

Agenda item:

Title of meeting: Employment Committee

Date of meeting: 15th December 2015

Subject: Sickness Absence - Quarterly Report

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

Wards affected: N/A

Key decision: No

Full Council decision: No

1. Purpose of report

The purpose of this quarterly report is to update and inform Employment Committee on actions being taken that have an effect on the levels of sickness absence across Services.

2. Recommendations

- **To continue to monitor sickness absence, on a quarterly basis, and to ensure appropriate management action is taken to address absenteeism.**
- **To continue to offer a range of interventions around the three main reasons for sickness absence to assist employees to manage their attendance at work.**

3. Background

- 3.1 In the period since the last quarterly update in June 2015 the level of sickness absence has decreased from 8.73 to 8.40 average days per person per year. This is against the new corporate target of an average 7 days per person per year. Members will note the reversal in trend from the first half of 2015, when an increase in sickness absence levels was reported. The overall trend over recent months is downwards.
- 3.2 Absence levels by Directorates for the period from 01 November 2014 to 31 October 2015 are attached in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 Of the 14 Directorates, seven (including schools) are over the corporate target of an average 7 days per person per year. Four Directorates are over an average 10 days per person per year.

3.4 Analysis of data indicates that over the last quarter there has been a slight decrease in the amount of long term absence from 4.70 to 4.56 average days per person per year. This continues the trend in long term absence, which has reduced from 5.88 to 4.56 average days per person per year since August 2012. Short term absence has been stable at around 2.58 average days per person per year over the same period.

3.5 Adult Services' average absence has reduced by 1.01 days per person over the last six months. This is due mainly to a reduction in long-term absence.

4. Health and Well-Being

4.1 Reasons for Sickness absence

A table of reasons for absence over the last three years is included in Appendix 2. The analysis of the data indicates that the main reasons for absence have not changed dramatically, with the three main reasons; musculoskeletal; anxiety, stress and psychological and colds, flu and virus, accounting for 52-55% of all absences in each of the last three years.

4.2 Flu vaccinations

The 2015 Flu Vaccination campaign started at the beginning of November.

The provision of a flu vaccination demonstrates the Council's role as a responsible employer and provider, committed to staff and client health and wellbeing.

In 2014, 903 members of staff took advantage of the vaccination campaign which equated to a final uptake of 22.7%. Although every effort will be made to maximise uptake, Public Health have estimated that it is unlikely that this will exceed 40% as some staff members will be vaccinated by their GP.

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

Appendix 2: Summary of reasons for absence over the last three years

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: