

PAPER D – WORKPLACE HEALTH & WELLBEING / GOOD WORK

1. Summary

- 1.1. This paper sets out the importance of workplace health and wellbeing / Good Work principles in the context of productivity and the achievement of HEY LEP aims and objectives.
- 1.2. It also proposes the development of a health & wellbeing / Good Work initiative for the HEY LEP.

2. Background

- 2.1. The economic cost of ill health on the UK's economy is estimated at £100 billion each year. Public Health England have estimated that the cost for the HEY region is around £872 million per annum (not accounting for health inequalities which may make the working population more vulnerable to poor health).
- 2.2. Employers have a pivotal role to play in creating healthy and inclusive workplaces, but often lack the time, resources or expertise to take the right steps, especially among SMEs which make up the majority of the Hull and East Yorkshire employer base.
- 2.3. The region needs more employers to adopt good work policies and practices that support employee health and wellbeing in its widest sense. The HEY LEP can facilitate this by bringing together the various tools and resources already made available by government, public sector partners and relevant professional bodies.
- 2.4. The HEY LEP Employment & Skills team held exploratory discussions with colleagues from the CIPD (the professional body for HR and people development) and Public Health England to discuss the feasibility of developing a health and wellbeing / Good Work initiative for the HEY LEP region.
- 2.5. The CIPD (Human Resources professional membership body) has supported this type of work in other areas and is keen to work with the HEY LEP to develop something similar for this region.
- 2.6. The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (formerly Public Health England) are also interested in collaborating and supporting this work.
- 2.7. There are already considerable resources available for employers which can be brought together for the benefit of the HEY LEP region and enhanced with other local service provision, projects and initiatives.

3. What might a HEY LEP health & wellbeing / Good Work initiative look like?

3.1. Health and wellbeing at work is multi-faceted. Examples of similar initiatives in other areas of the UK incorporate some of the following aspects:

- 3.1.1. Employment terms & contracts – committing to not using unnecessary forms of insecure employment allowing employees to have more security over their income.
- 3.1.2. Flexible working – giving employees the opportunity to work flexibly where possible.
- 3.1.3. Real Living Wage – work towards paying the Real Living Wage allowing employees a decent standard of living.
- 3.1.4. Good people management – investing in the training and development of the workforce, including managers ensuring good people management processes and creating high performing organisations.
- 3.1.5. Inclusive recruitment processes – being open to the diverse talent available in all HEY LEP communities, making adjustments for employees with disabilities or additional needs and recognising where neurodiversity can bring unique benefits to a workforce.
- 3.1.6. Health & wellbeing – supporting the mental and physical health of employees including making adjustments for people with long term conditions and disabilities, delivering high standards of health & safety in the workplace and reducing the costs of absences.
- 3.1.7. Repository of resources for employers – a collection of helpful resources from professional bodies and public services made available and promoted to local employers.

4. Proposal

4.1. A phased and evolutive approach to developing a health and wellbeing / Good Work initiative:

Phase 1- the creation of a repository of resources for employers. Content will be drawn from the CIPD, ACAS, The Office for Health Improvement and Disparities (formerly Public Health England) and local NHS and Council services.

Phase 2 – The creation of an Employer Charter which incorporates other aspects of “Good Work” (examples given in paragraph 3), with the recommendation that it prioritises health and wellbeing and inclusive recruitment processes in the first instance.

Phase 3 – evolution of the Employment Charter further to include other aspects of “Good Work”, the specific themes to be agreed by the Employment & Skills Board.

4.2 LEP Board approval and support would be sought for Phases 2 and 3.

5. Contribution to delivery of LEP priorities

5.1. This initiative will contribute towards the following HEY LEP aims and objectives:

- Increased productivity – reducing absenteeism and presenteeism by supporting employees with physical and mental health matters and broader aspects of wellbeing
- Social inclusion – through the promotion of inclusive and accessible recruitment and the recognition of employability standards e.g. Disability Confident
- Supporting labour market participation – through increased employer awareness and support of workplace health initiatives
- A healthy workforce – through increased employer awareness and support of workplace health initiatives.

6. Recommendations

6.1. The Board agrees to support and champion the principles of a HEY LEP workplace health / Good Work initiative consistent with the objectives set out in Priority 3 of the draft HEY LEP Economic Growth and Workforce Wellbeing strategy.

6.2. The Board mandates the HEY LEP Employment & Skills team to develop a workplace health & wellbeing / Good Work initiative for Hull & East Yorkshire focussing initially on the three themes identified in paragraph 4.2.

6.3. The Board is asked to suggest a name/branding options for the initiative.