**PEAK
DISTRICT
NATIONAL
PARK**

WELL BEING AT WORK POLICY

CONTENTS

1. Introduction

The Peak District National Park Authority (the Authority) has developed a Well Being at Work policy to manage its obligations to maintain the mental health and wellbeing of all staff. It covers the Authority's commitment to employee health, the responsibilities of managers and others for maintaining psychological health, health promotion initiatives, communicating and training on health issues, the range of support available for the maintenance of mental health and organisational commitment to handling individual issues.

2. Aim

The aim of this policy is to describe the Authority's commitment to the mental health and wellbeing of employees in its broadest, holistic sense, setting out how the Authority fulfils its legal obligations, the responsibilities of different functions and specialists and the range of services available to help employees maintain health and wellbeing. The Authority recognises that wellbeing and performance are linked. Improving employees' ability to handle pressure and to balance work and home life will ultimately lead to improved individual and organisational performance.

3. The Authority's commitment

The Authority has legal obligations under health and safety legislation to manage risks to the health and safety of its employees. In addition to reducing safety risks, this means operating in a way that minimises harm to employees' mental health, for example by ensuring that the demands of jobs are not unacceptable and having policies and procedures in place to support individuals experiencing mental ill health at work.

The Authority will put in place measures to prevent and manage risks to employee wellbeing, together with appropriate training and individual support. It will also seek to foster a mentally healthy culture by incorporating these principles into line manager training and running regular initiatives to raise awareness of mental health issues at work.

The Authority will regularly monitor staff wellbeing at work through surveys and focus groups so that 'wellbeing' is clearly defined and understood, and enables development of strategies for the improvement of individual and organisational performance.

4. Responsibilities

The Peak District National Park Authority

The Authority has a legal duty of care to employees to ensure health at work, as set out in the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999. The Authority will ensure that its policies and practices reflect this duty and review the operation of these documents at regular intervals.

Line managers

Line managers will put in place measures to minimise the risks to employee wellbeing, particularly from negative pressure at work. Managers must familiarise themselves with the Health and Safety Executive's stress management standards, and use these to mitigate psychological risks in their teams. For example, managers should ensure that employees understand their role within the team and receive the necessary information and support from managers and team members to do their job. Managers must also familiarise themselves with the Authority's Equality in Employment policy and Statement on Harassment at Work in order to support staff, for example on bullying and harassment issues.

In particular, line managers must ensure that they take steps to reduce the risks to employee health and wellbeing by:

- ensuring that the right people are recruited to the right jobs and that a good match is obtained between individuals recruited and job descriptions/specifications;
- keeping employees in the team up to date with developments at work and how these might affect their job and workload;
- ensuring that employees know who to approach with problems concerning their role and how to pursue issues with senior management;
- making sure jobs are designed fairly and that work is allocated appropriately between teams; and
- ensuring that work stations are regularly assessed to ensure that they are appropriate and fit for purpose.

Human resources

The HR service will develop policies and procedures to protect the wellbeing of employees, assist line managers in supporting individuals, and liaise as appropriate with occupational health and other medical professionals, with the object of helping employees to maintain good psychological health.

Occupational health Unit

Occupational health professionals will provide a service designed to help employees stay in work, or to return to work, after experiencing mental health problems. This will include preparing medical assessments of individuals' fitness for work following referrals from line managers and the HR service, liaising with GPs and working with individuals to help them to retain employment.

Occupational health professionals will play a critical part in developing rehabilitation plans for employees returning to work after absences related to mental ill health, and work with GPs and line managers to ensure that return to work is successful.

Employees

Employees must take responsibility for managing their own health and wellbeing, by adopting good health behaviours (for example in relation to diet, alcohol consumption and smoking) and informing the Authority if they believe work or the work environment poses a risk to their health. Any health-related information disclosed by an employee during discussions with managers, the HR service or the occupational health unit is treated in confidence.

5. Stress risk assessment

The Authority will take all reasonable steps to reduce health and safety risks from stress in the workplace to as low a level as reasonably practicable.

Causes of stress (stressors) will be identified and managed. A suitable and sufficient assessment of the risk of these stressors will be undertaken. Identified risks will be reduced to as low as is reasonably practicable through safe systems of work, suitable equipment and information and training. Employees will make proper use of any equipment and systems of work provided for their safety.

Any reports of stress at work will be investigated and individuals will be provided with appropriate support.

6. Health promotion initiatives

The Authority will develop and run a range of health promotion initiatives designed to raise awareness of health and lifestyle issues affecting mental health and wellbeing. Occupational health professionals and the HR service will have primary responsibility for leading these programmes, but line managers and employees will be expected to participate. These programmes will be evaluated to determine their effectiveness.

The programmes will include

- stress management and risk assessment;
- disability awareness and reasonable adjustments;
- how to deal with difficult customers at work;
- lifestyle behaviours, with voluntary screening (for example in relation to alcohol, drugs and smoking); and

Employees will also be encouraged to establish clubs and groups designed to foster wellbeing, for example lunchtime walking or social clubs.

7. Training and communications

As part of the Joint Performance & Achievement Review process and at scheduled one to one meetings, line managers and employees will regularly discuss individual training needs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills to adapt to ever-changing job demands. An examination of training needs will be particularly important prior to, and during, periods of organisational change.

Managers and employees are encouraged to participate in communication/feedback exercises, including stress audits and staff surveys. All employees are expected to be aware of the importance of effective communication and to use the media most appropriate to the

message, for example team meetings, one-to-one meetings, emails and organisation-wide methods such as Ezine. The Authority will ensure that structures exist to give employees regular feedback on their performance, and for them to raise concerns.

The Authority will consider special communication media, such as newsletters, during periods of organisational change.

8. Occupational health support

Line managers and employees can contact the Authority's occupational health service via the HR service. A comprehensive occupational health service is available, from individual health assessment to the design of return-to-work plans for those rehabilitating after a period of long-term sickness absence.

Workplace wellbeing services provided by the occupational health unit include:

- workstation assessments;
- pre-employment screening;
- fitness-for-work assessments;
- post-incident support;

If employees believe that their work, or some aspect of it, is putting their wellbeing at risk they should, in the first instance, speak to their line manager or a member of the HR team. The discussion should cover workload and other aspects of job demands, and raise issues such as identified training needs.

A referral to the occupational health unit will be made if this is considered appropriate after an employee's initial discussion with his/her manager or the HR service. Discussions between employees and the occupational health professionals are confidential, although the occupational health unit is likely to provide a report on the employee's fitness to work, and any recommended adaptations to the working environment, to the HR service.

Other measures available to support employees in maintaining health and wellbeing include:

- an employee assistance programme (counselling);
- mediation and joint problem solving;
- mentoring scheme;
- aggregated leave arrangements;
- opportunities for work life balance;
- support for workers with disabilities; and
- the Authority's grievance policy.

9. Relationship with other policies

This employee wellbeing policy should be read in conjunction with specific guidance on wellbeing at work and other policies and procedures covering attendance, equality, staff learning and development, and work life balance.

10. Relevant Legislation and Key PDNPA Policies
Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974
Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 (SI 1999/3242)
Equality Act 2010
Data Protection Act 1998
PDNPA   Absence Management Policy
              Equality in Employment Policy
              Flexible Working Policy
              General Statement on Health & Safety Policy
              Grievance Policy
              Joint Performance and Achievement Review process
              Learning and Development Policy
              Managing Change Policy
              No Smoking Policy
              Statement on harassment at work
              Values