



Council name	COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL
Name and date of Committee	CABINET – 3 OCTOBER 2024
Subject	UPDATED MENOPAUSE POLICY & PROCEDURE
Wards affected	None
Accountable member	Cllr Claire Bloomer, Cabinet Member for Cost of Living and Inclusion Email: claire.bloomer@cotswold.gov.uk
Accountable officer	Angela Claridge – Director of Governance & Development Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk
Report author	Angela Claridge – Director of Governance & Development Email: angela.claridge@cotswold.gov.uk
Summary/Purpose	To seek members' approval to adopt the updated Menopause Policy & Procedure as shown in Appendix A.
Annexes	Annex A - Current Menopause Policy & Procedure with proposed amendments in red type.
Recommendation(s)	That Cabinet resolves to: <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Approve the updated Menopause Policy & Procedure for implementation.2. Delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with Cabinet Member for the Cost of Living and Inclusion to make subsequent amendments that may be necessary in line with legal changes and best practice.
Corporate priorities	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Delivering Good Services
Key Decision	NO
Exempt	NO
Consultees/ Consultation	Cabinet Member for Cost of Living & Inclusion, Publica's HR Team and Local Management Team.



1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 Cabinet, at its meeting on 12 September 2023, agreed a suite of updated employment policies and procedures, including the Menopause Policy & Procedure. A review has been undertaken of this policy with recommended updates to reflect best practice and coincide with Menopause Awareness Month.
- 1.2 World Menopause Day is held each year on 18 October to raise awareness, break the stigma and highlight the support available for improving health and wellbeing for those experiencing menopause.

2. BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Cotswold District Council wants to support workforce wellbeing at every stage in life. With a predominantly female workforce, many of today's employees will be working through the perimenopause and menopause and managing the symptoms at work.
- 2.2 Many people feel uncomfortable talking about the perimenopause and menopause – which means that some suffer in silence while experiencing a wide range of symptoms that can affect their physical as well as mental health. It's time to start viewing this as a workplace issue that we all have a role in supporting.
- 2.3 The purposes of this Policy & Procedure and accompanying support, are to encourage and support colleagues to talk more about the perimenopause and menopause – for women experiencing symptoms to feel they can ask for the help needed, for managers to have the knowledge and confidence to know what to do if required to support a colleague through this time, and to give all colleagues, whatever gender, information of where to go for further help in the event that you or those you live or work with are experiencing the transition.

3. MAIN POINTS

- 3.1 Adopting a stand-alone Menopause Policy & Procedure last year confirmed the organisation's commitment to seeing the menopause as a workplace issue. A review of that Policy & Procedure recommends the following changes:

Heading	Changes and Key points
I. New heading added "What is Menopause"	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Details added on different stages of menopause – Perimenopause, Menopause and Postmenopause• Added that Symptoms can last up to 12 years• Added the importance of avoiding assumptions about genders experiencing menopause.• Added that menopause is a unique experience for each individual experiencing symptoms



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Listed types of medical interventions which may bring on Menopause. Reference made to protected characteristics under Equality Act 2010 and to avoid discrimination and unfavourable treatment as detailed the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy and Procedure.
2. Changes to “Symptoms of Menopause”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slightly reworded symptoms and listed them under categories of “Physical” and “Psychological. Added that employees affected are encouraged to speak openly for tailored support.
3. Changes to “Our Commitment to You”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added commitment to health, safety and welfare all employees and referenced the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974. Specified the detail measures designed to support staff affected by the symptom, giving examples of provision of training, introduction of role of Menopause Champion and providing additional resources such as sanitary products, menopause awareness posters, and the provision of a break room. Extending the scope and training of the Wellbeing Advocate role to include menopause support, complementing the work of the Menopause Champion.
4. Changes to “Requesting Support”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added new sections detailing the introduction of the Menopause Champion Role; The role, responsibilities, benefits and how to contact the Menopause Champion
5. Changes to “Working Flexibly on a Temporary Basis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Slight rewording and reference added to Flexible Working Policy and Procedure.
6. Changes to “Working Environment”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added requirement for a manager to complete a workplace Health and Safety Risk Assessment to consider specific needs and impact of working environment on symptoms.
7. Changes to “Quiet Place to Work”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Added information regarding the provision of a quiet comfortable space where employees can recuperate when they struggle with the effects of menopausal symptoms
8. Changes to “Sanitary Products”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Detailed proposed provision of emergency sanitary products in all toilet and restroom facilities
9. Changes to “Sickness”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minor spelling amendments Added why employee are requested to be open about their reasons for absence



10. Occupational Health renamed to “Changes to GP, Employee Wellbeing Programme (EAP) and Occupational Health”	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Added the need for employee to speak to GP/Medical Practitioner if they have concerns• Provided Employee Wellbeing Programme (EAP) as a confidential source for information and support
11. “External Sources of Help”	No change

4. ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS

- 4.1 Cabinet could choose not to adopt the updated Menopause Policy & Procedure, retaining the existing Policy & Procedure.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- 5.1 A positive statement about the menopause can contribute to morale, motivation, retention and productivity. Therefore, it’s recommended that the updated Menopause Policy & Procedure is adopted.

6. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Whilst there are no financial implications arising directly from this report, it is important that the Council’s HR policies are reviewed regularly to ensure they comply with relevant legislation and best practice guidance.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 Employers have a duty of care to the people they employ. It is important to be aware of responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974, the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 and the Equality Act 2010. Staff experiencing difficulties with the menopause may need adjustments to their working environment; equally, unsafe and unhealthy working environments may exacerbate problems.

8. RISK ASSESSMENT

- 8.1 It’s good practice for an organisation to have a Menopause Policy & Procedure – ensuring that ensure that women are not disadvantaged, and that experienced talent is not lost from the workforce. But policies are only useful if they are implemented and regularly reviewed.

9. EQUALITIES IMPACT



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9.1 While this document uses the term 'women' to talk about people who may experience perimenopause and menopause transition, this can impact trans or non-binary colleagues who don't identify as women in the same manner. The updated Policy & Procedure supports all colleagues experiencing perimenopause and menopause transition.

10. CLIMATE AND ECOLOGICAL EMERGENCIES IMPLICATIONS

10.1 No implications identified.

11. BACKGROUND PAPERS

11.1 None.

(END)