

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Employment Committee

Date of meeting: 12 September 2017

Subject: Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report

Report by: Jon Bell - Director of HR, Legal and Performance

Wards affected: N/A

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this report is to update Employment Committee about levels of sickness absence across the council and actions being taken to manage absence.

2. Recommendations

Members are recommended to:

- **Continue to monitor sickness absence, and ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In the period since the last update in February 2016 the level of sickness absence has decreased from 8.75 to 8.69 average days per person per year. This is against the corporate target of an average 7 days per person per year.
- 3.2 Analysis of data indicates that since the last report long term absence is stable at 4.90 average days per person per year. Short term absence has decreased from 2.51 to 2.46 average days per person per year over the same period.
- 3.3 Absence levels by Directorates for the period from 01 August 2016 to 31 July 2017 are attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Of the 12 Directorates, eight (excluding schools) are over the corporate target of an average 7 days per person per year. There are three Directorates that are over an average 10 days per person per year.
- 3.5 The main reasons for absence have remained the same, with musculoskeletal, anxiety/stress/psychological and colds/flu/viruses accounting for 53.41% of absences in the last 12 months.

- 3.6 Adult Services has decreased from 15.21 to 13.82 average days per person per year. This is as a result of improvements in the level of long-term absence from 10.38 to 8.93 average days per person per year. This is particularly noticeable in the Residential Units.
- 3.7 Executive has increased from 6.39 to 11.99 average days per person per year. This is a result of one long-term case from the 18 employees within the services that make up this directorate. The sickness absence days associated with this case will start to be lost from the statistics during the period November 2017 to July 2018.
- 3.8 The Port's average days per person per year has decreased from 8.86 to 5.47. This is in the context of a stable headcount and 11 of the last 13 months show a reduction in the number of sickness absence days in the directorate. In particular, Long-term absence has reduced from 7.12 to 2.06 average days per person due to no significant long-term sickness cases.
- 3.9 Public Health has seen an increase from 8.23 to 10.87 average days per person per year. This is due in part to a reduction in headcount resulting from the transfer of services to other directorates. Although the majority of staff in the service have no recorded absence over the past year, there is a small number of longer term absences, some of which have now been resolved by the staff members' departures.

4. Flu vaccinations

The Director of Public Health has written to other directors during August 2017, outlining last year's uptake, the benefits of providing flu vaccinations, as well as the potential cost to their budget. The provision of clinics and vouchers will be available from the end of October 2017.

The provision of a flu vaccination will continue to demonstrate the council's role as a responsible employer and provider and its commitment to staff and client health and wellbeing.

5. Reasons for recommendations

The continued monitoring of sickness absence and the identification of good management practices is an important part of maximising attendance, which will in turn increase productivity, improve engagement and build resilience.

6. Equality impact assessment (EIA)

A preliminary Equality Impact Assessment has been completed.

7. Legal implications

There are no immediate legal implications arising from this report.

8. Finance comments

There is no significant cashable saving resulting from the reduction in sickness absence. However there will be an improvement in productivity in terms of total days worked.

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Signed by:

Appendices:

Appendix 1: Sickness Absence by Directorate 31 July 2017

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location

The recommendation(s) set out above were approved/ approved as amended/ deferred/ rejected by on

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Signed by: