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# MANAGEMENT REVIEW COMMITTEE

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**Tuesday, 1st December, 2015**

**Present:** Councillor Miles Parkinson (in the Chair), Councillors Clare Cleary, Paul Cox and Terry Hurn

**Apologies** Councillor Tony Dobson

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**280 Apology for Absence**

An apology for absence was submitted from Councillor Tony Dobson.

**281 Substitution**

Councillor Terry Hurn attended the meeting as substitute representative for Councillor Tony Dobson.

**282 Declarations of Interest and Dispensations**

There were no declarations of interest or dispensations.

**283 Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Management Review Committee held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2015 were submitted for approval as a correct record.

**Resolved** **- That the Minutes be received and approved as a correct record.**

**284 Proposed Replacement of Stress Management Policy**

The Head of Human Resources submitted a report relating to the proposed replacement of the Council's Stress Management Policy. The following documents were appended to the report:-

Appendix 1 - Current Stress Management Policy and General Information Guide including Work Related Stress Risk Assessments

Appendix 2 - Emotional Wellbeing Handbook (Draft)

Appendix 3 - Promoting Emotional Wellbeing - A Guide for Managers (Draft)

Appendices 2 and 3 had been designed to support a reduction in stress / anxiety / depression related absence.

The current Stress Management Policy (Appendix 1) had been introduced in 2004 and was based on best practice at that time, including the then Health and Safety Executive (HSE) Stress Management Standards. Nationally and across local government, stress / anxiety and depression was the highest cause of sickness absence and was the highest cause of lost days at Hyndburn Borough Council.

The Council's WHAT Team had decided that the area of stress / anxiety and depression should be looked at as a priority for the coming year and a short-term Working Group had been established. The Group had put forward proposals for a revised and more helpful Stress Management Policy which still complied with the Council's duty of care.

The new draft Emotional Wellbeing Handbook (Appendix 2) whilst still dealing with stress-related cases, also represented a much more positive approach based on latest research which showed that people could learn skills to enhance their own happiness, their inner resilience and ability to bounce back from life's troubles. It had been designed to be read and followed by people who were well, not just those who perceived they were stressed (in a bad way). A Guide for Managers had also been developed to support the Handbook (Appendix 3).

A group of "Friendly Faces" was being established and would consist of people from around the Council with some basic training in counselling, mental health awareness and some of the relevant Human Resources policies or support mechanisms. Training was also to be rolled out to managers, including elearning on supporting the emotional wellbeing of staff as part of their management responsibilities. There would also be management training around a revised performance review process which would include feedback from the member of staff and how they felt about their job and workloads. The Employee Assistance Programme which gave all staff access to 24/7 telephone support and face to face counselling had also been reviewed. Training on personal resilience had been delivered and sessions would continue to be offered as part of the annual training plan to support emotional wellbeing.

Unison Branch Officers had been very supportive of the proposals and they had also been approved at a meeting of the Council's Joint Negotiating Consultative Committee held on 29<sup>th</sup> September 2015 to which all Trade Unions had been invited.

**Resolved**

- (1) That the proposed Emotional Wellbeing Handbook and Guide for Managers be agreed and replace the current Stress Management Policy; and,**
- (2) That the Head of Human Resources be requested to implement the agreed changes and proposed actions.**

Signed:.....

Date: .....

Chair of the meeting  
At which the minutes were confirmed