

Gloucestershire Healthy Workplace Award Report 2022

TEWKESBURY BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Award Level	Organization	Date
Foundation	Tewkesbury Borough Council	16 May 2022

Tewkesbury Borough Council are a local authority with around 200 employees supporting the community from a central office base in the town.

Our Organisation

Examples of good practice seen

We can see that staff wellbeing is embedded in your strategy and people plan and clearly set out in your culture and values statements.

Your evidence, including a company commitment statement demonstrates that staff health and wellbeing is a high priority for leaders at the Council. The interviews provided further evidence to demonstrate a commitment to embedding a healthy culture across all departments and that this culture is reaching staff across the company.

You have some great resources on offer via your 'wellbeing zone' with information about the Healthy Lifestyles Service and a thorough wellbeing guide that sets out all the benefits and support made available to council employees.

Interviews revealed that there is a strong culture among team leaders and managers to ensure that wellbeing checks are in place for team members with regular informal meetings to give staff a chance to talk and connect. This has been particularly effective throughout lockdown and with remote working in place.

Communication

Examples of good practice seen

We can see a good range of communication methods in place including up to date and dedicated intranet pages on wellbeing, messages from senior leaders and the culture and values for the organisation are promoted well.

Regular staff pulse surveys are undertaken with a good completion rate. Your monthly newsletter keeps staff up to date and our interviews showed it was well known and read by many. It was good to see the annual performance review paperwork and guidance reflects staff feedback and is aligned to company values.

A key strength in your approach to wellbeing is the fantastic selection of training courses run for staff and for managers which includes mental health awareness, managing from a distance and also covers effective coaching and feedback techniques. It is great to see an organisation prioritising development of these skills for managers.

Your 'Niblett' sessions are also a great tool to engage staff in a range of health and wellbeing topics.

Recruitment and Retention

Examples of good practice seen

Staff health and wellbeing including the benefits and support on offer is well promoted in your recruitment process. We can clearly see how health and wellbeing is embedded in the induction process with information about health safety and Mental Health First Aiders as well as a strong emphasis on informal and regular communication / 'checks ins' to support new employees on a personal and professional level.

You track your staff turnover and sickness absence data well and have thorough processes in place to monitor trends and patterns. Most importantly you have shown that you have responded to any issues that arise by introducing relevant training, policies, and practices such as a return-to-work process, equality and diversity policy, training and progression opportunities as well as rewards and recognition.

Interviews demonstrated that many of your staff have been there a long time and those new to the company (specifically those joining in lockdown) had a positive onboarding experience and were made to feel welcome and supported from the outset.

Mental Wellbeing and Stress Reduction

Examples of good practice seen

We can see that you have committed and invested in this area for staff.

There are clear messages within your 'mental health at work plan' which help to raise awareness and reduce stigma and the plan has been backed up by key actions including, mental health awareness training for staff and managers, a mental health first aiders scheme, promotion, and training for the use of the Mind Wellness Action Plan (WAP) as well as an EAP that provides counselling support.

We can see from your intranet information and newsletters that you have clearly worked hard to keep the conversations going about mental health across your workplace making good use of national awareness days and campaigns as well as regular promotion of company initiatives through a range of channels.

At interview we heard some great first-hand accounts from staff members about the vital and comprehensive support and help that they had received from their employer at times when they were struggling with their mental health.

Back Pain & Reduction

Examples of good practice seen

You have put lots of measures in place to support a healthy desk set up and ensure that employees working from home have a healthy and safe working environment. Your Cardinus online training programme is extremely thorough covering both desk set up and wellbeing at home and is backed up by a great 'home working guide' that is easy to read and engaging in its design.

We can see that you have put a lot of thought into keeping people safe when desk working and working from home. We have also seen strong evidence that staff are reminded to take regular breaks and to move and stretch throughout the day.

A robust policy is in place for manual handling, that includes risk assessments and training.

You have provided occupational health support for your employees and our interviews with staff confirmed that people know about this service and know where to go for help and support.

Smoking

Examples of good practice seen

You have a robust policy in place with a section on smoking cessation support available via the local healthy lifestyles service. Details are clear on your intranet in the relevant wellbeing section, and you have also promoted our online events. At the site visit I saw evidence of posters, leaflets and signs with regards to smoking and site rules.

Alcohol and Substance Misuse

Examples of good practice seen

A very thorough policy is in place. We can see that you have promoted the Healthy Lifestyles resources, quiz, and information about our support on your wellbeing pages of the intranet which is great.

You have promoted relevant and timely campaigns in your newsletters and online such as sober October and Dry January. You have shared a good list of support contacts online.

Physical Activity

Examples of good practice seen

You have shared some great examples of how you have encouraged physical activity, which include some company steps challenges and a range of exercise class options that have been advertised to staff.

We can see that regular breaks are encouraged with desk workers prompted to get up and move throughout the day. You have even produced a desk exercise document to help.

We can see that the benefits, and the connection between mental health and exercise has been promoted through your wellbeing campaigns.

You have put a new cycle to work scheme in place for staff and your 'lunchtime walks' initiative is simple yet important activity to help get people away from their desks for some exercise and fresh air.

Healthy Eating

Examples of good practice seen

We can see your statement of intent to support healthy eating and physical activity has been posted on the wellbeing pages of the intranet. This has been backed up by adequate facilities onsite, promotions of the Gloucestershire Healthy Lifestyles Service, and a range of promotions during national campaigns (for example 'diabetes awareness week' and 'nutrition and hydration week')

Personal Safety and Environmental Health

Examples of good practice seen

Your wellbeing strategy and action plan is very thorough. We have seen consistent promotion of all the key Public Health topics at Tewkesbury Borough Council. You make good use of national campaigns on a wide range of health topics such as sun safety, menopause, oral health, eye health, and more. You also have good support systems in place including an eye test contribution scheme, access to occupational health, and an employee assistance programme.

We can see a very strong commitment to supporting those who may be victims of domestic abuse and violence and to raising awareness of this topic. Your detailed corporate statement with guidance in place for employees and managers is exemplary. You have promoted this well, through the '16 days of action campaign' and other key posts and promotions.

Summary of findings and recommendations for future development.

The evidence submitted online, combined with the feedback from staff interviews has demonstrated that there is an extremely supportive culture at Tewkesbury Borough Council with a clear commitment to the health and wellbeing of the people working for you with a very strong training offer for leaders and managers to help make it work.

Our recommendation moving forward is to continue to build on the wellbeing initiatives that will bring people together in healthy activities, such as walking meetings, team challenges, and wellbeing sessions. We know you are developing the space in the office to help the team move away from their desks more.

There was very little feedback from the interviews with regards to areas for improvement, all staff interviewed were very happy with their working environment, the leadership, and the support available. New staff were also very happy with the induction support they had received. The only suggestions were for more creative use of space for activities including outdoor space.

Mental and physical wellbeing are clearly embedded in the core values of the organisation and every person interviewed spoke very highly of the support and care given by leaders and managers as well as the HR team on site. Our visit to your office confirmed that the culture you have documented in your company policies and statements is in place on the ground.