

**STRESS POLICY**

(This Policy was reviewed by the full Council at its AGM held on 15 May 2024, minute 20/24-25)

**Introduction**

The Town Council is committed to protecting the health, safety and welfare of its employees. The Town Council recognizes that workplace stress is a health and safety issue and acknowledges the importance of identifying and reducing workplace stressors.

**Definition of stress**

The Health and Safety Executive define stress as “the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them”. This makes an important distinction between pressure, which can be a positive state if managed correctly, and stress which can be detrimental to health.

**Policy**

- The Town Council will identify workplace stressors and, where possible and appropriate, implement suitable measures to control the risks from stress.
- The Town Council will provide the required training for appropriate staff in good management practices.
- The Town Clerk will provide confidential counselling for staff affected by stress caused by either work or external factors.

**Town Council's Responsibilities**

- Ensure good communication between staff, particularly where there are organizational and procedural changes.
- Ensure staff are fully trained to discharge their duties.
- Ensure staff are provided with developmental opportunities.
- Monitor workloads to ensure that people are not overloaded.
- Monitor working hours and overtime to ensure that staff are not overworking. Monitor holidays to ensure that staffs are taking their full entitlement.
- Attend training as required in good management practice and health and safety.
- Ensure that bullying and harassment is not tolerated.
- Be vigilant and offer additional support to a member of staff who is experiencing stress outside work e.g. bereavement or separation.
- Support individuals who have been off sick with stress.
- Refer to specialist agencies as required.
- Inform the Council through the Personnel Committee of any changes and developments in the field of stress at work.
- Give guidance on the stress policy.
- Help monitor the effectiveness of measures to address stress by collating sickness absence statistics.
- Advise individuals on training requirements.
- Provide continuing support to individuals in a changing environment and encourage referral to counsellors where appropriate.

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### Employees Responsibilities

- Raise issues of concern to the Town Clerk.
- Accept opportunities for counselling when recommended.

