available to staff and the Employee Engagement Officer was looking at programmes ranging from Yoga to Pilates. Free training was available to UNISON members but were also available to staff who were not UNISON members. North East Derbyshire District Council and Derbyshire County Council also had different types of training available.

Moved by Councillor Mary Dooley and seconded by Councillor Vicky Waplington
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

UECC15-23/24 UNISON CONVENOR UPDATE

The UNISON Convenor presented UNISON's update report and advised of two new branch stewards.

UNISON thanked the Council and Committee for supporting the provision of a full-time UNISON Convenor on facility time for a further 12-month period.

From the report, the UNISON Convenor noted a lot of work had been undertaken on improving Job Evaluation timescales across the Council and also Dragonfly. The full-time role had allowed the volume of evaluations to be managed and processed in a timely manner.

For the next 12 months, the promotion of the UNISON Learning Charter would take place. This would include a survey sent to all employees of the Council to encourage take up of training which would up-skill them in their current job role. A promotion in collaboration with the HR and Payroll Team on health and wellbeing events would also take place to boost staff morale and help with the identified stress/depression statistics.

It was still unclear how the East Midlands County Combined Authority would work, so the UNISON Convenor would learn about the future role and improve the visibility of the UNISON service to the newly elected Mayor.

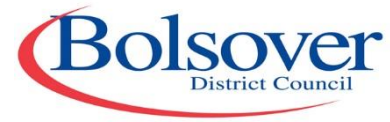
The UNISON Convenor noted that UNISON wanted to thank the Council's Chief Executive and Senior Leadership Team for their continued support and agreeing the position of the full-time UNISON Convenor for a further 12 months. The UNISON Convenor also wished to express both unions gratitude that the Council involved them in all decisions relating to its employees and she was looking forward to working closely with Members and employees on various topics.

The Strategic Director of Services thanked the HR Business Partner, UNISON and Unite, and reflected on the achievements made and recent awards received for digital transformation.

The Chair also expressed her thanks to the UNISON Convenor and the HR Business Partner, and the good work being undertaken. She was pleased that support was available to employees and a union representation in situ at the Council.

Moved by Councillor Mary Dooley and seconded by Councillor Rowan Clarke
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10:27 hours.



Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee on 5th June 2024

Quarter 4 Health & Safety Update: 1st January 2024 – 31st March 2024

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Classification | This report is Public |
| Report By | Jayne Stokes Health and Safety Adviser |
| Contact Officer | Bronwen MacArthur-Williams Health & Safety Manager |

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To provide an overview of the Authority's overall Health & Safety performance as indicated by:

- Accident statistics, trends and lost time.
- Training numbers including any reports of non-attendance and associated costs.
- Providing an overview of progress against the workplace inspection programme.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 To confirm how Bolsover District Council is performing from a Health and Safety perspective. Good Health and Safety performance is indicative of good management control and vice versa.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 Accident Statistics by Quarter:

The total number of BDC employee accidents in Quarter 4 is 8. This is fewer in comparison to Quarter 4 of 2-22-2023 which saw 12 accidents reported. The current Quarter accidents occurred in the following service areas:

- Streetscene – 6
- Leisure – 1
- Property services - 1

The following types of incidents were involved: Contact with moving machinery - 1, slips trips and falls on same level - 2, manual handling - 1, struck by moving object – 1, violence and aggression – 1, road traffic collision – 1, other – 1.

0 of these accidents was RIDDOR reportable.

The number of near misses reported during this Quarter was: 1

- Fire alarm was set off at Pleasley Vale Business Park Mill 2 due to a motor on a machine breaking and causing smoke to emit.

| Date of Incident | Service Area + Location | Type of Incident | Incident Severity | RIDDOR Reportable | Incident Details | Lost Time Days (Actual) |
|-------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------------|
| 16/01/2024 | StreetScene – Riverside Depot | Contact with moving machinery | Minor Injury - No Lost Days | No | IP clearing spilled green waste. Bin lifts switched from trade mode to automatic mode, IP got coat caught by lifters and was raised off the ground before colleagues pushed the emergency stop. | 0 |
| 19/01/2024 | StreetScene – Off site | Manual handling | Lost Time - Up to 7 days | No | IP was pulling the black bins off the kerbside, both bins spun around, twisting IP's wrists. | 7 |
| 22/02/2024 | StreetScene – Riverside Depot | Slips, trips and Falls on same level | Minor Injury – No Lost Days | No | IP stubbed foot on raised stone slab in wash bay area. | 0 |
| 23/02/2024 | StreetScene Off site – A617 | Road Traffic Collision | Road Traffic Collision – No Injury | No | Road traffic collision between refuse wagon and a lorry. | 0 |
| 27/02/2024 | Leisure – Go! Active | Struck by moving object | Minor Injury – No Lost Days | No | IP reached hand back through door to quickly grab something when door closed and trapped IP's hand. | 0 |
| 04/03/2024 | StreetScene – Off site: | Slips, trips and Falls on same level | Minor Injury – No Lost Days | No | IP was litter picking and slipped. | 0 |
| 07/03/2024 | StreetScene – Off site | Violence and aggression | Minor Injury – No Lost Days | No | While emptying the bins a dog bit IP on his left calf. | 0 |

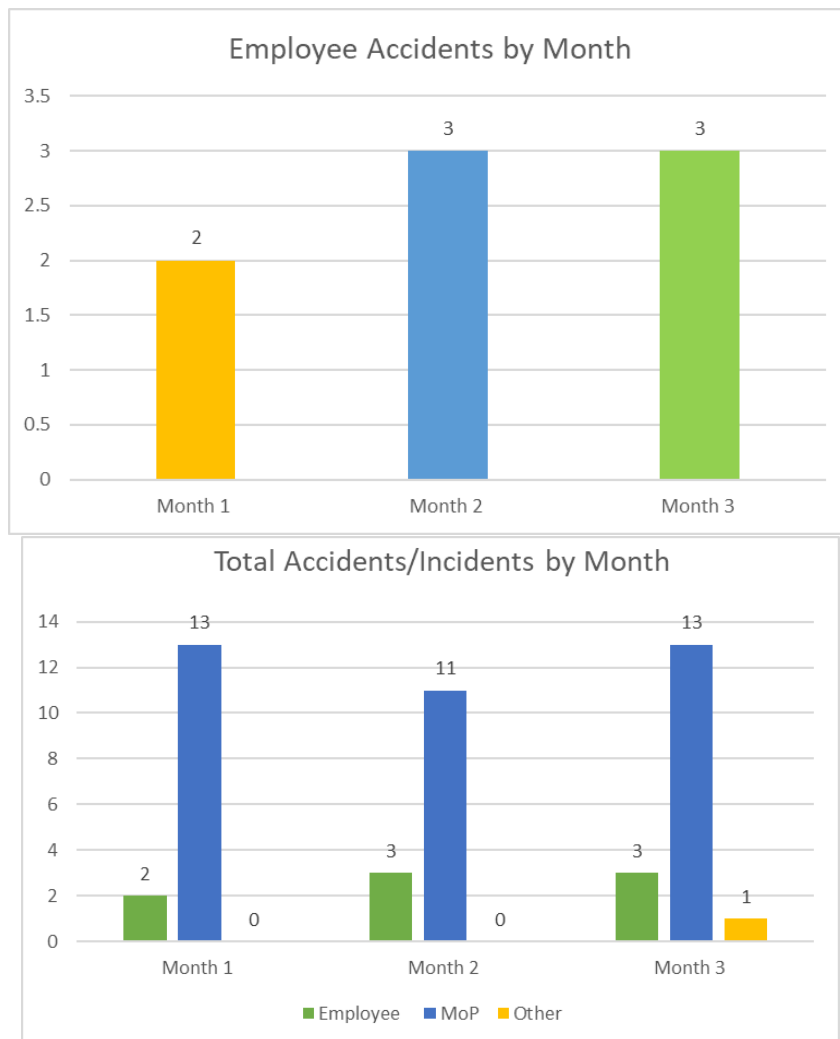
| | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|-----------------------------------|-------|----------|----|--|----------|
| 12/03/2024 | Property Services - Pleasley Vale | Other | Trespass | No | Theft of cable from side of unit 5 Mill 2. | 0 |
| Total Lost Days: | | | | | | 7 |

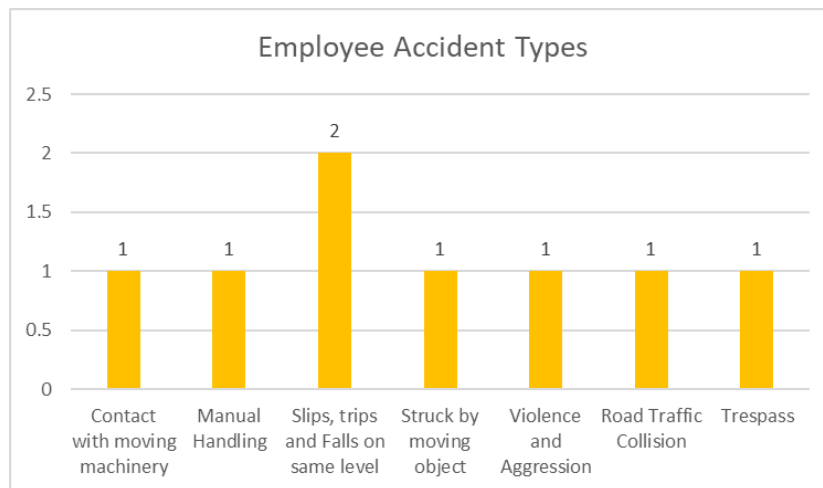
2.2 The average quarterly footfall into Go!Active is 85,958 people. The total number of accidents reported by Members of the Public is **37**. This is compared to **41** Member of the Public accidents in Quarter 4 2022-2023.

1 of the accidents from the current Quarter was serious enough to be RIDDOR reportable, occurring in Leisure Services:

- 09/02/2024 Go Active @ The Arc Leisure
IP was sitting down on flume, but right foot got caught and body weight forced it underneath, causing dislocation.

2.3 Graphs showing the total number of monthly accidents / incidents for employees, employee and member of the public accident numbers by month and incident types for employees are shown below:





2.4 Dragonfly Development Limited have reported the below for this Quarter.

| Date of Incident | Service Area + Location | Type of Incident | Incident Severity | RIDDOR Reportable | Incident Details | Lost Time Days (Actual) |
|-------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|--|-------------------------|
| 09/01/2024 | DDL – Shirebrook Crematorium | Trespass | Near Miss - No Injury | No | Break in and theft. Perpetrators appeared to have stolen at least one Stihl saw. | 0 |
| 23/01/2024 | DDL | Struck by moving object | Lost Time - Up to 7 days | No | Wind blew debris from the van floor into IP's eye. | 3 |
| 08/02/2024 | Dragonfly Repairs – Riverside Depot | Slips, trips and Falls on same level | Lost Time - Over 7 Days | Yes | IP slipped on snow covered path exiting building to carpark. | 18 |
| Total Lost Days: | | | | | | 21 |

3.0 Training

3.1 During this Quarter, 1 BDC employees were trained as detailed below:

- **Health & Safety Corporate Induction – 1**

3.2 During this Quarter, 13 Dragonfly Development Ltd. employees were trained as detailed below:

- **Asbestos Awareness – 12**
- **Health & Safety Corporate Induction – 1**

3.3 There were **no** recharges made for unattended training places.

4.0 INSPECTIONS:

4.1 5 formal biannual BDC inspections occurred. These are undertaken by a member of the Health & Safety Team, Facilities Management Team, a building representative and a Trade Union Representative (when available) – and occurred at:

- Pleasley Vale Mill 1
- Pleasley Vale Mill 2 and The Dye House
- Pleasley Vale Mill 3
- Pleasley Vale Outdoor Activity Centre and Boat House
- The Tangent

Additionally, regular joint informal walk-arounds of The Arc and Riverside Depot continue, between Health and Safety and Facilities Management.

4.2 7 Dragonfly Development Ltd. inspections occurred at:

- Bersahill – Doncaster – 1 visit
- Market Close – Shirebrook – 2 visits
- Moorfield Lane - Langwith – 2 visits
- Crematorium – 2 visits

5.0 Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 The Health & Safety Manager asks the committee to consider the report as a reflection on the corporate commitment to and continued awareness of the importance of, good Health & Safety performance.

6.0 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 In view of the proposed recommendations, Committee members not providing a steer on this matter would be an alternative option but is not considered a reasonable approach.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That Safety Committee members note the Health and Safety updates and provide any appropriate advice to officers on this work stream.
2. That Safety Committee members be assured that good Health and Safety management remains a key performance priority for Bolsover District Council.

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: Poor performance can lead to compensation claims, increasing the cost of insurance.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

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| <p>Legal (including Data Protection): Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Details: Good performance is an indicator of compliance with Health and Safety legislation.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council</p> <p>Staffing: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Details: Accidents resulting in injury can impact on staffing levels and costs attributed to manager time, sickness absence and replacement labour.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Head of Paid Service</p> |
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DECISION INFORMATION

| | |
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| <p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p> | No |
| <p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p> | No |

| | |
|---|--|
| District Wards Significantly Affected | N/A |
| <p>Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> | <p>Details: Trade Union Safety Representatives</p> |

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| Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment. |
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| DOCUMENT INFORMATION | |
|-----------------------------|-------|
| Appendix No | Title |
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| Background Papers |
| <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i> |
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Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee on 5th June 2024

Sickness Absence - Quarter 4 (January – March 2024)

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

| | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Classification | This report is Public |
| Report By | Oliver Fishburn HR and Payroll Manager |

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 4 (January – March 2024).

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months January – March 2024.
- 1.2 Absence for the Senior Managers Group is shown as 50% of the total absence for Joint Senior Managers as this is split with Bolsover/NE Derbyshire District Councils. For other employees the absences included are for the employing authority only.
- 1.3 **The average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 4 was 2.44 days.**
- 1.4 **The 2023/24 actual outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee is 8.98 days.**
- 1.5 The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2024 is 8.5 days.
- 1.6 For the purposes of sickness reporting, Senior Management is accounted for as follows:
 - 1 Joint Assistant Director Post (0.5 FTE). 0 days sickness experienced during Quarter 4.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

- 2.1 Tables 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix 1 detail the key patterns and trends being experienced corporately in relation to sickness absence.

2.2 Key Trends

- The overall average days lost due to sickness in Quarter 4 was 2.44, this has increased from Quarter 3 and is the highest quarter of the year in terms of average days lost, however the figure is lower than Q4 in 2022/3.
- There is a direct correlation between employees undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness. This is reinforced by Muscular/Skeletal absences regularly being in the top three reasons for sickness absence.
- 3 Services experienced zero sickness in Quarter 4 and a further 4 Services experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee.
- Stress/Depression has remained in the top three reasons for absence since Quarter of 2019/20.
- There were 13 cases of absence due to Stress/Depression during Quarter 4, 6 of which were work related, and 7 were none work related.
- Covid19 accounted for 5 days lost due to sickness in Quarter 4 in comparison to 64 days lost in Quarter 3.
- There are 15 long term cases in this quarter. 10 are due to physical health ailments and 5 cases are related to stress/depression (3 of which are/were work related). Appropriate support and assistance is being provided to facilitate support for those who have returned to work and those planning to do so. 8 Employees have now returned to work, 7 remain absent (2 of which, the Council is pursuing the Ill Health Retirement route).

Actions

2.3 Managers have support from the HR Advisor and are issued monthly sickness absence information. Managers are also able to access sickness information for their teams on a daily basis via HR21 Self Service.

2.4 Steps the Council has taken to support employees include:

- Mental Health awareness sessions are now available 'on demand' for all employees via Eric and have previously been delivered across the Council as part of the Council's quarterly corporate training programme.
- Awareness training explains that colleagues and managers are not specialists in mental health and their role is to listen to employees and signpost them to appropriate support.
- Mental Health awareness initiatives and possible support is continually publicised via Eric and the weekly bulletin. Recent examples of which include:
 - the Mental Health Map, which features all the pathways and support options available in Derbyshire.
 - Mental Health Awareness week – promoting the available guidance and support available.
 - SHOUT – an organisation which provides 24/7 confidential support to anyone struggling to cope.
- Cycle to Work Scheme is also available to encourage health and wellbeing and to address carbon emissions, the number of employees who have subscribed during 2023/24 are 2.
- The number of Employees subscribing to the Gym during 2023/24 are 63.

- Managers and Employees have accessed Occupational Health, Counselling, Physiotherapy, the Council's Employee Assistance Programme and other support.
- Employees are signposted to incentives which are available via Leisure i.e.:
 - To encourage health and wellbeing staff can take up membership for Go! Active which includes gym, swim and classes for only £15 per month.
 - There is a Health Referral Programme (Physical Activity & Lifestyle Support) which is available, all employees can access the Bolsover Wellness Programme if they meet the criteria. This is a programme aimed at changing behaviours and finding solutions to assist people facing daily challenges resulting in a concentrated approach regarding service users health and wellbeing.

2.5 Operational concerns about the management of sickness absence cases that exist are being raised with the respective managers and dealt with as per standard practice and policy.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

3.1 The report contains data relating to employees' absence levels.

4 Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

4.1 Not applicable – this report is for information.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the report be noted.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: High absence levels can contribute to poor service levels, low morale and higher costs for the Council.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details:

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

| |
|--|
| Staffing: Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Details: The report's topic relates to employees and their absence levels. <div style="text-align: right;">On behalf of the Head of Paid Service</div> |
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DECISION INFORMATION

| | |
|---|----|
| Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds: Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i> | No |
| Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i> | No |

| | |
|--|----------|
| District Wards Significantly Affected | None |
| Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> | Details: |

| |
|---|
| Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment. |
| N/A |

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

| Appendix No | Title |
|-------------|--|
| 1 | Figures for the Quarter by Directorate |
| | |

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| Background Papers <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i> |
| None |

Table One: Organisational Outturn Average Number of Days Absence

(Average sickness days per fte employee)

| | 2020/21 | 2020/21 Costs | 2021/22 | 2021/22 Costs | 2022/23 | 2022/23 Costs | 2023/24 | 2023/24 Costs |
|------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|----------------|--------------------------|
| Quarter One | 1.50 | £51,292.61 | 1.91 | £81,917.94 | 2.29 | £84,309.63 | 2.26 | £74,265.11 |
| Quarter Two | 1.35 | £52,351.59 | 2.31 | £91,025.58 | 2.02 | £84,144.83 | 2.39 | £86,396.88 |
| Quarter Three | 1.14 | £46,411.80 | 2.29 | £85,306.37 | 2.27 | £93,954.00 | 1.89 | £73,327.02 |
| Quarter Four | 1.58 | £66,731.07 | 2.19 | £84,857.65 | 2.82 | £118,763.85 | 2.44 | £99,520.51 |
| Overall Outturn | 5.57 | £216,787.07 | 8.7 | £343,107.54 | 9.4 | £381,172.31 | 8.98 | £333,509.52 |

Table Two: Organisational Long Term/Short Term Split Days Percentage

| | 2020/21 | | 2021/22 | | 2022/23 | | 2023/24 | |
|------------------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|------------|
| | Short Term | Long Term | Short Term | Long Term | Short Term | Long Term | Short Term | Long Term |
| Quarter One | 33% | 67% | 40% | 60% | 48% | 52% | 23% | 77% |
| Quarter Two | 37% | 63% | 67% | 33% | 46% | 54% | 37% | 63% |
| Quarter Three | 47% | 53% | 48% | 52% | 46% | 54% | 41% | 59% |
| Quarter Four | 43% | 57% | 69% | 31% | 43% | 57% | 41% | 59% |
| Overall Outturn | 41% | 59% | 57% | 43% | 46% | 54% | 36% | 64% |

Table Three: Top Three Reasons for Absence

(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost)

| | 2020/21 | 2021/22 | 2022/23 | Current Year 2023/24 |
|----------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Quarter One | 1. Stress/Depression 2. Other 3. Headaches/Migraines | 1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital | 1. COVID Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression | 1. Operations/Hospital 2. Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal |
| Quarter Two | 1. Operations/Hospital 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression | 1. COVID 19 Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression | 1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal | 1 Operations/Hospital 2. Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal |
| Quarter Three | 1. Other Musc. Skel 2. Stress/Depression 3. COVID 19 Symptoms | 1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal | 1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal | 1. Stress/Depression 2. Other 3. Other Musc. Skeletal |
| Quarter Four | 1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital | 1. COVID19 Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression | 1. Stress/Depression 2. Operations/Hospital 3. Other Musc. Skeletal | 1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc./Skel 3. Operations/Hospital |

| | | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Overall Outturn | 1. Other Musc. Skeletal | 1.COVID19 Symptoms | 1. Other Musc. Skeletal | 1.Stress/Depression |
| | 2. Stress/Depression | 2. Stress/Depression | 2. Stress/Depression | 2.Other Musc. Skeletal |
| | 3. Operations/Hospital | 3. Other Musc. Skeletal | 3. COVID19 Symptoms | 3.Operations/Hospital |

Summary Figures for the Quarter by Directorate/Service

Figure One – Service Breakdown Short/Long Term Split

21

| Service | Short term days | No. of Employees absent | Long term days | No. of Employees Absent | Total Days lost | FTE No. in Section | Average days lost per FTE |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Directors and Assistant Directors | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 8 | 0 |
| Governance | 4 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 4 | 5.6 | 0.71 |
| Elections | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2.5 | 0 |
| Health & Safety | 3 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 3 | 6 | 0.5 |
| Human Resources & Payroll | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 7.52 | 0 |
| Legal | 6 | 2 | 29 | 1 | 35 | 5.82 | 6.01 |
| Communications | 5 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 5 | 5 | 1 |
| Procurement | 0 | 0 | 100 | 3 | 100 | 2.96 | 33.78 |
| Performance | 0 | 0 | 65 | 1 | 65 | 2.82 | 23.05 |
| Finance | 14 | 4 | 0 | 0 | 14 | 9.8 | 1.43 |

| | | | | | | | |
|-----------------------------------|-----|----|-----|---|-----|-------|------|
| Revenues & Benefits | 17 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 17 | 25.18 | 0.68 |
| Customer Services | 36 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 36 | 23.87 | 1.51 |
| Leisure | 29 | 10 | 39 | 1 | 68 | 52 | 1.31 |
| Leaders/Executive Team | 12 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 12 | 8.42 | 1.43 |
| Streetscene | 150 | 38 | 243 | 7 | 393 | 105.1 | 3.74 |
| Housing Management (including CS) | 67 | 11 | 0 | 0 | 67 | 71.05 | 0.94 |
| Planning | 18 | 2 | 47 | 2 | 65 | 21.36 | 3.04 |

FOR INFORMATION ONLY – EMPLOYEES HOSTED BY NEDDC

| | | | | | | | |
|----------------------|------|---|-----|---|------|-------|------|
| ICT | 27.5 | 9 | 0 | 0 | 27.5 | 31.25 | 0.88 |
| Environmental Health | 32 | 8 | 142 | 3 | 174 | 48.08 | 3.62 |

Figure Two: Stress Cases During Quarter Four

| Work Related | Outside of Work Related | Total |
|--------------|-------------------------|-------|
| 6 | 7 | 13 |



Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee on 5th June 2024

Neurodiversity Policy

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

| | |
|------------------------|---|
| Classification | This report is Public |
| Report By | Peter Wilmot HR Business Partner Ext 2421 peter.wilmot@bolsover.gov.uk |
| Contact Officer | As above |

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

The purpose of this report is to seek approval for the implementation of a Neurodiversity Policy for the Council. The Neurodiversity Policy aims to foster an inclusive environment that recognises and values the diverse strengths and perspectives of individuals with neurological differences.

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

1.1 Neurodiversity refers to the natural variation in neurological functioning present in the population. It encompasses conditions such as Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Dyslexia, and others. Research has shown that neurodiverse individuals bring unique skills and perspectives to the workplace, including enhanced problem-solving abilities, creativity, and attention to detail.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 The implementation of a Neurodiversity Policy aligns with the Council’s commitment to diversity, equality and inclusion. By embracing neurodiversity, we can tap into a wider talent pool, increase innovation and create a more dynamic and supportive work environment for all employees. Moreover, fostering an inclusive culture where neurodiverse individuals feel valued and supported can lead to higher employee satisfaction, retention and productivity.

The policy helps create an environment where neurodiverse employees can thrive, contribute their unique perspectives and access necessary support and accommodations to fully participate in society. It fosters a culture of acceptance, understanding, and equal opportunities for all members of the community.

3. Principles of the Neurodiversity Policy

- 3.1 All employees deserve opportunities, encouragement and support to realise their full potential.
- 3.2 A diversity of cognitive approaches is a source of great strength and value within a genuinely inclusive workplace.
- 3.3 All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that policies, practices and culture do not discriminate against neurodivergent people.
- 3.4 Employees must not be subject to unfavourable treatment if they choose to disclose a neurodivergent condition.
- 3.5 Each employee is unique and that there can be a high degree of overlap between neurodivergent conditions. Consequently, any support needs must be identified and implemented on the basis of personal evaluation and individual consultation – not assumptions or stereotypes.

4. Key Components of the Proposed Neurodiversity Policy.

- 4.1 Awareness and Education: Raise awareness about neurodiversity and provide education on how to support neurodiverse individuals in the workplace.
- 4.2 Recruitment and Hiring Practices: Consider recruitment and hiring practices to ensure they are inclusive and accessible to neurodiverse candidates. This may include adjusting interview processes, providing alternative forms of assessment, and offering adaptations as needed.
- 4.3 Workplace Adjustments: Potential identify and implement workplace adjustments to support neurodiverse employees, such as flexible work arrangements where possible, sensory-friendly workspaces, and assistive technologies.
- 4.4 Non-Discrimination and Inclusivity: Ensure that policies and procedures are in place to prevent discrimination and promote inclusivity for neurodiverse individuals at all levels of the Council.
- 4.5 In conclusion, the adoption of a Neurodiversity Policy is important for creating an inclusive and supportive workplace where all employees can thrive.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

- 5.1 To demonstrate the Council's commitment to being an excellent and fully inclusive employer and to improve awareness amongst employees and members.

6. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection

6.1 Not to implement the policy and rely on the Council's existing employment policies.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. Approve the Neurodiversity Policy.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS:

Finance and Risk: Yes No

Details: The cost of launching the Policy, information, publicity and arranging awareness sessions.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

Legal (including Data Protection): Yes No

Details: Ensuring compliance with equality legislation.

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

Environment: Yes No

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

Details:

Staffing: Yes No

Details: Creating a more inclusive working environment.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

DECISION INFORMATION

| | |
|--|----|
| <p>Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p> | No |
| <p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? (Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</p> | No |

| | |
|--|---|
| District Wards Significantly Affected | (please state which wards or state All if all wards are affected) |
| Consultation: Leader / Deputy Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Executive <input type="checkbox"/> SLT <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Relevant Service Manager <input type="checkbox"/> Members <input type="checkbox"/> Public <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | Details: Trade Unions |

| |
|---|
| Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment. |
| |

| DOCUMENT INFORMATION | |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|
| Appendix No | Title |
| 1 | Neurodiversity Policy |
| | |
| | |

| |
|--|
| Background Papers |
| <i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i> |
| |



Bolsover District Council

Neurodiversity Policy

June 2024

Equalities Statement

Bolsover District Council is committed to equalities as an employer and when delivering the services it provides to all sections of the community.

The Council believes that no person should be treated unfairly and is committed to eliminating all forms of discrimination, advancing equality and fostering good relations between all groups in society.

Access for All statement

You can request this document or information in another format such as large print or **language** or contact us by:

- **Phone:** [01246 242424](tel:01246242424)
- **Email:** enquiries@bolsover.gov.uk
- **BSL Video Call:** A three-way video call with us and a BSL interpreter. It is free to call Bolsover District Council with Sign Solutions, you just need WiFi or mobile data to make the video call, or call into one of our Contact Centres.
- Call with [Relay UK](#) - a free phone service provided by BT for anyone who has difficulty hearing or speaking. It's a way to have a real-time conversation with us by text.
- **Visiting** one of our [offices](#) at Clowne, Bolsover, Shirebrook and South Normanton

CONTROL SHEET FOR NEURODIVERSITY POLICY

| Policy Details | Comments / Confirmation (To be updated as the document progresses) |
|---|---|
| Policy title | Neurodiversity Policy |
| Current status – i.e. first draft, version 2 or final version | |
| Policy author (post title only) | HR Business Partner |
| Location of policy (whilst in development) | |
| Relevant Cabinet Member (if applicable) | Councillor C Moesby |
| Equality Impact Assessment approval date | TBA |
| Partnership involvement (if applicable) | |
| Final policy approval route i.e. Executive/ Council | |
| Date policy approved | |
| Date policy due for review (maximum three years) | |
| Date policy forwarded to Performance & Communications teams (to include on ERIC, and website if applicable to the public) | |

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| 3. The Legal Framework | 5 |
| 4. Principles of this policy | 6 |
| 5. Neurodiverse Identification | 6 |
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Neurodiversity Policy

1. Introduction

The aim of this policy is to outline Bolsover District Council's (the Council's) commitment to promoting equality and fairness, whilst recognising and celebrating the diversity that exists among our local communities. It will also outline the duties we must uphold and the corporate framework within which we operate.

This policy applies to workers, and potential workers, who are neurodivergent, or who believe that they may be neurodivergent. It is also a document to give guidance to managers of neurodiverse staff.

The scope of this policy covers conditions including, but not limited to: autism spectrum conditions, Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), dyslexia, dyspraxia, and dyscalculia.

2. What Is Neurodiversity?

Neurodiversity refers to the different ways the brain can work and interpret information. It highlights that people naturally think about things differently, and how everyone differs in their areas of strength and weakness. Most people are "Neurotypical", meaning that the brain functions and processes information in such a way that the person thinks, perceives, and behaves in ways that are considered to be "normal" by the general population. Many day to day tasks are designed in a 'neurotypical' way and therefore these may have an impact on someone who is 'neurodiverse'.

According to the Advisory Conciliation and Arbitration Service (ACAS) it is estimated that around 1 in 7 people (more than 15% of people in the UK) are Neurodivergent, meaning that the brain functions, learns and processes information differently. Neurodivergence includes a range of different neurological conditions, including but not limited to:

- Attention Deficit Disorders (ADD, ADHD)
- Autism
- Dyslexia
- Dyspraxia
- Dyscalculia
- Dysgraphia
- Tourette's syndrome

3. The Legal Framework

The Equality Act 2010 (the Act) consolidated over 100 pieces of equality and anti-discriminatory legislation which seeks to develop a common approach to dealing with unfair treatment and discrimination.

The Act put in place nine 'Protected Characteristics' in order to prevent discrimination. According to the Transport Salaried Staffs Association (TSSA) trade union, currently no Neurodiverse condition is defined as a disability under the Equality Act 2010, but many people may be able to prove that their condition is defined as a disability as a consequence of it significantly impairing their ability to carry out day-to-day activities.

Normally, evidence is required from a diagnostic assessment to support this. An employee may be recognised as having a “hidden disability” and their employment rights are protected by the Equality Act 2010. The Council has a separate policy which covers Disability and Equality in greater depth which can be found on the Intranet.

4. Principles of this policy

- All Employees deserve opportunities, encouragement and support to realise their full potential
- A diversity of cognitive approaches is a source of great strength and value within a genuinely inclusive workplace
- All reasonable steps must be taken to ensure that policies, practices and culture do not discriminate against neurodivergent people
- Employees must not be subject to unfavourable treatment if they choose to disclose a neurodivergent condition
- Each employee is unique and that there can be a high degree of overlap between neurodivergent conditions. Consequently, any support needs must be identified and implemented on the basis of personal evaluation and individual consultation – not assumptions or stereotypes.

5. Neurodiverse Identification

The Council agrees to consider all requests for support for the purpose of obtaining a diagnosis within a timely fashion. Such support may be in the form of time off work to attend appointments, the provision of information, and funding for assessments by appropriately qualified persons.

It may be appropriate to explore on an informal basis first, using any free tools such as preliminary online screening before implementing a formal process. Funding for accessing a diagnosis or assessment, and reasonable adjustments, where provided, will continue throughout any formal Council processes.

As a Disability Confident Employer, the Council encourages applicants and employees to disclose neurodivergent conditions. It is also recognised that employees are under no legal or professional obligation to disclose a neurodivergent condition. However, appropriate support can only be offered if the Council is made aware of the condition by the employee.

As neurodivergent conditions are lifelong, the Council will accept previous assessments undertaken by appropriately qualified persons as sufficient evidence that an employee is neurodivergent. However, the Council may wish to gain a more recent diagnosis in order to support the employee, and their specific needs relating to the Council’s workplace. Such assessments may include reports by specialist consultants, educational psychologists’ reports, specialist Statements of Special Educational Need (‘Statements’), and Education, Health and Care Plans (‘EHCPs’).

Access to Work and Workplace Needs Assessments

The Council will take reasonable steps to assist employees with applications for Access to Work support and to facilitate Workplace Needs Assessments which may be conducted by Access to Work or independent consultants. It may also be recommended that the employee has a consultation with the Council's Occupational Health Provider to identify reasonable adjustments and support.

6. Supporting our Employees

According to ACAS, due to social stigma and discrimination, many Neurodiverse employees do not disclose their condition to their employer. This can be a difficulty if a manager is unaware of the employee's diagnosis and assumes there is a capability or health issue. Therefore, any known Neurological condition should be made known to Human Resources upon commencement of employment or at the earliest opportunity, to ensure reasonable adjustments and support can be made.

If an employee feels that they may have a learning difficulty such as dyslexia or dyscalculia, then HR should be contacted where a screening test can be arranged. Any contact made with HR will be treated with sensitivity.

An initial short screening test can be accessed via the British Dyslexia Organisation and this may help to provide some initial indication that an employee could have the condition.

Further comprehensive screening can also be undertaken with the employee's consent, after which, any recommendations, equipment or reasonable adjustments will then be reviewed by the Council and implemented wherever possible to support the employee within their specific workplace environment.

Neurodivergent applicants who apply for roles at the Council will be treated fairly and will not be discriminated against. Applicants meeting the essential criteria will be invited to attend for interview and appropriate support will be offered to assist them through the process.

7. Reasonable adjustments

The Council recognises Neurodiverse applicants and employees may require extra support in relation to their employment. The Council is committed to upholding its values on transparency, equality and innovation, and valuing its employees. Therefore, where reasonable adjustments are necessary, and can be accommodated, the Council will support these. Reasonable adjustments will be made on a case by case basis and will be agreed with line managers in relation to the employee's job role. These may include specific work related equipment, differently presented documents, documents in a larger font size or other recommended adjustments.

Guidance for Managers

Managers will be expected to:

- Support employees to obtain a diagnosis or assessment
- Encourage early disclosure within a genuinely supportive and inclusive environment

- Work to eliminate barriers (including prejudice) that neurodivergent people can face in the workplace
- Take reasonable steps to ensure that internal communications, training programmes, and testing requirements (such as to complete training courses) are accessible for neurodivergent Employees
- Raise awareness of neurodiversity in the workplace
- Where practical, make documents available in a format suitable for the employee within corporate style guidance
- Ensure any paperwork for meetings is provided to the employee within suitable timescales
- Ensure that all staff members with a learning disability/identified as Neurodivergent are informed of the 'Access to Work' Scheme.

Managers will not be expected to micro-manage neurodiverse employees and it should be recognised that they will also have other employees to manage across their teams. Managers will receive direct support from HR throughout the process and will ensure that the Manager is given clear guidance on Council Policy, reasonable adjustments and legislation.

HR may also arrange training where appropriate. The Council will endeavour to make adjustments where reasonable and practical.

Employees who are neurodivergent will be encouraged to:

- Make their Manager or HR aware should they think they may be neurodiverse – at the earliest opportunity.
- Use the mechanisms and processes available to identify suitable practical adjustments such as background colour for their PC – some people are affected by different colours so changing the background colour of the computer can help ease tired eyes and headaches
- Plan your work – to save time and reduce stress, plan and map your tasks for your working day
- Ask their Manager to verbally relay any important information should they have a learning difficulty.
- Make their Manager aware of potential triggers that may cause a difficulty in order for these to be addressed.
- Use text-to-speech software – most office based employees work on computers; if it helps use text-to-speech software allowing you access to an email or message and have it read to them.
- Be accountable and responsible for engaging with the process and support offered to them by their Manager and the Council. This includes utilising any reasonable adjustments, specialist software or equipment, coaching, training or Counselling provided.

8. Further Support

The following organisations can also be contacted for further support on Neurodiversity:

- Additional Neurodiversity conditions - The British Dyslexia Association is committed to raising awareness and understanding of Neurodiversity conditions by

offering a wide range of information to help families, professionals and Neurodiverse individuals.

□ Dyslexia Association –The Dyslexia Association helps to raise awareness and provides support and services for dyslexic children and adults of all ages.

□ Remploy – Remploy is the UK’s leading provider of disability employment services. Remploy provides tools and guidance to individuals with disabilities getting and staying in a job.

□ Dyscalculia – As well as dyslexia, Dyslexia Action UK also provides support and information to help remove the barriers facing individuals who have dyscalculia.

□ Dyspraxia - The Dyspraxia Foundation is a UK wide charity supporting and helping individuals with dyspraxia and providing them with a variety of tools to help themselves.

□ Autism - The National Autistic Society is a UK charity that provides information, guidance and support to people with Autism.