

*Meeting:* **Employment Committee**

*Date/Time:* **Thursday, 20 October 2016 at 10.00 am**

*Location:* **Goscote Committee Room, County Hall, Glenfield**

*Contact:* **Miss. A. Rog (0116 305 0455)**

*Email:* **anna.rog@leics.gov.uk**

### **Membership**

Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC (Chairman)

Mr. G. A. Boulter CC   Mrs. H. E. Loydall CC  
Mrs. J. Fox CC   Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC  
Mr. D. Jennings CC   Mr. E. D. Snartt CC

### **AGENDA**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Report by</u>	
1. Minutes of the meeting held on 30 June 2016.		(Pages 3 - 8)
2. Question Time.		
3. Questions asked by members under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).		
4. To advise of any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent elsewhere on the agenda.		
5. Declarations of Interest.		
6. Sickness Absence.	Director of Corporate Resources	(Pages 9 - 14)
7. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure: Summary of Action Plans.	Chief Executive	(Pages 15 - 20)



8. Any other items which the Chairman has decided to take as urgent.
9. Dates of Future Meetings.

Future meetings of the Committee are scheduled to take place at 10.00am on the following dates:-

1 December 2016  
2 February 2017  
29 June 2017  
19 October 2017  
7 December 2017.



Minutes of a meeting of the Employment Committee held at County Hall, Glenfield on Thursday, 30 June 2016.

PRESENT

Mrs. J. Fox CC  
Mr. S. J. Galton CC  
Mr. D. Jennings CC  
Mrs. H. E. Loydall CC

Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC  
Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC  
Mr. E. D. Snartt CC

1. Appointment of Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC be appointed Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2017.

(Mr. J. B. Rhodes CC - in the Chair)

2. Election of Deputy Chairman.

RESOLVED:

That Mr. R. J. Shepherd CC be elected Deputy Chairman of the Employment Committee for the period ending with the date of the Annual Meeting of the County Council in 2017.

3. Minutes.

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2016 were taken as read, confirmed and signed.

4. Question Time.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 35.

5. Questions asked by members.

The Chief Executive reported that no questions had been received under Standing Order 7(3) and 7(5).

6. Urgent Items.

There were no urgent items for consideration.

7. Declarations of Interest.

The Chairman invited members who wished to do so to declare any interest in respect of items on the agenda for the meeting.

Mr. D. Jennings CC declared a personal interest in respect of the item entitled "Local Government Pension Scheme" (minute 13 refers) as Chairman of the Council's Local Pension Board.

8. Sickness Absence.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources, which provided a year-end update on sickness absence for 2015-16. A copy of the report marked "Agenda Item 8" is filed with these minutes.

Members noted the additional information requested at the previous meeting of the Committee, which showed the breakdown by department of absences longer than six months, the Council's position against other comparable authorities on absence caused by viral infections and details of the Council's current flu vaccination programme.

In response to questions raised, members were advised as follows:-

- (i). The level of viral infections as a reason of absence was much greater at the Council than at other comparable authorities. However, it was noted that comparatively, the proportion of absence due to stress, depression and mental health was low, leading to questions about what people chose to report;
- (ii). Absences over seven days required a doctor's certificate to be submitted to a manager, though it was noted that viral infections were likely to be largely self-diagnosed and resulted in a short period of absence in most cases;
- (iii). The process of returning to work after a "long term" absence (classed as four weeks or more) included considering the involvement of Occupational Health, having a review meeting with the manager, and potentially actioning a support plan. This process was currently under review;
- (iv). The "myth busting communications plan" (as referred to on page 11) was a campaign aimed at making the Attendance Management policy and procedures clearer for staff and managers and tackling misconceptions.

Members noted the reduction in overall rate of days lost per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) by 0.51 days and welcomed the actions being taken to decrease it further. However concern remained about the cost of absence to the Authority at a time of significant pressure on the Council's finances. Particular concern was drawn to the comparatively high absence rates of both the Adults and Communities Department and Children and Family Services.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the reduction of sickness absence by 0.51 days per FTE at the end of 2015-16 and the work towards achieving the corporate target of 7.5 days per FTE be noted;
- (b) That it be noted that the corporate sickness absence rate, particularly that for the Adults and Communities Department and Children and Family Services would be drawn to the attention of the Chief Executive with a view of establishing an effective way forward on this issue.

9. Lone Working and Personal Safety Campaign.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources, which provided information and sought its views on the work undertaken by Health, Safety and Wellbeing Services to improve personal safety of staff whilst working alone. A copy of the report marked "Agenda Item 9" is filed with these minutes.

In response to the Committee's suggestion, the Policy would be amended to include guidance on the impact of mental health on lone working.

RESOLVED:

That the rollout of the Lone Working and Personal Safety campaign be supported.

10. Staff Survey, Values and Behaviours and the Employment Deal.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which provided a summary of the outcomes and actions identified in the 2015 Staff Survey. A copy of the report marked "Agenda Item 10" is filed with these minutes.

The Committee welcomed the increase in response rate though concern remained that 59% of staff did not participate in the Survey.

In response to questions raised, members were advised as follows:-

- (i). The low PDR completion rate was probably more reflective of a lack of recording of completed PDRs via the Oracle system. A review was being undertaken to improve the PDR process and ensure it was a valuable exercise for staff;
- (ii). That a full breakdown of Staff Survey data, including completion by department was made available to managers.

RESOLVED:

That the proposed actions arising from the Staff Survey as outlined in the report be supported.

11. Pay Award 2016-18.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which outlined the action taken by the Chief Executive to implement a pay award for all employees on Grades 2 -17 in line with the National Joint Council pay award for 2016 – 18, and sought its approval to implement the Joint Negotiating Committee pay award for the same period for Chief Officers and the Chief Executive. A copy of the report marked "Agenda Item 11" is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the urgent action taken by the Chief Executive in respect of the implementation of the National Joint Council Pay Award for employees on grades 2 –17 for 2016 – 18 be noted;

- (b) That the implementation of the Joint Negotiating Committee Pay Award for employees on grades 18 – 21 and the pay award for the Chief Executive for 2016 – 18 be approved.

## 12. Public Sector Exit Payments.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which informed members of the Government's proposals to place a cap on exit payments for public sector employees, and to introduce a repayment requirement where senior employees returning to any part of the public sector within 12 months of receiving such payment. A copy of the report marked "Agenda Item 12" is filed with these minutes.

In response to questions raised, members were advised as follows:-

- (i). The early analysis of the likely impact of the Policy would be on employees aged 55 years and over earning over £50,000, who faced redundancy and were able to access their pension. It was likely that the Policy could also affect lower-earning employees with a considerable length of service;
- (ii). It was envisaged that the repayment requirement would be enforceable under statute, which in extreme cases could lead to prosecution to recover the monies owed to the Authority.

Mrs. H. Loydall CC asked that it be recorded that she was disappointed that the legislative requirements on exit payments were being forced on the Council by the Government without any clarity from the Treasury as to how a power to "waiver" the payments would be implemented. The Director indicated a further report would be presented to the Committee when this information was available.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the report be noted;
- (b) That a report containing further detail regarding the implementation of a waiver arrangement and any impact on the Council's Pay Policy Statement be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee.

## 13. Local Government Pension Scheme.

The Committee considered a report of the Director of Corporate Resources which sought its agreement to the policies where the County Council, as a scheme employer, could exercise discretion under the provision of the Local Government Pension Scheme. A copy of the report marked "Agenda Item 13" is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

- (a) That the changes to the discretionary elements of Local Government Pension Scheme as set out in paragraphs 7 to 9 of the report be approved;
- (b) That it be noted that the discretion relating to the Exit Payment Regulations was provisional until the Enterprise Act 2016 comes into force later in 2016.

14. Organisational Change Policy and Procedure. Summary of Action Plans.

The Committee considered a report of the Chief Executive which presented a summary of current Action Plans which contained provision for compulsory redundancies and details of progress in their implementation. A copy of the report marked 'Agenda Item 14' is filed with these minutes.

RESOLVED:

That the report be noted.

15. Date of Next Meeting.

It was noted that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on 20 October 2016.

10.00 - 11.25 am  
30 June 2016

CHAIRMAN

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**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE**  
**20 OCTOBER 2016**

**SICKNESS ABSENCE**

**REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES**

**Purpose of Report**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide the Employment Committee with an update on the Council's overall position on sickness absence at the end of August 2016.

**Policy Framework and Previous Decisions**

2. On 30 June 2016 the Committee considered the end of 2015/16 sickness absence position.

**Absence Data**

<b>Department</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>Year to date up to end of August 2016</b>
<b>Days per FTE</b>	<b>End of Year</b>	<b>End of Year</b>	<b>Q1</b>	
Chief Executive's	5.55	6.99	6.21	5.87
Environment and Transport	8.23	8.80	10.12	10.21
Children and Family Services	10.37	10.06	10.92	10.80
Corporate Resources	7.86	6.95	7.52	7.55
Adults and Communities	12.24	11.31	12.53	12.61
Public Health	9.14	7.84	7.44	7.36
<b>Total</b>	<b>9.83</b>	<b>9.32</b>	<b>10.22</b>	<b>10.21</b>
ESPO	12.07	10.88	10.13	10.81
EMSS	6.65	6.69	8.42	8.51

3. Absence levels from the end of 2015/16 to quarter 1 2016/17 show a significant increase in average days. Between these two periods the reporting method has been upgraded to a new system which more accurately captures the absence of part-time

staff based on their working patterns. If the old reporting system had been used, the figure for total absence per FTE would have been 0.65 days lower. Therefore of the total increase in absence of 0.9 days FTE from the end of 2015/16 and quarter 1 2016/17, 0.65 days can be attributed to the change in reporting method, and 0.25 days is a real reflection of an increase in corporate absence.

4. At the end of quarter 1 and August 2016 Chief Executive's and Public Health departments had sickness absence levels under the corporate target of 7.5 days per FTE.

### **Reasons for Absence**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2015/16</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>As at end of August 2016</b>
<b>Percentage of days lost</b>	<b>Q2</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>Q4</b>	<b>Q1</b>	
<b>12 months cumulative</b>					
Back and neck problems	4.89	5.30	5.50	5.33	5.49
Other musculo-skeletal	5.71	6.43	6.66	7.35	7.73
Stress/depression, mental health	6.54	7.57	7.36	8.76	8.79
Viral infection	28.58	27.59	30.14	32.01	32.44
Neurological	5.40	5.82	6.08	6.17	6.38
Genito-Urinary/Gynaecological	2.93	3.36	3.43	3.21	3.07
Pregnancy Related	1.71	2.11	1.93	1.98	1.89
Stomach, liver, kidney, digestion	18.62	18.36	18.44	17.88	17.40
Heart, blood pressure, circulation	0.81	0.94	0.93	1.11	1.18
Chest, respiratory	4.79	4.63	4.68	4.82	4.66
Eye, ear, nose and mouth/dental	4.44	4.64	4.78	4.85	5.17
Other	8.81	5.96	2.85	0.75	0.07
Not disclosed	6.78	7.29	7.22	5.76	5.74

5. The table above details the percentage of cumulative days lost during quarters 2, 3 and 4 in 2015/16, quarter 1 in 2016/17 and at the end of August 2016. The two highest reasons for absence continue to be viral infections and stomach problems.

6. It is important to note that viral illness includes a wide spectrum of illnesses apart from cold and flu, therefore it has been agreed that there is a benefit in having a wider range of codes, enabling better analysis of the reasons for absence. Managers have also requested that codes are expanded to include categories for cancer treatment and operations.

### **Short and Long Term Absence Split**

	Q1 2016/17		July & August 2016/17	
Department	Long term	Short term	Long term	Short term
Chief Executive's	24.12%	75.88%	69.58%	30.42%
Environment and Transport	63.09%	36.91%	72.50%	27.50%
Children and Families Services	66.57%	33.43%	68.69%	31.31%
Corporate Resources	61.34%	38.66%	61.12%	38.88%
Adults and Communities	63.98%	36.02%	66.41%	33.59%
Public Health	42.70%	57.30%	36.53%	63.47%

**Note: Long term is categorised as over 4 week continuous absence.**

7. The majority of the departments continue to show a greater balance of longer term absence. The Chief Executive's department shows a change in the makeup of its absences between quarter 1 and 2 in 2016/17, noting that absence levels are decreasing in this department.

### **Performance Management**

8. The Council's Attendance Management policy and procedure has been in place since 2009. Together with a range of guidance and support it provides managers with all the tools they need to proactively manage poor attendance within their service areas. However it does rely on managers taking prompt, balanced and robust action, and also there being clear accountability in action.
9. From autumn 2015 onwards a new programme of attendance management skills workshops with a practical focus was being offered to managers. Further work was recently finalised to make this programme mandatory and actions are being taken to ensure that managers who have not completed the course, do so at the earliest opportunity.
10. On a more general note, performance management is an area that will be given significant focus as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy planning process. Arguably, sickness absence levels provide an insight into how well or otherwise managers are managing workforce issues. Poor attendance management often

indicates poor levels of performance management in other areas, such as capability and productivity. Initiatives to support managers to take action to manage absence will assist in reducing sickness absence levels. However, the key to sustained reductions in sickness absence is effective management. Further work is currently underway on wider performance management issues and the outputs of this will be brought to a future meeting of the Committee.

### **Absence Triage Service and Absence Reporting Procedure**

11. To strengthen the absence management process, an externally hosted absence triage service trial is being developed. The service will incorporate an absence reporting line, management guidance, prompts and information system. The absence reporting line will be staffed by a Registered General Nurse who would undertake a short medical assessment, provide general primary care advice and make any necessary referrals. Managers are provided with information and prompts for actions throughout any absence.
12. The triage service aims to reduce absence by targeting two areas. Firstly, by standardising the absence reporting process with a robust, medically advised conversation, and secondly through ensuring high levels of return to work interview completion, and management compliance with absence triggers. These are both achieved through having a clearly understood and consistently applied absence reporting procedure together with tailored management information systems which support the process, as well as clear accountability.
13. The trial will be introduced within the Environment and Transport Department and provider services (including the HART service) within the Adults and Communities Department. The discussions with the supplier are in the final stages with a view to commencing the trial as soon as possible.
14. For staff outside of the trial it has been agreed that the Absence Reporting Procedure will be reviewed to ensure that individuals are continuing to:
  - Have a conversation with their manager on the first day of absence;
  - Agree an expected return to work date / time;
  - Agree to seek any medical advice or treatment they need;
  - Explore opportunities for smarter working to avoid / reduce their absence;
  - Where necessary, agree a regular schedule of contact which provides the manager with the information they need to plan work, and the individual with any support or information they need.

### **Attendance Management Policy**

15. As detailed in paragraph 8, the Council's Attendance Management Policy and Procedure has been in place since 2009. Since its introduction there has been a series of amendments to expand upon the circumstances under which formal action

can commence under the Policy - individuals can be kept under review and also moved to the final stage of the policy in exceptional circumstances.

16. Having considered feedback from managers and analysed trends in absence data HR is currently working to make significant changes to the Attendance Management Policy, subject to consultation with trades unions. The recommended areas of policy change could include the following:

- Review the absence trigger point (currently 3 occasions in 6 months);
- Maintain one policy but review the procedure and approach for managing long and short term absences;
- Provide more emphasis for managers to take action to address poor attendance;
- Review if and when occupational health reports are required;
- Review the procedure regarding stages, notice periods and panel makeup;
- Review the effectiveness of having a 'stress related absence' trigger point;
- Align the Probationary Policy to support any changes.

### **Infection Control**

17. It has been agreed, in order to improve the hygiene of the working environment, desk top recyclers will be removed, as they have attracted pests, particularly fruit flies. Desk top recyclers were never intended to be used to hold food or food containers however, this has not been enforced. Teams who have voluntarily stopped using desk top recyclers report that there is no negative impact on recycling behaviour.

### **Recommendations**

18. The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

### **Background Papers**

None.

### **Officer to Contact**

Andrea Denham  
HR Business Partner  
(0116) 3055261  
[andrea.denham@leics.gov.uk](mailto:andrea.denham@leics.gov.uk)

### **Equality and Human Rights Implications**

19. The attendance management policy has been subject to an Equality and Human Rights Impact Assessment, and this was published in 2014. There are no equalities and human rights issues arising directly from this report.

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**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE****20 OCTOBER 2016****ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE POLICY AND PROCEDURE****SUMMARY OF ACTION PLANS****REPORT OF THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE****Introduction**

1. The purpose of this report is to present a summary of current Action Plans which contain provision for compulsory redundancy and details of progress in their implementation.

**Background**

2. At its meeting on 11 February 2010 the Committee approved a new Organisational Change Policy and Procedure (replacing the Policy in the Event of Redeployment and Redundancy) together with revised arrangements through which the Committee would exercise its oversight of the implementation of that procedure.
3. In accordance with that decision, summaries of current Action Plans are attached as follows:
  - Appendix A1 – Implementation Completed;
  - Appendix A2 – Implementation Underway.
4. The arrangements also involve presenting a summary of any outstanding comments/concerns raised by members of the Committee. There are no outstanding comments/concerns on this occasion.
5. Members are asked to indicate where they wish a representative of the Department concerned to be present to answer any questions in any particular case, if they have not already done so.

**Equality and Diversity Implications**

6. The Organisational Change Policy and Procedure is designed to ensure that changes which impact on employees are implemented in a fair and non-discriminatory manner.

**Recommendation**

7. That the report be noted.

**Officer to Contact**

Anna Rog, Committee Officer

☎ 0116 305 0455

Email: [anna.rog@leics.gov.uk](mailto:anna.rog@leics.gov.uk)

Gordon McFarlane, Assistant Director – Corporate Services & Transformation

☎ 0116 305 6333

Email: [gordon.mcfarlane@leics.gov.uk](mailto:gordon.mcfarlane@leics.gov.uk)

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## EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 20 OCTOBER 2016

### SUMMARY OF CURRENT ACTION PLANS - IMPLEMENTATION COMPLETED

Action Plan	Date Approved	Outcome
A&C Community Libraries Transfer	01/09/2015	15 Compulsory Redundancies
A&C - Melton Community Life Choices Service	05/01/2016	2 Compulsory Redundancies
CFS - Closure of Greengate Children's Home	21/01/2016	16 Compulsory Redundancies
CFS – Youth Offending	18/01/2016	4 Compulsory Redundancies
RES - Business Services Review Stage 2	12/09/2016	1 Compulsory Redundancy
A&C – Melton Community Life Choices Service	05/01/2016	2 Compulsory Redundancies

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**EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 20 OCTOBER 2016**  
**SUMMARY OF CURRENT ACTION PLANS - IMPLEMENTATION UNDERWAY**

Action Plan	Date Approved	Current Position	Next Steps	Max Compulsory Redundancies
A&C - Adult Learning Service and Business Support Action Plan	04/05/2016	Action plan has been launched to staff on 05/05/2016	Interim meetings during consultation due on 16 May and 6 June	8.91 FTE Redundancies
CFS - Supporting Leicestershire Families - Youth Offer - Duke Of Edinburgh	02/06/2016	Launch on 2nd June		1 redundancy
E&T - Environment & transport Phase 3	27/11/2015	Midpoint meeting 22 January 2016	Selection process ongoing - may result in more compulsory redundancies	7 redundancies
RES - Operational Property Services & FM	23/05/2016	Consultation started		5 redundancies
PUB - Action Plan For Public Health	25/06/2016			4 redundancies
RES - Churchill Juniors Action Plan	20/08/2016	Consultation started and employees have been given a copy of the Action Plan	Complete job preference forms	1 redundancy
RES - HR Services	26/09/2016	Action Plan launch meeting held on 26 September 2016	Formal consultation	5 redundancies

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