GENDER EQUALITY

UPDATE

CORPORATE REVIEW
3 JULY 2020

Staffordshire
County Council

Background & Context

- In June 2018 gender equality, sexual harassment and sexism paper considered by Corporate Review.

- Aim of today to provide progress update on positive actions to advance equality and inclusion for our workforce and members.

- Seek to address some gender specific items previously raised - steps to reduce the Gender Pay Gap, menopause at work initiative, maternity and paternity mentor initiative and the member paternity and maternity leave policy.

- Implementation of People Strategy, in the short and long term, promote a positive working environment and enhance inclusion. Embedding of the Councils values is to become a way of life to ensure:

  – the health of our workforce is a priority;

  – staff concerns are raised quickly and fairly; and

  – receive recognition, support and regular feedback.

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Gender Pay Gap – Analysis

Since the first gender pay gap publication (March 2018) significant analysis undertaken to understand reasons for our gender pay gap.

✓ It fluctuates and is susceptible to change

✓ Make-up of our workforce impacts on reducing our pay gap

✓ There are more women in part time lower paid and part time jobs

✓ Very few part time employees within managerial roles and within the upper pay quartile

✓ There are gender imbalances across the organisation by job category

In summary, many factors we can impact upon. However, also historical societal factors beyond our control may take some years to see change e.g. gender stereotypes affecting career choices.

Gender Pay Gap 2019

+11%

(2018 -12.3%)

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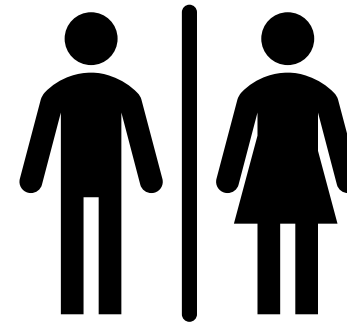
Closing
Our Gender Pay Gap

Embedding the People Strategy will improve the diversity of our workforce, however this may take several years to see a significant impact. We aim to reduce our pay gap by:

• Enhance employee experience focussing on: keeping and attracting talented people; promoting a positive working environment; development of skills for now and the future; and developing leaders for now and the future.

• Continue to develop and embed a 'Smart Working' environment to enable flexible working, and better work life balance.

• Develop our digital agenda to ensure employees have the the right equipment and resources to support smart working.

• Review our family friendly policies to understand how we improve current arrangements and encourage accessibility for more employees.

• Ensure recruitment processes are truly gender balanced and neutral and creating a more joined up approach to recruitment campaigns to increase the number of male or female employees in underrepresented areas.

• Target Apprenticeship Levy to develop skills and behaviours and encourage recruitment from underrepresented groups.

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Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Development Programme

EIS Development Programme – development of programmes since 2017 with aim to create healthy and high performing teams within the service. Diversity and Inclusion a key element of this work:

Equality

- Treating people fairly with respect

Diversity

- Valuing peoples differences and treating people in a way that they wish to be treated

Inclusion

- Taking positive actions to include people in all sections of society when planning and making decisions

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Economy, Infrastructure and Skills Development Programme

Some Departmental challenges in terms of Diversity & Inclusion, initial focus on: Gender, Age and Mental Health:

➢ **Workforce for the Future (**under 30's group) to understand the issues of younger generation and how to attract younger people into jobs.

➢ **Women in Leadership** – <u>Aim is not to train women to succeed in a male culture, but changing the culture so that everyone can succeed.</u> Held all staff workshop to understand barriers, build confidence and support the development of aspiring leaders. Outputs included: Learning Week 2019 sessions, maternity/paternity focus, coaching/mentoring support for aspiring leaders, and introduction of Reverse Mentoring.

➢ **Reverse Mentoring Scheme-** senior leaders and managers benefiting from the views of junior colleagues to understand different perspectives, help breakdown barriers and improve inclusion.

➢ **New Parent Mentor Scheme** – follow-up session from Women in Leadership to understand impact of maternity/paternity on career development led to the creation of this scheme (more later).

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Menopause at Work Initiative

The Facts – Why we need to act now

- 100 years ago women reach the menopause at 57 and died at 59.

- Now women reach the menopause at 51 and work into their late 60's and die in their 80's.

- 3 out of 4 women experience symptoms and 1 in 4 will experience severe symptoms.

- 25% of these women will also be informal carers (aged 50 – 64)

- Women over the age of 50 are largest growing part of the national workforce.

- The council workforce 6/10 women are of menopausal age.

The average age for women to reach menopause in the UK is **51 years**
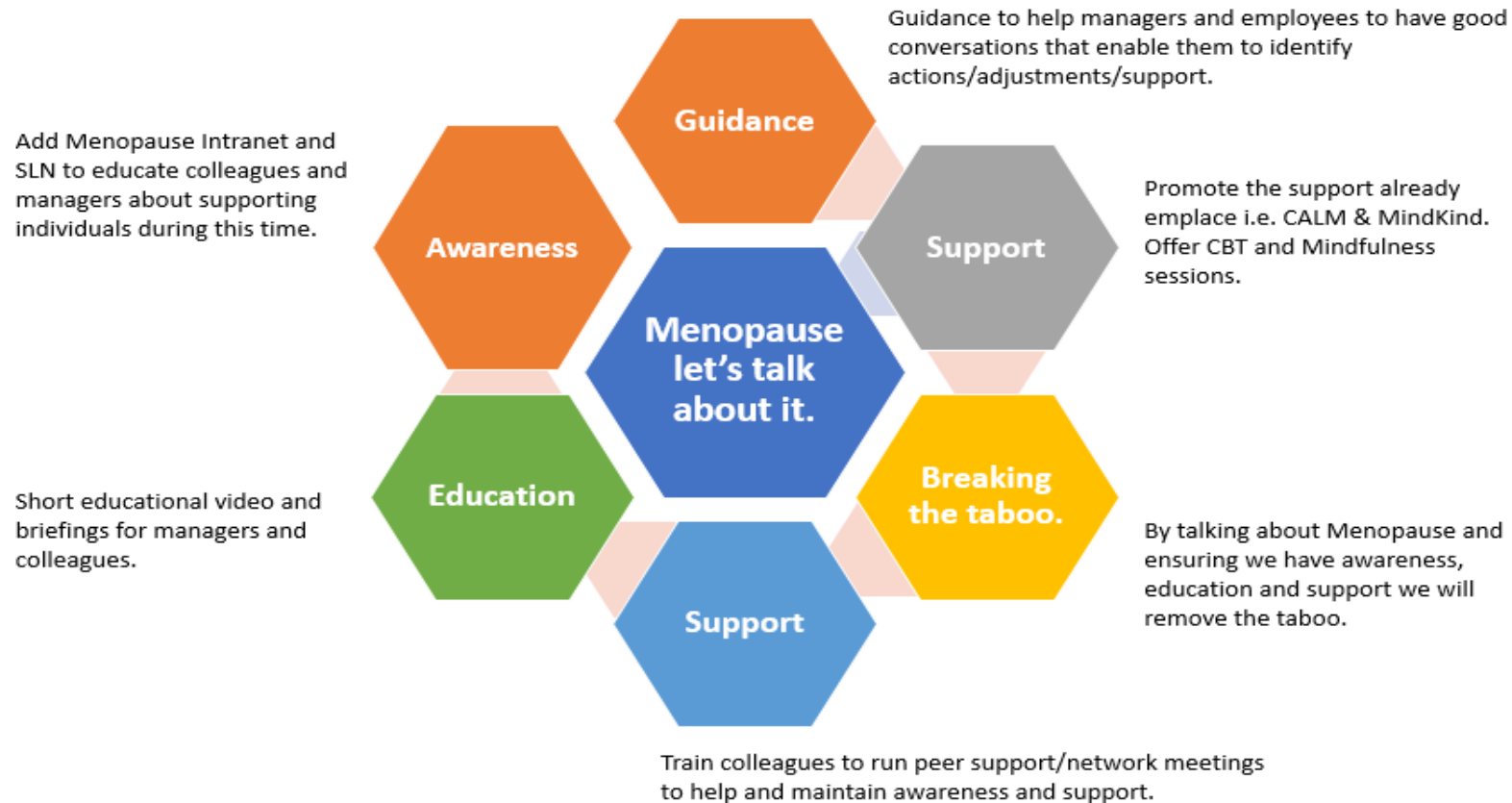
Around **75-80% of women** of menopausal age are in work

By 2020 it is estimated that **1 in 3 British workers** will be over the age of 50

50+ YEARS OLD

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SCC Approach – Menopause

Guidance to help managers and employees to have good conversations that enable them to identify actions/adjustments/support.

Add Menopause Intranet and SLN to educate colleagues and managers about supporting individuals during this time.

Guidance

Support

Promote the support already emplace i.e. CALM & MindKind. Offer CBT and Mindfulness sessions.

Awareness

Menopause let's talk about it.

Short educational video and briefings for managers and colleagues.

Education

Breaking the taboo.

By talking about Menopause and ensuring we have awareness, education and support we will remove the taboo.

Support

Train colleagues to run peer support/network meetings to help and maintain awareness and support.

People Strategy - Promoting a Positive Working Environment & Enhancing Wellbeing

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New Parent Mentoring Scheme

'Women In Leadership' group identified a common theme regarding barriers to career development was the impact of starting a family and maternity/ paternity leave. Given this insight and in the context of the aims of the People Strategy, a group of colleagues have developed a voluntary Parent Mentoring Scheme.

Why its Important?
National research shows peer support programmes are widely evidenced as having significant positive outcomes

What is it?
A mentoring scheme, to provide peer support, help and guidance, for all those questions expectant parents might have, before, during and when returning to work following maternity and paternity leave.

Benefits of the scheme
*   Increased wellbeing of staff
*   Increased motivation and productivity of staff
*   Staff retention
*   Improved 'family-friendly employer' offer

Response to Covid 19
*   Advice and support for parents whilst working at home

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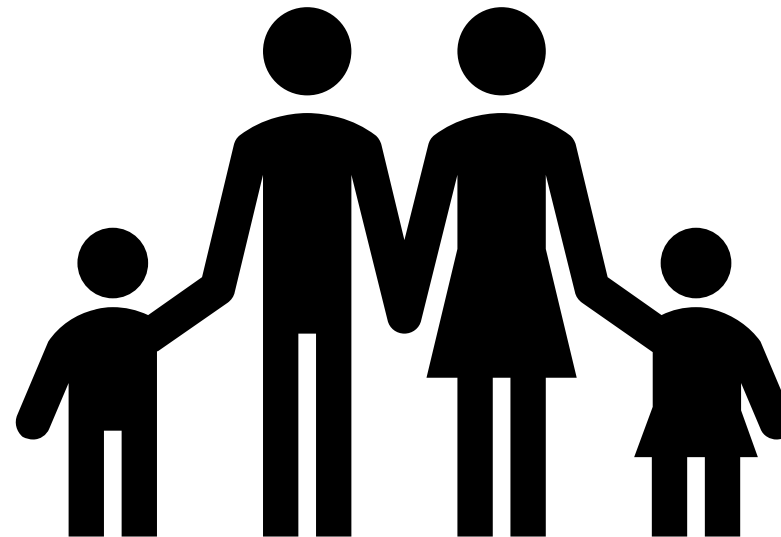
Member Parent Leave Policy Development

Equality initiatives and certain HR policies should be mirrored for our council members. County Councillor Phillip White (Cabinet Member for Learning and Employability) has created a working group to look at options for creating a Parent Leave Policy (including maternity, paternity, adoption leave, shared parental leave & parental leave). By doing this, the aim is to attract a more diverse cross section of the community into Councillor/Member positions.

This working group commenced in Autumn 2019 and actions to date have been undertaken:

➢ Scope, purpose and objectives of project agreed.
➢ Policy drafted based on key leave provisions and principles identified by Cllr Phillip White and the working group.
➢ Draft protocol developed in line with the draft policy on how leave arrangements could be managed for members.
➢ Working group members to review draft documentation with a view to agree final proposals by 26th June 2020.
➢ Once final policy will go to Full Council for formal approval.

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Summary

✓ Statutory reporting Gender Pay Gap published at end of March 2020.

✓ Ongoing ambitions and initiatives within the People Strategy will become embedded in everything we do.

✓ Local initiatives will continue to develop and enhance inclusion across the organisation.

✓ Develop Equalities objectives and action plan for 2020 (HR and Equalities Team)

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Covid 19
SCC Response

Covid 19 - Social Impact

34,000+
Clinically extremely vulnerable people living in Staffordshire

Large number are <u>working age</u>

Impact on support networks as the lockdown is eased

Vulnerable People

Health Impacts

↑ **33%** have missed health appointments

Mental Health & Wellbeing

48% have concerns about children returning to school

↑ **48%** have reported increased anxiety and/or depression

Volunteering & Social Action

↑ **60%** have volunteered to help others within their community

↑ **47.5%** are working from home... compared to 5% previously

30% are anticipated to keep working from home in the long-term

Digital, The Way We Work

Jobs, Employment and Poverty

↑ UK unemployment has risen at the fastest rate ever recorded

173,000 Staffordshire jobs in high-risk sectors

67% of parents reported concerns about the impact of the pandemic on their child's mental health

Disruption to education likely to have the greatest impact on disadvantaged children

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Impact of Covid 19 on Recovery Approaches

- Development of outline Community Impact Assessment (CIA) on recovery

- Supports the identification of wider impacts and priority mitigations

- Early stages - regular CIA updates to reflect:
  - Recovery plans as they develop
  - Take account of learning from Response phase
  - Informed by future engagement with residents, staff and partners

- Any significant change to service, as a result of recovery, subject to individual full CIA

- Recovery progress and updated CIA considered further by Cabinet

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Impact of Covid 19
Communities

- Wider impacts on different cohorts of people across Staffordshire's communities include:

  - **Age and Disability** – 34,000 people in Staffordshire and Stoke-on-Trent identified with 'extreme clinical vulnerability'. Older people aged 70+ and with a limiting, long-term illness

  - **Health and Care** – Potential widening of health inequalities, as well as seeing increased demand on NHS, public health and social care services.

  - **Children, young people and families** – Partial closure of education settings will have a significant impact on learning and family wellbeing, leading to potential increase in demand for Children's services

  - **Deprivation** – Less affluent likely to see greatest impact

  - **Localities** – Areas with older age profiles may be more impacted by the effects of social isolation.

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Impact of Covid 19
SCC Workforce

- Current headcount (excluding casuals) is 3781 people, of whom:
  - 78% are female
  - 36% work in social care roles
  - 13% are aged 60 or over
  - 2.9% are from BAME backgrounds, more than half of whom work in social care roles
- Age, gender and ethnicity key affected groups - mitigated through shielding, working from home, PPE etc
- No redundancies or changes to employment as a result of the Response phase, however key challenges arising include:
  - Staff categorised as vulnerable/extremely vulnerable – linked to underlying medical conditions of which we have no record
  - Childcare – closure of schools has forced parents/guardians to balance working from home with home-schooling
  - Physical space – many people do not have the space (or equipment) to support working from home for long periods
  - Increased risk of domestic violence or abuse

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Covid Measures & Lifting Lockdown Creating a Workplace Inclusive for All

Planning for the future & not the past

Safety First

Flexible in approach

Big questions ? Thoughtful answers

People

Physical Health
Mental Health
Welfare & Safety
Annual Leave

Support & Supervision
Manage & Development
Connections & Friendships

Buildings

- COVID Secure
- Social Distancing in place
- Cleaning procedures
- Shared spaces
- Equipment i.e. keyboards etc
- Desk management

Technology & Equipment

- Laptops & connectivity
- Skills & training
- Chairs, keyboards, mouse's, screens
- Headsets
- O365 & WhatsApp
- IT Support

Next Steps

- Employee survey to understand the impact on our workforce
- Analyse & interpret findings including the impact on gender, ethnicity, disability and other protected groups
- Learn from national research
- Incorporate findings into our plans & policies.

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