

Appendix 4

Wellbeing Offer at Havering Council report for Overview and Scrutiny Meeting 03 July 2025

The wellbeing offer to Havering employees is designed to ensure that staff feel supported and valued in their roles. It includes a range of initiatives such as mental health support, fitness programs, and flexible working arrangements. These measures aim to create a positive work environment that promotes both physical and emotional health, allowing employees to contribute effectively to the community they serve.

The four pillars of wellbeing that underpin this offer are:

- **Psychological Wellbeing:** Providing resources and support to help employees manage stress and mental health challenges.
- **Physical Wellbeing:** Encouraging fitness and healthy lifestyle choices through various programs and resources.
- **Social Wellbeing:** Fostering a sense of community and belonging through team-building activities and social events.
- **Financial Wellbeing:** Offering financial planning assistance and education to empower employees in managing their finances and securing their future.

Together, these dimensions create a holistic approach to employee wellness, promoting a balanced and thriving work environment that leads to increased productivity and job satisfaction.

Havering could establish a standalone wellbeing budget specifically allocated to initiatives that support the four pillars of wellbeing for employees. This dedicated budget will allow for the implementation of specialised programs, workshops, and resources tailored to employee needs, without affecting other operational funds.

By investing directly in comprehensive wellbeing initiatives, Havering can proactively address potential health issues, reduce absenteeism, and enhance overall employee engagement and retention.

The current wellbeing offer encompasses a range of initiatives aimed at supporting the physical, mental, financial, and social wellbeing of employees.

Psychological support – employees have access to a range of mental health and counselling support services such as:

- **Mental Health First Aiders** – Currently we have over 50 trained Mental Health First Aiders who have all completed 2 days Mental Health First Aid England training. Mental Health First Aiders are available for employees to contact if they are feeling emotionally overwhelmed, stressed, or depressed.
- **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)*** - currently powered by PAM ASSIST, who provide a professional independent service that offers support, guidance and counselling for a wide range of issues and concerns

employees may have. The service is confidential, available 24/7, and free to employees and dependents living at home. Employees are also able to seek support in dealing with Relationships, Legal, Domestic Abuse, Work Related Stress and many other life events.

- **Webinars** – As part of the Wellbeing Calendar of events to mark key awareness days throughout the year, webinars will be delivered to support employees in gaining knowledge and awareness of issues such as Stress, Burnout and Work/Life balance.
- **Communication** – regular mental health communication is shared via the 'All Company (LBH)' community page on Viva Engage, key mental health messages are posted via the intranet to the 'Big News' and 'News From Around The Council' sections.

*Following a procurement tender exercise, a new Employee Assistance Programme provider has been established. Optima Health commenced EAP support in May 2025 – data relating the the services and engagement will be accessible from quarter 1 (August 2025).

A series of webinars have been provided by our internal Wellbeing Consultant and an example of some of these are:

1. Burnout Awareness
2. Stress Management
3. Stress Management & Positive Mindset
4. Achieving Work/Life Balance
5. Anxiety & Stress
6. Wellbeing@Christmas
7. Wellbeing is Wealth.

The average cost for a webinar/speaker can range between £250 - £3000, therefore potentially savings to Havering range between £1,750 - £21,000.

Physical support – employees have access to a range of physical support and employee benefits such as:

- **York Test** - With 40 years' experience in food intolerance and food allergy testing, and as a leading home health test provider, York Test works with employees to optimise their diet and help take control of their health and wellbeing. By partnering with York Test, Havering employees receive a 40% discount.
- **Staff Badminton** - Every Monday, between 6pm – 7pm employees can take part in an hour-long badminton session held at Barking & Dagenham College.
- **Simplyhealth** - Havering partner with Simplyhealth to offer employee Health Plans. Employees can take advantage of discounted rates, extra benefits and start claiming money back towards everyday health treatments and access to virtual health services. The Simplyhealth health plan allows employees to claim their money back towards everyday health treatments such as optician appointments and glasses, dental treatments and body maintenance such as physiotherapy, podiatry and much more.

- **Everyone Active** - Everyone Active operate the leisure facilities owned by Havering Council, as part of the contract with Everyone Active, employees have access to discounted membership at the various leisure centres across the borough, discount will depend on the leisure centre employees choose to join.
- **Eye Care Scheme** – employees are able to claim £25 toward the cost of an eye test and £55 towards the cost of glasses for VDU. If the eye test or glasses are less than the maximum amount quoted, only the expenditure incurred will be reimbursed against receipts.
- **YMCA Romford** – Havering based employees who have been diagnosed with, or are receiving treatment for, cancer you are eligible for a free 10-week programme, subject to funding being available and instructor availability.
- **Occupational Health*** - Our provider for Occupational Health (OH) is People Asset Management Group Limited (PAM). PAM's approach focuses on supporting the physiological & psychological wellbeing of individuals from both a proactive and reactive perspective, which means a collaborative approach within PAM to work together to support you. PAM Occupational Health is a nursed led service and it aims to prevent illness and supporting the management of sickness absence.*
- **Communication** – regular health related communication is shared via the 'All Company (LBH)' community page on Viva Engage, key health messages are posted via the intranet to the 'Big News' and 'News From Around the Council' sections.

*Following a procurement tender exercise a new Occupation Health provider has been established. Optima Health commenced OH support in May 2025 – data relating to engagement and access will be available from August 2025

Social support – employees have access to a range social support available to them:

- **Staff forums** - employees can join staff forums that provide a platform for employees to discuss concerns, share ideas, and receive support from colleagues. These forums are designed to foster a sense of community and collaboration, helping to build strong professional relationships and encouraging open communication within the organisation.
- **Current Staff Forums:**
 - Women's Forum
 - Men's Forum
 - RISE Forum
 - Ability Forum
 - Faith Forum
 - Young Professionals Forum
 - LGBTQ+ Forum
 - Climate Change Forum
 - Neurodiversity Forum.

- **Learning Roulette** – Employees can join in the Learning Roulette, where they are randomly paired with another employee in the organisation once a month for a brief discussion.
- **Mentor Connect** - Mentor Connect provides tailored Mentor and Mentee matches. It supports career development with the added search criterion of protected characteristics, and it also formalises and facilitates the learning and sharing of knowledge across boroughs.
- **Havering Libraries** - free activities in libraries like regular Reading Groups, Knit and Natter meetings, Baby Bounce sessions, Games Clubs, Poetry Groups and Author events.

Financial support – employees have access to financial support and employee benefits such as:

- **Salary Finance** - Salary Finance are trusted by Havering Council to offer you the option to borrow fairly and securely through your salary fix rate is 13.9% however they provide afford loans between 5.9% - 29.9% APR. On average, Salary Finance are saving employees over £100 per month when consolidating their debts, that's a yearly saving of over £1,200. The 'price promise', guarantees to offer the lowest APR in the market for loans of £5,000 or less.
- Vivup Discount Platform - Vivup is the provider of our staff benefits and health and wellbeing initiatives. From groceries to clothing and discounts local to your place of work, save more on the items you need and want!
 - **Home & Electronics Salary Sacrifice** - budgeting household essentials and appliance breakdowns is expensive. With the Home and Electronics salary sacrifice scheme, employees can access the must-haves in a more manageable way.
 - **Cycle to Work** - enables employees to save up to 42% on the latest bikes, high-vis clothing and safety accessories for their commute to and from work.
- **CSSC Membership** – a not-for-profit, membership, organisation for over 140,000 colleagues from the civil service and public sector provide free days out, fantastic sports, and health and wellbeing benefits, together with savings, discounts and offers on a huge range of retail and leisure opportunities.
- **Boundless Membership** - is an exclusive membership club for public sector and civil service staff, delivering amazing experiences, days out and a range of savings and discounts on visits to top UK attractions with Kids Pass, as well as superb dining and coffee discounts with Tastecard and Coffee Club.
- **Stc Payroll Giving** – a tax-free, secure, and flexible way for employees to give to their favourite causes and charities.
- **Havering Libraries** – employees who live, work or study in Havering can have a Havering Libraries card and this can save them money, giving them access to free physical books from any of our ten libraries but also access to

thousands of free eBooks, audiobooks and bestselling magazines such as Cosmopolitan, Gardeners' World, Hello!, Men's Health, The Photographer, Radio Times etc.

By offering a comprehensive wellbeing package, Havering not only demonstrates a commitment to the health and happiness of its workforce, but also reaps tangible benefits. Investing in employee wellbeing results in a healthier, more engaged, and motivated workforce, which in turn leads to increased productivity and creativity.

Furthermore, it helps to reduce absenteeism and turnover rates, ensuring that valuable skills and knowledge are retained within the organisation.

By Havering establishing a dedicated wellbeing budget, this would be proactive approach that not only addresses existing health concerns but also prevents potential issues from arising, creating a positive and supportive work environment where employees can thrive.

Proactive wellbeing initiatives:

In October 2024, in collaboration with our Occupational Health provider, People Asset Management (PAM), and Health Champion from My Health Matters, HR Wellbeing Consultant organised Blood Pressure Screening events at the Town Hall. These events provided professional advice on maintaining healthy blood pressure levels and early detection of potential health issues. The event had a 74% attendance rate (39 colleagues).

Recently, in partnership with The Chiro Collection and Romford & Ilford Chiropractic Centre, we held Spine & Nervous System talks and free Spinal Analysis Assessments. These sessions included a health talk on stress, posture, and the relationship between the spine and the nervous system, followed by individual spinal analysis assessments.

Participants received an 80% discount voucher, extended to the entire organisation and family members. Events took place at the Town Hall and Langtons House. Over the course of the 3 events, 90 employees attended, with 51 utilising the voucher offer so far.

Our HR Wellbeing Consultant ensured these events were cost-neutral to Havering, saving £885.

By accessing the corporate discount provided employees have saved collectively £10,710 and £210 individually.

In addition to these events, in collaboration with our LGBTQ+ Staff Forum and Public Health colleagues, an HIV testing event and awareness sessions to mark HIV/STI Awareness Week was held in February. These sessions provided crucial

information on the prevention, testing, and treatment of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Free and confidential HIV testing was available to both employees and members of the public, fostering a greater understanding of the importance of regular health checks and promoting a stigma-free approach to sexual health.

These initiatives have set a positive precedent for future wellbeing programs and demonstrate a keen interest from employees in proactively managing their physical wellbeing.

A new provider for our Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme has been identified who will be able to support our efforts to reduce sickness absence linked to MSK, Stress, and Mental Health:

Musculoskeletal (MSK):

- Mitigate issues by reviewing role risk matrices
- Using mobile screening units and onsite assessments to monitor and address concerns.

Stress and mental health:

- Discussing issues using clinical tool results with employee and Manager.
- Use case conferences to manage and effectively resolve issues.

Stress Strategy, Risk Assessment and Standard.

HR L&OD colleagues are collaborating with Health & Safety colleagues to review the Stress strategy and Stress Risk Assessment information and proactively promote this support mechanism with potential training and targeted communications for Managers.

Havering also has a Stress Management Standard, the Standard describes the Council's commitment to identifying the sources of work-related stress and the arrangements put in place to minimise, as far as is reasonably practicable, the effects they may have on employees.

Council's Commitment to Stress Management

The London Borough of Havering is fully committed to ensuring the health, safety and welfare of its employees. It acknowledges its responsibility to identify sources of work-related stress and as far as it is reasonably practicable to minimise the effects they may have on their employees.

These include both pro- active and reactive measures to manage work related stress and the support available to staff.

The standard clearly sets out responsibilities for the following:

- General Management
- Directors
- Line Managers
- HR
- H&S
- Trade Unions
- Employees

Occupational Health Reports

Efforts have been made to ensure Occupational Health reports from People Asset Management are clear, concise, and supportive for Managers in addressing stress and knowing the next steps.

Over time, these proactive approaches have the potential to reduce costs associated with sickness absence related to back, neck, and musculoskeletal problems, as well as the impact of stress and mental health on the body.

Sickness reporting.

The Council's overview and scrutiny committee raised concerns about the high levels of sickness absences in Havering, and the high use of "Other" as the must used reason for the sickness absence.

With a view to know how best to support employees through Health & Wellbeing initiatives, the following changes will be applied as of 1st April 2025:

- 1) Remove "Other" and "Stress, Depression & Mental Health" as valid sickness reasons – i.e. end date these reasons at close of business on 31st March 2025 so they no longer appear as sickness reasons in the dropdown list effective 1st April 2025.
- 2) Add 6 new sickness reasons to the dropdown list (under Sickness absence type), effective from 1st April 2025:
 - a. Benign & Malignant Tumours - Cancers
 - b. Endocrine & Glandular
 - c. Mental Health - Anxiety/depression/other psychiatric illnesses
 - d. Mental Health - Non Work Related Stress
 - e. Mental Health - Work Related Stress
 - f. Skin, dermatological
- 3) Rename 4 existing sickness reasons as per below, effective 1st April 2025:
 - a. Chest & Respiratory to be updated to "Chest & Respiratory or Asthma Related"
 - b. Eye, Ear, Nose & Mouth/Dental to be updated to "Ear, Nose & Throat and Eye and Dental"
 - c. Infections to be updated to "Cold / Flu & Infections"
 - d. Neurological to be updated to "Headache, Migraine, Neurological"

Communications were issued to all managers impacted by these changes and work was carried out to ensure all categories were updated to reflect these amendments. It is expected to provide more well rounded workforce data reports.

Learning Experience Platform (LXP)

Based on extensive feedback from the Council, the LXP Support Team, in collaboration with the HR L&OD team, is introducing new streamlined and simpler processes for PDRs and monthly 1:1 Check-ins on the LXP.

The focus will be on employee wellbeing, which will now be a key component of check-ins, with employees being asked to rate their current levels of wellbeing. This implementation will allow the L&OD Team to export reports from the LXP on employees' wellbeing ratings, enabling the HR Wellbeing Consult and HR&OD Team to monitor the wellbeing of employees.

We believe Havering will be the only London Local Authority with this ability and shows how HR L&OD are being both innovative and proactive in its approach to employee wellbeing.

Stats Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme - April 2024 – March 2025.

Employee Assistance Programme:

- During the reporting period 69 individuals made 99 calls, of those 85 calls were for counselling, 14 legal calls with 84% identifying a Female at birth and 16% as Male a birth.
- 45 % of those calls were made by those born between 1980 – 1994 (Millennials)
- Top 3 reason were: Mental Health, Relationships and Anxiety.
- Of the 99 calls, 28 were referred for structured therapy which resulted in 131 therapy sessions being delivered.
- Following this therapy improvements were seen in generalised anxiety (45.0% improvement in GAD-7) and depression (48.2% improvement in PHQ-9)

Condensed Call Reason													
YEAR	2024												Total
Call Category	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	
Mental Health	1	8	4	4	2	5	3	3	5	5	7	6	53
Work		3			1	2		2	2	1	3		14
Relationships	1		1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3			12
Financial						1	1	1		3	2		7
Legal					1	2	1			3			7
Health	1			2				1					4
Trauma	1							1					2
Total	4	11	5	8	5	10	6	9	8	15	12	6	99

Referral Type													
YEAR	2024												Total
Referral Type	April	May	June	July	August	September	October	November	December	January	February	March	
In The Moment Support	2	10	4	3	5	6	3	8	6	11	9	4	71
Telephone Counselling	1	1	1	2			2	1		2	1	1	12
Video Counselling						2	1		2	2	1		8
Remote CBT				3									3
Face-To-Face CBT	1					1							2
Face-To-Face Counselling						1						1	2
Online CBT											1		1
Total	4	11	5	8	5	10	6	9	8	15	12	6	99

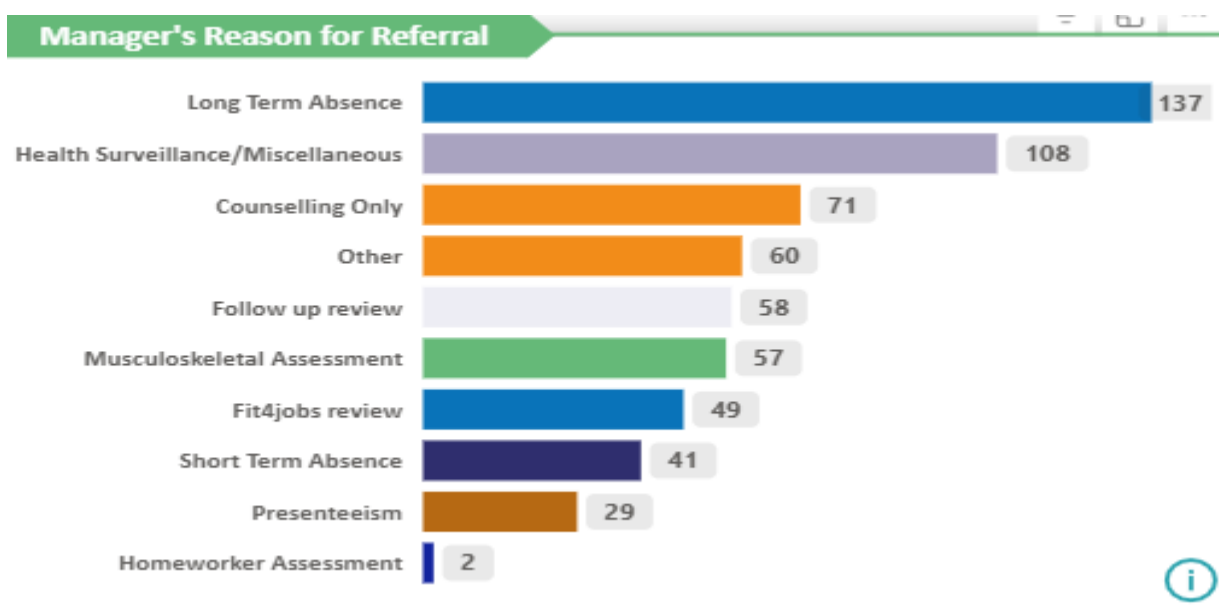
Counselling													
YEAR	2024										2025		
ReasonForCall	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Total
Anxiety				1	1	2	1	1	2	4	2	2	16
Bereavement			1		1		2		2	1	1	1	9
Depression											1	1	2
Disciplinary					1			1	1				3
Domestic Abuse and Violence	1												1
General Family	1			1		1	1						4
Health - Mental	1	8	3	3									15
Health - Physical	1			1				1					3
Life Transitions						3			1		1		5
Lifestyle				1									1
Low Mood								2			2	2	6
Management Advice		1								1			2
Relationships			1	1	1			1	1	3			8
Traumatic Incident								1					1
Workplace Conflict									1		1		2
WRS - Change											1		1
WRS - Demands						1							1
WRS - Relationships						1					1		2
WRS - Role								1					1
WRS - Workload		2											2
Total	4	11	5	8	4	8	4	8	8	9	10	6	85

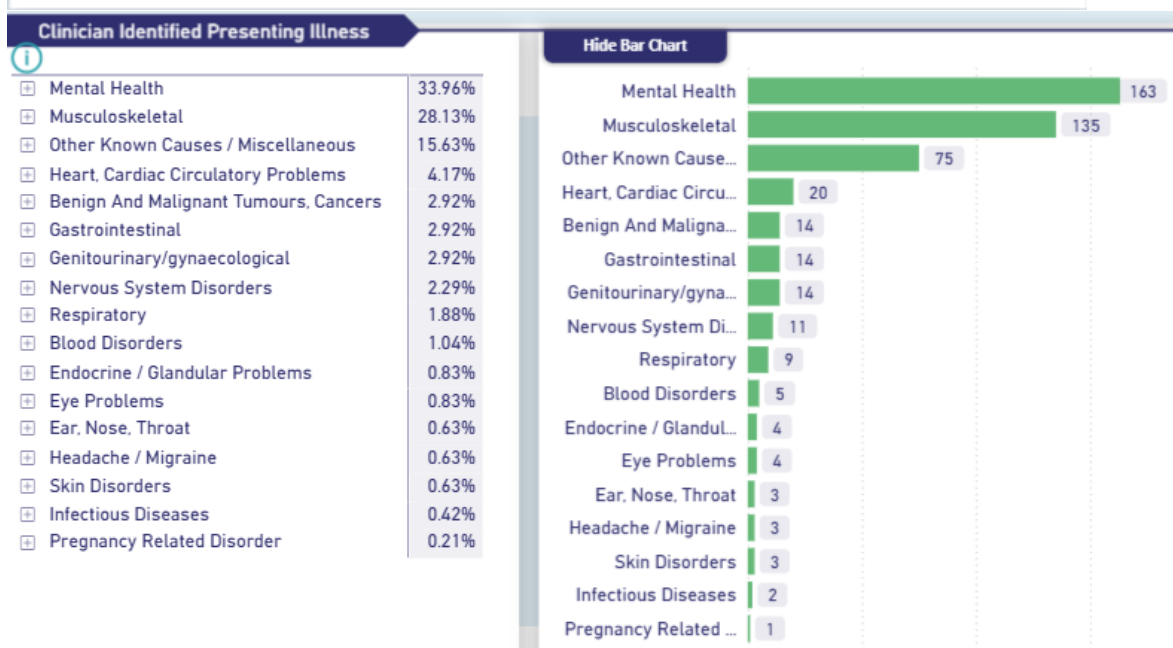
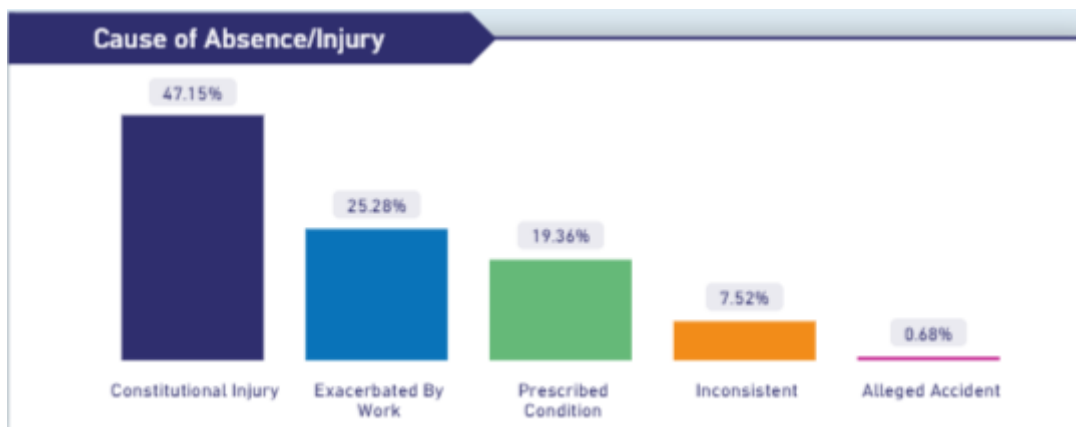
Average GAD-7 Scores			
Category	Start of Therapy	End of Therapy	Improvement (%)
Moderate Anxiety	12.8	5.0	60.9%
Mild Anxiety	7.8	6.5	16.1%
Severe Anxiety	18.5	10.5	43.2%
Total	13.0	7.2	45.0%

Average PHQ-9 Scores			
Category	Start of Therapy	End of Therapy	Improvement (%)
Mild Depression	7.5	3.0	60.0%
Moderately Severe Depression	16.8	5.2	69.0%
Moderate Depression	11.0	6.7	39.4%
Severe Depression	21.7	16.7	23.1%
Total	15.2	7.8	48.2%

Occupational Health:

- During the reporting period, 612 referrals were made for 333 employees, with 658 appointments booked.
- Reasons for referral: case management 53.10%, MSK 17.48%, Wellbeing 11.76%, Health Surveillance 9.80%, vaccinations and boosts 6.37% and Neurodiversity 1.47%.
- Vaccinations administered 32.





Health Surveillance:

