

LYTHE PARISH COUNCIL STRESS MANAGEMENT POLICY

Introduction

The health, safety and welfare of employees is important to the Council, and it is committed to ensuring this is met. The authority is committed to identifying and reducing the causes of workplace stress, as it acknowledges that this is an important health and safety issue.

This policy is applicable to all employees. It is the responsibility of the Council to implement the policy, and it is the Council's responsibility to provide the necessary resources.

Definition of stress

Stress is defined by the Health and Safety Executive as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them". There is a distinct difference between stress and pressure, as if managed correctly pressure can have a positive effect on an employee, whereas stress can be seen as detrimental to their well-being.

The effects of long-term stress can be seen in physical, intellectual, emotional, and behavioural signs. These can include headaches, nausea, tiredness, palpitations, worrying, making mistakes, anger, irritability, and job dissatisfaction.

The Council will aim to identify all workplace stressors and risk assessments can be conducted to identify the risks and eradicate them, which will be regularly reviewed. Training will be provided for members of the Council in dealing with workplace stress.

Furthermore, confidential counselling for staff affected by workplace, or external stress may be provided by the Council.

Responsibilities: The Council

The Council is responsible for:

- Implementing recommendations developed from stress related risk assessments
- Ensuring clear communication between the Council and its employees, specifically on internal changes that may affect them personally
- Ensuring there are developmental opportunities available to all staff
- Monitoring staff working hours to ensure they are not being overworked
- Managing holidays to ensure staff are taking their full entitlement
- Ensuring that there is a zero tolerance on bullying and harassment
- Offering additional support to members of staff who are experiencing stress outside work such as bereavement or separation.
- Providing training in stress management and risk assessment for Council members
- Consulting with workplace counsellors or specialist agencies when dealing with specific cases
- Continually reviewing the effectiveness of the Council's policy of reducing stress.
- Compiling sickness absence statistics to measure the effectiveness of the Council's stress management policy (where necessary)
- Encouraging referrals to occupational workplace counsellors if appropriate
- Monitoring the policy to ensure it is combatting the effects of stress and promoting employee wellbeing.

The Council will be permitted to access any relevant anonymous data from personnel folders to support a stressed employee, where the need to know can be clearly demonstrated.

Adopted 3 June 2024, minute ref 3.9

Employees

Employees should raise any issues relating to work place stress to their liaison councillor. If offered, the Council strongly encourage employees to undertake counselling that is offered.

(Source: CIPD HR Inform)