

INTRODUCING A MENOPAUSE POLICY

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 1.1 That HR Ctte support the proposed policy put forward.

2. INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The council takes the menopause very seriously and wants to support its' employees in this regard.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Discussions have already taken place with the unions with a view to agreeing a council policy through the Employee Side Liaison Panel.
- 3.2 The council wants to be clear as to the ways in which support can be given to those who are experiencing menopausal symptoms.

4. ISSUES FOR CONSIDERATION

- 4.1 The impact of the menopause on people is gradually being recognised. More studies have been conducted which show the true extent of the symptoms which people may experience which can include depression and anxiety.
- 4.2 In some cases, the symptoms can be so severe that they have been classed as a disability under the Equality Act 2010.
- 4.3 A range of reasonable adjustments are available, and managers are encouraged to have open discussions to support employees during this difficult time.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 No direct financial implications

6. CRIME & DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None

7. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None

8. EQUALITY & DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 8.1 The policy will apply equally to all staff who are experiencing menopausal symptoms.

9. DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS

- 9.1 Any information provided by an employee will be treated in the strictest confidence.

10. EMT COMMENTS

10.1 EMT were pleased to support the introduction of a menopause policy.

11 EMPLOYEE SIDE COMMENTS

11.1 Employee Side would like the following additions/changes made to the wording of the policy:

Policy Statement – To add the following

New Forest District Council is committed to ensuring the health and safety and wellbeing of all the workforce, and will ensure the workplace does not make the menopausal symptoms of employees worse.

This policy is part of New Forest District Council's commitment to equality and diversity. We are committed to creating a workplace that respects and values each other's differences, that promotes dignity and combats prejudice, discrimination and harassment. This policy seeks to benefit the welfare of individual members of staff; retain valued employees; improve morale and performance and enhance the reputation of New Forest District Council as an employer of choice.

New Forest District Council recognises that many of the changes to workplace culture and adjustments offered here may not only be of benefit to workers experiencing the menopause, but to all staff

Introduction – To replace the first 3 paragraphs with the following:

The menopause is a natural transition stage in most women's lives. For some it will be medically induced. It is marked by changes in the hormones and the woman stops having periods. Women may have a wide range of physical and psychological symptoms whilst experiencing the menopause and peri-menopause and may often encounter difficulties at work as a result of their symptoms.

They will be affected in different ways and to different degrees over different periods of time, and menopausal symptoms can often indirectly affect their partners, families and colleagues as well.

Managers should also be aware that trans men non-binary people and intersex people or people with variations in sex characteristics may also experience menopause. ~~and non-binary employees may also experience menopause-related symptoms.~~

To add these two issues to the list of symptoms, and this statement

- vaginal dryness or pain
- Osteoporosis

Menopausal symptoms may also exacerbate existing impairments and conditions that those affected may already be struggling to cope with.

Internal Support

Managers should make allowances should there be an additional need for sickness absence by employees experiencing the menopause in order to manage their menopausal symptoms. Absence will be recorded as related to menopausal symptoms and managers will consider such absence as an ongoing condition requiring the consideration of reasonable adjustments and flexibility in absence procedure triggers. Further details can be found in the '***Sickness absence policy and procedure***' ***[include a link or signpost to the appropriate policy]***.

All policies and procedures should take account of the effects of the menopausal symptoms to ensure that employees experiencing the menopause are not disadvantaged as a result of their symptoms.

All requests for support or adjustments must be dealt with confidentially and in accordance with the data protection policy.

External support – to add these two links to NHS information

- www.nhs.uk/conditions/menopause
- www.nhs.uk/conditions/early-menopause

For further information contact:

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Background Papers:

Menopause Policy
Appendix 1