



SAFFRON WALDEN
TOWN COUNCIL

Mental Health Policy

Version	Date	Minute Reference	Review Date
1	September 2025	F&E 124-25	October 2026

1. Introduction

Saffron Walden Town Council is committed to supporting and promoting positive mental health and wellbeing for all employees. We recognise that mental health is as important as physical health, can affect anyone at any time, and impacts everyone differently.

2. Understanding Mental Health

Mental health refers to the way we think, feel, and behave. Everyone has mental health, and it can fluctuate over time due to a range of work-related and personal factors. We are committed to increasing understanding and reducing stigma, ensuring our workplace is one where open and honest discussions about mental health are encouraged.

3. Open Communication and Sensitivity

We strive to create an environment where employees feel comfortable discussing mental health concerns without fear of discrimination or judgement. All conversations regarding mental health will be approached sensitively, respectfully and confidentially.

4. Mental Health Training

All line managers and relevant staff will receive training on mental health awareness, including recognising early signs of poor mental health, having supportive conversations, and knowing how to signpost to available resources. Opportunities for individual staff learning will also be promoted.

5. Support Available

We provide support to employees experiencing mental health challenges, including:

- Access to our confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) provided by Health Assured, offering support, counselling, and practical help.

To access the service: Download the 'Wisdom' app, Visit the website or telephone call directly.

Or another other platform provided by the Town Council.

- Reasonable workplace adjustments where appropriate.
- Signposting to NHS services and other external mental health support agencies.

Contact details and further information about Health Assured can be found on the staff intranet or requested your line manager.

6. Time Off for Mental Health

If an employee needs time off work due to a mental health condition, the absence will be managed in line with our sickness absence policy. We will treat such absence with the same importance as physical health absence.

7. Return to Work Process

A sensitive and supportive return-to-work process will be in place for employees who have been absent due to mental health reasons. This will include:

- A return-to-work meeting to discuss current needs and any reasonable adjustments.
- Ongoing review meetings as appropriate.
- Support from line managers.

8. Confidentiality

All discussions about an employee's mental health will be treated confidentially. Personal information will only be shared with others (e.g., HR, occupational health) with the individual's consent, unless there is a risk of harm.

9. Addressing Concerns

If an employee feels they have been treated unfairly due to their mental health, they should raise their concern via their line manager in the first instance or follow the Council's grievance procedure. We will take any such concerns seriously and act promptly.

10. Review and Monitoring

This policy will be reviewed every two years, or sooner if required by legislation or organisational changes. The review will be conducted by HR in consultation with employees, managers, and union representatives (where applicable), with updates communicated to all staff.

11. Further Information

Any questions about this policy or its implementation should be directed to their line manager in the first instance.