

# Old Catton Parish Council

## Stress in the Workplace Policy

### 1. Introduction

Old Catton Parish Council recognises that workplace stress is a significant issue that can affect the wellbeing of employees and the performance of the Council. We are committed to promoting a supportive and healthy working environment where stress is minimised and managed effectively.

This policy complies with the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999, as well as guidance from the Health and Safety Executive (HSE).

### 2. Policy Statement

The Parish Council will take reasonable steps to identify, reduce and manage workplace stress by:

- Promoting the health, safety and wellbeing of all employees
- Ensuring stress risk assessments are conducted regularly and acted upon
- Providing training and support to help employees manage work related stress
- Creating an open and supportive culture where stress can be discussed without stigma

### 3. Aims

The HSE defines workplace stress as **“the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them at work”**

Old Catton Parish Council acknowledges that stress can arise from various factors, including workload, interpersonal relationships, change management or external pressures.

### 4. Responsibilities

#### 4.1 Parish Clerk

- Ensure that stress risk assessments are conducted and reviewed regularly
- Identify stressors in the workplace and implement measures to reduce them
- Act prompt to address concerns raised by employees
- Monitor workloads to ensure they are manageable
- Encourage open communication about stress and mental health

#### 4.2 Councillors:

- Support a culture of respect, fairness and understanding within the Council
- Avoid behaviour or decision making that could contribute to unnecessary stress for employees
- Be aware of the signs of stress and see to address them collaboratively

#### 4.3 Employees:

- Take responsibility for raising concerns about workplace stress with the Clerk or a Councillor
- Participate in stress reduction initiatives and training

- Support colleagues experiencing stress by fostering a positive and inclusive environment

## **5. Risk Assessment and Prevention**

Old Catton Parish Council will:

- Conduct regular stress risk assessments to identify key stressors in the workplace
- Review and act on findings from risk assessments to mitigate stress related risks
- Provide employees with clear job roles, responsibilities and expectations
- Offer flexible working arrangements (where feasible) to support work-life balance

## **6. Support for Employees**

Employees experiencing stress will have access to the following support mechanisms:

- Confidential discussions with the Clerk or designated Councillor
- Referral to professional occupational health or counselling services if necessary
- Opportunities for additional training or professional development to address role-related pressures
- Support in workload prioritisation and delegation of tasks where appropriate

## **7. Training and Awareness**

Old Catton Parish Council will provide:

- Training for all employees and Councillors to identify and manage workplace stress
- Resources and guidance on mental health awareness and stress management

## **8. Reporting and Monitoring**

- Employees are encouraged to report stress related concerns promptly to the Clerk or a designated Councillor
- All reports will be treated with confidentiality and handled in accordance with Data Protection Laws
- Old Catton Parish Council will review this policy annually to ensure it remains relevant and effective

## **9. Equality**

The policy applies to all employees and Councillors, regardless of age, disability, gender, race, religion, or any other protected characteristic. Old Catton Parish Council is committed to ensuring equality, dignity and respect for all.

This policy will be reviewed annually, unless required earlier by legislation or additional material.

**Adopted: 10<sup>th</sup> February 2025**