



Glasgow City Council

**Wellbeing, Equalities, Communities, Culture
and Engagement City Policy Committee**

Report by Christine Brown, Head of Human Resources

Item 4

6th March 2025

**Contact: [Thom Hughes](#), HR Manager -Corporate or [Kirsty Jordan](#), HR
Officer -Corporate**

Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024 Update

Purpose of Report:

To provide the committee with a final update on the Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2021-24.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that the committee

- (1) Note the contents of this report.
- (2) Support the continued delivery of council staff health and wellbeing activities.
- (3) Note that an update on our future Staff Health & Wellbeing approach will be included in a future report on the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025 - 2029.

Ward No(s):

Citywide: ✓

Local member(s) advised: Yes ☐ No ☐ consulted: Yes ☐ No ☐

1 Background

- 1.1 The Council's Staff Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2021-2024) supports the Strategic Plan, Grand Challenge 4, Mission 3 - to enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities. The Strategy also aligns with Outcome 10 of the Council's Family Equality Outcomes 2021-2025 - to ensure that staff are supported to have improved mental and physical health and wellbeing. The Strategy is supported by a political commitment and annual budget of £20K.
- 1.2 This report follows two previous updates provided to committee members in September 2022 and February 2024, and encompasses this third and final update on key activities undertaken across the three-year lifespan of the Strategy.
- 1.3 In section two we have listed the key activities and outcomes under the following strategy aims:
 1. Create a positive and healthy working environment, engaging in the Healthy Working Lives framework;
 2. Deliver the necessary health, safety, and wellbeing factors relevant to a physically and psychologically safe workplace;
 3. Engage all staff in easy to access opportunities and resources to champion their own health and wellbeing;
 4. Work with our expert partners to continually improve our arrangements;
 5. Meet the health and wellbeing needs of our diverse workforce;
 6. Support staff attendance using our workforce data to design meaningful staff supports that make a difference.

2 Key activities and outcomes

- 2.1 ***Aim 1 - Create a positive and healthy working environment, engaging in the Healthy Working Lives (HWL) framework.***
- 2.2 HWL is the national best practice framework for organisational health and wellbeing, delivered by Public Health Scotland in partnership with NHS Scotland. The Council successfully maintained the HWL 'Gold' level award until the award's conclusion in April 2023. Despite the award process coming to an end, Council activity continues to align to the highest Gold level standards of the best practice framework. Activities undertaken include:
 - Delivery of the annual corporate inclusion calendar and communication plan - promoting national health awareness campaigns, information, resources, opportunities and support to empower staff to champion their own health and wellbeing;
 - Monthly programme of health and wellbeing awareness sessions, aligned to the inclusion calendar, and supported by expert partners including People Asset Management (PAM) (the Council's Occupational Health & Employee Assistance Provider), Prostate Scotland, Bowel Cancer

Scotland, MacMillan Cancer Support, Able Futures, Employers Network for Equality & Inclusion (ENEI), Scottish Action for Mental Health (SAMH), Greater Glasgow & Clyde NHS (GGC NHS) and Glasgow City HSCP (GCHSCP);

- Onsite health and wellbeing roadshows, engaging around 700 staff across various Council services and sites. Each event was tailored to meet local staff needs and asks, and facilitated by service staff with support from expert partners including PAM, Glasgow Alcohol and Drug Service, Gamblers Anonymous, Home Energy Scotland, Step Change Debt Charity, Glasgow Credit Union, and Hospital Saturday Fund;
- Facilitation of regular wellbeing sessions from our city centre wellbeing rooms following their re-opening after COVID-19, enabling office-based staff to come together and be physically active at work with lunch time table tennis, yoga and seated massage sessions - resulting in over 670 participants;
- Bespoke and national 6-week Step Count Challenges, delivered in partnership with 'Paths for All', enabling around 300 staff to increase their daily exercise to improve their physical and mental wellbeing;
- Staff health checks, delivered by PAM initially to 115 staff in NRS, which resulted in almost half of participants being referred to their GP due to high blood pressure or cholesterol results - proving to be a positive means for delivering direct health advice to staff and early interventions to improve long term health outcomes. As a result, health check clinics delivered corporately with over 200 staff attending in 2024;
- Regular promotion of staff discounts including preferential rates for Glasgow Club gym membership and discounted fruit and vegetables through City Markets, encouraging healthy eating options at work and at home;
- Provision of cost of living support including the development of a dedicated financial wellbeing page on our staff webpages, a help sheet signposting staff to trusted support, and financial wellbeing webinars delivered in partnership with Money Advice Scotland.

2.3 *Aim 2 - Deliver the necessary health, safety, and wellbeing factors relevant to a physically and psychologically safe workplace.*

2.3.1 Over 4,300 staff, managers, and HR representatives attended training as part of a tailored programme to support a psychologically safe workplace including:

- SAMH 'mental health in the workplace guide for managers', 'having mental health conversations', 'managing stress', and 'using wellness action plans';
- Cruse Scotland 'supporting bereavement friendly workplaces' training for managers on supporting their teams, and 'grief awareness' for staff; SafeTALK and ASIST suicide prevention training with GCHSCP;
- 'Compassionate management' training designed and delivered by our Corporate Organisational Development team to support managers to

respond compassionately to people management challenges along with 'Building resilience' and 'managing emotional triggers' training delivered by PAM;

- Over 4,000 staff have completed the Scottish Government's National Trauma training on our GOLD eLearning platform as part of our organisational commitment to develop a trauma informed and responsive workforce;
- NRS specific activity included the delivery of Accredited Scottish Mental Health First Aid training to over 40 managers and HR colleagues, promoting named mental health first aid contacts across key operational areas of the service. As recommended by MIND Mental Health Charity, Wellness Action Plans (WAP) were rolled out across the service. 120 managers and supervisors were trained in using the WAP as a tool to help facilitate supportive wellbeing conversations with staff;
- Involvement in relevant national awareness campaigns such as: '*Time to Talk Day*' - led by our workplace partners See Me, to reduce mental health stigma and create an environment where staff can talk openly about mental health and feel empowered to seek help when they need it; and '*Confide in Someone*' - our internal campaign run throughout the year to raise awareness, highlight available support, and encourage staff to speak up and seek help if they are affected by Bullying & Harassment, Alcohol, Drug or Gambling related harms.

2.3.2 Feedback from participants of these activities has been very positive, indicating increased knowledge, skills and confidence in the proactive management of health and wellbeing at work.

2.4 ***Aim 3 - Engage all staff in easy to access opportunities and resources to champion their own health and wellbeing.***

2.4.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that health and wellbeing information, resources and support are accessible to all staff. Key resources have been developed and are hosted on the staff webpages so that they are available to staff at any time, and from any device with internet access. These include:

- A corporate health and wellbeing handbook, which brings together a wide range of recommended internal and external support options for staff, and can be referred to online from any device or printed and distributed to staff in hard copy format;
- Workforce wellbeing support webpages - providing a central online hub where staff can access resources and sign up for wellbeing training and activities at any time and from any device;
- A mental health signposting resource - developed and implemented in collaboration with corporate and local service communication teams. The signposting resource is equipped with QR code links to enable quick scan, fingertip access to recommended mental health support. The resource has been widely cascaded across all Council workplaces as posters, leaflet/ signposting sheets, digital screen notices, and also via our staff webpages;

- Use of corporate branded health and wellbeing collateral including QR code posters, digital screen notices, and Council IT screensavers to alert and link staff to recommended sources of support;
- Staff also now have free access to a new digital Wellbeing App, provided by PAM, and specifically tailored for staff to access a holistic range of wellbeing information, resources and support. To date, over 600 staff have downloaded the App, where they can create their own personalised wellbeing improvement plan and access this from any device at any time.

2.5 ***Aim 4 - Work with our expert partners to continually improve our arrangements.***

- 2.5.1 We have developed a collaborative approach to our activities, partnering with specialists in the field to ensure our approach is appropriate and that staff have access to specialist independent providers alongside our in-house activities. We have worked with the Scottish Government Health and Wellbeing Champions Network, the Supporting Mentally Healthy Workplaces: National Learning Network for Employers, the Health and Social Care Partnership Staff Mental Health Network, and the Glasgow City Suicide Prevention Partnership.
- 2.5.2 Pre 2023, our Occupational Health (OH) and Employee Assistance (EA) Services were provided by two separate organisations. Through the activity delivered as part of our Health & Wellbeing Strategy, we identified that this approach was causing challenges particularly where employees were requiring support from both OH and EA and the crossover between two organisations. We therefore decided when our contract was due for renewal in 2023, that we would procure one provider to deliver both OH and EAP. PAM were awarded the contract in April 2023 and deliver it through PAM OH and PAM Assist (EA). Whilst both are delivered separately where employees required both OH and EA provision, they receive a more informed, joined up service. This combined approach is also beneficial to our overall organisational approach to delivering our Health & Wellbeing Strategy.
- 2.5.3 Since the start of the new contract, there has been a steady increase in support being provided - from 180 incidences of staff support in the first months, rising steadily to reach a peak of 856 incidences in December 2023. By the end of 2024, there had been 7,538 management referrals to PAM OH, 4,125 health surveillance appointments, 4,970 physio appointments, and 14,935 flu vaccinations provided. PAM Assist statistics highlight mental health as the top reason for staff contacts each month, which correlates with our organisational absence statistics highlighting psychological absence as the biggest reason for both short and long-term staff absence. In 2024, results from clinical screening conducted before and after structured support show that, in 2024, recipients reported an average improvement of 54.4% in anxiety symptoms, and 54.7% in depression symptoms.
- 2.5.4 Following a Council-wide launch, we have continued to regularly promote the service through information sessions, roadshows, health checks, staff news, and through our employment policies and supporting guidance.

- 2.5.5 We have also worked in partnership with Able Futures who deliver the Access to Work mental health support service on behalf of the Department of Work and Pensions. The service offers 9-months of free, confidential, one-to-one, work-focused support for staff with mild to moderate mental health challenges to help them stay well and in work.
- 2.5.6 The service has been promoted through a series of information sessions and 'virtual appointment days', providing staff the opportunity to book a telephone appointment with a qualified mental health professional. Over 450 staff have been referred to Able Futures and we are hearing very positive feedback anecdotally from HR colleagues conducting absence case reviews and from staff stories during health and wellbeing roadshow engagement.
- 2.5.7 The Council has successfully maintained its status as an 'official workplace partner' of See Me in recognition of the good work done to reduce mental health stigma in the workplace, in line with the good practice indicators set out in the national 'See Me in Work' programme.
- 2.5.8 To support staff financial wellbeing, we continue to work in partnership with:
- Glasgow Credit Union (GCU): offering staff a range of financial benefits including low-cost loans, member discounts and competitive deals on mortgages and insurance. 6,478 staff are members;
 - Glasgow Helps: providing free information and advice on issues such as food, utilities, income maximisation, housing, homelessness and help direct staff to appropriate support in line with their needs;
 - Hospital Saturday Fund: who offer staff access to a health cash plan to help spread the cost of health care not covered free by the NHS;
 - MacMillan Cancer Support and the 'Improving the Cancer Journey' (ICJ) Service which is accessible to staff affected by cancer to get the support they need, whether it's financial, emotional, medical or practical.

2.6 ***Aim 5 - Meet the health and wellbeing needs of our diverse workforce***

- 2.6.1 During the course of our Strategy delivery, we have used data from our OH / EA providers and worked with our Equality Employment Networks and Trade Unions to understand and take action to meet the health and wellbeing needs of our diverse workforce. This has included:
- Updating our Alcohol & Drugs and Gambling Harms Support policies and co-signing the Employer's Charter with Unite in agreement to work together to support the health and wellbeing of staff experiencing gambling harms, to help reduce sickness and absence, and assist staff who want or need to change their relationship with gambling. Training activity and support was focused in NRS, where the workforce is predominantly male and at more risk than women of alcohol, drug and gambling related harm;
 - Delivering a programme of corporate facilitated Menopause Cafes to provide staff experiencing the menopause with a safe space to share their experiences, connect with people, and access support;
 - Promoting and signposting staff to the women's health platform on the NHS Inform website, which offers a wide range of information, advice and

resources on female-specific conditions that impact women throughout their lives, including menstruation, endometriosis and the menopause;

- Creating greater understanding of diversity in the workplace, fostering inclusivity and empathy through the delivery of regular sessions open to all staff including LGBTQ+ Awareness, ADHD Awareness, Menopause Awareness, and Race Awareness;
- Working with partners such as City of Glasgow College and GGC NHS to deliver training to managers including: creating inclusive and supportive spaces for LGBTQ+ staff, working and managing in a diverse environment, supporting staff with a disability, supporting staff with long-term health conditions, and supporting mental health in the workplace;
- Updating our corporate Carer's Guide, delivering information and support sessions for managers and staff, and PAM health checks specifically focused on supporting staff who are unpaid carers.

2.6.2 In March 2024, the Council was awarded 'Development' level accreditation in the Equally Safe at Work Accreditation Programme which has an aim to tackle sexual harassment, address inequalities, advance gender equality and prevent gender based violence. The Council is now working towards Bronze accreditation. This activity will make the workplace a safer, healthier place particularly for women and particularly in relation to mental health.

2.7 ***Aim 6 - Support staff attendance using our workforce data to design meaningful staff supports that make a difference.***

2.7.1 All corporate health and wellbeing activity is now closely linked to attendance data. Our Strategic Absence Management Forum and Business Intelligence team have worked to ensure that attendance statistics are available and reported consistently at a corporate and service level, whilst also enabling services to further analyse data. As part of our new contract with PAM we have worked with them to develop a suite of management information to understand our EA usage, activity is ongoing with them to revise the data received in relation to OH. Our corporate training programmes were informed by a training needs analysis, informed by this attendance data.

2.7.2 This refreshed approach to data use ensures that we better understand our attendance information to inform our overall health and wellbeing solutions and allows us to tailor requirements to service specific staff needs captured in service attendance management / Health & Wellbeing action plans.

2.7.3 A good example of this was the NRS People Project which delivered tailored solutions to drive cultural change and improve employee health and wellbeing. An update on this work was provided to committee on 10 August 2023 and can be viewed [here](#).

3. **Conclusion and Next Steps**

3.1 Significant activity has been delivered through our Health & Wellbeing Strategy 2021-2024 and feedback received from employees shows it has

assisted in driving cultural change within the organisation, delivering key activities as outlined in this report at a corporate and service specific level. The commitment to this strategy was particularly helpful in the organisations response and support provided to staff during the COVID19 Pandemic.

- 3.2 As mentioned earlier, the Health & Wellbeing Strategy forms part of our organisational Equality Outcomes 2021 - 25. In line with the requirements of the Equality Act 2010, the organisation is currently developing revised outcomes to cover the period 2025 - 2029. As part of this activity we are currently consulting with employees via survey and focus groups to fully understand their views in relation to the impact of the strategy. We are also conscious of the wider societal impact of the consistent rise in working-age health challenges prevalent across the UK, and are analysing the key drivers of this increase.
- 3.3 We envisage that we will continue to deliver our approach to Health & Wellbeing as has been detailed in this report, and ask for committee's commitment to that, and note that full details of our approach from April 2025 will be included in the organisational report on Equality Outcomes which will be presented to committee in due course.

4. Policy and Resource Implications

Resource Implications:

<i>Financial:</i>	Financial resources required are covered by agreed budgets
<i>Legal:</i>	N/A
<i>Personnel:</i>	N/A
<i>Procurement:</i>	N/A

Council Strategic Plan: Grand challenge 4: Enable staff to deliver essential services in a sustainable, innovative and efficient way for our communities.

Equality and Socio-Economic Impacts:

<i>Does the proposal support the Council's Equality Outcomes 2021-25? Please specify.</i>	Yes, it supports the Equality outcome number 10.
<i>What are the potential equality</i>	Positive Impact

impacts as a result of this report?

Please highlight if the policy/proposal will help address socio-economic disadvantage.

N/A

Climate Impacts:

Does the proposal support any Climate Plan actions? Please specify:

N/A

What are the potential climate impacts as a result of this proposal?

N/A

Will the proposal contribute to Glasgow's net zero carbon target?

N/A

Privacy and Data Protection Impacts:

Are there any potential data protection impacts as a result of this report

N/A

If Yes, please confirm that a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) has been carried out

5. Recommendations

- 1 Committee to note the contents of the report.
- 2 Committee to support the continued delivery of council staff health and wellbeing activities.
- 3 Committee to note that an update on our future Staff Health & Wellbeing approach will be included in a future report on the Council's Equality Outcomes 2025 - 2029.