

## Workforce Wellbeing Strategy

### Our Vision Statement

Our vision is to have a culture where everyone's wellbeing matters. We'll work together to enable the right environment and behaviours so that individual and organisational wellbeing is embedded in everything we do. Our ambition is to create a healthy, content, resilient and productive workforce who are able to work to the best of their ability to deliver great outcomes for each other and the residents of Gateshead.

### Our Vision is About:

- Visible commitment, leadership, and role modelling from senior management.
- Our workforce being engaged and actively participating in wellbeing activities.
- Creating a safe and healthy work environment which fosters a culture of positive wellbeing, whereby the wellbeing of our workforce is seen as integral to everything we do.
- Improving wellbeing for our diverse workforce and ensuring that wellbeing is seen as everyone's responsibility.
- Establishing ways of working that ensure that our practices, process, systems, policies, and procedures support our ambition to be an exemplar for wellbeing
- Providing impactful wellbeing support based on the needs of our workforce, through collaboration with our communities and partners.
- Being an employer of choice who cares about wellbeing and recognises the role wellbeing can play in terms of:
  - attraction to the organisation
  - engaging, motivating and retaining
  - creating a healthier, more inclusive culture
  - lowering sickness absence
  - improving performance and development
  - improving productivity and success

### Defining Wellbeing

Wellbeing is defined as a state of feeling comfortable, healthy or happy (Oxford Dictionary)

Wellbeing is a broad concept that covers personal, physical, mental, social and economic aspects of life. (The Care Act 2014)



## Our Model for Wellbeing



### My Body

We are committed to:

- Supporting our workforce to take care of themselves and make positive steps around health in areas such as nutrition, physical activity, smoking, alcohol, sleep and drinking enough water.
- Creating an environment where our workforce feel empowered and are educated about their physical wellbeing.
- Establishing programmes for specific clinical conditions/areas of need.
- Improving our working environment and providing safe systems of work.



## My Mind

We are committed to:

- Creating a culture of open discussion around stress and mental health.
- Creating an environment where our workforce feel empowered and are educated about their mental wellbeing.
- Supporting our workforce to better manage their psychological wellbeing and develop personal resilience.
- Providing access to support, advice and signposting
- Provide education and support to line managers on how to intervene early and support their teams.

## My Work

We are committed to:

- Building healthy, collaborative, nurturing and supportive working relationships, which includes good leadership.
- Implementing safe, flexible, supportive and inclusive working practices, spaces, policies and procedures.
- Embedding good job design to provide attractive job roles with manageable workload.
- Promoting learning and development and personal growth.
- Recognising achievement and providing regular feedback.
- Giving our workforce a voice and ensuring they feel able to engage with the organisation.
- Ensuring that our workforce know that they make a valuable contribution and that they matter as individuals.

## My Home

We are committed to:

- Supporting our workforce, where possible to have a healthy experience outside of work.
- Enabling our workforce to achieve a positive work-life balance, personal-professional harmony.

## My Money

We are committed to:

- Supporting our workforce to become more aware of their finances.
- Mitigating financial stress as far as possible, by helping our workforce to better manage their finances and become more financially secure. This will include areas such as managing debt, budgeting, saving, pensions, and living within our means.
- Promoting employment practices that avoid low pay, insecure contracts, unfair pay gaps and ensuring job security while meeting organisational requirements.
- Ensuring reward and benefits' policies allow opportunities to support employees at all stages of their lives.



## Our Corporate Ambitions

Our strategic approach, 'Thrive' has ambitions to make Gateshead a place where everyone thrives, including our employees, many of whom live in Gateshead. It drives our major policy decisions, aiming to put people and families at the heart of everything we do.

This Wellbeing Strategy supports our corporate objectives in relation to Thrive which are set out in our:

- Corporate Plan 2023 - 2028
- Health and Wellbeing Strategy
- Workforce Strategy

## Our strategic approach for Wellbeing

Our approach will take account of our obligations in line with legislation, our workforce strategy, and what we want to do/have committed to, so that we grow a positive wellbeing culture.

We will deliver the change that's needed through focussing our activities on **six key objectives**:

### Commitment and leadership



### Engagement and participation



### Communication



### Learning and Competence



### Monitoring and reporting



### Accountability



## Our plan, our priorities

### Commitment and Leadership



**We will ensure there is clear visible commitment and support from leaders for wellbeing by:**

- Ensuring suitable resources are available and clear lines of responsibility are understood.
- Actively promoting and championing wellbeing initiatives and good practice.
- Responding to concerns raised within a reasonable timeframe.
- Making wellbeing a topic of everyday conversation.

### Engagement and participation



**We will create an environment where it is easy for people to have open discussions about their health and wellbeing. We'll do this by:**

- Creating a framework which will allow us to reach out to all employees.
- Ensuring there are 'positive feedback loops' and not just one directional communications.
- Carrying out a health & wellbeing survey.
- Creating a way to promote good behaviours and call out poor ones.

### Communication



**We will make sure there are effective means for communicating wellbeing information by:**

- Identifying areas and reasons why communication fails, and where it works quite well.
- Use effective communication channels for communicating both internally and externally.
- Ensuring wellbeing is embedded within our comms strategy.



### Learning and Competence



**We will ensure our people are suitably competent to carry out their roles. We will provide learning opportunities that impact positively on people's motivation, behaviour, and perceptions. We'll do this by:**

- Ensuring expectations, requirements and responsibilities are clear for employees and line managers.
- Providing quality learning opportunities which are delivered in an effective way.
- Ensure that our line managers have the skills and knowledge to identify any concerns within their teams, where possible and support, guide and advise individual as appropriate.

### Monitoring and reporting



**We will ensure that wellbeing is measured and reported on, in a way that targets areas for improvement by:**

- Undertaking regular surveys
- Monitoring and evaluating wellbeing initiatives
- Monitoring employee engagement
- Monitoring sickness absence
- Analysing data to identify trends and hotspots

### Accountability



**We will establish and maintain an environment in which people take responsibility not only for their own wellbeing, but the wellbeing of the team and other colleagues. We will achieve this by:**

- Taking action when organisational KPI's linked to employee satisfaction are declining e.g. sickness absence, employee turnover etc.
- Making sure everyone knows what the council's expectations are for health and safety behaviour.
- Clarifying and communicating consequences for when expectations are met – recognition and feedback to reinforce good performance and behaviours
- Clarifying and communicating corrective action when expectations are not met – non-compliances/ escalation mechanisms. The focus being on a fair and balanced approach not looking to apportion blame.
- Individuals holding themselves accountable for their actions and decisions, which builds trust, creating a safe and secure environment in which individuals can work safely, enabling good health and wellbeing.



## Our 5-year plan

We know that having a plan is how we'll understand what we've got to do, but also know that there's lots to do and embedding change takes time. Health and wellbeing will always be a focus, continually reviewing and revising the strategy and plan to ensure that it is adapted and flexed to meet the needs of the workforce. We want a culture where the employees recognise and take shared responsibility for their health and wellbeing, knowing that how they feel matters to Gateshead Council. We'll develop leading key performance indicators to measure our incremental changes so that people can see the difference we can make together through learning, continuously improving and embedding new ways of working.



