



Report title

Wellbeing Update

Meeting

Resources Committee

Date

12 January 2018

Report by

Head of Development and Training

Document Number

FEP 2815

Summary

This report updates the Board on the progress of ongoing LFB wellbeing initiatives and highlights the success LFB is having in establishing wellbeing as an integral part of organisational and departmental planning.

Recommendation

That the report be noted.

Introduction

1. This report is the latest six monthly update to the Board outlining what wellbeing initiatives are being progressed.

Wellbeing initiatives

2. Officers continue to focus on identifying and developing wellbeing initiatives designed to benefit staff, with a specific focus on mental health wellbeing following on from LFB signing the *Time to Change* pledge. This demonstrates the organisation's commitment to challenging mental health stigma and the promotion of positive wellbeing within the service.
3. The Grenfell incident has, of course, impacted this area of work greatly. The Counselling and Wellbeing team have made a significant contribution in supporting over 600 staff by providing wellbeing checks on the day of the incident, 28 days after and 3 months further on. A further 6 month check is underway. The team are also continuing to provide support for all staff subject to police witness interviews and will continue to support those involved in the Grenfell Tower Public Inquiry. The Team will continue to ensure that a day to day counselling and wellbeing service is available to the workforce as a whole.
4. In recognition of the importance and impact of the work undertaken by the Counselling and Wellbeing Team, an additional four counsellors are being recruited.
5. This commitment is further underpinned by
 - a. Training interventions for all managers on how to deal with stress, anxiety and depression being updated. These are due for publication in the first quarter of 2018.
 - b. The *Dealing with Potentially Traumatic Events* training intervention has been updated and a new policy issued in July 2017 (Policy Number 915).
 - c. The mental health charity MIND completing their engagements with fire station staff to advise on mental health wellbeing as part of their continuing Blue Light Programme initiative. In line with the funding available MIND were able to visit over 20 fire stations. The feedback provided from staff was very positive and has been used to aid the development of LFBs own training materials to help staff be more aware about the signs and symptoms of poor mental health.
 - d. Seconding one of LFBs MIND mental health Blue Light Champion (MBLC) to visit fire stations to promote the work of MINDs Blue Light Programme and engage with personnel on a peer basis about mental health wellbeing. This pilot will commence in early 2018 with a view to allocating one MBLC per Area.
 - e. Officers hosting visits by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service's Trauma Support Team to support our own counselling and wellbeing response to the Grenfell Tower incident. The feedback from this intervention was overwhelmingly positive and has led to a feasibility study being undertaken to determine whether the approach to peer trauma management and prevention used by Tyne and Wear Fire and Rescue Service is one that can be adopted by London Fire Brigade.
 - f. A "short survey" being circulated to all staff in December 2017 to
 - i. get a snapshot about how people feel working for the LFB
 - ii. measure people's engagement and satisfaction and build trust
 - iii. inform the development of the GLA-wide Diversity and Inclusion Strategy and Diversity Standard and;
 - iv. compare staff engagement and satisfaction across the GLA family as a whole

6. Other initiatives include

- a. the continued work to develop a menopause guidance note to better inform the workforce, outlining the types of intervention managers should consider to try and mitigate its effects, and the type of support that can be offered for people in the workplace. Publication is planned for the first quarter of 2018.
- b. the development of a nutrition programme for all fire station personnel to address obesity and other health related issues that result from poor diets. A serving Firefighter who has recently completed an MSc in Human Nutrition and is a Registered Associate Nutritionist (ANutr) with the Association for Nutrition, has offered his services to instigate and lead on establishing this project as part of the wider work on wellbeing.
- c. proposals for introducing a health and wellbeing events calendar based on NHS and NICE imperatives has been formulated.
- d. departments continuing to action their individual wellbeing action plans and have succeeded in
 - i. embedding team and communication days where "guest speakers" are invited to provide updates about their areas of work
 - ii. making more use of flexible and remote working options for staff that is being supported by line managers
 - iii. providing additional IT hardware (lap tops and twin screen stations) to facilitate both remote working and better Display Screen Working practice
 - iv. providing "standing work stations" to address specific musculoskeletal matters
 - v. extending the use of self-report questionnaires with the purpose of indicating differing psychological preferences in how people perceive the world around them and make decisions
 - vi. introducing "annual planning away days" where teams/departments convene to agree work priorities, and decide how to better manage work demands and what support structures need to be put place for a year to maintain staff wellbeing
 - vii. creating a departmental blog to share and comment on initiatives within the department and wider industry sector
 - viii. introducing "promotion support sessions" facilitated by line managers and teams heads
 - ix. introducing "interview practice sessions" and career profiling within teams/departments using the new Development Discussion initiative
 - x. preparing a business case for consideration and having ongoing discussions with LFB's Property department to install better, zonal lighting with dimmer facilities to improve the workspace environment in an office space (basement level) that has low levels of natural light

Future wellbeing arrangements

7. Officers are currently considering whether to establish a dedicated wellbeing team.
8. This aligns with the feedback received from the GLAs London Healthy Workplace Charter verification panel about LFBs submission at both *Achievement* and *Excellence* accreditation levels; that there was a need to have dedicated and clearly identifiable resources to progress wellbeing matters.

Head of Legal and Democratic Services comments

9. The Head of Legal and Democratic Services has reviewed this report and has no comments.

Director of Finance and Contractual Services comments

10. The Director of Finance and Contractual Service has reviewed this report and has no comments

Environmental implications

11. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Equalities implications

12. LFBs wellbeing approach is aligned to the organisation's wider equalities agenda, providing advice and services to support the psychological, physical and social wellbeing of all staff. Officers will continue to work with trade unions, support groups and its occupational health provider to promote the benefits of wellbeing, and will look to expand and introduce new initiatives to address organisational attendance issues.

Staff Side consultations undertaken

13. Trade Unions continue to be involved in matters that relate to people practices.

List of Appendices to this report:

None

LOCAL GOVERNMENT (ACCESS TO INFORMATION) ACT 1985	
List of background documents None	
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