

Stress at Work Policy

Adopted: 11.05.26

Review Date: May 2027

1. Introduction

Health and Safety Executive defines work-related stress as “*the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them.*”

Holton le Clay Parish Council recognises that stress can affect anyone and is committed to promoting a healthy working environment and preventing work-related stress wherever possible.

2. Policy Statement

The Council will:

- Provide a working environment that minimises the risk of stress
 - Take all reasonable steps to identify and reduce workplace stressors
 - Support employees experiencing stress
 - Promote open communication about wellbeing
 - Comply with relevant health and safety legislation
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3. Scope

This policy applies to:

- The Clerk and any employees
 - Parish councillors where relevant to their duties
 - Volunteers acting on behalf of the Council
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4. Responsibilities

The Council

- Ensure this policy is implemented and reviewed
- Provide adequate resources for training and support
- Monitor workloads and working practices

The Chair of HR

- Act as first point of contact for the Clerk
- Address concerns promptly and sensitively
- Promote a positive working environment

Councillors

- Treat colleagues with respect
- Follow the Code of Conduct
- Raise concerns appropriately

The Clerk / Employees

- Take reasonable care of their own wellbeing
 - Inform the Chair of work-related stress concerns
 - Participate in support measures offered
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5. Identifying Stress

The Council will use risk assessments (such as the Stress Risk Assessment) and regular communication to identify potential causes of stress, including:

- Excessive workload
 - Unclear roles
 - Conflict or poor relationships
 - Public pressure and complaints
 - Lack of support or training
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6. Managing Stress

The Council will:

- Carry out and regularly review stress risk assessments
 - Ensure workloads are manageable and prioritised
 - Provide training and development opportunities
 - Encourage regular one-to-one discussions
 - Promote work-life balance, including respecting contracted hours
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7. Supporting Individuals

Where stress is identified, the Council may:

- Adjust workload or deadlines
- Provide additional support or supervision
- Allow flexible working arrangements where possible
- Signpost external support services (e.g. GP or counselling)

All matters will be handled confidentially and sensitively.

8. Bullying and Harassment

The Council operates a zero-tolerance approach to bullying and harassment. Any concerns should be raised in line with the Council's grievance procedure.

9. Absence Due to Stress

If an employee is absent due to stress:

- The Council will maintain appropriate contact
 - A return-to-work meeting will be held
 - Reasonable adjustments will be considered
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10. Monitoring and Review

This policy will be reviewed annually or following:

- Changes in legislation
 - Organisational changes
 - Identified issues or incidents
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11. Related Documents

- Stress Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Policy
- Grievance Procedure
- Code of Conduct