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To: Personnel Committee – 30 January 2009

Subject: Work & Wellbeing Activity and Health Check Update

Classification: Unrestricted

SUMMARY: This paper informs Personnel Committee of (i) the Work & Wellbeing Framework (ii) the fit4health programme 06/08 (iii) plans for 2009/10 to maintain and improve the health and wellbeing of KCC staff and (iv) Staff Health Check update

1. Context

- 1.1 KCC recognises that providing high quality services to the people of Kent is dependant on the performance of staff and therefore has promoted and addressed staff wellbeing since 2002 when the initiative was introduced through to the new framework and action plan for 2009/10.

One part of our Strategy for Staff commits us to fostering a healthy, lively and vibrant organisation where the physical environment, the nature of the job and the balance between home and work enable staff to work effectively, safely and to have fun.

2. The Work & Wellbeing Framework in Kent County Council

- 2.1 The outcomes to continuously improve organisational performance expected from investing in staff wellbeing include:
- staff feeling valued as individuals and for their work contribution
 - high levels of staff morale, motivation and job enjoyment, improving staff and organisational capacity, capability, resilience and performance
 - improved ability to recruit & retain high calibre staff that reflect the Kent community
 - reducing sickness absence (led through the Health Wellbeing & Attendance Project)
 - meeting our employer's duty of care responsibilities towards staff.

- 2.2 Work and Wellbeing activity is clustered around the 5 themed areas of:

1. Physical Health & Wellbeing
2. Mental & Emotional Health & Wellbeing
3. Social & Economic Wellbeing
4. Health Promotion
5. Organisational & People Management

- 2.3 Underlying principles drive Wellbeing activity based on the belief that:
- Taking a holistic and long term approach is the best way to achieve sustained improvements in staff wellbeing and performance
 - Focusing energy on getting the right balance across the dimensions of our lives (work, home, family, community, self) empowers staff to high performance (a high performance organisation needs its staff to deliver optimum performance when at work) not necessarily spend long periods at work
 - A high performing organisation deals robustly with poor performance, but does not focus on weaknesses because engaging staff interest and focusing on strengths is a more effective driver of positive outcomes.

3. Fit4health Programme 06/08

- 3.1 This programme was designed to offer something for everyone regardless of their geographic location or level of fitness and health. Additional support was targeted for those struggling with being substantially overweight, which addressed the personal concerns of individuals, recommendations from the select committee on obesity and the Public Health agenda. The programme covered physical activity, nutrition/healthy eating and psychological barriers to weight loss.

“The fit4health programme and its facilitators have given me so much information and support which has been useful in making diet and health, life-changing decisions” (CED)

3.2. Walking the World (April-July 2007)

275 staff took part in this virtual walking challenge, encouraging staff to walk more, including an office based member of staff clocking up 190,760 steps in one week.

“I’ll shortly be 50 the challenge has given me a push to raise my walking levels, I am so pleased to have lost a stone in weight over the 1st four weeks. It has proved a great, active fun way to get fit” (CFE)

3.3 Weight & Wellness (April 07 to July 08)

Four 12 week programmes were provided to staff with a significantly high Body Mass Index (obese/morbidly obese). The programme covered gym, group and individual support and advice. Outcomes from the first 3 programmes identified:

- 81% of participants believed their fitness had improved
- 70% that their physical activity had increased
- 95% that they feel more positive about themselves

“ I have now lost 12kgs and kept it off easily, in the past I would put any weight lost back on quickly”

3.4 Nutrition & Fitness (Sept/Nov 07)

2 weekend pilots were externally provided for staff who had nutrition/food related health conditions that linked to being overweight for example diabetes & food allergies. Due to mixed feedback this initiative was not developed further.

“The activities that I took part in gave me the opportunity to look at my lifestyle and recognise the changes I need to make. Some of these are extremely far reaching and need major changes. The activities made me realise I need to make these changes!”(CMY)

3.5 Activity Classes & Sessions

Staff needing additional support were offered a free term of an activity class provided through Adult Education Classes (salsa, exercise to music, stretch, strengthen & relax).

“I really enjoyed the stretch, exercise & relaxation class, the tutor is excellent and I have already enrolled in the September class along with another colleague from my team” (CFE)

Environment & Regeneration’s Wellbeing lead organised on site classes and sessions that staff paid for direct and included yoga, tai chi, line dancing, belly dancing, Nordic walking, Indian head massage, reflexology and chiropody.

3.6 Weight Loss Challenge (May 08 ongoing)

The challenge attracted 30 teams, with 407 staff from all directorates taking part. By November 08 the reported weight loss was an incredible 206 stone 1lb.

“one of the team members managed to lose over a stone (in just over a month) and three further members are already in double figures with their weight loss” (CFE)

3.7 Fitbug – Intelligent Pedometer & Online Support (June 08 to November 08)

70 staff who struggle with being overweight, took part in a 6 month pilot. Online recording of steps walked and food intake against targets is easily accessible with nutritional and activity advice provided on the interactive website. The pilot is being evaluated with staff saying they value the facility. A 25% fee reduction has been negotiated for KCC staff, accessible through Kent Rewards

“Of all the activities I have taken part in the fitbug scheme was by far the best and most enjoyable”

3.8 Activity/Fitness DVD Loan Service

Recognising busy lifestyles and economic factors for lower paid staff, a DVD loan service provides 45 titles for staff to borrow, covering dance, aerobic, stretch workouts, recognising lifestyle, lifecycle and diversity needs within the titles provided.

“It was great, in fact I went and bought one to use all the time and have lost 3 inches around my midriff, so you can imagine how pleased I am. I just needed a prod to get going again and at 62 it’s not easy to get motivated” (ASD)

4. Plans for 2009/10

4.1 In December 2008 the Workforce Strategy Board agreed that the priority theme for attention and resourcing during 09/10 is Organisational & People

Management, although key priorities in other themes will also be actioned as resources allow. This is a crucial theme to focus on in the current economic climate with the expectation of increased need and the necessity to make maximum use of KCC resources. This addresses the wellbeing dimension of how we do things here, through equipping managers to be confident in supporting the health & wellbeing of their staff, including through effective leadership which is vital to building and sustaining an organisational culture where staff can thrive and perform well. The 09/10 action plan is being consulted on to be ratified through the Workforce Strategy Board

4.2 Organisational Wellbeing & People Management Priority Areas

- Managing change well, recognising the people element of staff staying and leaving KCC within change initiatives
- Engaging staff at all levels, providing the time and mechanisms to address issues and ensure feedback particularly through change
- Promoting & managing a flexible environment
- Recruiting good people managers
- Leadership and management training, required elements for KCC managers
- Managing difficult conversations well – manager training
- Promoting and measuring wellbeing thorough Performance Indicators and business plans.

4.3 Priorities to be Actioned in Other Themes

4.3.1 Physical Health & Wellbeing

- From December 2008, 12 month Pilot of VirtualGym TV available to all KCC staff including those working in schools
- Continuation of the successful team weight loss challenge
- Piloting pain management & healthy backs training.

4.3.2 Mental & Emotional Health & Wellbeing

- Pilot return to work coaching, within KCC's case management approach to attendance management
- Continue provision of successful positive management of mental health training.

4.3.3 Social & Economic Wellbeing

- Continue providing FSA financial management training
- Promote wellbeing benefits in total reward communication.

4.3.4 Health Promotion

- Promote and evaluate Health check programme
- Provide annual calendar of health promotion topics with advice on Knet.

5. Health Check Programme

- 5.1 Personnel Committee requested an update on Health Check activity for the first year of the second three year programme. The health check is offered

free to staff and uptake is voluntary. The checks are conducted by a qualified nurse and cover:

- Blood Pressure
- Cholesterol test
- Urine Analysis – testing for diabetes and kidney problems
- Height, weight, Body Mass Index (BMI)
- Heart Disease Risk Score
- Stress review

5.2 Checks are provided at locations across the county usually at KCC premises. The target number of 300 health checks are now being provided each month. Health checks are not currently being provided to schools. Children, Families & Education are able to liaise with schools to enable purchase of this service for their staff from our external provider.

5.3 Statistical information January 08 to October 08

- 1,890 staff (1,410 women and 480 men) attended for a health check. This is 13% of KCC's non schools workforce. A take up of 40% for health checks is considered usual. It is anticipated that a 40% take up rate over the three year programme will be achieved.
- 12.2% of staff had blood pressure above 150/90. Normal/optimal blood pressure is 120/80mmHG. 140/90mmHg and over is diagnosed as hypertension. This is less than half of the level recorded in the general population in the South East of 26%. UK statistics for 2005 indicate that men typically have higher blood pressure than women.
- 26.6% of staff, had a cholesterol level above 5mmol, a desirable level is below 5mmol.
- 7.5% of staff smoke. This is significantly lower than national statistics with 2.6% men (25% nationally) and 4.9% of women (23% nationally) smoking. This is also a significant reduction from 11% of staff smoking (April 2006) and therefore not a major cause for concern.
- The percentage of staff declaring that their alcohol consumption exceeds the recommended level continues to be significantly lower than the national average. Alcohol consumption is therefore not a major cause for concern.
- 41.5% of staff indicated that they are experiencing a high level of stress.
- 30.7% of staff had a Body Mass Index above 25 (17.8% women, 12.9% men).

5.4 Feedback from staff and current priorities

Staff appreciate the health checks and that they are provided throughout the county and on KCC sites. Some people would like more in depth checks/advice and the checks continue to provide an 'early warning' mechanism, for example high blood pressure (stroke, heart/cardiac problems, diabetes). See appendix A for examples. Current activity to address issues highlighted include, promoting the facility to staff who would not usually consider having a health check, continuing to provide health

promotion advice and facilities through Work & Wellbeing activity (smoking, alcohol, healthy eating/lowering cholesterol).

6. Wellbeing - Additional Benefits, External Links & Acknowledgements

6.1 The Work & Wellbeing activity has created additional and unexpected benefits for example:

- Supporting environmental objectives (green travel plan) with staff walking & using their bikes more
- Staff engaging their families with activities including taking children on weekend walks and dog walking, using the fitness DVD's, thinking about nutrition and healthy eating, demonstrating that the good practice influence is spreading beyond KCC's workforce into the wider community
- Social events are planned by staff teams and groups that involve physical activity are very effective in team building and morale boosting
- Staff feeling valued and uplifted through involvement in the programmes
- Staff being encouraged to take part in fund raising activity that benefits the individual and the charity
- Improved awareness and appreciation of KCC services and Kent community, accessing Adult Education classes, county parks and Nordic walking provision
- Invitation to speak at a national conferences on KCC's fit4health programme
- Presenting to NHS, third and private sector partners through the Kent & Medway Physical Activity & Health Eating Alliance
- Media interest – People Management, Occupational Health Review publications, Radio Kent
- Advice/info requests from other local authorities on our approach and achievements
- Health Peer review – confirming staff awareness of and valuing Work & Wellbeing initiatives

7. Summary

Personnel Committee is asked to note the contents of the report.

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Appendix A

Health Check Feedback from Staff

- Very helpful and balanced advice
- Useful having computerized feedback
- Glad to receive info on cholesterol as it is not something I have had checked before
- Good to have health check at work as I did not have to travel
- Healthchecks are useful for making people aware of the importance of healthy living
- Information given will definitely help me to sort out my weight problem
- Good advice which can be followed easily
- Very efficient and professional
- A very good programme for checking general health
- Very good. Thought provoking
- Good as an informal view of health situation and information on things of concern in the back of my mind
- A test for bowel cancer would be reassuring as it is known as a 'silent cancer'
- Outreach to pockets of KCC staff would be helpful i.e. on specific sites

Appendix B

Reference documents

- Working for a healthier tomorrow (March 2008) – Dame Carol Black's review of the health of Britain's working age population
- Improving health and work: changing lives (Nov 2008) – The Government's response to 'the Black Review'
- Mental Health and Work (March 2008) – Cross Government Health and Wellbeing Programme
- HSE Management standards – Previously Stress Management Standards
- Investors in People (5-7) – New IIP profile Indicator 3
- No one written off: reforming welfare to reward responsibility – Green paper (2008)
- 'Health, work and well-being – Caring for our future' strategy (2005)
- DWP Building Capacity for Work (work rehabilitation), Health, Wellbeing
- Creating a healthy workplace – guidance from the faculties of Public Health and Occupational Medicine (2006)
- Choosing Health: Making Healthy Choices (2004) - DOH
- Working life: employee attitudes and engagement CIPD (2006) -Kingston University & Ipsos/Mori