



**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

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To: Councillors Morgan (Chair), Boldrin (Vice-Chair), Barkley, B. Gray, Poland, Shepherd and Snartt (For attention)

All other members of the Council  
(For information)

You are requested to attend the meeting of the Personnel Committee to be held in Committee Room 1, at the Council Offices, Southfields, Loughborough on Tuesday, 28th March 2023 at 6.00 pm for the following business.

Chief Executive

Southfields  
Loughborough

20th March 2023

**AGENDA**

1. APOLOGIES
2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING 3 - 6

To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 20th December 2022.

3. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS, AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

For information, disclosable pecuniary interests and registrable interests relate to entries that are included, or should be included, on a councillor's register of interest. Non-registrable interests relate to any other matters.

4. QUESTIONS UNDER COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 12.8

No questions were submitted.

5. GENDER PAY GAP AS AT 31ST MARCH 2022

7 - 17

Report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Contracts.

6. MENOPAUSE GUIDANCE – ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS UPDATE

18 - 30

Report of the Director of Finance, Governance and Contracts.

**FUTURE MEETING DATES**

Please note further meetings of the Committee for 2023-24 are scheduled as follows:

13th June 2023

10th October 2023

19th December 2023

26th March 2024

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE 20TH DECEMBER 2022

PRESENT: The Chair (Councillor Morgan)  
Councillors Gerrard, A. Gray, B. Gray, Lowe,  
Shepherd and Snartt

Director Finance, Governance and Contracts  
Charnwood HR Manager  
Senior HR Advisor  
Learning and Organisational Development  
Coordinator  
Democratic Services Officer (NC)

APOLOGIES: Councillor Boldrin, Barkley and Poland

The Chair stated that the meeting would be recorded and the sound recording subsequently made available via the Council's website. He also advised that, under the Openness of Local Government Bodies Regulations 2014, other people may film, record, tweet or blog from this meeting, and the use of any such images or sound recordings was not under the Council's control.

### 12. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st November 2022 was confirmed as a correct record and signed.

### 13. DISCLOSURES OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS, AND OTHER REGISTRABLE AND NON-REGISTRABLE INTERESTS

Councillor Snartt declared an interest for item 6, Veterans and Reservists – Armed Forces Covenant Policy Development as a former member of the Armed Services.

### 14. QUESTIONS UNDER COMMITTEE PROCEDURES 12.8

No questions had been submitted.

### 15. APPRENTICESHIP REPORTING UPDATE - 1ST APRIL TO 31ST MARCH 2022

A report of the Director, Finance, Governance and Contracts was submitted to report the findings of the apprenticeship scheme (item 5 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

The Learning and Organisational Development Coordinator provided a brief overview and clarified that central Government did not issue penalties to Authorities who did not meet the targets. The report documented data required by the Government from April 2021 when the impact of the pandemic was evident. but it was recognised that since then the impact had lessened as supported by increased new apprenticeship opportunities.

Members discussed whether apprenticeships could be utilised in hard-to-fill posts where it was challenging for the Council to recruit and retain staff and how existing staff could be supported to further develop their careers.

## **RESOLVED**

1. that the findings of the apprenticeship reporting be noted by the Personnel Committee;
2. that further information be provided at the next update to the Committee of the apprenticeship scheme, this to include more detail on how the scheme was applied in Charnwood Borough Council and how individuals were benefitting.

### Reasons

1. The Public Sector Apprenticeship Targets Regulations 2017 came into force on 31st March 2017. The regulations have been updated to reflect amendments made to the Public Sector Apprenticeship Targets (Amendment) Regulations 2021, which came into force on 1st April 2021. All public bodies with 250 or more staff in England as of 31st March have a target to employ an average of at least 2.3% of their staff as new apprentice starts over the period of 1st April 2021 to 31st March 2022. Bodies in scope must have regard to the target and should therefore actively consider apprenticeships either for new recruits or as part of career development for existing staff. Apprentices are only considered as “new apprentices” who will count towards the target, in the year in which they begin their apprenticeship.
2. The Committee considered further detailed information would support its consideration of this matter.

## 16. VETERANS AND RESERVISTS - ARMED FORCES COVENANT POLICY DEVELOPMENT

A report of the Director, Finance, Governance and Contracts was submitted to agree proposals for the Armed Forces Covenant Policy, (item 6 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

Members welcomed the proposals, with particular reference to the inclusion of spouses and civil partners of current serving personnel in the Guaranteed Interview Scheme.

**RESOLVED** that the amendments are made to the Guaranteed Interview Scheme, Leave Arrangements Policy (page 18/19) and the recruitment and Selection Policy (page 7) to reflect the agreement to the proposal as set out in this report.

### Reason

The Armed Forces Community Covenant Development Officer has raised new policy suggestions to further demonstrate the Council’s commitment to the armed forces community. These further commitments include greater emphasis and provisions for

reservists and spouses and civil partners of current service personnel and offering further unpaid leave for training / volunteering opportunities.

17. RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION POLICY

A report of the Director, Finance, Governance and Contracts was submitted seeking approval of the Recruitment and Retention Policy (item 7 on the agenda filed with these minutes).

It was clarified that if incentives were offered to recruit staff, existing staff in identical roles would also receive the same financial incentive and that apprentices would not be included in the Council's pension scheme whilst an apprentice.

Members discussed approaches to recruiting in the Planning Service, the inclusion of non-financial incentives, the length of time the employee was required to remain employed in order to not have to repay the financial incentive and proposed improvements to recruitment processes.

**RESOLVED** that the Recruitment and Retention Incentives Policy is agreed, and the Market Premia Policy is deleted.

Reason

To provide a formal mechanism for the Council to offer incentives to recruit staff with the required skillset to meet the business needs. There are increasingly more challenges for the Council to attract and retain employees, therefore the need to consider the use of Recruitment and Retention Incentives for certain hard to fill posts has become a necessity.

18. PAY POLICY STATEMENT 2023/24

A report of the Director, Finance, Governance and Contracts was submitted seeking the Committee's approval of the Pay Policy statement covering the period 1st April 2023 to 31st March 2024.

During the consideration of this item it was noted that in the policy attached as an annex, there was a section on page 85 of the agenda pack that referenced the Market Premia Policy. This Policy had been approved for deletion by the Committee during its consideration of the above item 7 - Recruitment and Retention Policy, therefore the Pay Policy Statement would require updating before its submission to Full Council.

**RESOLVED** that the Personnel Committee approves the Pay Policy Statement for 2023/24, attached at Annex A, with agreed amendments to proceed to Full Council for formal approval and adoption.

Reason

To ensure that the Council meets its obligations under Section 38 of the Localism Act 2011.

Post meeting note: *the amendments to the Pay Policy Statement were agreed by the Committee after the meeting by email correspondence.*

NOTES:

1. No reference may be made to these minutes at the next ordinary Council meeting unless notice to that effect is given to the Democratic Services Manager by five members of the Council by noon on the fifth working day following publication of these minutes.
2. These minutes are subject to confirmation as a correct record at the next meeting of the Personnel Committee.

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

### Report of the Director Finance, Governance and Contracts

#### Part A

#### GENDER PAY GAP AS AT 31ST MARCH 2022

##### Purpose of Report

Personnel Committee to note the Council's Gender Pay Gap report based on the snapshot date of 31 March 2022 and agree the recommendations set out below.

##### Recommendation

That Personnel Committee note the details of the Gender Pay Gap report.

##### Reason

To note the information outlined within the Gender Pay Gap report as required under The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017. The Act requires public sector employers with 250 or more employees on the snapshot date of 31 March each year to carry out gender pay analysis and reporting.

##### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Government requires that gender pay is analysed and reported on each year. The information was issued to the Senior Leadership Team on 21st December 2022 and to the Joint Management & Trade Unions Meeting on 18th January 2023. This is the sixth annual Gender Pay Gap report produced by the Council.

##### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions

It is a requirement that the information is published on the website before 31<sup>st</sup> March each year. The gender pay gap data has been published in accordance with those requirements.

##### Report Implications

##### ***Financial Implications***

There are no immediate financial implications arising from this decision.

##### ***Risk Management***

There are no specific risks associated with this decision.

##### ***Equality and Diversity***

The Gender Pay Gap data analysis is considered against an action plan which has been established to put measures in place to address the issue of a gender pay gap.

**Climate Change and Carbon Impact**

None identified.

***Crime and Disorder***

None identified.

**Wards Affected**

Not applicable.

**Publicity Arrangements**

Not applicable.

***Consultations***

Not applicable

**Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Caring for the Environment	No
Healthy Communities	No
A Thriving Economy	No
Your Council	Yes

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: Gender Pay Gap Action Plan

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## Part B

### Background

#### **Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017**

The Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 requires public sector employers with 250 or more employees on the snapshot date of 31 March each given year, to carry out gender pay analysis and reporting.

The gender pay gap report must set out the Council's results in relation to:

<b>Mean Gender Pay Gap</b>	The difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full pay relevant employees and that of female full pay relevant employees
<b>Median Gender Pay Gap</b>	The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full pay relevant employees and that of female full pay relevant employees
<b>Mean Bonus Gap</b>	The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
<b>Median Bonus Gap</b>	The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees
<b>Bonus Proportions</b>	The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus during the relevant period
<b>Quartile Pay Bands</b>	The proportions of male and female full pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands

The Council is required to publish the results on our website by 31 March each year. In addition, the results must also be published on a specified government website.

The Government considers that the rate of progress in terms of closing the gender pay gap continues to be too slow and has committed to closing the gap within a generation. Gov.uk has outlined some potential actions for employers to consider.

The gender pay gap reporting requirements enable employers to compare the gender pay gap in its own organisation and look at ways to close the gap if an issue arises.

The data analysed relates to all "employees" of the Council and includes those under a contract of service, apprenticeship or a contract to do work personally. The analysis is based on all individual employees and not full-time equivalents. The pay is based on ordinary pay which includes basic pay (hourly rate), occupational pension benefits, contractual enhancements and sick pay. The hourly rate is used as it takes account of the fact that more men than women work full time. It excludes expenses, overtime pay, pay in lieu of leave, benefits in kind, redundancy pay and other payments transferable to termination.

## Gender Pay Gap Outcomes as at 31 March 2022

### Gender Pay Gap Analysis

The results of the 6 required calculations are outlined below, based on the data obtained for the snapshot date of 31 March 2022.

The Council employed 486 eligible individuals on the snapshot date. This is a drop from the previous period of 504 which was made up of 212 male employees and 292 female employees. It should be noted that 18 of these were casuals working on the snapshot date of 31 March 2022. All casual employees were in the lower quartile, 4 of which were male and 14 female. When split into gender the figures are as follows:

Gender	Number of Employees	Percentage Difference
Female	289	59%
Male	197	41%

### Mean Gender Pay Gap

The mean gender pay gap is the difference between the mean hourly rate of pay of male full pay relevant employees and that of female full pay relevant employees.

Gender	Hourly Rate	Percentage Difference for Gender Pay Gap
Female	£14.47	14.2%
Male	£16.87	

The average hourly rate of female employees' is 14.2% lower than male employees. The gap has increased from 12.9% as at 31 March 2021 with the mean hourly rate as at that date being £14.39 for females and £16.52 for males.

The mean is calculated by adding up all the relevant earnings of employees and dividing that figure by the number of employees. A mean average gives a good overall indication of the gender pay gap, but very large or small pay rates can "dominate" and distort the answer.

### Median Gender Pay Gap

The difference between the median hourly rate of pay of male full pay relevant employees and that of female full pay relevant employees.

Gender	Hourly Rate	Percentage Difference for Gender Pay Gap
Female	£13.10	14.1%
Male	£15.25	

The median hourly rate of female employees' is 14.1% lower than male employees. In accordance with the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings – Gender Pay Gap in the UK - Office for National Statistics (ONS) 2022 the longer-term trend of the gender pay

gap for all employees (full and part time) is 14.9%. Therefore, the Council’s median gender pay gap remains less than this national statistic.

Overall, this data shows that women earn 86p for every £1 that men earn when comparing median hourly wages.

**Mean Bonus Gap**

The difference between the mean bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees.

The Council does not consider that it pays bonus in accordance with the criteria set out and therefore reporting on this element is not applicable.

**Median Bonus Gap**

The difference between the median bonus pay paid to male relevant employees and that paid to female relevant employees.

The Council does not consider that it pays bonus in accordance with the criteria set out and therefore reporting on this element is not applicable.

**Bonus Proportions**

The proportions of male and female relevant employees who were paid bonus during the relevant period.

The Council does not consider that it pays bonus in accordance with the criteria set out and therefore reporting on this element is not applicable.

**Quartile Pay Bands**

The proportions of male and female full pay relevant employees in the lower, lower middle, upper middle and upper quartile pay bands.

Quartile	Gender	Number of Employees	Percentage of Total	Percentage in Each Quartile
Upper Quartile	Male	69	14%	56.5%
	Female	53	11%	43.5%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Upper Middle Quartile	Male	48	10%	40%
	Female	73	15%	60%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Lower Middle Quartile	Male	43	9%	35%
	Female	79	16%	65%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>122</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>
Lower Quartile	Male	37	8%	30.5%
	Female	84	17%	69.5%
	<i>Total</i>	<i>121</i>	<i>25%</i>	<i>100%</i>

There is a relatively even split of males and females in the Upper Quartile and a greater differential in all other quartiles. The data highlights that females have increased in the upper middle quartile, but reduced marginally in all other quartiles. Male employees have remained the same in the upper quartile, decreased most notably in the upper middle quartile and then decreased slightly in the lower quartiles. The largest change as reflected above is in the upper middle quartile with females increasing by 5 and males reducing by 10.

The Upper Middle Quartile, Lower Middle Quartile and Lower Quartile outline larger differences in the number of male and female employees in those categories. This is consistent with the previous reporting years, particularly with the Lower Middle Quartile and Lower Quartile. The headcount of the Council has reduced from 504 to 486 for this reporting period and the figures in the quartiles reflect this.

The proportion of males and females in the upper quartile has remained the same as in the previous reporting year, with 14% of that quartile being male and 11% female. This is despite there being less females in the upper quartile than the previous reporting period, but the calculation is based on a smaller headcount than in that period. The percentages in the lower middle quartile and the lower quartile have remained the same as the previous reporting year. . The greatest change has been in the upper middle quartile as females have increased from 13.5% to 15% and males have reduced from 11.5% to 10% of the total workforce.

Overall, females occupy 43.5% of the highest paid jobs and 69.5% of the lowest paid jobs.

**Analysis of Full and Part Time Employees in each Quartile**

Gender.	Full Time		Part Time		Full Total	Part Time		Part Total	Grand Total		
	Female	%	Male	%		Female	%			Male	%
UPPER QUARTILE	35	28.5%	63	51.5%	98	18	15%	6	5%	24	122
UPPER MIDDLE QUARTILE	52	43%	44	36%	96	21	17.5%	4	3.5%	25	121
LOWER MIDDLE QUARTILE	39	32%	32	26%	71	40	33%	11	9%	51	122
LOWER QUARTILE	19	15.5%	18	15%	37	65	54%	19	15.5%	84	121
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>145</b>		<b>157</b>		<b>302</b>	<b>144</b>		<b>40</b>		<b>184</b>	<b>486</b>

In order to analyse the quartiles further, an additional piece of reporting was conducted into the breakdown of full and part time staff, by gender, in each quartile as evidenced in the table above.

All quartiles show that females significantly occupy more part time posts than male employees. In the lower and lower middle quartiles there are 105 part time female employees and 30 part time male employees.

The table further demonstrates that there is a greater proportion of full-time males in the upper quartile (63 males and 35 females). This is in line with last years reporting data. In the upper middle quartile the number of full time male employees has

decreased from 54 to 44 and the number of full time female employees has increased from 46 to 52.

Overall there are fewer male employees (197) than female employees (289). The calculations for the gender pay gap do not require an employer to distinguish between full time and part time employees. However, an analysis of this data is helpful in understanding the pattern of employment within the figures and how this may impact upon the gender pay gap as outlined above.

## Findings

The findings of the data analysed as at 31 March 2022 again show that there are groups who would typically fall within the lower middle quartiles (plumber, electrician, gas fitter, joiner) who receive enhancements, such as standby allowance, that is resulting in them falling in the upper quartiles. These payments increase the overall hourly rate of those in receipt of the enhancements. The key areas highlighted are traditionally male dominated. Despite openly advertising positions, the Council has struggled to recruit female employees in these areas.

Analysing the data in more detail, the proportion of males and females in the upper quartile has remained the same as in the previous reporting year, with 14% of that quartile being male and 11% female. This is despite there being less females in the upper quartile than the previous reporting period, but the calculation is based on a smaller headcount than in that period. The percentages in the lower middle quartile and the lower quartile have also remained the same as the previous reporting year. The greatest change has been in the upper middle quartile as females have increased from 13.5% to 15% and males have reduced from 11.5% to 10% of the total workforce.

Whilst the percentage changes are marginal, compared to the previous reporting period there are 4 less females in the upper quartile and 5 more in the upper middle quartile. The number of males remains the same in the upper quartile and 10 less males in the upper middle quartile. There are 5 more females in the lower and lower middle quartiles and 5 less males. It should be noted that very large or small pay rates within a quartile can “dominate” the overall gender pay gap and have an impact on that figure.

The data also shows us that females occupy 43.5% of the highest paid jobs and 69.5% of the lowest paid jobs.

There are also significantly more part time female employees in the lower quartiles (105 part time females and 30 part time males). The upper quartile shows the biggest differential with a greater proportion of full time male employees (63 full time males compared to 35 full time females). There has been a change in the upper middle quartile as there are now more full time female employees at 52 than full time male employees at 44. In the last reporting period there were 46 full time females and 54 full time males. Once again, this confirms that there has been a greater reduction in full time males in the upper middle quartile. The data shows that when looking at a comparison of the the most populated quartile, there are 63 full time males in the upper quartile and 65 part time females in the lower quartile. This could show that part time working has an impact on the figures alongside the impact of very high and low pay rates within those quartiles.

In terms of the quartiles, it should be noted that the pay grades do not fit neatly into each quartile. In order to establish each quartile, the total number of full pay relevant employees (not the pay bands) was split into four equal parts. Therefore, this means that grades may appear in more than one quartile. Additionally, factors such as enhancements can increase an individual's position within the quartiles from a lower quartile to a higher quartile.

There continue to be more female and part time employees on the lower pay scales and, in general, the posts that they occupy do not require them to undertake the duties that some other posts receive enhancements for.

Essential car user allowance is aligned to a number of posts within the Council, with those employees receiving a monthly lump sum. The essential car user lump sum is increasing some employees' salaries which is placing them in a higher quartile. As outlined earlier, the increase is more significant for part time employees as the lump sum amount was not pro-rated in this reporting period.

Charnwood Borough Council is committed to the principle of equal opportunities and equal treatment for all employees, regardless of sex, race, religion or belief, age, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy/maternity, sexual orientation, gender reassignment or disability. Employees are paid equally for the same or equivalent work and alongside its policies and working practices, the Council:

- carries out Equal Pay Audits at regular intervals
- evaluates posts through an agreed job evaluation process
- analyses gender pay gap information and considers approaches to closing the gap.

Overall it is considered that the Council has a good representation of male and female employees at senior level. The majority of Council employees are female with 145 full time and 144 part time. There are a greater number of full-time males at 157 but significantly less part time males at 40.

As in the previous year's the information analysed indicates that the gender pay gap does not stem from paying men and women differently for the same or equivalent work. The gender pay gap appears to relate to factors such as the occupation that men and women choose to undertake within the organisation, salaries that these roles attract and the proportion of men and women working part time or full time.

However, a range of enhancements have had an impact upon the results within the quartiles and these could be considered to have had an impact upon the results between male and female employees.

There has been a review of the Gender Pay Gap Action Plan attached at Appendix A. This was undertaken by the Equalities Group and submitted to Personnel Committee for comments in July of this year. The action plan sets out key objectives to improve the gender pay gap including:

- promoting gender representation throughout the recruitment process

- promoting opportunities to support progression
- raising confidence in applicants to apply for positions
- monitoring recruitment and selection promotions within the council
- monitoring feedback from staff exiting the organisation
- gaining feedback on gender balance
- monitoring the gender pattern of take up of agile working opportunities, and
- promoting a more consistent approach to flexible working across the council.

The action plan will remain under review and it is hoped the actions will lead to a reduction in the gender pay gap.

The Council implemented an Agile Working Policy effective from 1 April 2021. This was developed to reflect the change in the way of working; with the need for greater flexibility and a further need to attract and retain employees. Over time we will be better able to analyse the impact that this may have had on the gender pay gap.

A review of the Council's recruitment and selection process is being progressed as part of a working group. Part of the considerations of that review are to identify ways in which we can attract a greater range of candidates to our posts. Moving forward it is hoped that this can assist in helping with our gender pay gap.

It should be noted that the Council continues to have a gender pay gap percentage that is lower than the national statistic as set out in section 2.3 of this report.

### Appendices

#### Gender Pay Gap Action Plan

## Gender Pay Gap Action Plan – 2022/23

### DRAFT 2022/23 Gender Pay Action Plan

#### 1. Review of recruitment, selection, and promotion of opportunities for all

Objective	Action	Responsibility	Monitoring Date	Completion Date
1.1 Promote gender representation throughout the recruitment process.	1.1.1 Encourage female / male applicants in roles that have gender under-representation. Including a review of the language in our adverts to ensure that there is no gender bias and promote a focus on the values of the organisation.	Recruiting Managers / Human Resource	<b>October 2022 &amp; Mar 2023 Monitor 6 monthly</b>	<b>March 2023</b>
	1.1.2 Managers to encourage internal recruitment to support progression whilst also advertising externally.	Recruiting Managers	<b>October 2022 &amp; Mar 2023 Monitor 6 monthly</b>	<b>March 2023</b>
	1.1.3 Review recruitment job profiles, including job descriptions, person specifications, language, and criteria.	Recruitment Project Team	<b>December 2022</b>	<b>December 2022</b>
1.2 Promote opportunities to support progression.  Raise confidence in applicants to apply for positions.	1.2.1 Raise awareness of shadowing and mentoring opportunities. Including both formal schemes (District scheme) and informal channels. Review opportunities to introduce a workplace buddy scheme to support internal progression.	Learning and Development	<b>January 2023</b>	<b>September 2022</b>
	1.2.2 Investigate how we promote vacancies including use of video and media content to promote CBC and offer insight into organisational make up.	Recruiting Managers / Communications Team	<b>October 2022 &amp; Mar 2023 Monitor 6 monthly</b>	<b>March 2023</b>



## Gender Pay Gap Action Plan – 2022/23

### 2. Data collection / monitoring to address areas for improvement

Objective		Action		Responsibility	Monitoring Date	Completion Date
2.1	Monitor recruitment and selection promotions within the council.	2.1.1	Seek and analyse recruitment and selection data by age and gender on an annual basis and share these findings with Personnel Committee	Human Resources / Organisational Change Officer	June, Sept, Dec & Mar Quarterly monitoring	April 2023
2.2	Monitor feedback from staff exiting the organisation	2.2.1	Analysis of feedback through the exit interview process, including additional questions in exit interview template regarding gender.	Learning and Development	June, Sept, Dec & Mar Quarterly monitoring	April 2023
2.3	Gain feedback on gender balance.	2.4.1.	Annual survey to women to seek feedback on working for CBC, followed by a review of feedback to analyse results	Communication Team / Organisational Change Officer	Annual feedback	April 2023

### 3. Improve workspace flexibility for men and women

Objective		Action		Responsibility	Monitoring Date	Completion Date
3.1	Monitor the gender pattern of take up of agile working opportunities.	3.1.1	Annual agile working survey to seek feedback on agile working plans and policy. Analyse results and challenge perceived inconsistencies.	Learning and Development	October 2022 & Mar 2023 Monitor 6 monthly	April 2023
		3.1.2.	Promote non-monetary initiatives and flexible working arrangements to staff.	Human Resources / Communications Team	October 2022 & Mar 2023 Monitor 6 monthly	April 2023
3.2	Promote a more consistent approach to flexible working across the Council	3.2.1	Encourage the uptake of shared parental leave.	Human Resources / Managers	Annual review	April 2023

## PERSONNEL COMMITTEE - TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

### Report of the Director Finance, Governance and Contracts

#### Part A

#### PC 28 MARCH 2022 ITEM MENOPAUSE GUIDANCE - ADVICE AND SUPPORT FOR EMPLOYEES AND MANAGERS

##### Purpose of Report

Personnel Committee to agree the proposed amendment to the Menopause Guidance – Advice and Support for Employees.

##### Recommendation

That Personnel Committee agree the proposed amendment to the Menopause Guidance – Advice and Support for Employees and Manager to reflect the Council's commitment to the Menopause Workplace Pledge.

##### Reason

To accurately reflect the commitments made by the Council in relation to the menopause and ensure this is clearly set out within the relevant council policy.

##### Policy Justification and Previous Decisions

The Menopause Guidance - Advice and Support for Employees and Managers and the Menopause Guidance: Summary Document were introduced by the Council in 2019. The proposed amendment to policy has been agreed by the Senior Leadership Team and the Joint Management & Trade Unions Meeting to accurately reflect the Council's commitment to the Menopause Workplace Pledge.

##### Implementation Timetable including Future Decisions

The decision will come into effect immediately following agreement at Personnel Committee and be published on the Council's intranet.

##### Report Implications

##### ***Financial Implications***

There are no financial implications associated with this decision.

##### ***Risk Management***

*There are no specific risks associated with this decision*

##### ***Equality and Diversity***

Demonstrates the Council's commitment to health and wellbeing issues associated with equality and diversity.

## **Climate Change and Carbon Impact**

None identified.

## ***Crime and Disorder***

None identified.

## **Wards Affected**

Not applicable.

## **Publicity Arrangements**

Not applicable.

## ***Consultations***

Not applicable.

## **Links to the Corporate Strategy**

Caring for the Environment	No
Healthy Communities	No
A Thriving Economy	No
Your Council	Yes

Key Decision: No

Background Papers: The Menopause Guidance - Advice and Support for Employees and Managers - (Page 5 – 6)

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## Part B

### Background

1. The Menopause Guidance - Advice and Support for Employees and Managers and the Menopause Guidance: Summary Document were introduced by the Council in 2019. The Council also has a workplace Health and Wellbeing group who provide further support relating to the menopause, including staff support and awareness initiatives.
2. The Council's current guidance and summary document is intended to:
  - Create an environment where staff can openly and supportively talk about menopause;
  - Help everyone to gain a greater understanding of what menopause is and the impact this can have on individuals;
  - Inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause and how they can support women in the workplace;
  - Ensure that women suffering with menopause symptoms feel confident to ask for support and any reasonable adjustments they require, so that they can continue to succeed in the workplace;
  - Assure women that Charnwood Borough Council is a responsible employer, committed to reasonably supporting their needs during the menopause.
3. In addition, it outlines further support, advice and links that are helpful for providing further support for anyone requiring information on menopause.

### Menopause Workplace Pledge and Policy Amendment

4. To further support the positive work the Council has undertaken in this area the Council has signed up to the Menopause Workplace Pledge. It is proposed that this is referenced in the Menopause Guidance – Advice and Support for Employees and Managers.

### Appendices

Menopause Guidance – Advice and Support for Employees and Managers.

## Menopause Guidance Advice and Support for Employees and Managers

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### Purpose

Charnwood Borough Council is committed to providing a supportive working environment for all staff and, as an inclusive employer, feels that the subject of menopause should not be viewed as ‘taboo’ or ‘hidden’. It is important for everyone to understand what menopause is, and to be able to talk about it openly, without embarrassment. This is not just an issue for women, men should be aware too.

The changing age of the UK’s workforce means that between 75-80% of menopausal women are in work. Research shows that most of these women are reluctant to discuss menopause-related health problems with their line manager, nor ask for the support or adjustments that they may need.

Through this Menopause Guidance document, the Council aims to:

- a) Create an environment where staff can openly and conformably engage in discussions about menopause.
- b) Ensure everyone understands what menopause is and can confidently discuss the subject, as appropriate.

- c) Inform managers about the potential symptoms of menopause, and how they can support women at work.
- d) Ensure that women experiencing menopause symptoms feel confident to ask for support and any reasonable adjustments they require, so that they can continue to succeed in the workplace.
- e) Assure women that Charnwood Borough Council is a responsible employer, committed to supporting their needs during menopause.

## What is Menopause?

Menopause is a natural part of every woman's life. It isn't always an easy transition, but with the right support it can be much better. Whilst every woman does not experience symptoms, supporting those who do will improve their experience at work.

- **Menopause** is defined as a biological stage in a woman's life that occurs when she stops menstruating and reaches the end of her natural reproductive life. Usually it is defined as having occurred when a woman has not had a period for twelve consecutive months (for women reaching menopause naturally). The average age for a woman to reach menopause is 51, however it can be earlier or later than this due to surgery, illness or other reasons. Around 10 in 100 women experience the menopause before 40 years of age.
- **Perimenopause** is the time leading up to menopause when a woman may experience changes, e.g. irregular periods or other menopausal symptoms. This can be years before menopause.
- **Postmenopause** is the time after menopause has occurred, starting when a woman has not had a period for 12 consecutive months.

## Symptoms of Menopause

It is important to note that not every woman will notice every symptom, or even need help or support. However, 75% of women do experience some symptoms and 25% could be classed as severe.

Most women will experience menopausal symptoms. Some of these can be quite severe and have a significant impact on your everyday activities. Menopausal symptoms can begin months or even years before your periods stop and last around four years after your last period, although some women experience them for much longer.

In some cases, Menopause can also increase a woman's risk of developing long term health risks, such as weak bones (osteoporosis), raised cholesterol and heart disease. In severe cases, the symptoms may have such an adverse impact that they may meet the legal definition of a disability.

Common symptoms can include:

- Hot flushes
- Heavy/ light periods
- Headaches
- Poor concentration
- Panic attacks
- Difficulty sleeping/ night sweats
- Low mood/ mood swings
- Loss of confidence
- Anxiety

The above is not an exhaustive list and women may experience other symptoms to those shown.

## Guidance for Managers

It is recognised that every woman is different, and it is therefore not feasible to set out a structured set of specific guidelines for managers to follow.

It is important that all managers are ready and willing to have open discussions about menopause, appreciating the personal nature of the conversations and treat any discussion sensitively and professionally. Managers may find it helpful to use the Confidential Discussion Template (see *Appendix A*) when having a one-to-one discussion with a member of the team, if it helps.

As a manager, when having a one-to-one discussion with a member of the team about these issues, please ensure that you:

- Allow adequate time to have the conversation.
- Find an appropriate room that is confidential.
- Consider how the symptoms listed in this guidance may be impacting on the employee.
- Encourage them to speak openly and honestly.
- Suggest ways in which they can be supported (i.e. reasonable adjustments).
- Agree actions and how to implement them. Ensure that this record is treated as confidential and is stored securely.
- Ensure all agreed adjustments are implemented without delay.
- Agree if other members of the team should be informed and by whom.
- Signpost to other sources of support e.g. GP, Employee Wellbeing Service, support groups, etc. (*see Page 7 for more information*).
- Ensure that designated time is allowed for a follow up meeting. Do not rely on quick queries during chance encounters in the corridor, toilet areas or breakout areas etc.

Where adjustments are unsuccessful, or if symptoms are proving more problematic it may be necessary to:

- Discuss a referral to Occupational Health for further advice.
- Refer the employee to Occupational Health.
- Review Occupational Health advice, and implement any recommendations, where reasonably practical.
- Update the action plan and continue to review.

## Guidance for Employees

Symptoms can manifest both physically and psychologically and support for women could be considered as detailed below (please note, this is not an exhaustive list). The type of support required will depend on you as an individual and will need a discussion between yourself and your manager. Some options for support could include the following:

### Hot flushes

- Request temperature control for the work area, such as a fan on your desk (where possible a USB connected desk fan to ensure environmentally friendly) or moving near a window or away from a heat source.
- Easy access to drinking water.
- Be allowed to adapt prescribed uniform e.g. by removing a jacket.
- Have access to a rest room for breaks if your work involves long periods of standing or sitting, or a quiet area if severe hot flushes need managing.

### Heavy/light periods

- Have permanent access to toilet facilities
- Request an extra uniform
- Ensure storage space available for a change of clothing i.e. pedestal under desk

### Headaches

- Have access to fresh drinking water
- Have a quiet space to work (where reasonable to the job role)
- Have noise reducing headphones to wear in open offices
- Have time out to take medication if needed

### Difficulty sleeping

- Ask to be considered for flexible working via the Flexible Working Policy, particularly if you are suffering from lack of sleep. You can find the policy [here](#).

### Low mood/ mood swings

- Agree time out from others when required without needing to ask for permission
- Identify a Buddy to talk to
- Identify a time out space to be able to go and 'clear your head'
- Contact AMICA (Confidential Employee Support) on: 0116 254 4538 or contact via the [online form](#)

### Loss of confidence

- Have regular quarterly reviews and one-to-ones
- Have regular protected time with your manager to discuss any issues
- Have agreed protected time to catch up with work

### Poor concentration



- Discuss if there are times of the day when your concentration is better or worse and adjust working pattern accordingly (where reasonable/ appropriate to the job role)
- Review task allocation and workload
- Be provided with books for lists, note board or other memory- assisting equipment
- Reduce interruptions
- Have agreement in place in an open office so that you are not disturbed
- Have agreed protected time to catch up with work

#### Anxiety

- Request counselling services provided by AMICA or through Occupational Health
- Identify a Buddy to talk to
- Be able to have time away from work to undertake relaxation techniques
- Undertake mindfulness exercises such as breathing exercises, gentle exercise (go for a walk)

#### Panic attacks

- Agree time out from others when required without needing to ask for permission
- Identify a Buddy
- Be able to have time away from their work to undertake relaxation techniques
- Undertake mindfulness exercises such as breathing exercises, gentle exercise (go for a walk)

#### *Visiting the GP*

Employees may find it helpful to keep a record of symptoms including the relevant dates, frequency and the impact they are having. If the symptoms are troubling or are being experienced under the age of 45 then advice should be sought from a GP.

It would be good to discuss with your manager if you have visited your GP, and the next step suggested, particularly if the areas of difficulty are sleeping, panic attacks or anxiety.

If you have visited your GP and are being supported by them, it may be useful at this point to undertake an Occupational Health appointment as they can give specific advice regarding the workplace. A GP can offer treatments and suggest lifestyle changes if there are severe menopausal symptoms that interfere with day-to-day life. This can cover a range of options such as Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT), or simply eating a balanced diet and exercise regularly. [Health tools- NHS Choices](#).

## menopause Workplace Pledge

### *Menopause Workplace Pledge*

The Council has signed up to the Menopause Workplace Pledge to demonstrate the positive action and commitment it has to anyone affected by the menopause. In signing the pledge the Council agrees to:

- Recognise that the menopause can be an issue in the workplace and women need support
- Talk openly, positively and respectfully about the menopause
- Actively support and inform our employees affected by the menopause.

## Menopause 'Buddies' and Support Group

### Menopause Buddies

These are members of staff who currently come along to the Menopause Support Group. They are happy to provide one-one-support, confidentially if needed, to any member of staff- man or woman.

### *Menopause Support Group (Hot Stuff)*

Some employees may find talking about their symptoms or just talking about how they are feeling, may help. The Council's Menopause Support Group (Hot Stuff) could be helpful or alternatively, talking to a Menopause Buddy (*see page 6 for further information*) could provide one-to-one support. These options are also available for male employees who wish to speak about a member of their family, a friend or a colleague.

If you would like to speak to someone, please contact [equality@charnwood.gov.uk](mailto:equality@charnwood.gov.uk).

## How to talk to the GP about Menopause

If you are suffering from menopausal symptoms to the point and it is getting in the way of enjoying your life, it's time to talk to the doctor.

Below are some helpful, straightforward tips to help you get the best from your appointment:

1. **Don't wait** - It's all too common for women to feel they must simply 'put up' with menopausal symptoms as part of life, but if they are affecting you then there are things that you can do, and support is available.
2. **Prepare for your appointment** - it's easier for your doctor to understand what is going on if you provide them with all the information. It may sound obvious, but blood tests to say where you are on the menopause transition are not always available or accurate, plus your hormones can fluctuate daily during this time. Your doctor will be thinking about what to recommend for you based on your symptoms. You may find it useful to visit the [NICE Guidelines](#) to support your preparation.
3. **Keep a list of your symptoms** - your menstrual cycle, hot flushes how you are feeling, and any changes you have noticed. Write them down and take them to your appointment. Your doctor will thank you for it and it's more likely that together you will find the right solution faster. Also, if you have any preference

about how you manage your symptoms tell them that too e.g. if you would like to try Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) or not.

4. **Ask the receptionist which doctor is best to talk to about the menopause** - they are often the font of all knowledge at a surgery and can help you find the best person to speak to- it might not be your usual GP, as a different GP may have had special training in the subject.
5. **Ask for a longer appointment** - If you do not think the standard appointment will be long enough then see if you can book a double appointment, quite a lot of surgeries will allow this.
6. **Don't be afraid to ask for a second opinion** - if you do not feel that you have received the help you need, ask to speak to someone else. Do not be put off, you know how you are feeling and how it's affecting you.
7. **Ask if there is a Menopause clinic in your area** - Occasionally, there are regional clinics specifically devoted to menopause. If there is one in your area and you think this will be helpful, ask for a referral.
8. **Take a friend or partner with you** - Your friend or partner will know how the symptoms are affecting you, they could support you at the appointment and find out how they can support you.

What to expect from your doctor:

They should	They should not
<p>✓ Talk about your lifestyle, how to manage symptoms and long-term health</p>	<p>✗ Put it down to 'that time of life'. Yes, menopause is a natural stage but please do not feel that means you should have to put up with every symptom without help.</p>
<p>✓ Provide advice on Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) and other non-medical options</p>	<p>✗ Say that they don't prescribe HRT. It is up to you what you want to try and for them to say whether it could be right for you, depending on your medical history.</p>
<p>✓ Talk to you about safety and effectiveness of any treatment</p>	<p>✗ Impose unnecessary time restrictions e.g. they will only prescribe this once or for a year or two. This is an ongoing conversation and if your symptoms persist, you will need help to manage them.</p>

## How can menopause symptoms be managed?

Not all women will require assistance to help alleviate their symptoms however where this is not the case, there are a number of treatment options available including:

- Medical options such as Hormone Replacement Therapy (HRT) - tablets, skin patches, gels and implants that relieve menopausal symptoms by replacing oestrogen. If HRT isn't suitable, other medications may be prescribed.
- Lifestyle changes such as eating a healthy, balanced diet, exercising regularly, stopping smoking, reducing alcohol and caffeine consumption, managing stress and having sufficient calcium and vitamin D. Employees should consider how their actions may be impacting on their symptoms (e.g. drinking alcohol may increase the likelihood of hot sweats and disturbed sleep, etc.);
- Complementary and herbal remedies such as St John's Wort, Milk Thistle, Sage and Red Clover. Advice should be sought from a [medical herbalist](#) before trying any of these remedies;
- Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) - a talking therapy that can help with low mood and anxiety;
- Self-help measures such as getting plenty of rest, acupuncture, aromatherapy, reflexology, talking to others about what they are experiencing, and practising relaxation techniques such as yoga, tai chi or mindfulness.

GP's can refer individuals to a menopause specialist if their symptoms don't improve after trying treatment or if the individual is unable to take HRT.

## Further support, advice & links

**AMICA Employee Support (confidential telephone helpline):** 0116 254 4538 (open 365 days a year from 8.30am to 8.30pm) or contact via the [online form](#)

**CBC Wellbeing Site:** Workplace support to improve your wellbeing.  
<http://intranet.charnwood.local/Wellbeing@Work/SitePages/Home.aspx>

**Charnwood Walking Maps:** To support your physical and mental wellbeing.  
<https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/walkingforhealth>

**Charnwood Adult Sport Activities:** To support your physical and mental wellbeing.  
[https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/adult\\_sports](https://www.charnwood.gov.uk/pages/adult_sports)

**Government Report:** researched by the University of Leicester School of Business.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/menopause-transition-effects-onwomens-economic-participation>

**Henpicked:** This provides an overview of menopause. You can find out more at <https://henpicked.net/>

**Information on hysterectomy:** This provides an insight into surgically induced menopause as a result of having a hysterectomy. You can find out more at <https://www.hysterectomy-association.org.uk>

**Menopause Matters:** An independent website providing up-to-date, accurate information about the menopause. <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>

**Menopause Information:** This provides an overview of menopause. You can find out more at <https://www.rcog.org.uk/en/patients/menopause/>

**National Institute of Medical Herbalists:** This provides advice on herbal remedies <http://www.nimh.org.uk/>

**NHS:** <https://www.nhs.uk/video/Pages/early-menopause.aspx>

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/Livewell/menopause/Pages/Menopausehome.aspx>

**NICE guidelines:** Impartial menopause information from National Institute for health and care excellence <https://www.nice.org.uk/guidance/ng23/ifp/chapter/Menopause>

**Premature Ovarian Insufficiency (POI):** POI Information and support on very early menopause. You can find out more at <https://www.daisynetwork.org.uk>

**Confidential Discussion Template**

<b>Employee:</b>
<b>Manager:</b>
<b>Date of meeting:</b>

<b>Summary of Discussion</b>
<b>Agreed Actions/ Adjustments</b>

<b>Date of review meeting (if needed):</b>
<b>Signed (Employee):</b>
<b>Signed (Manager):</b>