

Notice of Meeting



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Remote Personnel Committee

Friday, 17th July, 2020 at 10.30 am

This meeting will be held in a virtual format in accordance with The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panels Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 (“the Regulations”).

The meeting can be accessed from the following link from 10:30am:
www.westberks.gov.uk/personnelcommitteelive

Note: . The Council will be live streaming its meetings

Date of despatch of Agenda: Thursday, 9 July 2020

For further information about this Agenda, or to inspect any background documents referred to in Part I reports, please contact Moira Fraser on (01635) 519045
e-mail: moira.fraser@westberks.gov.uk

Further information and Minutes are also available on the Council’s website at
www.westberks.gov.uk



To: Councillors Adrian Abbs, Peter Argyle, Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman),
Garth Simpson (Chairman) and Joanne Stewart

Substitutes: Councillors Dennis Benneyworth, Lee Dillon, Nassar Kessell and
Richard Somner

Agenda

Part I

Page No.

1. **Apologies for Absence**
To receive apologies for inability to attend the meeting (if any).
2. **Minutes** 5 - 8
To approve as a correct record the Minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 24 April 2020 and 14 May 2020.
3. **Declarations of Interest**
To remind Members of the need to record the existence and nature of any personal, disclosable pecuniary or other registrable interests in items on the agenda, in accordance with the Members' [Code of Conduct](#).
4. **Terms of Reference of the Personnel Committee** 9 - 10
To note the Terms of Reference of the Personnel Committee.
5. **Menopause Policy (PC3940)** 11 - 40
Purpose: To approve the menopause policy and use of appropriate rest rooms.
6. **Date of Next Meeting**
 - 13 November 2020 at 10am
 - 12 February 2021 at 10am

Sarah Clarke
Service Director: Strategy and Governance

If you require this information in a different format or translation, please contact Moira Fraser on telephone (01635) 519045.

Agenda Item 2.

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

REMOTE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON FRIDAY, 24 APRIL 2020

Councillors Present: Adrian Abbs, Dennis Benneyworth, Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Garth Simpson (Chairman) and Howard Woollaston

Also Present: , Councillor Graham Bridgman (Portfolio Holder: Deputy Leader, Adult Social Care), Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager) and Abi Witting (HR Manager)

PART I

18. Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 11 February 2020 were approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chairman.

19. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest received.

20. Parental Leave for Members Report (PC3841)

The Committee considered a report (Agenda Item 4) which sought agreement to adopt a parental leave policy for Councillors in accordance with the motion that was approved at the 12 September 2019 Council meeting.

Abi Witting explained that the Leader had proposed the motion which had been adopted by Council and was designed to encourage a more diverse range of people to stand for election in the future. It was hoped that the policy would assist with the work life balance for elected Members. She thanked the Legal Team for their input into the report. The policy was based on the employee framework and would address the issue of Members ceasing to be a member if they were unable to attend a Council meeting over a six month period.

Councillor Jeff Brooks commented that was a good, well written policy and he thanked Officers for it. He did however feel that, as this was a policy for Members, there should be more emphasis on the role of Group Leaders in the document. He therefore requested that paragraphs 5.1 and 8.1 be expanded to include the role of the Group Leader and the political groups and not just those of the Monitoring officer. Councillor Brooks commented that the report would need to be promoted.

Officers commented that they would amend the policy to reflect the changes suggested. The following changes were proposed:

- Insert the following paragraph at 4.3 - Before formally requesting to take Qualifying Parental Leave a Member should first consult their political group leader.
- Paragraph 8.1 to be amended to read: 'On returning to Member duties (or commencing duties if a New Member), a Member can request a 'parental buddy' to support them – for example, someone who has experience of returning to duties

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - 24 APRIL 2020 - MINUTES

following a period of maternity or adoption leave. Such requests should be discussed with the Member's political group leader in the first instance.'

Officers note that in terms of publicity, while the Council would publish the policy on its website, it would be incumbent on the political groups to make prospective candidates aware of the policy in order to encourage more diversity of candidates. Councillors Adrian Abbs, Dennis Benneyworth and Howard Woollaston stated that they would be willing to accept the changes proposed by Councillor Brooks and that they too welcomed the policy.

RESOLVED that:

- 1. the policy as amended at the meeting would be adopted.**
- 2. Authority be delegated to the Personnel Committee to make any future changes to the policy following a review.**
- 3. Authority be delegated to the Service Director Strategy & Governance to make any changes to the Constitution arising from the approval of the policy.**

21. Future Meeting Dates

17 July 2020 at 10.30am in the Committee Room

13 November 2020 at 10.30am in the Committee Room

12 February 2020 at 10.30am in the Committee Room

(The meeting commenced at 10.30 am and closed at 10.47 am)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

DRAFT

Note: These Minutes will remain DRAFT until approved at the next meeting of the Committee

PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THURSDAY, 14 MAY 2020

Councillors Present: Adrian Abbs, Peter Argyle, Jeff Brooks (Vice-Chairman), Garth Simpson (Chairman) and Joanne Stewart

Also Present: Moira Fraser (Democratic and Electoral Services Manager)

PART I

1. Election of Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Garth Simpson be elected Chairman of the Personnel Committee for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

2. Appointment of Vice-Chairman

RESOLVED that Councillor Jeff Brooks be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Personnel Committee for the 2020/21 Municipal Year.

(The meeting commenced at 6.00 pm and closed at 6.05 pm)

CHAIRMAN

Date of Signature

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Agenda Item 4.

Terms of Reference

That, in order to comply with the Regulations under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council appoint a Personnel Committee (reporting direct to Council) consisting of five Members with the following terms of reference:

- (i) Powers to appoint staff at Service Director level and above by means of an Appointments Panel. (Note: The Appointments Panel usually comprises three Member proposed by the relevant Leaders on a politically balanced basis.)
- (ii) Powers to determine requests for the early release of pensions subject to the financial implications of each request being approved through the Executive decision making process.
- (iii) Powers to appoint Proper Officers.
- (iv) Powers to designate officers as Head of Paid Service, Monitoring Officer and Section 151 Officer.
- (v) Powers to approve new and revised HR and Health and Safety Policies *

*The power to approve new and revised HR policies and procedures is delegated to the Chief Executive. The Chief Executive may decide to refer particular HR policies and procedures to the Personnel Committee rather than exercise the delegation.

- (vi) Powers to approve new and revised HR and Health and Safety Procedures.
- (vii) Powers to designate an officer as the Director of Adult Social Care and to designate an officer as the Director of Children's Services.

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Menopause Policy

Committee considering report:	Personnel Committee 17 July 2020
Portfolio Member:	Councillor Jo Stewart
Date Portfolio Member agreed report:	02 July 2020
Report Author:	Katie Penlington
Forward Plan Ref:	PC3940

1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 This report seeks approval for a new Menopause Policy for the Council.
- 1.2 The menopause affects many employees, not just women, and can impact upon their working lives. The policy aims to raise awareness of the menopause and its impact, encourage open and supportive conversations between employees and their line manager so reasonable adjustments can be explored to support the employee at work and enable them to continue to be effective in their jobs.

2 Recommendation

- 2.1 Personnel Committee is recommended to approve the menopause policy and use of appropriate rest rooms.

3 Implications and Impact Assessment

Implication	Commentary
Financial:	Property have advised that the cost to repaint each of the proposed rest rooms and equip them with a suitable chair and night light would total approximately £2200 and can be funded from the existing buildings and furniture replacement budgets without the need for further approval.
Human Resource:	N/A
Legal:	A number of menopause related employment tribunal claims against other employers have succeeded on grounds of discrimination. The policy aims to minimise the Council's risk

Menopause Policy

	of menopause related tribunal claims by seeking to ensure appropriate action is taken to support employees.			
Risk Management:	The Policy aims to assess and minimise risks where appropriate for individual employees. A menopause risk assessment is attached.			
Property:	It is best practice to make appropriate rest facilities available. Property have suggested the first aid rooms at Market Street and West Street House, and the old reception room at Turnham's Green are used.			
Policy:	N/A			
	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Commentary
Equalities Impact:				
A Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could impact on inequality?	X			The policy aims to support employees affected by the menopause. The majority of these are likely to be women. The policy aims to raise awareness, encourage open conversations and facilitate implementation of appropriate reasonable adjustments to support affected employees to enable them to continue to be effective at work.
B Will the proposed decision have an impact upon the lives of people with protected characteristics, including employees and service users?	X			The proposed policy aims to have a positive impact (as described in 'A' above) on the working lives of employees and may have a particular impact upon female employees, those aged between 40 and 60 and those whose menopausal symptoms meet the definition of a disability set out in the Equality Act 2010.
Environmental Impact:		X		

Health Impact:	X			As above.
ICT Impact:		X		
Digital Services Impact:		X		
Council Strategy Priorities:		X		
Core Business:	X			Supporting employees continuing to be effective in their work will help to ensure core business is delivered.
Data Impact:		X		
Consultation and Engagement:	<p>Consultation has taken place with:</p> <p>Laura Mayes and Mike Lindburn – Health and Safety,</p> <p>Andy Green – Property</p> <p>Catherine Greaves – Public Health</p> <p>HR</p> <p>Unison and GMB</p>			

4 Executive Summary

- 4.1 This report seeks approval for the Menopause Policy in order to raise awareness of the menopause and its symptoms, help support employees have open conversations and provide managers and staff with guidance on how those affected can be supported at work.
- 4.2 To support implementation of the policy the report also seeks approval to use the first aid rooms at Market Street and West Street House, and the old reception room at Turnham's Green as places where those experiencing symptoms can, as a reasonable adjustment agreed with their line manager, go to rest.
- 4.3 To improve the suitability of the rooms mentioned in 4.2 as rest spaces, a small cost to existing budgets is suggested to equip the rooms with suitable chair, a 'night light' and repainting.
- 4.4 Approval of points 4.1 to 4.3 is recommended as they will help the Council achieve its commitment to promote equality and diversity as set out in its Equality in Employment

Menopause Policy

Policy. Having a menopause policy that raises awareness, encourages open communication and support is best practice and recommended by organisations such as the Local Government Association, ACAS, the Institute of Personnel and Development and TUC Wales.

5 Supporting Information

Introduction

- 5.1 This report seeks approval for the Menopause Policy in order to raise awareness of the menopause and its symptoms, help support employees and provide managers and staff with guidance on how those affected can be supported at work.

Background

- 5.2 Menopausal symptoms can affect employees at work. Most women experience menopausal symptoms at some time in their lives. CIPD research found that 59% of women experiencing menopausal symptoms said it had a negative impact on their work yet many felt they could not raise this taboo subject with their line managers.
- 5.3 Other employees may also be affected by the menopause if their partner, family member or colleague has symptoms. Transgender employees and employees in other age groups may also experience symptoms. The effect of symptoms may have an impact on employees' ability to perform their role.
- 5.4 The Council has a high proportion of female employees – 78.04% of the workforce is female, 59.41% of female employees are in the 40 and 60 age category.
- 5.5 The Council has a duty to look after the health and safety of its employees and ensure that the workplace does not exacerbate symptoms.
- 5.6 The Council has committed to promote equality and diversity in its equality in employment policy. Implementing an effective menopause policy would support the Council in achieving this by fostering a gender and age inclusive workplace.
- 5.7 Having a menopause policy would help raise awareness of the issues, encourage open discussion and provide a framework for managers to support team members who are affected by the menopause at work. Implementing a policy is recommended by a wide range of professional organisations including the Local Government Association, ACAS and the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Unison requested that the Council develop a menopause policy.

Proposals

- 5.8 The draft policy aims to raise awareness amongst staff and managers of the symptoms of the menopause, to encourage open conversations and to encourage exploration of reasonable adjustments to reduce the impact on work and to support affected employees.
- 5.9 The menopause policy was developed using information and best practice guidance from the NHS, ACAS, Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD), TUC Wales and the Local Government Association (LGA) amongst others.

Menopause Policy

- 5.10 The policy is accompanied by a risk assessment template to assist managers and staff in identifying the impact the menopause is having, where the workplace may be exacerbating symptoms and identify measures to address these issues.
- 5.11 To support implementation of the policy this report also seeks approval to use the first aid rooms at Market Street and West Street House, and the old reception room at Turnham's Green as places where those experiencing symptoms can, as a reasonable adjustment agreed with their line manager, go to rest. Providing a suitable rest place is advised by the LGA, ACAS and CIPD. Existing staff rest areas do not provide privacy and may not be quiet.
- 5.12 Rooms were suggested by the Maintenance and Facilities Manager. Health and Safety have been consulted on use of the first aid rooms and have agreed that these are suitable with minor modifications as they are rarely used for first aid. It is suggested that first aid treatment would take priority in the case of a room being required for both purposes at the same time.
- 5.13 To improve the suitability of the rooms mentioned in 5.10 as rest spaces, a small cost to existing budgets would equip them with a suitable chair, a 'night light' and repainting. Property have advised that the cost of redecorating would be up to £500 per room and can be funded from the existing buildings budget, and the cost of a suitable chair and night light would be approximately £200 and £10 each respectively which could be funded from the existing furniture replacement budget.

6 Other options considered

- 6.1 The Council could choose not to have a menopause policy. This approach is not recommended as it would miss the opportunity to foster an inclusive workforce where employees are supported to remain effective in their roles and where their well-being is shown to be valued. There have been successful tribunal claims relating to the menopause on grounds of gender and disability discrimination. Continuing without a policy may put the Council at greater risk of claims if managers are unaware of the reasonable action they should take if an employee is affected by menopausal symptoms at work.
- 6.2 Approval of the suggested (or alternative) rest rooms could be rejected. This is not recommended as it would limit the support that can be offered to those with some menopausal symptoms and could potentially result in higher sickness absence than if they are made available.

7 Conclusion

- 7.1 Personnel Committee is recommended to approve the menopause policy and use of appropriate rest rooms in order to support those experiencing menopausal symptom and to support them remaining affected within their roles.

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix A – Equalities Impact Assessment
- 8.2 Appendix B – Draft Menopause Risk Assessment

Background Papers:

None.

Subject to Call-In:

Yes: No:

Wards affected: Not applicable.

Officer details:

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Document Control

Document Ref:		Date Created:	
Version:		Date Modified:	
Author:			
Owning Service			

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1			
2			

Appendix A

Equality Impact Assessment - Stage One

We need to ensure that our strategies, policies, functions and services, current and proposed have given due regard to equality and diversity as set out in the Public Sector Equality Duty (Section 149 of the Equality Act), which states:

- (1) A public authority must, in the exercise of its functions, have due regard to the need to:**
 - (a) eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under this Act;**
 - (b) advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it; This includes the need to:**
 - (i) remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are connected to that characteristic;**
 - (ii) take steps to meet the needs of persons who share a relevant protected characteristic that are different from the needs of persons who do not share it;**
 - (c) foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it, with due regard, in particular, to the need to be aware that compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**
- (2) The steps involved in meeting the needs of disabled persons that are different from the needs of persons who are not disabled include, in particular, steps to take account of disabled persons' disabilities.**
- (3) Compliance with the duties in this section may involve treating some persons more favourably than others.**

The following list of questions may help to establish whether the decision is relevant to equality:

- Does the decision affect service users, employees or the wider community?
- (The relevance of a decision to equality depends not just on the number of those affected but on the significance of the impact on them)
- Is it likely to affect people with particular protected characteristics differently?
- Is it a major policy, or a major change to an existing policy, significantly affecting how functions are delivered?
- Will the decision have a significant impact on how other organisations operate in terms of equality?
- Does the decision relate to functions that engagement has identified as being important to people with particular protected characteristics?
- Does the decision relate to an area with known inequalities?
- Does the decision relate to any equality objectives that have been set by the council?

Please complete the following questions to determine whether a full Stage Two, Equality Impact Assessment is required.

What is the proposed decision that you are asking the Executive to make:	Personnel Committee is being requested to approve a Menopause Policy that would apply to Council employees
Summary of relevant legislation:	The Equality Act 2010
Does the proposed decision conflict with any of the Council's key strategy priorities?	No
Name of assessor:	Katie Penlington
Date of assessment:	04/06/2020

Is this a:		Is this:	
Policy	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	New or proposed	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Strategy	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Already exists and is being reviewed	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Function	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Is changing	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>
Service	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>		

What are the main aims, objectives and intended outcomes of the proposed decision and who is likely to benefit from it?	
Aims:	To support employees affected by the menopause and support them in remaining effective in their roles.
Objectives:	To raise awareness of the menopause and how it can impact on employees, encourage open conversations between staff and managers, encourage consideration and implementation of reasonable adjustments that support employees at work and in remaining effective in their roles.
Outcomes:	Employees affected by the menopause are supported at work and remain effective in their roles.
Benefits:	Employees feel supported and remain effective. Further supports the Council's commitments within the Equality in Employment Policy.

Note which groups may be affected by the proposed decision. Consider how they may be affected, whether it is positively or negatively and what sources of information have been used to determine this.

(Please demonstrate consideration of all strands – Age, Disability, Gender Reassignment, Marriage and Civil Partnership, Pregnancy and Maternity, Race, Religion or Belief, Sex and Sexual Orientation.)

Menopause Policy

Group Affected	What might be the effect?	Information to support this
Age	Those most likely to be affected are women in their late 40s and early 50s, although those in other age groups can be affected	Information from the NHS website 78.04% of the Council's workforce is female, of these 59.41% are aged between 40 and 60.
Disability	Some symptoms of the menopause may fit the definition of a disability if they are long term and have an effect upon day to day activities.	ACAS
Gender Reassignment	Trans people can be affected by the menopause	NHS Wales guidance document ACAS 'Menopause at work'
Marriage and Civil Partnership		
Pregnancy and Maternity		
Race		
Religion or Belief		
Sex	More women than men are likely to be affected by the menopause	ACAS
Sexual Orientation		
Further Comments relating to the item:		

Result	
Are there any aspects of the proposed decision, including how it is delivered or accessed, that could contribute to inequality?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	
Will the proposed decision have an adverse impact upon the lives of people, including employees and service users?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please provide an explanation for your answer:	

Menopause Policy

The policy aims to support all employees affected by the menopause regardless of sex, age, gender reassignment or disability (or any of the other protected characteristics).

If your answers to question 2 have identified potential adverse impacts and you have answered 'yes' to either of the sections at question 3, or you are unsure about the impact, then you should carry out a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment.

If a Stage Two Equality Impact Assessment is required, before proceeding you should discuss the scope of the Assessment with service managers in your area. You will also need to refer to the Equality Impact Assessment guidance and Stage Two template.

Identify next steps as appropriate:	
Stage Two required	No
Owner of Stage Two assessment:	
Timescale for Stage Two assessment:	

Name:

Date:

Please now forward this completed form to Rachel Craggs, Principal Policy Officer (Equality and Diversity) (rachel.craggs@westberks.gov.uk), for publication on the WBC website.

Menopause Policy

Document Control

Document Ref:	HRMP	Date Created:	June 2020
Version:	1	Date Modified:	
Revision due			
Author:	Katie Penlington	Sign & Date:	
Owning Service	Human Resources		
Equality Impact Assessment: (EIA)	Date undertaken:		
	Issues (if any):		
Chief Executive	Sign & Date:		
Corporate Director (Communities)	Sign & Date:		
Corporate Director (Economy and Environment)	Sign & Date:		

Change History

Version	Date	Description	Change ID
1	April 2020	New Policy	
2			
3			

This Policy is not for publication externally



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1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Council is committed to fostering an inclusive and supportive working environment for all our staff.
- 1.2 The Council recognises that many members of staff will experience the menopause and that for some the menopause can have an adverse impact upon their working lives.
- 1.3 The Council recognises that those experiencing the menopause may need additional support and adjustments and the Council is committed to supporting these workers and ensuring their workplace does not make their symptoms worse.
- 1.4 The purpose of this policy is to
 - 1.4.1 raise awareness of the menopause and how it can affect staff
 - 1.4.2 encourage open conversations between staff and their line managers
 - 1.4.3 foster an environment in which staff can openly and comfortably engage in conversations about the menopause in a respectful and supportive way
 - 1.4.4 support workers experiencing the menopause to continue to be effective in their jobs
- 1.5 Personnel Committee has approved the Menopause Policy.

2. Applicability

- 2.1 This Policy applies to:
 - 2.1.1 All non-school based employees working for the Council, including those working from home or at non-Council locations.
 - 2.1.2 Other persons including Elected Members, consultants, agency staff and contractors working for the Council, volunteers, external organisations working with the Council, whilst engaged on Council business.
- 2.2 It is the responsibility of each employee and other persons mentioned in section 2.1 to familiarise themselves with and adhere to this Policy.
- 2.3 Adherence to this Policy is a condition of working for the Council or using its assets.
- 2.4 This Policy has had consultation with Heads of Service and Trade Unions and the Council's Corporate Board. It has been approved by Personnel Committee.

3. What is the menopause?

- 3.1 The menopause is a natural transition stage in most womens' lives when oestrogen levels decline. It usually occurs in their late forties/early fifties, although it can happen earlier or later.

- 3.2 The NHS defines the menopause as ‘when a woman stops having periods and is no longer able to get pregnant naturally’. Part of the process of reaching the menopause is termed the ‘perimenopause’. This is when a woman’s body is starting to change in the build up to the menopause. For simplicity perimenopause is included in the term ‘menopause’ in this policy.
- 3.3 Some women may go through the early menopause – one in 100 women may go through the menopause before the age of 40 so it is important not to make assumptions about who is likely to be going through the menopause. Early menopause may happen for a variety of reasons including where a woman has certain medical conditions and/or health treatments such as hysterectomy or treatment for cancer, other women may naturally go through the menopause early.
- 3.4 The menopause can also impact on trans, intersex and non-binary people who may not identify as female. Trans men can experience menopausal symptoms as well as those presenting as women.
- 3.5 The menopause can impact indirectly upon employees whose partners/other family members are going through it.
- 3.6 Symptoms can be physical and/or psychological and vary from person to person, in severity, and may fluctuate. Symptoms are due to changes in hormone levels that begin in perimenopause and can continue for a number of years after a woman’s last period. Symptoms often last between four to eight years in total, but may last longer or for less. A list of some of the symptoms can be found at appendix one.
- 3.7 Menopausal symptoms may also exacerbate existing impairments and conditions.

4. **Policy**

- 4.1 It is the Policy of the Council to ensure that staff affected by the menopause are supported. Menopause is not just an issue for women. All staff should be aware of the menopause so that they can support those going through it or otherwise affected by it.
- 4.2 The Council encourages an environment in which colleagues can have open conversations about the menopause should they wish to do so. We expect all staff to be supportive of colleagues who may be affected by the menopause in the workplace.
- 4.3 Anyone affected by the menopause should feel confident to talk to their line manager about the impact which the menopause is having upon them, and the support they may need to reduce the difficulties it can cause them at work. Some may want to talk about support without talking about their symptoms in detail.
- 4.4 Line managers should be ready to have open conversations about the menopause and to discuss the support available. Such conversations should be treated sensitively and professionally and any information provided should be handled confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation.

- 4.5 Managers will consider requests for support and reasonable adjustments sympathetically and will not discriminate against employees who are experiencing the menopause.
- 4.6 Whilst the employee's line manager is the person who can put support measures in place, in some circumstances the employee may prefer to talk to someone else in the first instance. This may be their manager's manager, another manager within their service or their trade union. Managers are expected to be prepared to have these conversations with members of staff even where they are not the employee's line manager. Where the employee wishes, this person can support them in discussing with their line manager the impact the menopause is having and the support that could reduce the difficulties this may cause them at work.

5. **Risk assessment**

- 5.1 The Council is committed to ensuring the health and safety of its staff and will consider any aspects of the working environment that may worsen menopausal symptoms. This may involve identifying and addressing specific risks to health and well-being of those going through the menopause.
- 5.2 A menopause risk assessment form, for managers to use where an employee tells them they are experiencing symptoms, is available on the intranet. The risk assessment should focus on how the menopause is affecting the employee individually, including any impact on or due to any existing conditions the employee may have.

6. **Support and adjustments**

- 6.1 The Council recognises that the menopause is a very personal experience. While many who go through the menopause will be able to carry on their working lives as normal, others may benefit from reasonable adjustments to their working conditions to mitigate the impact of menopause symptoms at work.
- 6.2 Employees experiencing the menopause are encouraged to let their line manager know if they are experiencing symptoms that impact on their work so that they can discuss appropriate support.
- 6.3 Where an employee tells their line manager that they are experiencing symptoms the line manager will conduct a menopause risk assessment to assess whether the employee's menopausal symptoms are being made worse by the workplace or by work practices. Areas to consider include:
- 6.3.1 Workplace temperature
 - 6.3.2 Access to toilet and washing facilities
 - 6.3.3 Access to drinking water
 - 6.3.4 Uniforms and personal protective equipment
 - 6.3.5 Working times and break times
 - 6.3.6 Workload

- 6.4 The line manager and employee should discuss whether there are reasonable adjustments that could help the employee and the line manager may refer the employee to Occupational Health to better understand any adjustments and other support that may help alleviate symptoms affecting the employee at work.
- 6.5 Depending upon individual and business needs, adjustments that might be considered include:
- 6.5.1 Provision of electric fans
 - 6.5.2 Flexible working/changes to work patterns
 - 6.5.3 Changes to work allocation
 - 6.5.4 More frequent rest breaks
 - 6.5.5 Access to somewhere suitable to rest
 - 6.5.6 Changes to work allocation/duties
 - 6.5.7 Flexibility over uniform/dress code and/or provision of additional spare uniforms
 - 6.5.8 Ready access to chilled water and to toilets and washing facilities

These are examples only and not an exhaustive list.

- 6.6 Managers should seek further advice on making reasonable adjustments from HR as some symptoms of the menopause may meet the definition of a disability under the Equality Act 2010 where they have a substantial and long-term effect on the employee's ability to do normal daily activities.
- 6.7 Managers will put agreed support and reasonable adjustments into place in a timely manner and will regularly review them with the employee, keeping in mind that symptoms and their impact may fluctuate.

7. **Sickness absence**

Absences due to menopausal symptoms may be viewed as part of an on-going health issue rather than short term sickness absence. Managers should seek advice from Human Resources at an early stage if they believe the absence of an employee, or other symptoms impacting their work, may be related to the menopause. HR, with advice from Occupational Health where appropriate, will advise how menopause related sickness absence should be recorded and managed.

8. **Roles and Responsibilities**

- 8.1 Human Resources is responsible for maintaining this Policy and for providing advice and guidance on request on its implementation.
- 8.2 All managers are directly responsible for implementing this Policy within their service areas, and for the adherence of their staff and others (2.1.2).

8.3 All personnel detailed at 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 have an individual responsibility to adhere to this Policy.

9. **Review**

9.1 This policy will be reviewed to respond to any changes and at least every 3 years.

9.2 The Service responsible for reviewing and maintaining this Policy is Human Resources.

DRAFT

Useful sources of information

Internal sources of support:

Employee Assistance Programme (available via the Intranet)
Menopause Risk Assessment

External sources of information:

NHS guidance on the menopause [Menopause - NHS](https://www.nhs.uk/video/Pages/coping-with-the-menopause.aspx)
<https://www.nhs.uk/video/Pages/coping-with-the-menopause.aspx>

Support for premature menopause [The Daisy Network | The Daisy Network](#)

NICE Menopause <https://www.nice.org.uk/favicon.ico>

Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists
<https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/>

Other sources

<https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>

<https://thebms.org.uk/>

<https://thebms.org.uk/publications/videos/bms-tv/>

<https://www.womens-health-concern.org/>

<https://healthtalk.org/menopause/overview>

<https://www.wellbeingofwomen.org.uk/the-menopause/>

<https://henpicked.net/>

[The Menopause in the workplace - a toolkit for trade unionists - TUC Wales](#)

Other Relevant Documentation

Template Menopause Risk Assessment

[The Stress and Mental Well-Being Policy and Guidance](#)

[Sickness absence reporting and management policy, procedure and guidance](#)

Appendix one – symptoms of the menopause

Symptoms can be physical and/or psychological and may include:

- Difficulty in sleeping
- Night sweats
- Feeling tired and lacking in energy
- Low mood, irritability, depression, anxiety, panic attacks
- Poor concentration, loss of confidence and memory problems
- Hot flushes – may include sweating, the skin becoming red and patchy and a quicker or stronger heart rate
- Taking longer to recover from illness
- Irregular periods
- Heavier, painful periods and clots leaving those affected exhausted as well as practically needing to change sanitary wear more frequently. Some affected may become anaemic.
- Aches and pains including muscle and joint stiffness
- Urinary problems – more frequent urinary incontinence and urinary tract infections such as cystitis.
- Headaches including migraines
- Putting on weight
- Noticeable heartbeats
- Skin and/or vaginal irritation and/or dryness
- Menopausal hairloss
- Osteoporosis
- Dry eyes
- Side effects of hormone replacement therapy (HRT)

This is not an exhaustive list.

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Corporate Risk Assessment

Before completing the full risk assessment form it is important to understand the menopause symptoms your staff member is experiencing that they believe affect them at work, for example disturbed sleep may result in the employee feeling exhausted at work. This will assist with focussing your control measures and reasonable adjustments.

Go through the list of common symptoms with the staff member below, filling out the impact box to the right of each symptom. Add any additional symptoms that the employee believes is affecting their work to the bottom of the list – there is a fuller list of symptoms in the menopause policy and employees may want to review this too before completing the risk assessment with you:

Note: this document contains information that is classed as ‘sensitive data’ under data protection legislation. It must be stored securely and in accordance with the legislation. It must be retained in accordance with the Council’s data retention schedule.

Symptom	What impact, if any, does the symptom have on the employee at work, their well-being and their ability to perform their duties?
Hot Flashes	
Palpitations/noticeable heartbeats	
Night sweats (increased sweating may also be experienced during the day)	
Insomnia & sleep disturbance	
Fatigue	
Poor Concentration	
Headaches	
Joint/muscle aches	
Skin irritation & dryness	
Dry eyes	
Urinary problems	
Hair loss	
Changes to periods (irregular, heavy or more painful)	
Depression	
Weight gain	

Notes:

- Risk Assessors should have sufficient skills, knowledge and experience.
- Sponsors will be Heads of Service, Line Managers, Head Teachers or Heads of School Department.
- Risk Assessment reviews to be carried out after any associated accident, near miss; significant change or annually.
- Consider if training maybe required for any of the hazards identified above.

Corporate Risk Assessment

Panic attacks	
Anxiety	
Mood swings	
Irritability	
Memory problems	
Loss of confidence	
Osteoporosis	
Side effects of HRT	
Impact of menopausal symptoms on pre-existing medical conditions/disabilities	
Impact of pre-existing medical conditions/disabilities on menopausal symptoms	
[add in any additional symptoms the employee is experiencing and the impact]	

Directorate							
Service							
Team							
Job, Activity or Task							
List the Hazards?	Considerations	Who might be harmed & how?	What are you already doing to lower risks?	Any further action needed?	Action by Whom?	Action by when?	Date complete
Lack of information and sign posting on Menopause	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Does the employee have access to information on 						

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Corporate Risk Assessment

	<p>Menopause</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have they been sign posted to policies and services available including OH, the EAP, Stress and mental well-being policy and guidance, Unions, support groups, counselling etc. • Are there any local support groups or a network of colleagues experiencing similar issues for mental wellbeing support • Could counselling services/EAP be helpful? 						
Lack of confidential sickness reporting	Are staff able to report menopause related sickness absence confidentially						
Lack of appropriate stress management	Are there appropriate mechanisms in place to regarding stress identification and management and have these been applied/followed where						

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Corporate Risk Assessment

	applicable (stress risk assessment)						
Inappropriate workstations/DSE	<p>Are workstations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • located near to sanitary and rest facilities • interchangeable to allow the staff member to change desks to manage temperature or other physical comfort issues • Is there sufficient workspace • Is there sufficient access to natural light • Noise (too much?) • Can the employee vary their posture and position throughout the day/shift • Is a DSE assessment required 						
Lack of access to/ill equipped facilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are private washing and changing facilities available • Is there access to sanitary products • Do rotas/shifts 						

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Corporate Risk Assessment

	<p>ensure that staff have easy access to sanitary and washing facilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has a rest room been provided where employees can sit/lie down quietly when required • Is there access to cold water facilities • • Do shifts/rotas provide sufficient breaks • Are travelling/remote staff aware of the nearest premises which provides sufficient facilities 						
Temperature	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is the temperature set at a reasonable level for all staff as far as reasonably practicable • Is additional ventilation/equipment available to adjust temperature (fans etc.) 						
Inappropriate clothing/PPE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are clothes made of natural fibres 						

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Corporate Risk Assessment

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Where a uniform is provided/required is this made of natural fibres and provided in sufficient number that it can be changed regularly • Is PPE a good fit and provided in sufficient number that it can be changed regularly 						
Job role	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Does the role impact on physical or mental fatigue • Does the role result in fatigue from standing or physical exertion • Are you able to monitor and respond to frequent changes in job demands • Does the employee work shifts (day or night), are they on call • Can shifts be changed to accommodate/manage symptoms • Does the employee 						

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Corporate Risk Assessment

	<p>drive for business purposes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there flexible arrangements in place in relation to breaks • Can start and finish times be adjusted as part of flexible working • Have work processes been assessed to see if any reasonable adjustments can be made • Is the environment too noisy • Can remote/home working be applied/reviewed • Are there opportunities to switch to lighter duties • Do manual handling assessments take into account issues around menopause 						
Lone working	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there suitable lone working arrangements in place including 						

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Corporate Risk Assessment

	monitoring the safety and health of lone workers during the course of their work day (whether that be day or night)						
Training/awareness raising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there lack of awareness about the menopause amongst the team and managers that indicate a training/awareness raising need 						

Risk assessment completed by		Signature	
Risk assessment sponsored by		Signature	
Date assessment completed			
Risk assessment communicated to relevant staff by	Briefing <input type="checkbox"/> Email <input type="checkbox"/> Copy & Signature <input type="checkbox"/> Other <input type="checkbox"/> please state:		

Review Date	Assessor	Signature	Sponsor	Signature

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