

## EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE: 3 DECEMBER 2015

### SICKNESS ABSENCE

#### REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

##### Purpose

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 Quarter 2 2015-16.

##### Background

2. The Employment Committee considered the end of year sickness absence position on 22 October 2015.
3. The Committee requested further information about the sickness absence levels within Leicestershire Borough and District Councils and for discussions to take place with those County Councils (table provided in the report dated 22 October 2015) with lower levels of absence to understand any specific activity they were undertaking to effectively manage attendance.

##### Absence Data

Table 1.

<b>Department Days per FTE</b>	<b>2014/15</b>	<b>15/16 Q1</b>	<b>15/16 Q2</b>
Chief Executive's	5.55	6.01	6.11
Environment and Transport	8.23	7.66	7.63
Children and Families Services	10.37	9.31	9.42
Corporate Resources	7.86	7.86	7.13
Adults and Communities	12.24	11.98	11.90
Public Health	9.14	7.48	5.28
<b>Total:</b>	<b>9.83</b>	<b>9.39</b>	<b>9.32</b>
ESPO	12.07	12.25	12.03
EMSS	6.65	6.76	7.52

4. At the end of Quarter 2 2015-16 Chief Executive's, Public Health and Corporate Resources are all under the corporate target of 7.5 days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE). Environment and Transport are also making steady progress toward this target.
5. Children and Family Services have made improvements since the end of the financial year however there has been a small increase in sickness absence since the last quarter.
6. Adults and Communities Department is making reductions in sickness levels however the number of days absent per FTE is still at a concerning level.
7. ESPO and EMSS sickness absence is not included within the Council's overall figure, however both areas of the organisation are taking action towards achieving the 7.5 days per FTE target.

### **Reasons for Absence**

Table 2.

<b>Reasons % days lost</b>	<b>End of Q 1 2015-16</b>	<b>End of Q2 2015-16</b>
Back & neck problems	4.76	4.89
Other musculo-skeletal	6.04	5.71
Stress/depression, mental health	5.94	6.54
Viral infection	27.09	28.58
Neurological	5.33	5.40
Genito-Urinary/Gynaecological	2.77	2.93
Pregnancy Related	1.46	1.71
Stomach, liver, kidney, digestion	18.73	18.62
Heart, blood pressure, circulation	0.79	0.81
Chest, respiratory	4.65	4.79
Eye, ear, nose & mouth/dental	4.55	4.44
Other	10.74	8.81
Nothing stated	7.13	6.78

8. Table 2. details the percentage of days lost at the end of Quarter 1 and 2 2015-16. The two highest reasons for absence continue to be viral infections and stomach problems.

### **Comparative Data & Actions**

9. At the last meeting of this Committee, sickness absence data for 2014-15 was requested from Leicestershire Borough and District Councils. East Midlands Councils assisted in providing data from 5 councils. In days lost per FTE these figures were 3.45, 7.41, 8.1, 8.45 and 9.31.
10. Discussions have taken place with other county councils who have reported less than 7 days absence per FTE in order to share and generate ideas to improve attendance. One council has implemented a policy which directly links performance (including attendance) to the entitlement to receive and maintain pay increments. This is an area which could be developed for consideration as part of the review of pay and reward. The high level plan for this is the subject of a separate report to the Committee.

### **Attendance Management Action Plan**

11. The following actions have taken place since the last meeting of the Employment Committee :
- (a) Adults and Communities, Children and Family Services and Environment and Transport are undertaking Absence Star Chamber sessions;
  - (b) Prioritisation of managers for the attendance management workshops has been agreed and sessions are being scheduled;
  - (c) Employment Committee will receive a separate paper on the review of Mental Health First Aiders;
  - (d) Information for the attendance improvement plan audit has been collected and the audit has commenced.

### **Recommendations**

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

### **Background Papers**

Report to the Employment Committee 22 October 2015 - "Sickness Absence"  
<http://ow.ly/V11jV>

### **Circulation under the Local Issue Alert Procedure**

None.

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**Equal and Human Rights Implications**

12. 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.