SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Slough Wellbeing Board

DATE: **14th November 2022**

CONTACT OFFICER: Dr Vanita Dutta, Public Health Principal, Slough Borough Council

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WARD(S):   *ALL*

PART I
For comment and consideration

Workplace Health Strategy Update

1.   **Purpose of Report**

To provide the Slough Wellbeing Board with an update on progress to date on the works delivered against the ambitions and actions of Priority 4 – Workplace Health.

2.   **Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action**

a) The Board is requested to review and note the contents of this report.
b) To consider and agree the future plan proposed through this report.

3.   **The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy, the JSNA and the Five Year Plan**

The Slough Joint Wellbeing Strategy (SJWS) details the priorities agreed for Slough with partner organisations. The SJWS has been developed using a comprehensive evidence base that includes the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)[1].

3a.   **Slough Wellbeing Strategy Priorities –** (Compulsory Section)

Workplace Health is our fourth priority within the Slough Wellbeing Strategy.

Priorities:
1. Starting Well
2. Integration (relating to Health & Social Care)
3. Strong, healthy and attractive neighbourhoods
4. Workplace health

3b.   **Five Year Plan Outcomes** (Compulsory Section)

Explain which of the Five Year Plan's outcomes the proposal or action will help to deliver. The outcomes are:

- *Outcome 2: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs– through having a robust system wide Workforce Health strategy and action plan*

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[1] https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/file/866/slough-wellbeing-board-strategy-2020-2025

- *Outcome 5: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents - through the Council being an employer of choice and who places Workplace Health as a corporate priority*

4. **Other Implications**

    Financial Implications:

    In order to deliver effective and robust workplace health programme the most essential resource will be the people delivering and driving the programme. This is best delivered adopting system wide approach via engagement and partnership of various stakeholders including Slough businesses.

    Dedicated resource is essential to drive the agenda forward. This will be supported through COVID recovery plan until March 23 but will need resources identified in the future.

    (a) Risk Management *(Compulsory section to be included in **all** reports)*

    The Table below must be completed fully for each recommendation from Section 2

	Risks/Threats/ Opportunities	Current Controls	Using the Risk Management Matrix Score the risk	Future Controls
Ongoing work on Workplace Health	Financial insecurity of the council as a result of S114	Funded through grant for COVID recovery	18 (High)	Funded from PH ringfenced grant Exploring alternate funding source

    (b) *Human Rights Act and Other Legal Implications* *(compulsory section to be included in **all** reports)*

    There are no human Rights Act implications.

    (c) *Equalities Impact Assessment* *(Compulsory section to be included in all reports which relate to a new or substantially revised policy, procedure or function)*

    The Workforce Health Strategy and action plan process will augment and strengthen the SBC Equality duty through representation from various employee forums including REACH, disability etc. to ensure all needs of Slough employees with protected characteristics as set out in the Equality Act are considered and met.

5. **Supporting Information**

    (A) Background
    There is strong evidence that supporting health and wellbeing of colleagues can achieve a range of positive outcomes such as: enhanced performance, improved staff retention, lower levels of sickness absence, presenteesim and organisational success through more productive and motivated staff.
    Workplace Health has a wider implication on other socio-economic indicators like employment, poverty, housing.

(B) Update

Since the last report to the Slough Wellbeing Board in May 2022, following actions have been undertaken:

Workplace Health Project Manager has been recruited to oversee the operational delivery.

Progress has been positive against the **three over-arching actions** which sit within Priority 4 -Workplace Health as laid out in the Slough Wellbeing Strategy[2]:

1. ***Build Connections with local businesses in Slough to promote information about Workplace Health and establish a set of Wellbeing Awards to celebrate success and best practice from employers.***

   I.   The Workplace Health Strategy Group has been set up, replacing the previous Workplace Health Task & Finish Group which had been stalled due to Covid-19. The strategy group meets monthly and has had two meetings so far.

   II.   The group agreed the Terms of Reference at the October meeting, which are attached as Appendix A. The current membership represents organisations with an interest in workplace health, we are continually developing relationships and expanding partnership across Slough place to include partners from Police, NHS Acute Trust, Primary Care Networks etc.

   III. Contact has been established with Chamber of Commerce and Slough Business Community Partnerships and although this work is slow to progress, initial interest is positive and will continue to develop.

2. ***Create a toolkit of resources and materials relating to Workplace Health for employers and staff in Slough, particularly in relation to COVID-19 recovery.***

   I.   Partnership work is on-going to audit and evaluate current activities, offers and resources for staff - as many of these are out of date. The review will be further shaped by the results of the SBC staff survey due to go out in November.

   II.   Menopause Guidance has been produced for SBC employees and was released on World Menopause Day in October. This was achieved through collaborative efforts of various SBC teams including HR, equality and diversity and policy teams. This guidance has been shared with partners as a resource to adapt to individual organisational need. Menopause cafés are in development.

   III. The 'One Slough website' has been agreed as the most accessible platform to host workplace health promotion and resources for businesses and organisations. It will also be one of the gateways for training opportunities, public health interventions and wider health and wellbeing resources. Additional benefit is the added value of One Slough being the source of a directory of services for signposting routes.

3. ***Promote culture change surrounding workplace health in employers across the borough.***

   I.   Draft paper has been completed for SBC CLT with recommendation for SBC as organisation to commitment to MECC principles and approach. This aims to provide sample template in making the case for MECC in other organisations. (Making Every Contact Count is a nationally recognised and accredited tool).

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[2] https://www.slough.gov.uk/downloads/file/866/slough-wellbeing-board-strategy-2020-2025

II. MECC staff training options menu has been developed and awaiting initial costings for delivery of a universal open offer for businesses and CVS.

III. Discussion is underway to embed MECC level 1 free on-line training onto the SBC learning and development platform 'Cornerstone' for all SBC staff, creating a network of champions.

(C) Future Plan

I. Extend the membership of the Strategy group to make partnership robust recognising that organisations vary in size, capability, and resource

II. Deliver a Workplace Health workshop in Jan 23 to draw out the needs and priorities of workplace health in Slough. The workshop is key to shaping a set of realistic and achievable common deliverables which individual organisations feel motivated to sign up to.

III. Produce a Slough Workplace Health Strategy and subsequent action plan

IV. Continue building relationship with the business to influence and advocate the importance of Workplace Health

V. Key activities over the coming months will focus on the roll-out and evaluation of the workshop outcomes and shaping the programme plan, and the implementation of Making Every Contact Count (MECC).

6. **Comments of Other Committees**

NA

7. **Conclusion**

Workplace Health is Sloughs' Priority Four within the 2020-25 Wellbeing Strategy.

Effective workplace health programmes can make a real difference to the health and wellbeing of employees, businesses and the communities in which people live and work. Research evidence shows that promoting health in the workplace improves the working environment and is beneficial to the organisation and its employees in the following ways[3]:

• Reduction in illness-related absence and ineffectiveness caused by presence at work when ill.
• Reduction in staff turnover.
• Increased motivation among staff and improved working atmosphere, leading to more flexibility, better communications and improved use of resources.
• Measurable increases in the quality of products and services, more innovation and creativity, and a rise in productivity.
• More prestige, which improves the public image of the organisation and makes it more attractive as an employer

Efforts are underway to adopt system wide approach to Workplace Health in Slough with future plans in place. Board is requested to note the report, agree to the future plan and provide opportunity to bring the Slough Workplace Health Strategy for approval in 6 months.

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[3] https://www.publichealth.hscni.net/sites/default/files/Workplace_Health_Guide_08_17.pdf

8. **Background Papers** *(This is compulsory)*

Workplace Health Strategy Group Terms of Reference (Appendix A)

Appendix A

Workplace Health Strategy Group
Terms of Reference

Background & Context

Employment is an important factor for health, directly and indirectly making an impact on the individual, their families and communities[4]. Unemployment is associated with an increased risk of mortality and morbidity, including limiting illness, cardiovascular disease, poor mental health, suicide and health-damaging behaviours[5]. Individuals unemployed for more than 6 months have lower wellbeing than those unemployed for less time[6]. Health-related worklessness can be defined as individuals not in employment for a health reason[7].

The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted even more-so the important relationship between work and physical and mental health and wellbeing. The review of specific working conditions, policies, and practices have helped organisations and workers navigate pandemic-related challenges. These include a commitment to the physical and emotional health, wellbeing, and safety of workers; supportive and flexible leadership; frequent and honest communication and dialogue; flexible work provisions; encouragement and support of worker engagement in both identifying and solving problems; and enhanced organisational benefits (e.g., flexible working, childcare support, sick leave policies, and care-taker policies). [8]

As part of the Covid-19 recovery plans, the requirement to increase the focus and visibility in narrowing social and health disparities across the workforce has become more prominent, as the way in which people live and work has significantly changed from traditional formats to the evolution of hybrid and remote working arrangements becoming the norm for many workplaces. Hybrid and remote work arrangements have changed the sense of cohesion within organisations, introducing the need for policies and practices to increase connectedness and a sense of value and belonging for workers. [9]

Workplaces and their working conditions are central to addressing the sociodemographic determinants of health and inequalities, such as determinants related to income, race and ethnicity and gender; promoting a culture of diversity and inclusion so that nobody is left behind.

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[4] McGinnis JM, Williams-Russo P, Knickman JR. The case for more active policy attention to health promotion. Health Aff (Millward) 2002;21(2):78-93.

[5] Marmot M, Allen J, Goldblatt P et al. Fair society, healthy lives: strategic review of health inequalities in England post-2010; London: The Marmot Review.

[6] Health, work and health related worklessness: A guide for local authorities. 2016; London: Local Government Association.

[7] Centre for Mental Health. The economic and social costs of mental health problems in 2009/10. London: Centre for Mental Health, 2010.

[8] http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.3856915; Work, health and COVID-19: a literature review. SSRN. 2021; (published online June 7.)

[9] https://www.pewresearch.org/social-trends/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2020/12/PSDT_12.09.20_covid.work_fullreport.pdf

In addition, Workplace health requires a system-wide approach working at a collaborative and integrated level to meet future public health challenges and the ambitions of our Corporate and ICS and priorities.

The Slough Wellbeing Board is a partnership between organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors in Slough. In 2020, the Board developed the Slough Wellbeing Strategy 2020 to 2025.[10] This strategy has four key priority areas; one of which is Workplace Health, which the Board will seek to address to improve the health and wellbeing of the people of Slough. The board approved a proposal in May 2022 to take forward the next steps in establishing a workplace health partnership to deliver on this priority, along with a supporting budget.

Purpose & Objectives

The Workplace Health Steering Group has been set up by the Wellbeing Board to support the development and delivery of the ambitions and actions of Workplace Health (Priority 4).

Governance and Accountability

The group will be accountable to the joint Slough Wellbeing Board.

Scope

1. All workplaces in the Slough borough, including home remote working and businesses without a physical building or office.
2. A focus on diversity and inclusion plus addressing workplace health inequalities.
3. A short, medium and long term scope reflecting the current COVID 19 pandemic and its impact on workplace health.

Roles and Functions

- provide leadership and operational steer in delivering the priorities outlined in the joint Slough Wellbeing Strategy
- develop a joint policy statement through partnership working
- provide advice, support and assistance in developing strategy for improving Workplace Health
- assist in the promotion of an organisational culture of health and wellbeing across workforces
- support the development of a structure to support the programme management and monitor identified and emerging risks and advise on their prevention, mitigation and management
- recognise both barriers and enablers to healthy lifestyles within the workplace, and assist in developing initiatives to address these
- monitor the programme budget and expenditure
- provide governance for task and finish groups delivering the plan

Membership

The group is formed of members from a range of organisations, all with an interest in Workplace Health:

Name	Role	Organisation	Contact
Vanita Dutta *Chair	Public Health Principal & Consultant in Public Health cover	Slough BC	Vanita.dutta@slough.gov.uk
Shirley O'Brien	PH Lead/Prog Mgr.	Slough BC	Shirley.Obrien@slough.gov.uk
Adrian Davis	Partnership Manager	Dept. of Work and Pensions	adrian.davies1@dwp.gov.uk
Ramesh Kukar	Slough Council for Voluntary Service	CVS	ramesh@sloughcvs.org.ul

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[10] slough-wellbeing-board-strategy-2020-2025

Kam Birdie	Localities, Community Development and Leisure Lead	SBC Place and Community Directorate	kam.birdie@slough.gov.uk
David Saab		Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce	DavidSaab@tvchamber.co.uk
Bob Jones	SBCP Company Secretary	Slough Business Community Partnership (SBCP)	bob@sbcp.co.uk
Dipak Misty	OH/Human Resources	Slough BC	Dipak.Mistry@slough.gov.uk
Simon Lawrence	Frimley Health	Frimley ICB	simon.lawrence6@nhs.net
Christine Ford	Diversity & Inclusion Lead	Slough BC	equalities@slough.gov.uk
Andre Ansah	REACH (race, equalities and celebrating heritage	ASC, Slough BC	Andre.ansah@slough.gov.uk
Gaby Koenig	Women's Network	Slough BC	Gabrielle.Koenig@slough.gov.uk
Liam Tower	Disabilities Network	Slough BC	Liam.Toner@slough.gov.uk
Carers network	Interim Group Manager, Market Management People, Strategy and Commissioning	Slough BC	Sally.kitson@slough.gov.uk
Thames Valley Police			To be confirmed
Frimley Healthcare Trust			To be confirmed
Note-Taker – Maria McCann	Public Health Business Support	Slough BC	Maria.mccann@slough.gov.uk
			More members to be confirmed, from local business partnerships and Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service?

Members will nominate an informed and suitable representative to attend in their stead if they are unable to attend any meeting.

Membership of the group will be reviewed at least every 6 months and subject to the frequency in attendance of members.

Administration

- The group will meet monthly via Teams or in person
- Meetings will be chaired by Vanita Dutta
- An underpinning Programme Management framework will be developed to monitor and track deliverables and timelines
- Programme and highlight reports will be provided to the Slough Wellbeing Board as and when required

- Agenda items to be submitted to the (admin support) by close of play five working days prior to the next meeting
- Agenda and meeting papers to be distributed at least 5 days prior to the scheduled meeting
- Meeting notes to be circulated no later than 7 days post meeting
- Administrative support will be provided by Slough Borough Council

Quorum
A quorum will be 50% attendance of the membership.