Kingskerswell Parish Council

Stress Management Policy

Date: 5th December 2024
Agreed at Full Council Meeting: 6th January 2025

Introduction

The Parish Council recognises the importance of promoting a healthy and supportive working environment. Stress, if not managed, can impact the well-being of employees, councillors, and the effective functioning of the council. This policy sets out the Parish Council's commitment to identifying, managing, and mitigating stress in the workplace.

Purpose

The purpose of this policy is to:

- Promote awareness and understanding of stress.
- Identify potential sources of stress and take proactive steps to address them.
- Provide support for employees and councillors experiencing stress.
- Foster a culture of openness where stress-related issues can be discussed without stigma.

Scope

This policy applies to all employees, councillors, and volunteers working for or with the Parish Council.

Definition of Stress

Stress is defined as the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or demands placed on them. While some pressure can be motivating, excessive pressure can lead to stress that affects physical and mental health.

Responsibilities

- **The Parish Council:**
  - Ensure that resources are allocated to manage stress effectively.
  - Monitor workloads and working conditions to reduce potential stressors.
  - Regularly review workplace practices and make necessary adjustments.
- **Managers/Clerk:**
  - Identify early signs of stress among employees or councillors.
  - Provide a supportive environment and encourage open communication.
  - Implement changes to reduce stress where possible.
  - Facilitate access to support services when required.
- **Employees and Councillors:**
  - Take reasonable care of their own health and well-being.
  - Raise concerns about stress with the Clerk or Chair promptly.
  - Seek support when experiencing stress.

Sources of Stress

Common causes of workplace stress include:

- Excessive workload or unrealistic deadlines.
- Lack of clarity in roles or responsibilities.
- Interpersonal conflicts or bullying.
- Insufficient resources or support.

The Parish Council will proactively monitor and address these issues through regular reviews and discussions.

Support Available

The Parish Council will:

- Provide access to an Employee Assistance Programme (if available).
- Encourage the use of flexible working arrangements where appropriate.
- Organize stress awareness and management training.
- Offer regular appraisals and feedback sessions.

Procedure for Raising Concerns

1. If an individual feels stressed, they should report their concerns to the Clerk (or the Chair if the Clerk is the subject of concern).
2. The issue will be handled confidentially and sensitively.
3. An action plan will be developed to address the sources of stress and provide support.
4. Progress will be monitored regularly.

Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed periodically to ensure it remains effective and up to date. Feedback from employees, councillors, and other stakeholders will be considered during the review process.

Policy Approval

This Stress Management Policy was adopted by the Parish Council on 6th January 2025.