
Wellbeing Strategy

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1 Introduction

- 1.1. Wellbeing is about feeling good and functioning well. Health is one of the top things people say matters to their wellbeing. There is a two way relationship between wellbeing and health: health influences wellbeing and wellbeing itself influences health.
- 1.2. The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) defines wellbeing as: *'Creating an environment ... which allows staff to flourish and achieve their full potential for the benefit of themselves and their organisation.'* (CIPD 2016)
- 1.3. As an organisation, PSOW recognises that work can impact upon health and wellbeing, and is committed to taking action to ensure the creation and maintenance of a healthy working environment and improving the quality of working lives for all staff.
- 1.4. The Covid-19 pandemic has presented unique challenges as a result of staff having to work remotely. The organisation has been proactively adapting working practices and procedures to safeguard wellbeing at work and will continue to do so.

2 Purpose

- 2.1. Investing in staff wellbeing can have positive outcomes both for staff and employers. Studies have shown there is a relationship between the psychological wellbeing of staff and positive organisational outcomes, such as enhanced productivity and performance, as well as reduced levels of sickness absence.
- 2.2. The Wellbeing Strategy is informed by legal requirements, including the employer's duty of care, but continually seeks to go significantly beyond these duties. The Strategy provides a commitment to taking positive action to both safeguard and improve the wellbeing of all staff.

3 Vision

- 3.1. The Wellbeing Strategy is designed to ensure that:
 - we provide clear leadership and management in relation to wellbeing
 - we take action as the employer and encourage staff to take action as

individuals

- our actions lead to long-term, sustainable improvements in the mental and physical health and wellbeing of our staff
- best use is made of the resources available to optimise the delivery of the strategy
- we engage with relevant stakeholders and develop effective partnerships to promote wellbeing across the organisation.

4 Aims and Objectives

- 4.1. The Wellbeing Strategy aims to support this commitment, and to support staff to play their part in protecting and improving their own wellbeing. We seek to support wellbeing in all work activities and practices and to provide a positive environment that promotes staff engagement, high performance and good achievement.
- 4.2. The strategy aims to represent a commitment to an integrated approach to staff wellbeing that:
 - provides a positive, supportive and healthy working environment
 - develops an environment where staff wellbeing is integrated into day-to-day policies and practices
 - supports and encourages staff to maintain good mental and physical health
 - provides a culture that reflects our shared values, creates a sense of belonging and supports staff when problems arise
 - creates an environment that recognises skills and encourages personal development.
- 4.3. The Wellbeing Strategy's ultimate objective is to safeguard and improve the health, safety and wellbeing of our diverse workforce and to prevent work associated ill-health, for the overall benefit of staff and the organisation. Wellbeing encompasses the physical, mental and social health of staff and we recognise that workplace behaviours and values, as well as work and personal development at work, contribute to overall wellbeing. The success of this strategy relies on working in partnership with staff, with a shared objective of improving wellbeing.

4.4. The strategy will bring together those who can support the health and wellbeing of staff, to:

- raise awareness of current initiatives and their connection to health and wellbeing
- consider how initiatives, developed in response to the identified outcomes, might be developed and funded
- encourage and empower individuals to improve their wellbeing and to find their own coping mechanisms and strategies
- help develop specific outcome measures designed to monitor the strategy's progress and success.

4.5. In order to support delivery of the overall objectives of the strategy, a Wellbeing Working Group is in place and is made up of volunteers from across the Organisation. The group meet on a monthly basis to discuss and introduce ways to positively impact staff wellbeing.

4.6. We will continue to work to meet these objectives through active human resource management, health and safety management, engagement with staff and engagement with Trade Unions.

5 Responsibilities

5.1 **Management Team is responsible for:**

- providing a safe and healthy environment for all staff at work
- leading, supporting and promoting the wellbeing agenda through, for example, training, guidance and positive communication
- ensuring ways of working safeguard staff health and wellbeing
- monitoring the organisation's overall levels of health, performance and behaviour and taking action as appropriate.

5.2 **Managers are responsible for:**

- effective recruitment, induction, staff development and training
- monitoring and managing workload for the benefit of staff and the organisation
- identifying and working to address work-related stress

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- carrying out stress risk assessments with staff and supporting staff with developing their own wellness action plan where appropriate
- implementing necessary control measures to minimise or prevent harmful stress and identifying appropriate support mechanisms at work
- supporting staff through changing and challenging times, enhancing their coping capacity
- supporting flexible working arrangements where possible
- creating a culture that encourages staff to speak up about wellbeing
- identifying problems where they arise and seek solutions that meet individual as well as organisational needs
- engaging with staff to promote and enhance staff health and wellbeing
- implementing effective return to work policies following staff illness/absence from work
- taking meaningful action to support staff and improve wellbeing.

5.3 Staff are responsible for:

- taking responsibility for their own physical and mental wellbeing management at work and outside work
- engaging with management and colleagues to work together to enhance staff wellbeing
- actively engage with the completion of stress risk assessments and developing their own wellness action plan
- reporting stress and ill health to management as early as possible
- engaging positively with any internal and external support arrangements provided to protect or enhance wellbeing
- responding positively to training and development opportunities.

5.4 Internal and External Human Resources are responsible for:

- developing and reviewing organisation-wide policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of staff
- assisting line managers in supporting the wellbeing of individuals

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- supporting line managers with the completion of stress risk assessments and wellness action plans
- liaising as appropriate with occupational health and other professionals with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

5.5 Occupational health/external services are responsible for:

- providing a comprehensive service designed to help staff stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing physical or mental health problems. This will include preparing assessments of staff fitness for work following referrals, liaising with GPs and working with individuals
- advising PSOW of any appropriate provisions, reasonable adjustments or support arrangements that will help members of staff to work successfully and safely
- developing rehabilitation plans for staff returning to work after absences related to mental ill health, and work with GPs and line managers to ensure that rehabilitation is successful
- supporting the design and implementation of health promotion and lifestyle behaviour management programmes if and when required, including initiatives on managing pressure and ongoing health conditions at work.

5.6 The Wellbeing Working Group is responsible for:

- developing and delivering an annual action plan
- researching initiatives and potential funding
- making recommendations to Management Team for implementation
- raising awareness of wellbeing initiatives and encouraging participation
- encouraging and empowering individuals to improve their wellbeing
- reviewing, monitoring and evaluating wellbeing initiatives.

5.7 What we already have in place

PSOW currently has a package of staff benefits in place that support wellbeing. These include:

- extensive flexi-time scheme with no core period to provide daily flexibility
- incremental pay scales for most staff with annual pay award in line with Local Government
- enhanced sick pay provisions
- enhanced Maternity, Paternity and Adoption pay
- generous holiday entitlement of 32 days plus Bank Holidays
- onsite subsidised yoga classes
- discounted local gym membership
- confidential counselling (free of charge and on a self-referral basis)
- mental health first aiders, who are accessible to all staff
- good working environment including free parking, modern well-equipped open-plan offices, adjustable desks allowing for standing or sitting while working, comfortable staff room with TV, quiet rooms, wellbeing room and showers
- blended working arrangements, where provision has been made for staff to work from home for a proportion of the time
- generous employer contributions to pension schemes
- informal staff social events
- support for training and development, with staff encouraged to complete 28 hours continuing professional development, to enhance skills for current roles and support development.
- an active cross section of volunteers that form the Wellbeing Working Group, meeting on a monthly basis focusing on ways of enhancing wellbeing.

6 Review and publication

- 6.1 This policy will be reviewed every 2 years and is published internally and externally.
- 6.2 All queries about this policy can be directed to:
policycontrol@ombudsman.wales