



CORPORATE HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE – 14TH NOVEMBER 2022

SUBJECT: ANNUAL CARE FIRST REPORT

REPORT BY: CORPORATE DIRECTOR FOR EDUCATION AND CORPORATE SERVICES

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Committee with a copy of the Care first Annual Report 2022 on the Employee Assistance Programme (attached at Appendix 1).

2. SUMMARY

- 2.1 The report is provided as information for members of the Committee, to ensure that they are kept informed of any matters that could impact on the management of health and safety within the Council. For information, some of the detail has been removed to ensure individual employees cannot be identified.

3. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 That the Committee note the contents of the report.

4. REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS

- 4.1 To keep the Committee up to date on any health and issues that may be relevant or may require further consideration.

5. THE REPORT

- 5.1 Employers have a duty under section 2 of the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to ensure the Health, Safety and Welfare of all employees and this legal responsibility includes mental as well as physical health.
- 5.1.1 Care first is a comprehensive employee assistance programme which offers confidential, impartial advice, information and a counselling service 24 hours a day 365 days a year.
- 5.1.2 Access to Care first is available by the telephone or online access including typetalk and minicom for people with hearing difficulties plus an interpreter service in 150 languages.

- 5.1.3 Employees are able to self-refer to Care first or managers can refer on the employees behalf with permission and subject to a specific criteria. 88% of referrals during 2021-22 were self-referrals with the remainder comprising of management referrals (10%), Occupational Health referrals (1%) and HR referrals (1%). The support provided by Care First is much wider than work related issues and includes legal, tax, human rights, immigration and nationality and travel, transport and holidays, financial advice (budget calculator on webpage), covid, bereavement, management support etc
- 5.1.4 Through the Care First Lifestyle site staff can access a wide range of supportive information, covering a variety of wellbeing topics. The launch last year of the new My Possible Self/ZEST mental health focussed app which can be used any time anywhere.
- 5.1.5 Care first is well promoted across the Authority with weekly e-mails to all users directing employees to events and information detailing how Care first is able to support them. Managers of employees who do not have access to e-mails are encouraged to share information in hard copy and via team meetings,
- 5.1.6 Overall usage of the service for the period April 2021- March 2022 increased from 3.31 % overall uses in 2021 to 5% by end of March 2022.
- 5.1.7 Work related contacts made up 41 out of 415 contacts during the year April 2021 – March 2022.
- 5.1.8 Work related physical and emotional health, change and relationships with managers were the most common reason for work related contacts.
- 5.1.9 Care first continues to be actively promoted across CCBC as an information resource and a tool for employees at all levels to access information, advice and support relating to personal and work-related concerns.

5.2 Conclusion

- 5.2.1 Health and safety remains a key priority for Local Authority action. Providing and communicating the Care first services is an important plank of CCBC approach for support employees facing work or personal challenges and/or seeking a healthier lifestyle. Access to Care first together with robust health and safety and human resources policies setting out formal processes for managing risk and agreed processes for addressing issues CCBC have in place arrangements to support employees and keep them well in work. Ensuring that health and safety is considered, and risks assessed and controlled, assists the Authority in meeting its legal obligations, in protecting the health and safety of employees and others.

6. ASSUMPTIONS

- 6.1 No assumptions have been made regarding the information contained in this report.

7. SUMMARY OF INTEGRATED IMPACT ASSESSMENT

- 7.1 This report is for information only and so an Integrated Impact Assessment is not required

8. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 There are no financial implications.

9. PERSONNEL IMPLICATIONS

9.1 There are no personnel implications

10. CONSULTATIONS

10.1 All comments from consultees have been included in the report.

11. STATUTORY POWER

11.1 The Health and Safety at Work etc. Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999.

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Appendix 1 Care First Annual Report