

Agenda item: OC 06/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 22nd May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update committee on issues relating to Operations, with some recommendations within.

RECOMMENDATION:

1. That committee notes the report.
2. That committee agrees to have a default position of taking action when officers / councillors are subject to physical abuse.
3. That committee agrees to a volunteer engagement programme.
4. That committee agrees to advertise for a new Landscape Operative.
5. That committee agrees to return the blue Landscape Truck, in line with the lease agreement.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

There are a few issues that it is important that committee is aware of, with decisions to be agreed on some areas.

- A Landscape Operative was physically assaulted whilst undertaking their duties, when a member of the public grabbed them by the lapels before running off. There appears to be no reason for this, with no precursor and, whilst there is no physical harm, incidents such as these take a toll on people. As a result of this, plus a previous incident where a member of the public was verbally abusive to both officers and members, it is **recommended that WCC reiterates its 'zero tolerance' policy, with agreement that 'banning' people from accessing buildings and / or people within WCC can be agreed as a last resort.**
- Both youth and community services would benefit from some additional volunteer capacity. To support this, it is recommended that WCC undertakes a 'volunteer drive' over the next couple of months (in the run up to summer). Youth for catering / food prep, plus youth clubs and Play Rangers, community for cooks and other roles. **It is recommended that WCC undertakes a volunteer drive over May – June.**
- Due to health issues, one of the landscape officers is unable to continue in the role and as a result, there is a vacancy for a landscape operative. Whilst there is a lack of clarity around what the future of the landscape provision is (due to delays in MKCC providing basic information), it is likely that by the time any process is underway, WCC will have this clarity. To ensure that delays are minimised, **it is recommended that WCC advertises for a Landscape Operative, on current pay scales and on a full time basis.** If the future delivery changes, this process can, if necessary, be halted.

- The blue landscape truck is now at the end of the lease extension and as such, **it is recommended that it is returned**. This needs to happen by early June to prevent any further charges.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

As mentioned in the main body of the report.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 07/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 22nd May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To propose utilising the new Employee Assistance Programme offered as a 'member benefit' by Bucks and Milton Keynes Association of Local Councils (BMKALC).

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That council agrees to join the scheme.**
- 2. That council agrees to fund the membership.**
- 3. That this is reviewed after one (1) year to assess benefit.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The Service

Is provided by TP Health t/a Optima. BMKALC has accessed this service through Optima's established Academies, Foundation & Voluntary Aided Schools offering.

The service provides:

- A totally confidential 24 hour/365 day phonenumber for employees and their immediate family living at the same address.
- Up to 6 counselling/support sessions are available for employees (not immediate family).
- A confidential 24 hour/365 day phone line for managers who want guidance on how to support their employees.
- A great website with resources, information and webchat functionality
- A pro-active app providing resources to help you with your specific health and well-being needs.

Support covering the following topics:

- Financial concerns, budgeting or debt issues
- Workplace issues
- Anxiety, stress or depression
- Physical and mental health concerns
- Emotional, relationships or family issues
- Bereavement support
- Legal issues – disputes with neighbours, retailers, energy suppliers etc.

Telephone Support

No matter what time of day or night, when life gets challenging, or you just simply need advice TP Health t/a Optima is there for you. Your calls will be answered by experienced, professional, and non-judgmental advisors that will provide you with peace of mind. The service is confidential, so you can have confidence that your conversations will remain between you and your advisor.

Workplace Wellbeing Website

The workplace wellbeing platform provides access to information about EAP services plus self-help content. It includes engaging materials covering Healthy Body, Healthy Mind, Healthy Life and Healthy Work - including videos, podcasts, articles and guides. There are two sub-sections within the platform, one for managers and the other for employees.

- The Managers section includes access to resources to support line managers in their role, including a well-being calendar, learning opportunities such as well-being workshops and information on specific health conditions.
- The Employees section includes access to resources including videos, podcasts, articles and guides and fast access to contracted services such as Optimise and the Employee Assistance Programme.

Optimise

The Optimise platform is a health and wellbeing app available to all employees. You will need to register when you first access the app and will be required to answer a series of lifestyle questions to create a Quealth score. The Quealth score will produce specific recommendations based on your answers.

- Healthy Days - see how positive lifestyle changes translate into life free of illness and disease or additional "healthy days".
- Wellbeing Resources - packed with articles, videos and podcasts, divided into eight broad lifestyle categories. Partnered with the Money Advice Service to bring you all their great tools, calculators and resources.
- Wearable Integration - integrates with leading fitness trackers and wearables to track and monitor your lifestyle data.
- Rewards & Recognition - smart onboarding, pulse surveys, status levels, badges, streaks, goals and more.
- Assessment Centre - a collection of mental, physical and financial health checks headlined by awarded-winning Quealth Score and the Big Five assessments.
- Personalised Dashboard - packed with suggestions and prompts, it provides direct links to all platform features.

The Costs

The charge is £8.10 per annum for each employee or sub contractor covered. This comprises the £6.75 base charge plus VAT. The full £8.10 will be forwarded to Optima. BMKALC does not levy any service charge. We can only provide this service to paid up members of BMKALC who have subscribed to the EAP scheme.

BMKALC's Role

BMKALC will be named as the customer with Optima, the provider. Member employees when using the service will identify themselves as BMKALC members. This ensures the confidentiality of the employee as they will not be identifying their employer. We will collate the details of the participating councils and number of employees to be covered, no personal names will be taken. This information will be forwarded to Optima and used by BMKALC for invoicing purposes. BMKALC will share posters/contact details etc with subscribing Councils to enable you to start using the service.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

For WCC, we have 31 employees (including all part time and 'bank' employees). At £8.10 per employee, this would cost £251.10 per year.

In the event that councillors are also able to be included, an additional £153.90 would be needed.

To include all officers and councillors of WCC would cost £405 per year.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

WCC current provides 'in person' counselling sessions for employees where appropriate. 6 sessions would cost between £240 - £300. The EAP approach would mean that this offer could be amended – this is likely to therefore save money long term.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 08/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 22nd May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To consider the priority for a funding bid towards a community centre.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That committee considers the most suitable centre for a grant application.**
- 2. That once agreed, a bid is created over the summer, for submission to FCC Community Action Fund before 6th September 2023.**
- 3. That if successful, committee is informed and updated on proposed work.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Community Centres are currently being considered for upgrading works, with funding coming from a variety of sources. This include some from MKCC (yet to be confirmed), Community Infrastructure Funds and, as agreed in the budgeting process, 'match funding' from WCC for both these bids.

There is now the potential for a further bid via the FCC Community Action Fund – this is the funding that can be accessed through the Landfill Communities Fund. Up to £100,000 with a need for some contributory funding from the applicant (in this case, WCC – we could use existing funding for this).

This funding **MUST** be allocated to one building / site alone. Committee is asked to consider which venue is the priority.

Both CH and TB have some funding already allocated.

ES is currently in the process of being transferred so at this point, we don't have any agreement in place (which would exclude any application, until such time as an agreement is formalised). If this could happen quickly, an application towards the refurbishment of the 'back end', alongside the kitchen and the external spaces (e.g. nursery gardens, etc.) and installation of some solar / etc would be an excellent option.

This leaves NF, which would certainly benefit from a decent level of investment – external improvements, potentially linked to any further funding towards replacement / repairs of the court, 'changing places' facilities and alterations to the kitchen to make it more usable would all be possible. There is currently a lease in place until 2040 which doesn't appear to have a break clause within, which means spending is possible with some security around payback in the event that any significant change happens within the locale.

It is recommended that a preference for which building is directed by this committee, with either NF or ES identified as the preferred option.

If there isn't any agreement in place for ES, an application will, by default, be made for NF.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 09/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 22nd May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To request additional money for the new depot site, following increased costs for fencing.

RECOMMENDATION:

That committee agrees to a further £7,000 towards the cost of the depot.

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

Council agreed a budget of £25,000 for the creation of the multi-use depot, on Rochfords.

At the current time, four (4) containers have been bought, sprayed and treated with anti-condensation internal cladding.

In addition, a 'welfare unit' has also been bought and is due to be delivered.

Further work is needed to ensure suitability – fencing is the priority, with some additional works needed to connect to water / electricity / sewerage, as well as security in terms of lighting and CCTV.

The original cost of fencing was £11k. However, these costs have risen significantly since the initial quote was provided (almost 18 months ago) and this cost has now increased to £18,600. As a result, the original budget is no longer sufficient to enable all the works.

A further £7,000 is requested for authorisation to enable works to be finalised. Once agreed, the fencing can be installed and further works undertaken.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

None.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None perceived.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager

Agenda item: OC 10/23

WOUGHTON COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Operations & Resources Committee

Monday 22nd May 2023

PURPOSE OF REPORT:

To update the committee on policy reviews, following the Annual Meeting.

RECOMMENDATION:

- 1. That committee notes the responsibility to review the following policies.**
- 2. That this is undertaken in a gradual manner, to enable sufficient time for committee members to read and contribute to the policy.**
- 3. That existing policies are shared via Sharepoint in advance for members to comment on, to enable meetings to have considerations in advance.**

MAIN ISSUES AND CONSIDERATIONS:

The following policies were allocated to Operations Committee as part of the annual meeting:

1. Social Media
2. Health & Safety
3. Lone Working
4. Driving at Work
5. Capability and Sickness Management
6. Incident Plan
7. Red Alert - Emergency advice
8. 1to1 Supervision and Support
9. Employment
10. Maternity, Paternity, Parental and adoption
11. Redundancy
12. Training and Development
13. Absence and Leave
14. Equal Opportunities and diversity
15. Officers Allowances and Expenses
16. Security IT
17. Volunteer Policy and Process
18. Appraisal and Review
19. Recruitment and Retention
20. Sickness
21. Disciplinary Procedures & Background
22. Menopause
23. Banking Procedures
24. Procurement
25. Investment strategy
26. Write off and Disposal

27. Retention and Disposal
28. Safeguarding
29. Whistleblowing
30. Grievance
31. Officer Code of Conduct
32. Dignity at Work Policy
33. Employee Handbook
34. Asset Register
35. Internal Audit Terms of Reference

Many of these policies have been reviewed relatively recently (e.g. Health and Safety in February this year, Dignity at Work in September 2022, Disciplinary in October 2022), but some are now overdue for renewal. To this end, the following is suggested:

That each Operations Meeting has a maximum of five (5) policies for review, which are added to a SharePoint folder which is accessible to committee members. These are read and considered in advance of the meeting, with comments made in advance for discussion / inclusion.

STAFFING IMPLICATIONS:

In the absence of the Operations Manager, the Council Manager will undertake the initial review of the policies noted, sharing recommendations accordingly.

OTHER IMPLICATIONS:

None.

BACKGROUND PAPERS:

None.

AUTHOR

Steve McNay – Council Manager