

Personnel Committee

Date: 4th November 2019

Dying to Work Charter

Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	No
Is it in the Council's Forward Plan?	No
Is it eligible for "call in" by Scrutiny?	No
Date signed off by <u>Director</u> & name	Rachel Spencer-Henshall 22 nd October 2019
Is it signed off by the Service Director – Legal, Governance and Commissioning (Monitoring Officer)?	Julie Muscroft 24 th October 2019
Cabinet member portfolio	Cllr Turner – Corporate 24 th October 2019

Electoral [wards](#) affected: None

**Ward Councillors consulted:
None**

Public or private: Public

1. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to set out the background to the Dying to Work Charter, explain the impact of the Council signing up to this Charter and seek approval to formally adopt the Charter.

2. Decision required

The Personnel Committee is asked to consider the Dying to Work Charter, including the proposal that the Council extend our supportive approach beyond the core Charter to include employees who are dealing with a close relative with a terminal illness.

3. Background

The Trade Unions approached the Council earlier this year with a request that we consider signing up to the TUC Dying to Work Charter. The Charter sets out a commitment that the employer will support, protect and guide employees throughout their employment, following a terminal diagnosis.

The Council as an employer already has established guidance, practice and a supportive culture when managing complex ill health issues; the signing of the Dying to Work Charter is therefore an affirmation of our collective approach as a supportive employer and will not require any policy changes.

4. What is the Dying to Work Charter?

The Dying to Work Charter sets out an agreed commitment and approach to how our employees will be supported, protected and guided throughout their employment, following a terminal diagnosis. A copy of the Charter is at Appendix 1.

Over 250 employers, covering over half a million employees, have already signed up to the Charter. These employers include Leeds City Council as well as all ten Greater Manchester Councils, plus the Greater Manchester Combined Authority.

5. Implications for the Council

Kirklees Council policies and procedures are already supportive in terms of dealing with employees with a terminal diagnosis e.g. we would not pursue a dismissal in a long term absence case where this was for the reason of terminal illness and we would only consider a termination of contract where this was something requested by the individual affected. Our approach is to provide proactive support and access to programmes through Employee Healthcare, including access to counselling, specialist clinical services, legal and financial advice.

Signing the Charter will not change our approach but it will serve to increase awareness for employees who may have concerns now or in the future and reinforce our reputation as a caring, kind and supportive employer of choice.

In addition to supporting employees with a terminal illness, we propose that our commitment goes beyond the Charter to extend that support to employees dealing with close family members with a terminal illness. If approved, we will develop and provide guidance and support to managers on how to deal with affected employees in this situation e.g. offering flexible working arrangements, signposting staff to access support via to Employee Healthcare, etc.

6. Next steps

If supported, there will be a communication plan to raise awareness of the Dying to Work Charter throughout the organisation. This will be followed by an official signing opportunity, involving senior managers, political leaders and Trade Union colleagues and will be accompanied by an official photograph, press release and information being uploaded onto the Dying to Work website <https://www.dyingtowork.co.uk/>

7. Recommendation

That Personnel Committee approves the Dying to Work Charter

8. Contact Officer

Deborah Lucas, Head of People Service

9. Strategic Director responsible

Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director for Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health



This charter sets out an agreed way in which our employees will be supported, protected and guided throughout their employment, following a terminal diagnosis.

- We recognise that terminal illness requires support and understanding and not additional and avoidable stress and worry.
- Terminally ill workers will be secure in the knowledge that we will support them following their diagnosis and we recognise that, safe and reasonable work can help maintain dignity, offer a valuable distraction and can be therapeutic in itself.
- We will provide our employees with the security of work, peace of mind and the right to choose the best course of action for themselves and their families which helps them through this challenging period with dignity and without undue financial loss.
- We support the TUC's Dying to Work campaign so that all employees battling terminal illness have adequate employment protection and have their death in service benefits protected for the loved ones they leave behind.

Chief Executive of Company

TUC Regional Secretary

