

<b>Committee(s):</b>	<b>Date(s):</b>
Health and Wellbeing Board	30 May 2014
<b>Subject:</b> Business Healthy – City Worker Initiative	<b>Public</b>
<b>Report of:</b> Health and Wellbeing Policy Development Manager	<b>For Decision</b>
<b>Summary</b>	
<p>This paper provides a summary of progress on the Business Healthy initiative and sets out recommendations for its further development.</p> <p>Business Healthy has sought to establish the extent to which City businesses would welcome support around workplace health and, if so, what form that support should take.</p> <p>So far, the initiative has established a network, the Business Healthy Circle, as well as an online resource, the Business Healthy Lab.</p> <p>Initial feedback from businesses has been extremely positive, and there are clear opportunities to carry this work forward.</p> <p><b>Recommendation(s)</b></p> <p>Members are asked to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• note this report and its contents</li> <li>• endorse the proposed approach to the work of the Business Healthy Circle and Business Healthy Lab</li> </ul>	

## Main Report

### Background

1. Poor health is estimated to cost the British economy over £100bn annually<sup>1</sup>. In London a business with 250 employees is estimated to make a loss of around £250,000 annually through sickness absence<sup>2</sup>. This makes employee health a significant strategic issue for the individuals themselves and for business.
2. The Health and Well-being Board (HWB) of the City of London Corporation (CoLC) has clear responsibilities under the 2012 Health and Social Care Act to promote the health and well-being of those who live or work in the City. It

<sup>1</sup> Dame Carol Black (2008) Review of the Health of Britain's working Age Population: Working for a Healthier Tomorrow.

[www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/209782/hwwb-working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/209782/hwwb-working-for-a-healthier-tomorrow.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> GLA Economics (2012) London's Business Case for Employees Health and well-being. [www.gov.uk/sites/default/files/health-wellbeing-2012.pdf](http://www.gov.uk/sites/default/files/health-wellbeing-2012.pdf)

has, as an early priority in its work, decided to set up a strategic initiative designed to promote the health of City workers, and to achieve impact on their health, in a co-ordinated and coherent way.

3. This initiative, Business Healthy , has sought to establish the extent to which City businesses would welcome support in this area and, if so, what form that support should take. It is also intended to help the City of London promote itself as an excellent place to work and hence an ideal location for staff to develop, skills to grow and businesses to thrive.

### **Business Healthy Initiative**

4. There are currently two elements to the Business Healthy initiative, the Business Healthy Circle and the Business Healthy Lab. Both were launched at a conference hosted by the Lord Mayor of London at the Mansion House on 11<sup>th</sup> March attended by leaders from small and large businesses based in the City of London.
5. *The Business Healthy Circle* brings together leaders from City businesses who want to co-create improvements in the health and well-being of the City workforce. The Circle is a virtual group designed to connect business leaders, human resources, health and safety, occupational health, communications and senior staff representatives to cut across normal professional boundaries and deliver solutions. It will
  - promote the business case for worker health and well-being
  - share best practice on what works between disciplines and companies from different sectors sponsor intelligence gathering, learning and sharing
  - turn the case into action
  - track progress and make it visible.
  - <http://www.businesshealthy.org/circle.html>

### **The Business Healthy Lab**

6. The Lab is the engine room for the project, bringing together research, evidence, policies, practice and case studies to focus on what needs to be done and what can be done to improve the health, well-being and performance of people working in the City.
  - <http://www.businesshealthy.org/lab.html>

### **Current Position**

7. In 2012, 400,000 people were employed in the City of London in over 14,000 businesses. 215 of these would be considered 'large' (employing more than 250 people) but most are much smaller. The UK leads the world in a number of financial services and many of these businesses are located in the City of London. In this respect, maintaining the health of its employees is of paramount importance to the national economy.

8. There is increasing interest in workplace health from leading companies who are finding that they can make a convincing business case for investing in health programmes. They understand that a successful company will tend to have a healthy, productive workforce, and that employers have a vested interest in reducing absenteeism and increasing productivity by improving the health of their employees. However, employers' commitment to health and wellbeing goes further than this, as they recognise that offering positive health programmes to their staff can improve staff recruitment and retention - as well as being a positive contribution to corporate social responsibility.
9. Generally health and wellbeing provision for City workers is good and in some cases excellent – particularly for those working in large companies. Many companies are already implementing interventions that can fast-track people back into work if they have a health problem. Businesses want to move their health and wellbeing strategies forward so that they help to prevent workers from going off sick, and most businesses acknowledge that there needs to be a better alignment between sickness absence rates and health and well-being interventions.

### **Building the Case**

10. Research has shown that programmes would appear to be most effective when they combine aspects from different health issues into an integrated programme. Examples might include physical activity, diet and smoking combined with cognitive approaches to behavioural change. There is evidence of positive effects of wellness programmes on exercise, dietary, smoking, alcohol and mental health outcomes as well as physiological markers (BMI, blood pressure and blood cholesterol) amongst participants<sup>3</sup>. Established public health approaches have been adapted in relation to workplace health. These focus on:-
  - population-based health protection and promotion
  - targeted prevention for groups at risk and
  - support / interventions for those with health problems.
11. In reality, a combination of all three approaches are required to provide an effective approach to workforce health. It is likely that population-based approaches – such as to those working in the City of London – will affect the largest number.

### **Options**

12. The overall business case for tackling health at work may be clear, any serious attempt to engage with the health of workers in the City should from the outset establish what specific businesses in the City (as well as their

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<sup>3</sup> City of London (2014) Best Practice in Promoting Employee Health and Well-being in the City of London.  
[www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/economicresearch](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/business/economicresearch)

partners from public agencies and charities) actually want to achieve and their appetite to take action.

13. An assessment has been made through three main channels, which together can inform decisions on next steps.

*Business Healthy Conference*

14. The Business Healthy Conference held at the Mansion House on 11<sup>th</sup> March brought together world-class speakers and case studies to articulate and explore the business case for addressing the health of workers in the City and the implications for businesses in terms of commitment and action. The event, at which the Business Healthy Circle was also launched, was attended by around 100 invited leaders from both large and small businesses and organisations.
15. The Conference therefore represented an ideal opportunity to gauge levels of interest and initial ideas for focus to make progress. The immediate feedback was exceptionally positive and supportive for the case and revealed an appetite for collective action behind the idea of making the health of workers a defining characteristic of the City of London (see appendix).
16. The formal evaluation of conference confirmed this, as with attendees saying that they found the conference to be inspiring and thought-provoking, complementing the depth, authority and relevance of the speakers and appreciating the way in which the business case was developed and the practical way in which the issue was discussed. 60% said that would like to be members of the Circle and 30% said that they would welcome being kept informed.
17. As concrete next steps, delegates said that they wished to see
  - the Business Healthy Circle providing leadership and advocacy and oversight of the development of Business Healthy as a continuing and coherent initiative
  - further development of the Business Healthy Lab as a way of sharing knowledge, tools and promoting connections
  - commitment by the Corporation itself to become a visible Business Healthy exemplar in its own right
  - early evidence of companies in the City sharing knowledge and good practice about tools and approaches that work
  - the Circle operating primarily in a virtual way through on-line information-sharing or chat-rooms
  - face-to-face sessions or master-classes on specific issues e.g. alcohol and addiction
  - information on “getting started” in a practical way
  - a focus on issues of confidentiality and trust which would allow workers to feel confident about Business Healthy and access support without stigma
  - active support for managers so that they can look after themselves and as a result look after their staff better

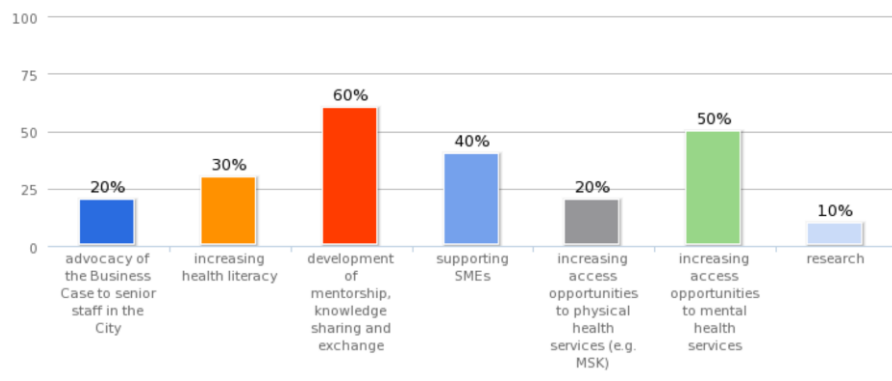
- support on what constitutes proper evidence about “return on investment” for business healthy activities
  - assistance with developing metrics and making a stronger case to Boards for inclusion in mainstream strategies
18. There were some other interesting issues raised at table discussion during the Conference which are captured in the following statements as they are important in framing next steps.
- The City could indeed work together as a whole on this issue to give London a global advantage over other competitor cities.
  - Many companies are unaware of what services are available from the public sector and the NHS in particular and therefore underuse them.
  - Inclusion and promotion of SMEs as an integral part of the Circle and what it stands for would be an important sign of serious commitment by larger organizations.
  - The Circle was something which would work as a forum through which organisations could share best-practice even though individually they are often in competition.
  - The Circle would only work if there was a clear business model which secured funds and commitments.
  - Business Healthy should be sensitive to existing alliances and programmes but it was a good means for overcoming some issues of fragmentation, duplication and even contradiction between existing.
  - Embracing different approaches and resisting the temptation to become monolithic would be important for Business Healthy to establish and retain credibility.
  - Communication, gaining momentum and securing early wins were necessary to show what Business Healthy was about.
  - Making access to professional health and well-being services for workers as easy as possible might require looking at physical location of services in the City

*Business Healthy Survey*

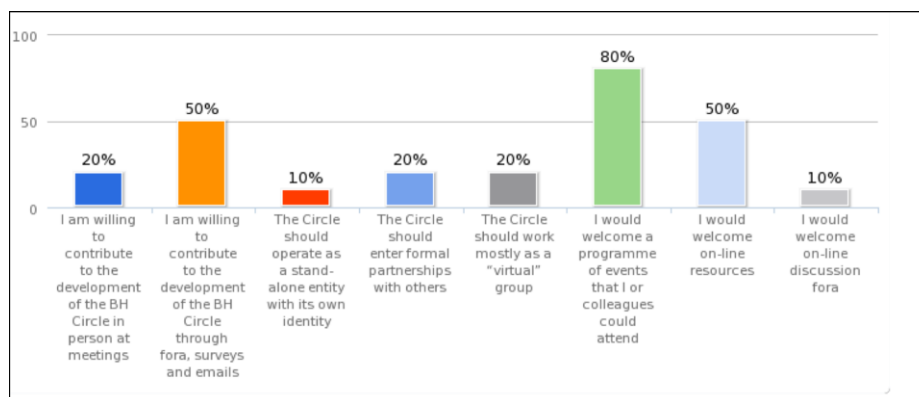
19. In addition to gain further intelligence to guide next steps, businesses that stated that they wished to be kept informed about the Circle – but who also stated that they did not wish to attend meetings as part of the Circle’s development – were surveyed in March 2014. They were asked:
- what they would like the Business Healthy Circle to prioritise in its first twelve months of operation;
  - how they would like the Business Healthy Circle to operate
  - how they would like it to be resourced

- would they be interested in a City Workers' Health Centre, offering health and well-being services?
20. 40 businesses were surveyed and 24 businesses replied. The findings from each of the questions are set out below. Overall the survey showed that Businesses would welcome:
- engagement with the Circle through on-line surveys and on-line resources;
  - a programme of events on specific issues;
  - access to mentoring and knowledge sharing with fellow professionals;
  - a range of ways of funding are adopted.

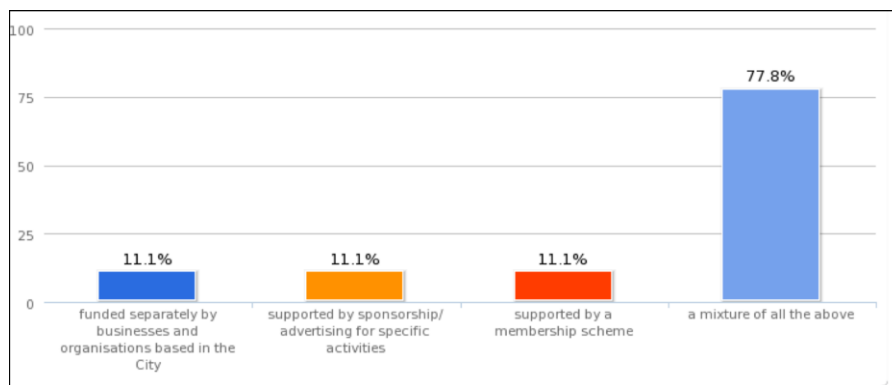
**Figure 4: What Do You Think the Business Healthy Circle Should Prioritise in Its First Twelve Months?**



**Figure 5: How would you like to see the Business Healthy Circle Operate?**



**Figure 6: The Circle will be Better Able to succeed if Resources are:**



21. There was very little support for a physical health centre for City workers as an early priority (a view also reflected in the Conference and the first Circle meeting). This perhaps reflects a sense that there are other more immediate issues and mapping of services which need to be addressed first. It may be that the idea of having a new base to augment existing health and well-being services and to act as a visible focal point for Business Healthy might emerge from further work in the coming months.

#### *Business Healthy Circle*

22. Those businesses who expressed an interest in being part of the development of the Business Healthy Circle were invited to attend a round-table to discuss priorities and next steps.
23. On March 25<sup>th</sup> this first meeting of the Business Healthy Circle was held at the Guildhall. Attendees were drawn from professional services, construction, financial services and the public sector. The meeting was chaired by Sir Stephen O'Brien, Chair of Barts Health.
24. A number of themes emerged from this meeting which resonated with the Conference and the survey results:
- Businesses would welcome a knowledge hub that provides examples of good practice and an opportunity to share experience and expertise. Smaller businesses would welcome a source of advice and support – especially where there was no in-house HR or access to professional health and well-being capability.
  - Many companies struggle with developing the case and pulling together a convincing approach to their Boards. There is a role for the Business Healthy Lab / Business Healthy Circle in developing materials that help with this – and potentially for running or supporting road-shows in-house.
  - There are a large number of for-profit and not-for-profit businesses competing for market share in the health and well-being / EAP space. It would be helpful if the Business Healthy Circle could provide some sort

of signposting through the broad range of offers. Business Healthy could also potentially become a more active agent in provision of quality-assured services

- Employers have tended to concentrate their investment on the provision of tertiary services for their direct employees. Business Healthy can bring together employers, charities and public health to work upstream. Business Healthy must also seek ways to support those employed as part of the outsourced workforce.
  - There was a strong preference for the Circle to operate virtually. Whilst there might be a need for a physical centre this should only be considered once the Circle had achieved a greater level of maturity. In the meantime consideration should be given to using existing facilities – pharmacies, voluntary and private sector provision.
25. The key role of arriving quickly at a sustainable business model for the Business Healthy initiative emerged as a key priority with some members of the Circle providing a range of different suggestions about possible, even likely, sources of funding and support at international, national and local levels. The need for some enablement funding from the Corporation whilst the business model was developed was also seen as a necessary pre-requisite for getting momentum and focus.

## **Proposals**

26. The Business Healthy Circle has attracted a wide-ranging and potentially powerful membership which could provide the drive needed to make the vision for Business Healthy turn into practice. (The current membership is at Appendix 1)
27. This active support now needs to be built on, and momentum generated behind the priorities identified at the Conference and by the subsequent survey and first meeting of the Business Healthy Circle.
28. Sir Stephen O'Brien has indicated he is willing to continue as Chair of the Business Healthy Circle for the next few months. In addition some enabling support funding will be allocated by the City of London Corporation to cover the period to the end of 2014. This is designed to provide necessary technical and specialist support to the Circle and the Lab as they develop, and also to provide momentum and targets for Business Healthy to establish its longer-term, sustainable business model and the key relationships on which its success depends.
29. The following next steps have been identified for the Business Healthy initiative as a result of work to date:
- to grow the Business Healthy Circle as a virtual group providing leadership for the Business Healthy initiative in line with its remit (Appendix 1) and for a detailed programme of work to be developed over the summer 2014



- to extend and promote the Business Healthy Lab as a knowledge hub for sharing of the business case, best practice, research, information and toolkits
- to develop a business model to support the work of the Circle and the Lab on a sustainable basis into the future
- to map existing health and well-being and EAP services within the City with a view to providing a signposting service
- to set up a programme of events and master classes
- to establish a clear communications, partnership development and engagement process to support the visibility and reach of Business Healthy
- to identify a set of indicators of impact.

## Conclusion

30. The Business Healthy initiative has got off to a very good start with significant support for the concept and an appetite for practical action from a notable number of key supporters within the City.
31. Business Healthy has the potential to provide an important and trusted process for addressing critical issues in relation to the health of workers within the City.

## Appendices

**Appendix 1 - Members of the Business Healthy Circle at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2014**

**Appendix 2 - What is the Business Healthy Circle?**

**Appendix 3 - The Business Healthy Conference - Feedback**

## Background Papers:

31<sup>st</sup> January 2014. *Worker Health Update*

4<sup>th</sup> July 2013. *Workplace Health*

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