

EMPLOYEE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OFFER

In August 2020, Employee Health and Wellbeing appointed a new Employee Wellbeing Co-ordinator. This has enabled us to develop a comprehensive Staff Wellbeing Offer that is constantly evolving.

Outlined below is what has been achieved to date, the initiatives and projects currently active, and the projects we are now working on:

ACHIEVEMENTS

- 1 Refresh of the **Bradford Council Staff Wellbeing Strategy** with objectives linking with our Council Plan and Council values, and development of the Employee Wellbeing Framework (**December 2020**). These were presented to and approved by CMT in March 2021.
- 2 Staff **Wellness Check with Employee Health and Wellbeing** launched in September 20. This self-referral service provides an opportunity for individual staff members to confidentially discuss their health, wellbeing and lifestyle choices. Clients come with a range of issues such as difficulties with sleep, pain management, mental health, financial worries. Clients are supported in setting wellbeing goals and provided with information on which they can make an informed choice about changes that could help them improve their health and wellbeing. This may also include access to other internal or external services.



63 Wellness Checks have been carried out with 62 members of staff reporting they felt this was Beneficial or Very Beneficial to their wellbeing and 1 person reporting this was of limited benefit to the:

- 3 Development of a range of communications to help our staff look after themselves covering; keeping physically active, looking after our own mental health, looking out for a colleague, financial wellbeing and staying connected. For example, the **Employee Wellbeing Champion** monthly newsletter (circulated to Employee Wellbeing Champions, Staff Equality Network Leads as well as our internal and external partners) providing information which links to the **Wellbeing Calendar** covering monthly topics. The themes are based on our own data (sickness absence statistics and qualitative information), Public Health research of what the local issues are for our staff/residents. Also linking with national/global campaigns
- 4 **Weekly wellbeing messages** provided for **Week Ahead** giving our CMT advance notice of what will be communicated that week

5 **Weekly wellbeing messages on Bradnet** linked to monthly theme.

As an indication of update rates:

- Your Wellbeing Calendar - Wednesday 9 December - 96 clicks to this page from the all staff Bradnews email
- 8 September 2021 - World suicide prevention day newsletter - 54 link clicks to the Samaritans information and 21 link clicks to the Zero suicide alliance training

6 **Mindfulness session for staff** launched August 20. Mark Anslow delivers a virtual **Mindfulness** session via Webex every Friday at 12.30. Staff can also access the session via the staff Facebook group, **Your Wellbeing Matters Facebook Group** which is updated with information on monthly theme for staff to access who may not have a work computer.

- *228 members of staff have accessed these sessions since they were launched and a paper has been prepared to request funding to support the expansion of these sessions to all staff.*

7 **Walk Leader Training** opportunity currently to receive training to become a Workplace Walking Leader through **Living Streets** giving our staff the tools to offer support on how colleagues can safely increase walking into their working days.
August 21

8 **Mental Health Action Plan and discussion template** (March 2021). Managers have been provided with a tool that can be used to record routine wellbeing discussions so that any issues affecting staff can be picked up in a timely manner. Staff can then be supported and signposted accordingly. Managers must keep a record of their plans that set out contact arrangements with management and peers for staff members.

9 Membership of **Leeds Mindful Employer Network** Leeds Mindful Employer Network, commissioned by Leeds Public Health and led by Leeds Mind, brings local employers together to champion positive mental health at work.

- By being a member of this network we benefit from a wide range of support, guidance, information and events focused on improving workplace mental health. It provides access to free tools and resources to help with areas such as raising awareness, reducing stigma, introducing policies and embedding good practice.
- Currently the Network is supporting employers across the region with specific challenges around the Covid-19 crisis

10 In February 2021 we were invited to join a design team with others from organisations across Bradford District and Craven to lead on the development of the **Act as One Festival**. The Act as One Festival's aim is to celebrate the joint working of all organisations across the District working together with the ambition of keeping people 'happy, healthy at home'. Included in the schedule were a host of wellbeing events so that staff could take some time out and look after themselves and boost their wellbeing. The Festival took place over April and May this year. The wellbeing events were designed for all those working in paid or unpaid roles within health and

care. The **evaluation demonstrated** that the areas of interest were the Menopause and also issues arising for people under different working arrangements under the pandemic, such as working from home and having less contact with colleagues. The statistics also revealed that there needed to be some levelling up in terms of a more diverse approach to the content and how the sessions were delivered to make the event more inclusive. The learning from the sessions has now been taken forward into the planning for the next set of events

11 Provision of **Mental Health Support Service (MHSS) through Remploy** to all staff. The **Access to Work Mental Health Support Service**, delivered by Remploy, funded by the Department for Work and Pensions provides confidential one-to-one workplace mental health support for Bradford City Council employees or apprentices.

- It offers expert advice and support for **nine months**, which includes, a wellbeing plan to help employees stay in - or return to work, suggestions regarding workplace adjustments and coping strategies. They will also include the client's line manager in discussions if the client agrees and feels that would be helpful.
- We promote and host **monthly sessions** with this service encouraging our employees who may be struggling emotionally to access the support and have monthly meetings with the **MHSS manager** to discuss the numbers of referrals they are receiving from Bradford Council and any arising trends. The service is essentially self-referral but the statistics reveal that staff are encouraged to use the service from **Employee Health and Wellbeing** and **Line Managers**.

Bradford Council Remploy referrals by quarter:

	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
2020/21			54	60
2021/22	28	75		

CURRENT INITIATIVES AND PROJECTS

- 1 Equalities, Inclusion and Diversity: **Employee Wellbeing Co-ordinator** part of the Staff Equality Network Lead Team listening to the experiences of our staff from diverse groups and taking wellbeing related issues forward in response
- 2 **Employee Health and Wellbeing Technician** working jointly with Women's Voices Network Lead to deliver two one-hour interactive management education session on the Menopause per month
- 3 Signed up to the **West Yorkshire and Harrogate Staff Check-In Campaign** throughout September 2021. This campaign is aimed at preventing staff suicide and we are part of a group of organisations across **West Yorkshire and Harrogate** who use this campaign and its resources to educate, raise awareness and save lives. Suicide is preventable and we have fully embraced this campaign as part of our overall **Wellbeing Framework**.

4 Launched in June 2021 **The Cellar Trust: Mental Health Training Platform**

- offers free courses covering; mental health awareness, the causes of low mood, improving sleep, suicide awareness and understanding the effects of stress. It links to a range of further resources, so that those who need help with their mental health can find support quickly and easily. The courses can be accessed via all electronic devices and smart phones. Our **Employee Wellbeing Co-ordinator** is part of the steering group that looks at the platform's continued development

5 Currently liaising with our **Sports and Leisure facilities** to discuss staff discount for facility access and branding under **Living Well**

6 Employee Health and Wellbeing are currently undertaking a **pilot with Revenues and Benefits** to support the service to identify their current wellbeing status and look at areas for improvement. As part of this work the first iteration of a **Manager's Wellbeing Toolkit** has been developed. This toolkit provides sections on:

- The business case for workplace wellbeing, what it is and why it is important
- The importance of recognising the current context in which employees are working and adopting the right "tone" when communicating wellbeing plans to staff
- Getting the basics right – developing an infrastructure where regular meetings with staff to ask them how they are and obtaining their views and feedback about their working day is routine
- Tools to establish some baseline data so that actions can be measured for success (including a staff survey)
- Utilising and communicating the current staff wellbeing offer to show staff that their wellbeing is being given priority (Staff Wellbeing Guide/Wellbeing messages and information via Bradnet/Wellbeing Newsletters, services currently available to staff both internally and externally, providing line management support and training etc)

The pilot will be running over the next three months

7 Joint working with **West Yorkshire & Harrogate Mental Health Hub**. Staff Wellbeing is a top priority across the West Yorkshire and Harrogate Healthcare Partnership, with many leaders (including our own Chief Executive) highlighting concerns about staff stress and burnout through the pandemic.

NHS England / Improvement has funded the development and ongoing delivery of a mental health and wellbeing hub until the end of March 2022 to support over 100 000 staff who work in WY&H HCP organisations free of charge, across all sectors including voluntary and community services.

The Hub brings together individual therapeutic services with mechanisms and services that emphasise prevention and culture; support having the right conversations at the right time with the right people; work with teams and

organisations to develop their local offers and support triaging, signposting and advocating for most appropriate support for individuals. They have a team of psychologists in place who are trained to deal with trauma, stress and burnout; depression and anxiety.

We aim to offer an appointment within 48 hours of a referral being made either via the **Employee Health and Wellbeing team**, a manager or leader or self-referral from their telephone support service which is open every day, 8am-8pm (0808 1963833).

Employee Health and Wellbeing are having regular meetings with the Head of Psychology leading on this piece of work to discuss the needs of our staff and current work is being undertaken to word the marketing and publicity making it attractive and inclusive to Bradford Council staff.

- 8 Refresh of the **Employee Wellbeing Guide** which was initially developed to support staff at the start of the Covid-19 pandemic to ensure it remains up to date and fit for purpose
- 9 Access to **Royal Society for Public Health Training Courses**. These courses will help our employees to gain knowledge and confidence to support themselves, their family and friends to live a healthier lifestyle. This also includes learning about local services that can help to support health and wellbeing:
 - RSPH Level 1 – Health Awareness: This course is for anyone living or working in the Bradford district who would like to know more about health and wellbeing
 - RSPH Level 2 - Understanding Health Improvement: This course covers the skills needed to have an appropriate conversation to motivate, encourage and support people to improve or change their health and wellbeing. This is suitable for: Practitioners, staff, line managers, HR colleagues, Employee Wellbeing Champions or volunteers.

The skills and knowledge developed can support wellbeing internally with each other as Council Employees or externally with our service users and residents. All training courses are accredited and take place online over three separate two hour sessions. After these sessions a short assessment needs to be completed to receive a certificate.

- 10 **Cycle for Health** is a programme that provides a route into regular activity, building fitness and self - esteem. Designed specifically for adults identified as having poor mental or physical health, the 12- week package of support develops skills and grows confidence through cycle training and led bike rides. Created in West Yorkshire as part of the West Yorkshire Combined Authority's CityConnect programme, it creates significant change by empowering participants to choose cycling for everyday journeys. The Employee Health and Wellbeing Team are referring anyone who fulfils the criteria and who has an interest in cycling

UPCOMING ACTIVITIES

- 1 Pro-active recruitment of **Employee Wellbeing Champions (EWC's)** to ensure there is a Champion (be that a line manager or member of staff) in each service area, or team. Our Champions are crucial to the wellbeing agenda as they have an understanding of the culture of their team/service and are best placed to pick up the needs of their colleagues. Our aim is that every team has an EWC and that they are provided with support and training in line with the level of role they choose to undertake.

They are also instrumental in working with Employee Health and Wellbeing to disseminate information that is in a format that is accessible to their colleagues. Our future intentions and hopes for our champions is (for those that want it) to develop their role and provide further support and training.

Some of our Champions are confident in spotting the signs and symptoms of colleagues who may not be coping and intervene with skilled wellbeing conversations. They understand the resources that are available to people both internally (for example the Employee Health and Wellbeing Service) and in the community and signpost and support employees to access them when appropriate.

Ultimately, EWC's can act as a preventative measure that services can easily and quickly deploy to mitigate the risks of stress and poor mental health in the workplace, while also being a force for creating a culture of wellness.

- 2 **Employee Wellbeing Co-ordinator** taking part in a series of webinars/panel discussions throughout Inclusion Week (launch of RESPECT) encouraging our staff to share their experiences at work, what keeps them well, what could make things better. As well as discussing how we can support each other at work (our **behaviours and values**) Information will be shared at these sessions regarding the wellbeing support staff can access
- 3 **Wellbeing page** to be built into **Respect Sharepoint** for all staff to have access to and will provide a one stop shop for useful information for staff and managers
- 4 **Evaluation** of the pilot Wellbeing Project in Revenues and Benefits to help form the basis for the further development of the **Managers Wellbeing Toolkit** for roll-out across the Council