

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

AGENDA



Monday 10 October 2022

at 10.00 am

**in the Council Chamber,
Civic Centre, Hartlepool.**

MEMBERS: FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

Councillors Boddy, Brash, Buchan, Cassidy, Harrison, Lindridge, Little, Martin-Wells, Moore, Morley and Young.

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST BY MEMBERS

3. MINUTES

- 3.1 To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Finance and Policy Committee held on 28 September 2022. (To Follow)

4. BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK ITEMS

No items.

5. KEY DECISIONS

No items.

6. OTHER ITEMS REQUIRING DECISION

- 6.1 Death in Service Policy and Procedure – *Assistant Director, Corporate Services*

- 6.2 Menopause Policy – *Assistant Director, Corporate Services*

CIVIC CENTRE EVACUATION AND ASSEMBLY PROCEDURE

In the event of a fire alarm or a bomb alarm, please leave by the nearest emergency exit as directed by Council Officers. A Fire Alarm is a continuous ringing. A Bomb Alarm is a continuous tone. The Assembly Point for everyone is Victory Square by the Cenotaph. If the meeting has to be evacuated, please proceed to the Assembly Point so that you can be safely accounted for.

7. ITEMS FOR INFORMATION

7.1 Community Pot Update – *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*

7.2 Update on Developing Sustainable Solutions to Food Poverty – *Director of Adult and Community Based Services*

8. ANY OTHER BUSINESS WHICH THE CHAIR CONSIDERS URGENT

For Information:

Dates and times of forthcoming meetings of the Finance and Policy Committee –

Monday 21 November, 2022 at 10.00 am (Revised date)

Monday 12 December, 2022 at 10.00 am

Monday 23 January, 2023 at 10.00 am

Monday 13 February, 2023 at 10.00 am

Monday 13 March, 2023 at 10.00 am



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

10th October 2022



Report of: Assistant Director, Corporate Services

Subject: DEATH IN SERVICE POLICY AND PROCEDURE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to request Finance and Policy Committee approval for the revised Death in Service Policy and Procedure as attached as Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Death in Service Policy and Procedure was introduced in 2012. Following the approval and implementation of the Bereavement Policy and Procedure in December 2021 it has triggered a full review of the Death in Service Policy and Procedure to ensure that they are complementary to one another.

4. SUMMARY

- 4.1 The Council recognises the emotional impact that a Death in Service can have, impacting upon family, friends and work colleagues.
- 4.2 The policy provides clarity on the importance of balancing the sensitivity of the situation, providing support to the next of kin and work colleagues whilst undertaking the practical arrangements such as the need to administer pay.
- 4.3 The policy clearly sets out key roles and responsibilities.

5. TRADE UNION CONSULTATION

- 5.1 The Trade Unions have been fully consulted in the revision of this policy and procedure.

6. IMPLICATIONS

RISK	None.
FINANCIAL	None.
LEGAL	None.
CONSULTATION	Trade Unions have been fully involved in the consideration of this revised policy.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	None.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	None.
STAFF	This policy ensures that staff are appropriately supported in the event of a Death in Service.
ASSET MANAGEMENT	None.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	None.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 It is recommended that Finance and Policy Committee approve the revised Death in Service Policy and Procedure.

8. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1 To ensure that the Council has a robust policy and procedure for dealing with sensitive matters in the event of a Death in Service.

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

10. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director



Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor





Death in Service Policy & Procedure

HR Service

Content

	Page
Policy Statement	3
Scope & Purpose	3
1. Notification	3
2. Allocation of a Liaison Officer	3
3. Who Should be a Liaison Officer	4
4. Role of the Liaison Officer	4
5. Role of the Assistant Director	5
6. Role of the Head of Service	5
7. Role of Human Resources	5
8. Role of Payroll	5
Documentation	6
Further Reading	6

POLICY

Hartlepool Borough Council has an ethos of caring for its workforce and recognises the need to support the employee's next of kin compassionately if there is a death in service through balancing sensitivity with the practical need to administer pay arrangements.

The Council also understands the emotional impact this can have on the employee's work colleagues and will offer support and understanding through this difficult time.

SCOPE & PURPOSE

This procedure sets out guidance for managers on dealing with the death of an employee and should be read in conjunction with the Bereavement Leave Policy (HRPP-34).

PROCEDURE

1. NOTIFICATION

- 1.1 In the event of a death / serious injury occurring in the workplace, the relevant duty manager will notify the Head of Health Safety & Risk Management and relevant senior officers (See 1.4) of the Council immediately.
- 1.2 Human Resources / Managers have access to employee emergency contact details for relatives if required.
- 1.3 Liaise with the Communications and Marketing team in relation to possible press statement relating to the incident.
- 1.4 If a manager is made aware of the death of an employee while not in the workplace they should ensure they notify the Managing Director, relevant Director, Assistant Director, Head of Service and Human Resources.

2. ALLOCATION OF A LIAISON OFFICER

- 2.1 The relevant Assistant Director will allocate a Liaison Officer in the event of a death in service.
- 2.2 The Liaison Officer should be in a position to provide support to the next of kin to ensure that any matters with which they require assistance and relate to the Council can be raised or addressed.

3. WHO SHOULD BE A LIAISON OFFICER?

- 3.1 The first criteria to apply must be 'who should **not** be a Liaison Officer'. This would include any individual who has had:
- A recent bereavement of a close relative / friend.
 - A recent major life trauma.
 - An onerous workload.
 - Frequency of recent deployment in the role, i.e. have completed this role several times in recent months.
 - Availability – holidays / training course or similar commitments.
 - A person who does not feel comfortable in such a role.
- 3.2 It is suggested that a Senior Manager within the employee's service area will undertake the role of Liaison Officer. Any individual asked to perform the role should be able to decline the role on the basis of the above criteria.
- 3.3 The person appointed may, if required seek support from their line manager.

4. ROLE OF THE LIAISON OFFICER

- 4.1 The Liaison Officer's role may vary with each individual set of circumstances.
- 4.2 The main function of a Liaison Officer is in a caring and co-operative manner to be an information conduit on employment related issues. Liaison Officers are not counsellors and should not take on this type of responsibility.
- 4.3 Examples of assistance could include;
- Signposting to relevant support services, e.g. counselling, pension advice, legal advice, benefits.
 - Assist in notifying relevant services within the Council, e.g. Human Resources (HR), Payroll, internal administration departments, relevant Pension Fund.
 - Inform relevant Trade Union (if individual is known to be a member).
 - Identifying the next of kin / agreed contact.
 - Ensure any outstanding payments, e.g. salary payments that cannot be paid electronically (cheque payments), due to the employee are handed to the next of kin / agreed contact.
 - Return to the next of kin / agreed contact any outstanding personal property from the workplace.
 - Recover any Council property at the employee's home, e.g. computer equipment, I.T equipment, work papers.
 - Liaise with managers to support relatives or colleagues who work for the Council after the bereavement by referring them to appropriate support services if required e.g. Occupational Health, signposting to Counselling.
 - Be the Council link to external organisations requiring information if required.
 - Circulate funeral arrangements and family wishes.

5. ROLE OF THE ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

The role of the Assistant Director of the department the employee worked in is to;

- Select and appoint a Liaison Officer following a discussion with Human Resources.
- Support and supervise the Liaison Officer.
- Arrange a letter of condolence (master letter HRPP-15/G1).
- Decide whether a message to all employees is appropriate.
- Ensure information relating to the death is circulated to appropriate people within the Council (may include the Press Office).
- Authorise release of Council information to the family if appropriate.
- Make decisions on Council representatives attending a funeral.
- Support and provide guidance / signposting in relation to any other matters raised, e.g. funeral organisation (local Funeral Director), work, money issues (see section 8).

6. ROLE OF THE HEAD OF SERVICE

- Departmental management should inform the relevant team(s) who work with the employee who has died and signpost to appropriate support as required (see above).
- Manager should ensure any personal possessions of the employee are secured and reviewed. Discussion with Liaison Officer with regards to possible return to family of any items.
- Manager should submit a leaver form to enable payroll to complete relevant paperwork relating to pay and pension (if applicable).
- Manager to liaise with CICT in relation to email account (if applicable).
- Consider additional support for the team with whom the employee worked.

7. ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES

- Ensure death in service procedure is applied and provide relevant advice, guidance and support.
- Ensure the next of kin receives any cheque with outstanding pay

8. ROLE OF PAYROLL

- Payroll to complete leaver paperwork and liaise with HR in relation to forwarding outstanding pay to next of kin. Provide information in relation to any pension entitlements to HR and Liaison Officer.
- Ensure information is provided to HR / Liaison Officer in relation to any payments relating to any Salary Sacrifice payments, Childcare Vouchers, loans, overpayments etc.
- Flag relevant records, e.g. Enterprise, Resourcelink.

DOCUMENTATION

HRPP-15/G1 Master Letter for Next of Kin
HRPP-34 Bereavement Leave Policy and Procedure

FURTHER READING / SUPPORT

What to do when someone dies.

<http://www.direct.gov.uk/en/Governmentcitizensandrights/Death/index.htm>

Bereavement Advice Service

<https://www.bereavementadvice.org/>

What to do after a death (Citizens Advice)

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/family/death-and-wills/what-to-do-after-a-death/>

Council Bereavement Leave Policy

<http://hbcintranet/PublishingImages/Pages/Policies-and-Procedures-A-Z/Bereavement%20Leave%20Policy%20and%20Procedure.pdf>

Policy Review

This **xxx** Policy and Procedure was adopted on **(date)**.

This policy will be reviewed on a 3 yearly basis, unless changes necessitate an earlier review. The latest version, which supersedes all previous versions, is available on HBC Intranet.

A history of most recent policy changes can be found in the table below:

Version	Date	Change
V1	July 2012	Uploaded to intranet
V2	July 2022	Reviewed and updated in conjunction with revised Bereavement Leave Policy

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

10th October 2022



Report of: Assistant Director, Corporate Services

Subject: MENOPAUSE POLICY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

Non-Key Decision.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to request Finance and Policy Committee approval for a new Menopause Policy as attached as Appendix 1 with a formal launch ceremony on World Menopause Day, 18th October.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The effects of the menopause on the workforce has been on the national media in recent times. As part of its equality agenda, the Council has invested in training for managers and the wider workforce to be more aware of the symptoms and what can be done to help employees manage this at work.
- 3.2 The Council recognises the need to formalise its policy to promote and provide guidance for the workforce.

4. TRADE UNION CONSULTATION

- 4.1 Trade Unions have been consulted and have contributed positively to the formation of the draft policy. It is proposed that a joint launch ceremony takes place on World Menopause Day on 18th October with senior HBC officer and Trade Union officials.

5. IMPLICATIONS

RISK	None.
FINANCIAL	Very small financial impact of cost of training which will be met from existing budgets.
LEGAL	None.
CONSULTATION	Trade Unions have been fully involved in the consideration of this revised policy.
CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY	None.
EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY	None.
STAFF	This policy ensures that staff are appropriately supported if suffering the effects of the Menopause.
ASSET MANAGEMENT	None.
ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS	None.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 6.1 It is recommended that Finance and Policy Committee approve the revised Menopause Policy with a formal launch on World Menopause Day, 18th October.

7. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 7.1 To ensure that the Council has a robust policy and procedure for supporting the workforce.

8. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

9. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director



Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor





Menopause Policy

Index

Section	Contents	Page
	Scope & Purpose	3
1	Introduction	4
2	About the Menopause <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Definitions – Menopause and Perimenopause • Symptoms 	4
3	Menopause and the Workplace	8
4	Manager Responsibilities	9
5	Employee Responsibilities	10
6	List of Additional Useful References	11

Scope & Purpose

Menopause is a natural stage of life. Hartlepool Borough Council understand the effects of the menopause on its workforce. This includes:

- Women: Each Woman will be affected in different ways and to different degrees over different periods of time. Menopause symptoms can often indirectly affect their partners, families and colleagues. Studies suggest that BAME women may have more prevalent and severe symptoms. Disabled woman and those with pre-existing health conditions may find the menopause can aggravate their existing impairments and health conditions or even trigger new ones. Menopausal symptoms can in turn also be made worse by the health condition or impairment.
- Trans men who are changing gender from a woman to a man if their ovaries remain in place and no hormone therapy is given. Trans men may experience surgical menopause if the ovaries and uterus are removed. If hormone therapy is in place in may complicate it for trans men.
- Trans women who identify as female but were assigned male at birth may experience pseudo-menopausal symptoms if their hormone therapy treatment is interrupted or levels are unstable.
- Non-binary people are people who do not identify as solely male or female. They may define themselves as both, neither, or something entirely different. Non-binary people don't think themselves as simply male or female. Some non-binary people may also experience menopausal symptoms.
- It is also recognised that some men may experience symptoms similar to those of the perimenopause as part of the natural aging process.

The Council recognises this is a sensitive and personal issue and is committed to ensuring managers cultivate an environment where employees can talk in confidence with a manager who understands the issues they are experiencing, and possible changes in the workplace that will prevent discrimination, support their wellbeing, and enable them to continue to fulfil their job roles.

The Council is committed to working with trade union colleagues to provide a policy, guidance and training for its workforce to promote the symptoms of the menopause and proactive ways to support people in the workplace.

All staff will be provided with appropriate information and training so that they are able to better understand the effects of the menopause and be comfortable about discussing and addressing the impact that it can have on employees carrying out their roles.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Hartlepool Borough Council is committed to ensuring that all employees are treated fairly and with dignity and respect in their working environment. We are also committed to improving the wellbeing of our employees.

This policy has been designed with the aim of ensuring that employees know and understand the help and support that is available to them if they are experiencing symptoms which they feel may be linked to the perimenopause or menopause and as a result assist in:

- improving the recruitment of people that understand the Council values all employees and provides supportive work environments
- improving retention across the workforce by supporting employees to reduce or minimise sickness absence levels which may be directly or indirectly linked to symptoms of the perimenopause or menopause.

- 1.2 The provisions outlined in this procedure apply to all employees of Hartlepool Borough Council regardless of the number of hours worked each week and includes the casual workforce. Agency workers should refer to their employing agency for guidance.

- 1.3 In support of this procedure Hartlepool Borough Council offers employees a number of wellbeing services which are available as follows:

- Occupational Health Services
- Well Workforce resources and information available on the intranet

- 1.4 If this document is required in another language or format, or the services of an interpreter are required, please contact Human Resources.

2. About the Menopause?

2.1 Definitions

It is important that all managers and employees understand the difference between the terms menopause and perimenopause. Both are distinct and natural stages in the life cycle which can potentially impact employees across the whole workforce in different ways and to varying degrees.

Menopause is not just an issue for women in the workplace; it is equally important for male colleagues to understand and be aware of the subject so that they are well equipped to support not only their colleagues in the workplace but also their family and friends who may be experiencing symptoms which may impact on everyday life.

By understanding what the terms perimenopause and menopause mean, and the support that is available to colleagues who are experiencing symptoms during either of these stages, as an employer we can avoid unnecessary embarrassment by ensuring this is not a 'taboo' subject in the workplace.

Menopause

This is the term given to the single point in time when a woman has not had a menstrual period for the duration of 12 months and this marks the end of their reproductive years. Whilst every woman's individual experience is different, menopause usually occurs between 45 and 55 years of age, the average age being 51. However, around 1 in 100 women will experience the menopause before age 40. This is referred to as the **early menopause**.

Menopause can also be triggered, at any age, by certain cancer treatments or by surgery which involves either the partial or complete removal of the ovaries. This is referred to as **medical or surgical menopause**. This type of menopause can occur suddenly and result in more intense symptoms.

As part of the natural aging process men may experience symptoms similar to those associated with the menopause such as changes in mood, lack of energy, sleep disturbance and poor concentration or loss of short term memory. This typically occurs amongst men in their late forties to early fifties and can have an impact on daily activities. It is important to work with colleagues to try to understand any underlying causes of symptoms which are impacting upon work performance and to offer the same level of support which is afforded to female colleagues.

Perimenopause

Perimenopause is the term given to the period of transition that takes place in the years leading up to the menopause. This is the stage when the female ovaries gradually start to produce less oestrogen until the point of menopause when the reproductive stage ends.

Experiences of perimenopause will vary for each individual. This can range from mild and manageable symptoms to severe and debilitating physical, mental and cognitive symptoms which can impact significantly on a woman's daily life. Statistical data suggests that 3 out of 4 women will experience symptoms to some degree and for 1 in 4 women, symptoms will be severe.

Common symptoms of the perimenopause can include, but are not limited to, hot flushes, night sweats, fatigue, headaches, changes in mood and irregular periods.

Some employees may need support at work, others may not, but for those who do, providing the right support can make a significant difference. It is therefore important to understand both the range of symptoms that can be experienced and the support that can be considered in the workplace. Creating a safe space to have a confidential and open discussion and making just a few minor adjustments can have a really positive impact.

2.2 Common Symptoms of Perimenopause and Menopause and Adjustments

6.2 Appendix 1

The table below provides examples of some of the more common symptoms of perimenopause and menopause and is not an exhaustive list. Managers are encouraged to listen openly to the symptoms identified and described by each individual employee and consider appropriate support where operationally feasible as there is no 'one size fits all'. Occupational Health can also provide support with individual cases and reasonable adjustments.

Common Identified Symptoms of Perimenopause and Menopause :	Suggested Reasonable Adjustments for Discussion & Consideration where Operationally Feasible:
Hot flushes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Position desk near to window or source of ventilation • Provision of desk fan • Monitor workplace room temperature and maintain at acceptable consistent level • Avoid excesses of temperature • Allow employee micro breaks to cool down / take fresh air • Access to drinking water • Temporary changes to duties • Flexibly over uniform/dress codes & provision of spare uniforms.
Night sweats Sleep Disturbance Fatigue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider flexibility of working day ie: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ later start time ○ periods of homeworking
Headaches / Migraines	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand and avoid triggers ie: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ excesses of temperature ○ noise level ○ stress ○ Strong smells e.g. perfume • Explore medication options with GP • Stay hydrated / access to drinking water • Keep cool packs in fridge
Irregular or Heavy Periods	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to suitable / private toilet / washing facilities
Low Mood / Changes in Mood Anxiety / Panic Attacks Loss of confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signpost to employee wellbeing services • Regular scheduled & protected 1:1 time with line manager • Time out / micro break facility if feeling overwhelmed

Joint Pain / Stiffness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Workplace DSE risk assessment • Consider purchase of any specialist equipment i.e. office chair with additional support • Avoid sitting or standing for extended periods
Poor concentration Memory Problems ‘Brain Fog’	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of memory aids • Set reminders in Outlook calendar • Home working where possible to minimise distractions i.e. report writing / project work
Palpitations Irritability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Micro/breaks

3. Menopause and the Workplace

It is important to understand and acknowledge the risks of not effectively understanding or supporting those employees who are experiencing symptoms associated with the perimenopause or menopause in the workplace.

Both perimenopause and menopause can be recognised under three protected characteristics as covered by the Equality Act 2010: age, sex and disability discrimination. Further information can be found in the Council’s Equality in Employment Policy.

In addition the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 also makes provision for ‘safe working’ which extends to the working conditions of those experiencing symptoms of the perimenopause or menopause.

Workplace demographics both nationally and within Hartlepool Borough Council show that menopausal and perimenopausal women make up a significant proportion of the workforce. Women over the age of 50 make up the fastest growing demographic in the workplace and approximately 80% of women experiencing menopause are in work.

4. Manager Responsibilities

As a Manager there are many things you can do to ensure that your team members or direct reports are treated fairly and with respect.

- Be well informed about the subject and understand the potential impact on members of your team. There are a number of sources of further information which you can refer to. Some additional sources of useful information are outlined within this policy.
- Participate in any future training relating to the menopause. This training is not exclusively for women and it is essential that men are also well informed on the subject to enable them to provide appropriate support to their colleagues, friends and family members.
- Encourage open and honest conversation without fear of embarrassment. Be sensitive and avoid workplace banter.
- If an employee expresses a wish to discuss perimenopausal or menopausal symptoms with you, ensure you provide a confidential setting or 'safe space' where employees can discuss their concerns with you and be mindful to respect confidentiality at all times.
- Employees who do not feel comfortable discussing their concerns with their line manager may prefer to talk to an alternative such as another manager, HR Advisor, Occupational Health, Health Advocate or a Trade Union Representative.
- Monitor sickness absence sensitively. Encourage employees to be open and honest about the reasons for their absence and reassure them they can do so without fear of discrimination at work.
- Take practical steps to provide suitable support in the workplace. Following discussions at the request of an individual, consider any reasonable adjustments to the workplace where this is operationally feasible. Refer to the table in within this policy for a list of potential symptoms and suggestions of appropriate adjustments.
- Encourage employees to seek further appropriate support from their GP, or from alternative support services where appropriate, and in line with individual preferences.
- Hartlepool Borough Council recognises the potential impact of menopausal symptoms on performance by employees experiencing the menopause and managers will seek to support sympathetically looking at adjustments initially, rather than moving directly to the capability procedure.
- Don't make assumptions and generalisations. Not all employee's performance in the workplace will be negatively affected. Be mindful of and respect individual preferences at all times.

- Keep accurate records of any individual discussions and what has been agreed. Agree and schedule reviews so that you can monitor the effectiveness of any adjustments and the potential impact on service delivery. Consider changes as and when required in line with the needs of the service.

5. Employee Responsibilities

As an employee of Hartlepool Borough Council, if you are, or think you might be, experiencing symptoms of the perimenopause or menopause there are a number of things that you can do to manage this and to ensure you are receiving the right level of support for you in the workplace.

- Ask to speak in confidence to your Wellbeing Champion or line manager about the symptoms you are experiencing and how you feel this may be impacting upon your performance at work. Your manager/Health Advocates will be able to arrange a mutually convenient time for you to discuss your concerns in confidence and consider any appropriate support you may need. Information in relation to Health Advocates can be found on the intranet under the 'Well Workforce' tile.
- Make an appointment with your GP to discuss your concerns. You may be able to request an appointment with a specific GP who specialises in perimenopause or menopause. You could also ask for a longer appointment to give you the opportunity to fully discuss all your concerns. Your GP will be able to explain the clinical treatment options such as hormone replacement therapy (HRT). Time off to attend an appointment with your GP will be considered in line with the Council's Single Status Agreement.
- There is lots of information available and readily accessible on the intranet or alternatively you could ask at your local library or GP surgery for any information they may have available. They may be able to signpost you to support groups in your local area. Complementary therapies such as acupuncture and aromatherapy may help with the symptoms. Lifestyle changes may reduce your symptoms to a manageable level.
- Be honest about the reasons for sickness absence and identify if you feel this is due to perimenopausal or menopausal issues.
- All staff have a responsibility to contribute to a respectful and productive working environment, be willing to help and support their colleagues and understand any necessary adjustments their colleagues are receiving as a result of their menopausal symptoms.

Employees are encouraged to report any instance of harassment, victimisation or discrimination experienced because of issues related to the menopause.

6. List of additional useful references – Supporting information & signposting

- Please refer to the [Well Workforce](#) tile on the Intranet for information on referrals to our Occupational Health Service along with other wellbeing advice and guidance.
- **CIPD (Chartered Institute of Personnel & Development) Guide: [The Menopause at Work – A Practical Guide for People Managers](#)**
- [NHS Menopause Guidance on Symptoms & Treatment](#)
- [NICE \(National Institute for Health & Care Excellence\) Menopause Guidance](#)
- [ACAS Guidance for Employers](#)
- <https://www.menopausematters.co.uk/>

If you have any queries or should you require any specific advice or assistance in relation to the perimenopause or menopause then please do not hesitate to contact your Health Advocate, trade union or a HR Advisor on 01429 523544 via the email address: HR@hartlepool.gov.uk

Documentation

HRPP-31 Equality in Employment Policy and Procedure

Policy Review

This Menopause Policy and Procedure was adopted on **10 October 2022.**

This policy will be initially reviewed after one year and thereafter on a 3 yearly basis, unless changes necessitate an earlier review. The latest version, which supersedes all previous versions, is available on the HBC Intranet.

A history of most recent policy changes can be found in the table below:

Version	Date	Change
V1	10 October 2022	New Policy – no change

FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

10 October 2022



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Subject: COMMUNITY POT UPDATE

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

No decision required; for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Finance and Policy Committee regarding the Community Pot grants and the outcomes delivered.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Finance and Policy Committee identified a Community Pot of £200,000 to support community-led initiatives aimed at tackling the social and economic impact of COVID19.
- 3.2 The criteria for accessing funding from the Community Pot and the process for applications were agreed by Finance and Policy Committee in November 2020 and allocations from the Community Pot were agreed on 15 February 2021 as summarised below:

Proposal	Community Pot Funding
Financial Advice and Support (including benefit appeals)	£34,500
Hartlepool Financial Inclusion Partnership	£36,500
Get Connected - digital inclusion project	£40,900
Community Led Inclusion Partnership	£48,800
Supported Housing and Counselling for Homeless and Vulnerable	£15,000
Accessible IT equipment and training	£24,300

4. PROGRESS UPDATE

4.1 A brief summary of the outcomes achieved for each project is provided below:

4.1.1 Financial Advice and Support: funded April 2021 – March 2022

- Service won 32 of 36 appeal cases.
- Assisted 1,834 individual cases with various issues from Employment Law to utility voucher top-ups.
- Developed partnerships with various organisations and services in Hartlepool which has increased referrals from the community.
- Established drop-in services in Bovis House, Middleton Grange Shopping Centre, St Josephs Hall and Lily Anne's Coffee Shop.
- Financial gains to individuals for welfare rights/benefits appeals is an average of £4,700 per person.
- Feedback from people accessing the service is very good.

4.1.2 Hartlepool Financial Inclusion Partnership: funded April 2021 – March 2023

- A coordinator was recruited on a fixed term contract to support the Partnership, identifying guest speakers for meetings ensuring that stakeholders are kept up to date on relevant issues and understand what help is available. This has included a recent speaker on energy awareness highlighting the ways in which members can support residents in reducing energy costs. A speaker from the Money and Pensions Service updated members on their Way Forward campaign demonstrating the resources available to support individuals.
- The coordinator represents the HFIP (Hartlepool Financial Inclusion Partnership) at a range of meetings including those relating to the UK Strategy for Financial Wellbeing which is designed to drive change. Attendance at these meeting ensures that the voice of Hartlepool people contributes to the national plan for Financial Wellbeing.
- The coordinator has undertaken research and is preparing a business case regarding the development and potential creation of a Credit Union in the town. This work has involved:
 - Consulting with residents to establish the appetite for a Credit Union.
 - Meeting a number of local Credit Unions to explore the practicalities of establishing a front facing Credit Union bank in Hartlepool.
 - Identifying though research that there are 2,175 Hartlepool residents using 3 Credit Unions.
 - Drafting an options appraisal to be presented to the HFIP.

4.1.3 Get Connected: funded April 2021 – March 2022

- Blue Dice offer drop-in sessions in Central and South Community Hubs providing support with accessing technology and link with the Digital Community Navigators ensuring ongoing, targeted support for people.
- The project has led to connections with North Tees and Hartlepool NHS Foundation Trust with Blue Dice supporting the Pal Call project – providing

access to technology and support for people living at home receiving palliative care.

- 19 fully inclusive Deaf Digital Inclusion sessions were delivered at Café 177. 10 participants aged 54 – 92 attended, all registered disabled and many with health conditions.
- The outcomes for the individuals attending the course were impressive with all reporting some benefits which have included people downloading SignLive and SignVideo Apps, raised awareness of BSL Zone and signed programmes on the iPlayer, connecting with people via Facebook and an online BSL knitting group – all participants reported an improvement in their wellbeing as a result of the course.
- An unintended consequence of this project has been improved partnership working and greater awareness of the needs of the Deaf community.
- Hartlepool Deaf Centre has committed to dedicating one Deaf Club each month to focus on digital skills as their members have told them that they need to be repeatedly reminded on how to master their new skills to continue their learning and confidence with technology.

4.1.4 Community Led Inclusion Partnership (CLIP): funded April 2021 – March 2023

- Steering Group established.
- CLIP currently has 306 members.
- Monthly meetings with community members held where priority areas are discussed
- Focus groups held on a range of issues including:
 - Hospital experiences from those living with a neurodiversity condition
 - Accessing local services with a Sensory Loss
 - Disability and poverty
 - Inclusion within education
 - The Social Model of Disability
 - Accessing GP services
 - Changing Places facilities
- CLIP have been involved in various consultations and projects including:
 - Changing Places Facilities in Hartlepool
 - APLE Collective addressing poverty within the Hartlepool disabled community – speaking at the House of Lords
 - The Tall Ships Race Event (2023)
 - The Highlight Development
 - Hartlepool Train Station platform upgrade working with Network Rail
 - VONNE – Inclusive Community Engagement
- As well as monthly meetings, CLIP engages with members via surveys.
- CLIP have been involved in a range of community events, raising the group's profile and engaging with the community. These have included:
 - Carers Week
 - Dementia Action Week
 - Catcote Academy Careers Event
 - Autism Awareness Week
 - Community Hubs open weeks
 - Save Money Hartlepool

4.1.5 Supported Housing and Counselling for Homeless and Vulnerable People: funded April 2021 – March 2022

- The Park Road centre has been operational since October 2021.
- As well as acting as a shop front to the charity's furniture and shed business, it offers support, advice and signposting to services that empower people to make good life choices.
- The building provides free showers and laundry use to those without access.
- Peer led groups and activities have been supported in the centre including a women's group.
- Drop-ins provide access to a food bank, clothes bank and computer and internet access.

4.1.6 Accessible IT Equipment and Training: funded April 2021 – March 2022

- Unforeseen circumstances impacted on the starting of this project however the collaboration remained committed to their objectives and the project progressed well.
- IT Equipment is in place in community locations within acoustic screens to allow for privacy.
- The project has led to increasing people's knowledge and skills in using the technology and has led to some real benefits for individuals who have been able to make use of the technology. Examples include:
- An older lady being able to have a Zoom appointment with her GP – she was amazed that she could have a face to face discussion with her GP when they were both in different places!
- A senior youth club member used the technology for her college interview. She said that using the technology in a centre she was familiar with and comfortable in meant she felt more relaxed and more open and willing to talk in her interview. She was offered a college place after the interview.
- The laptops and printers are being used for people to amend their CV's and print off copies. Thirteen Housing Group are now running a weekly Job Club at Kilmarnock Road, one of the centres who were part of the project, and making use of the laptops and printer.
- A centre user was supported with a job application. He was happy doing this in the centre as the acoustic screens aloud for his privacy but he knew that there was help available should he need it.
- One centre user used Zoom to connect with and speak to her solicitor concerning her divorce. She said she found this a really good way to speak to her solicitor as she didn't really like doing this over the phone. She got answers to her queries quickly.

5. **RISK IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There are risks associated with allocating one off funding in that it can build expectations and generate longer term demand. The Community Pot application process made clear that this was a one-off resource to support sustainable solutions and applicants were required to provide evidence of an exit strategy.

- 5.2 The majority of the projects that received Community Pot funding, which has now ended, have been able to embed their work into the core functions of the groups involved, meaning that the funding has left a real legacy in the town.

6. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 6.1 The Community Pot was a one-off opportunity that was fully committed and there are no ongoing financial considerations.

7. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The allocation of funding from the Community Pot was completed in accordance with the Council's Contract Procedure Rules.

8. CONSULTATION

- 8.1 The criteria and process for allocation of the Community Pot were discussed with representatives of the VCS. The Council's commitment to work with the VCS and support the sector to work collaboratively was welcomed.

9. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY

- 9.1 The aim of the Community Pot was to tackle the social and economic impacts of COVID19, which supported the Council's commitment to tackle child and family poverty. The ongoing work associated with these projects will continue to support this agenda.

10. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 10.1 Consideration of applications for Community Pot funding took into account the needs of individuals and families experiencing hardship due to age, disability or other protected characteristics. It is clear from the outcomes highlighted in this report that the funding has been used to support people from a broad age group, with a proportion of the resource providing targeted support for people with disabilities and / or sensory loss.

11. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 There are no staffing considerations associated with this report.

12. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no asset management considerations associated with this report.

13. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no environment, sustainability and climate change considerations with this report.

14. RECOMMENDATION

- 14.1 It is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee note the update regarding the Community Pot grant allocation and the positive outcomes that have been and continue to be achieved for residents.

15. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION

- 15.1 The Finance and Policy Committee made a commitment to create the Community Pot to support local communities through the COVID19 recovery and requested an update regarding the use of the funding and the outcomes achieved.

16. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 16.1 Finance and Policy Committee, 30 November 2020 – Allocation of the Community Pot

Finance and Policy Committee, 15 October 2021 – Community Pot Update

17. CONTACT OFFICERS

Jill Harrison
Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Gemma Ptak
Assistant Director (Preventative and Community Based Services)

Sign Off:-

Managing Director



Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor



FINANCE AND POLICY COMMITTEE

10 October 2022



Report of: Director of Adult and Community Based Services

Subject: UPDATE ON DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE SOLUTIONS TO FOOD POVERTY

1. TYPE OF DECISION/APPLICABLE CATEGORY

No decision required; for information.

2. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 2.1 To update the Finance and Policy Committee regarding work that has been undertaken with 'The Bread and Butter Thing' to develop a sustainable solution to food poverty, linked to the role of Community Hubs.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The identification of food poverty particularly among the working poor and the over 65s during the Council's response to COVID19 led to the acknowledgement that a sustainable solution to food poverty was needed.
- 3.2 In August 2020 the Finance and Policy Committee agreed to the undertaking of a procurement exercise which resulted in the awarding of a contract to 'The Bread and Butter Thing'.
- 3.3 The legacy of individual hardship as a result of the pandemic and the increasing pressures on people's finances as the cost of living increases means that the contribution of The Bread and Butter Thing remains vital in helping people manage their finances.

4. THE BREAD AND BUTTER THING MODEL

- 4.1 The model is based on making life more affordable for those on low incomes by addressing the premium that people in poverty pay for food, loans, energy and other everyday essentials because of their personal circumstances. A

community-led membership model is used to provide access to low cost, nutritious food whereby families and individuals with little disposable income are offered the provision of a deeply discounted food service to help their income go further. Members receive a week's worth of fresh food and other essentials in return for a nominal membership fee.

- 4.2 The Bread and Butter Thing now accept Healthy Start vouchers provided by the NHS and offer affordable period products at all of their sessions. The 'Big Shop' has also been rolled out allowing members to pay for an additional bag of cupboard or frozen food as well as the three bags of food included as part of a standard membership.

5. PROGRESS UPDATE

- 5.1 The Bread and Butter Thing has 5 delivery hubs in Hartlepool across the week at Community Hub Central, Community Hub South, Burbank House, St Hilda's Church and the West View Project.
- 5.2 There are a total of 3,099 members in Hartlepool and 1,143 volunteer opportunities have been created to date (totalling over 3,400 hours). So far in 2022 a total of 10,061 sets of bags, equivalent to over 311,287 meals have been provided, supporting an average of 60 households at each hub each week.
- 5.3 In the winter of 2021, as agreed by the Finance and Policy Committee, an additional £10,000 was allocated to The Bread and Butter Thing from the Household Support Fund to provide extra food grocery bags. This additional investment allowed The Bread and Butter Thing to support 439 households.
- 5.4 Every week The Bread and Butter Thing improves diets with a diverse variety of healthy produce. At each hub, an average of 13kg of food in each set of bags is given out. 80% of this is made up of chilled goods and fruit and vegetables – delivering maximum nutritional benefits for members.
- 5.5 Every week The Bread and Butter Thing reduces the stress of stretched finances. So far Hartlepool residents have benefited from a cumulative saving of over £266,000 by shopping with The Bread and Butter Thing.
- 5.6 Feedback from members and volunteers has been overwhelmingly positive. From a survey of members:
- 97% feel that The Bread and Butter Thing is good for their communities.
 - 86% feel that they are more able to afford to feed their family.
 - 76% were eating more fruit and vegetables.
 - 79% have income left over to purchase more than the basics.

A volunteer commented:

"I've been here pretty much every single week. The most rewarding thing is just helping people out. It's a very nice friendly atmosphere that's just been growing and growing since I've started here. It's just nice to make extra

friends that you wouldn't have had beforehand. And it's hard work. It gets your blood pumping too!"

- 5.7 In Central and South Community Hubs The Bread and Butter Thing sessions are supported by additional activities such as children's sessions in the library areas and activities in the Fab Lab. Community Navigators and representatives from the Voluntary and Community Sector including Hartlepool Carers, West View Advice and Resource Centre and Let's Connect are also present providing information, advice and support as needed.
- 5.8 The Burbank Centre and West View Advice and Resource Centre also provide additional support opportunities.
- 5.9 Volunteers from the West View Advice and Resource Centre have joined a town-wide Poverty Truth Commission and are in discussions with The Bread and Butter Thing to develop a pilot to provide some additional shopping opportunities at that centre.
- 5.10 The success and continued need for The Bread and Butter Thing is demonstrated by the increasing over-subscription of the service. Community Hub Central and Community Hub South are now regularly oversubscribed by an average of 75 and 80 people a week respectively. This has increased from an average of 31 and 25 people respectively. Burbank is averaging 27 oversubscriptions a week and West View 22. The session at the Headland remains fairly consistent although there have been 2 recent occasions of oversubscription.
- 5.11 When sites are oversubscribed The Bread and Butter Thing make sure that those people who are not successful one week can access the service the following week. Unfortunately oversubscriptions in Central and South Community Hubs are reaching a level where people can only access the service once every 3 weeks which will have a huge impact on their incomes and ability to provide a healthy, balanced meal for their family.

6. RISK IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 When proposing this model there was a risk that there would be insufficient interest to make it sustainable after the initial investment, this is not the case. The demand for the current offer of 5 hubs a week is supported by one van and is sustainable.
- 6.2 The risk now is the increasing demand which it is anticipated will continue to grow. Oversubscriptions mean that people are not able to access the service as regularly as before which will have a significant impact on people's financial circumstances as the cost of living continues to increase.

7. FINANCIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 7.1 The one off cost of £125,000 to establish The Bread and Butter Thing in Hartlepool was met from a national grant to councils to assist households struggling to afford food and support. There is no ongoing funding for the service. The ongoing commitment from the Council is to enable the service to be delivered from the Community Hub sites and to facilitate close working with other partners.
- 7.2 An additional £10,000 was allocated to The Bread and Butter Thing from the Household Support Fund to provide extra provisions for people during the winter of 2021.

8. LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

- 8.1 In accordance with the Council's Contract Procedures, a procurement exercise was undertaken to secure a provider for the service. There are no ongoing legal considerations.

9. CONSULTATION

- 9.1 Consultations took place with organisations involved with the Food Network prior to the procurement exercise.
- 9.2 The Council worked with The Bread and Butter Thing to facilitate joint working with partners to ensure that the service was made available across the town.

10. CHILD AND FAMILY POVERTY IMPACT

- 10.1 The Bread and Butter Thing aims to give access to nutritious and affordable food that is taken into the heart of communities. The weekly shop provides essential produce for family eating – fresh fruit and vegetables, chilled goods and cupboard staples. The data from The Bread and Butter Things annual survey found:
- 85% of people supported were of working age.
 - 40% are in receipt of Job Seekers Allowance or Universal Credit.
 - 68% have at least one child under 18.
 - 23% have three or more children under 18.
 - 56% have health problems that limit their daily activity or work.

11. EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY CONSIDERATIONS

- 11.1 The service is available to all residents regardless of protected characteristics with reasonable adjustments made as needed to ensure access.

12. STAFF CONSIDERATIONS

- 12.1 There are no staffing considerations associated with this report.

13. ASSET MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS

- 13.1 There are no asset management considerations associated with this report. The service is being delivered through existing Community Hub buildings.

14. ENVIRONMENT, SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE CONSIDERATIONS

- 14.1 The Bread and Butter Thing work closely with their suppliers to encourage and help them donate their surplus food safely and effectively which is then redistributed to their network of members’.
- 14.2 The team at The Bread and Butter Thing have over 25 years’ experience and are experts in the food redistribution field. They look closely at their suppliers’ business and supply chains, providing them with advice and a reliable service to redistribute their surpluses saving them money, time and resources. Their suppliers also receive regular feedback on their goods and the social impact they are having within communities.
- 14.3 Working with over 60 suppliers, The Bread and Butter thing unlock over 100 tonnes of industry surplus every week. Where possible they share any excess with the Hartlepool Food Network, with approximately 6 tonnes of food being shared across 2021 winter months and a further donation of 1.5 tonnes in July 2022.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 15.1 It is recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee note the update regarding a sustainable solution for food poverty and the positive progress that has been made.
- 15.2 It is also recommended that the Finance and Policy Committee note the increased demand for support from The Bread and Butter Thing and the potential of this to increase as the cost of living continues to rise.

16. REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

- 16.1 The Finance and Policy Committee committed to developing a sustainable solution for people experiencing long term food poverty and may wish to consider further investment in the service if funding opportunities arise.

17. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Finance and Policy Committee, 29 June 2020 – COVID19 Recovery: A Sustainable Solution to Food Poverty

Finance and Policy Committee, 15 October 2021 – Update on Developing Sustainable Solutions to Food Poverty

18. CONTACT OFFICERS

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Sign Off:-

Managing Director



Director of Resources and Development



Chief Solicitor

