

**Title of meeting:** Employment Committee

**Date of meeting:** 25 September 2018

**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

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### 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 June 2018 the level of sickness absence has decreased marginally from 8.53 to 8.49 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 has increased marginally from 4.80 to 4.82 average days per person per year. Short term absence has decreased from 2.48 to 2.40 average days per person per year over the same period.
- 3.3 Absence levels by directorates for the period from 01 September 2017 to 31 August 2018 are attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.4 Of the 12 directorates, six (excluding schools) are over the corporate target of an average 7 days per person per year. There are four directorates that are over an average 10 days per person per year.
- 3.5 The analysis of the data indicates the main reasons for absence have remained the same, with musculoskeletal, anxiety/stress/psychological and colds/flu/viruses

accounting for 52.99% of absences in the last 12 months. This compares to 54.65% in the period 01 September 2016 to 31 August 2017.

#### **4. Wellbeing**

Since the last update on wellbeing activities the following workplace health initiatives are being promoted, implemented, or are under development:

- Supporting Mental Health training is available for managers across the council.
- The promotion of cycle to work day resulted in a 16% increase in cycling on that day.
- The 'Winter Wellness' campaign is to be rolled out shortly and will include making flu jabs and vouchers for jabs accessible to all employees, top tips for staying healthy over the winter months and financial wellbeing webinars.
- 'Active 10' walks start on 18 September 2018. This trial will be publicised over a 6 week period.
- Stoptober, the 28-day stop smoking campaign from Public Health England starts on 1st October 2018. Campaign literature and posters are being distributed, targeting housing offices and residential units as well as information drop in sessions.

#### **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 August 2018

Appendix 2: Summary of reasons for sickness absence - 31 August 2018

**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 .....

.....  
Signed by: