

Subject:	MENOPAUSE POLICY
Meeting and Date:	General Purposes Committee – 11th December 2023
Report of:	Nadeem Aziz, Head of Paid Service
Classification:	Unrestricted
Purpose of the report:	To consider the adoption of a new menopause policy
Recommendation:	That the Committee: Approves the new Menopause Policy to take effect from 1 st January 2024

1. Summary

1.1 This report seeks member approval for the adoption of a new menopause policy, applicable to all Dover District Council (the Council) employees, workers and volunteers.

2. Introduction and Background

2.1 The Council recognise there is now a need to implement a policy relating to Menopause, which includes definitions as to what menopause is, with the intention to enable and encourage open conversations, support and adjustments between employees and managers.

2.2 The Council is seeing an increasing number of employment relations performance, absence and grievance cases where menopausal symptoms have been cited as a contributing factor.

2.3 The policy will be compliant with employment law and be consistent with ACAS guidance.

2.4 This policy is not a standalone initiative and would be implemented alongside a continuation of wellbeing resources and communications to encourage proactive good health across the Council and to increase awareness of menopause.

2.5 The Council do not currently have a menopause policy, anyone requiring support or managing those requiring support must refer to less specific policies that may not be entirely suitable.

2.6 Absence due to menopausal symptoms is currently managed through absence management policies and procedures and will continue to be managed that way.

2.7 Barriers to managing menopausal symptoms and menopausal related absence can be evaluated by five key areas:

- Complicated absence management policies
- Manager confidence
- Manager education
- Perceived risks of discrimination
- Lack of clarity or awareness about menopausal symptoms

2.8 This policy is intended to resolve some of these prevalent issues including, de-mystifying menopause, increasing manager confidence and decisiveness and reducing the risks associated with inconsistent approaches to Menopause support across the council.

3. Identification of Options

3.1 Option 1 - The committee agree the adoption of the new menopause policy from 1st January 2024.

3.2 Option 2 - The committee decline the new menopause policy and instead ask the Head of Paid Service to consider other policy options.

3.3 Option 3 - The committee decline the new menopause policy.

4. **Evaluation of Options**

For the reasons set out in this report, option 1, agree the adoption of the new menopause policy from 1st January 2024 is the recommended option.

5. **Resource Implications**

5.1 There is potential for an increase in managers managing and supporting those experiencing menopausal symptoms. Initially this could create greater demand for HR advisory services, however, it is not expected that this would have a significant impact on the current or future budget for the Council.

6. **Corporate Implications**

6.1 Comment from Section 151 Officer:

The s151 officer has been consulted in the production of this report and has no additional comments (MD).

6.2 Comment from Solicitor to the Council:

The Solicitor to the Council has been consulted in the preparation of this report and has no further comment to add.

6.3 Comment from Equalities Officer:

The Equality Officer has been consulted in the preparation of this report and it has been identified that an equality impact assessment would be beneficial in support of the delivery of the new Menopause Policy. The adoption of a new Menopause Policy supports the objectives of the Council's Equality Policy and is to be welcomed. In discharging their duties members are required to comply with the public sector equality duty as set out in Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010
<http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2010/15/section/149>

7. **Appendices**

7.1 1. Draft menopause policy

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