

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 5 DECEMBER 2019**ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT****REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to update the Employment Committee on the County Council's overall position on sickness absence as at the end of September 2019.

Background

2. On 26 September 2019, the Committee considered the Council's absence position as at the end of June 2019.

Sickness absence – current position

3. The table below details the end of year sickness absence levels of the previous 4 years together with last four quarters, including Q2 2019/20.

Department	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19 Q3	18/19 Q4 end of year	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2	Total FTE days lost 01/10/18 – 30/09/19	Total cost of absence 01/10/18 – 30/09/19
Chief Executive's	5.55	6.99	6.03	6.38	9.12	7.60	6.98	6.46	1,464	£167,224
E&T	8.23	8.80	9.68	10.09	9.90	9.16	8.77	8.36	6,435	£564,440
C&FS	10.37	10.06	10.05	10.25	11.07	10.55	10.00	9.69	9,671	£1,129,838
Corporate Resources	7.86	6.95	7.94	8.12	7.64	7.39	7.85	8.24	9,433	£836,554
A&C	12.24	11.31	12.57	11.26	10.30	10.02	10.72	11.00	13,652	£1,302,761
Public Health	9.14	7.84	7.43	6.49	8.65	8.57	8.45	8.45	729	£86,876
LCC total	9.83	9.32	10.01	9.73	9.65	9.18	9.26	9.25	41,485	£4,087,694
ESPO	12.07	10.88	9.75	11.70	9.72	9.55	9.52	8.73	2,745	£221,582
EMSS	6.65	6.69	9.27	7.42	8.22	7.54	7.30	7.87	1,194	£92,0377

4. By the end of September 2019, although most departments have made reductions, only the Chief Executive's department are below the corporate target of 7.5 days per FTE. Therefore, further action is required to continue to address levels of sickness absence across all departments.

Reasons for sickness absence

5. Displayed in order of percentage of time lost (greatest first), the table below details the top 10 reasons for absence, plus the 'not disclosed' category.

Percentage of FTE days lost 12 months cumulative	2018/19 June 2018 Q1	2018/19 Sept 2018 Q2	2018/19 Dec 2018 Q3	2018/19 Mar 2019 Q4	2019/20 June 2019 Q1	2019/20 Sept 2019 Q2
Stress/depression, mental health	26.8%	27.2%	28.5%	29.9%	29.9%	30.5%
Other musculo-skeletal	17.0%	17.6%	17.1%	16.6%	16.5%	14.8%
Gastro-stomach, digestion	7.8%	8.4%	8.3%	8.2%	8.6%	8.2%
Cancer	3.0%	3.0%	3.4%	4.4%	5.5%	6.2%
Cough/cold/flu	7.9%	8.0%	7.8%	6.2%	6.0%	5.8%
Back & neck	4.9%	4.4%	4.6%	4.9%	5.0%	5.5%
Neurological	4.2%	3.8%	4.4%	4.9%	4.9%	5.1%
Viral infection, not cough/cold/flu	5.8%	5.7%	5.4%	5.1%	4.9%	4.5%
Chest, respiratory	4.8%	4.9%	4.8%	4.2%	4.0%	4.1%
Eye, ear, nose, mouth/dental	3.9%	4.1%	3.8%	3.7%	3.6%	4.1%
<i>Not disclosed</i>	<i>4.0%</i>	<i>3.5%</i>	<i>2.5%</i>	<i>2.5%</i>	<i>2.5%</i>	<i>2.7%</i>

Short and long-term absence split

6. The table below details the number of FTE days lost due to absence and the percentage split of FTE days lost at the end of quarter 2 2019/20.

2019/20 as at end of Quarter 2/September 2019						
12 months cumulative						
Department	Long term			Short term		
	FTE days lost	% FTE days lost	Individual occurrences	FTE days lost	% FTE days lost	Individual occurrences
Chief Executive's	785.99	53.69%	21	678.05	46.31%	238
Environment and Transport	3,504.97	54.47%	100	2,929.53	45.53%	864
Children and Family Services	6,287.28	65.01%	153	3,384.17	34.99%	1053
Corporate Resources	6,094.98	57.35%	173	4,532.66	42.65%	1765
Adults and	8,583.92	62.88%	245	5,068.32	37.12%	1604

2019/20 as at end of Quarter 2/September 2019						
12 months cumulative						
Communities						
Public Health	412.05	56.52%	10	317.02	43.48%	94

Note: Long term is categorised as over 4 weeks of continuous absence.

Service level data

7. The table below provides details of the days lost per FTE at the end of 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19 and at the end of quarter 1 and quarter 2 2019/20, for service areas by department. It also shows the number of employees with absence, the headcount and the percentage of employees with an absence, in each service area, for the 12 months to September 2019.

Department	2016/17 Year end (Mar 17)	2017/18 Year end (Mar 18)	2018/19 Year end (Mar 19)	2019/20 End of Q1 (Jun 19)	2019/20 End of Q2 (Sep 19)	Oct 18 – Sept 19 Individual occurrence	Oct 18 – Sept 19 Emps with absence	Oct 18 – Sept 19 Head- count	Oct 18 – Sept 19 Emps with absence /Headcou nt
Chief Executive's	6.03	6.38	7.6	6.98	6.46	259	140	307	45.60%
Planning and Historic and Natural Environment	3.81	4.04	14.92	11.42	11.04	27	12	20	60.00%
Regulatory Services	6.95	4.87	6.2	6.73	6.28	53	41	67	61.19%
Trading Standards	8.76	9.65	7.24	9.33	8.18	29	22	39	56.41%
Strategy and Business Intelligence	6.28	8.04	6.93	6.23	6.32	85	47	87	54.02%
Democratic Services	10.69	8.91	14.81	15.17	12.13	30	15	23	65.22%
Legal Services	3.01	4.02	5.48	4.38	3.92	62	22	63	34.92%
Environment and Transport	9.68	10.09	9.16	8.77	8.36	964	537	994	54.02%
Highways and Transport	10.38	10.62	8.96	8.30	7.97	533	307	556	55.22%
Environment and Waste Management	4.85	7.98	10.07	10.91	10.14	181	98	154	63.64%

Department	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2019/20	Oct 18 –	Oct 18 –	Oct 18 –	Oct 18 –
Days per FTE	Year end	Year end	Year end	End of	End of	Sept 19	Sept 19	Sept 19	Sept 19
12 months cumulative	(Mar 17)	(Mar 18)	(Mar 19)	Q1	Q2	Individual occurrence	Emps with absence	Head-count	Emps with absence /Headcount
				(Jun 19)	(Sep 19)				
Children and Family Services	10.05	10.25	10.55	10	9.69	1206	668	1182	56.51%
Education and Early Help	9.13	9.28	8.42	8.40	8.75	772	355	603	58.87%
Children's Social Care	11.90	11.62	14.18	13.24	11.66	368	203	403	50.37%
Corporate Resources	7.94	8.12	7.41	7.79	8.20	1938	1075	1985	54.16%
Strategic Finance and Assurance	4.89	4.25	6.63	8.63	9.89	143	82	169	48.52%
Corporate Services	4.68	5.88	4.18	3.9	3.86	252	152	305	49.84%
Commercial and Customer Services	10.55	10.04	8.91	9.32	9.65	1364	736	1327	55.46%
Adults and Communities	12.57	11.26	10.02	10.72	11	1849	1025	1753	58.47%
East care pathway	n/a	11.06	9.51	10.53	10.58	294	177	299	59.20%
West care pathway	n/a	13.16	12.01	12.23	12.08	242	132	204	64.71%
Commissioning and Quality	n/a	8.01	8.02	7.69	8.53	166	91	118	77.12%
Promoting Independence	12.26	15.11	13.26	13.43	13.04	271	157	237	66.24%
Personal Care and Support	15.62	11.99	13.86	15.73	15.83	461	221	280	78.93%
Communities and Wellbeing	7.67	7.98	6.97	7.58	8.37	366	215	549	39.16%
Public Health	7.43	6.49	8.57	8.45	7.93	104	63	100	63.00%

Peer review

8. A peer review was conducted by senior Human Resources staff from North Yorkshire County Council in early August 2019. This was a combination of a desktop review of policies, initiatives and our communication channels, and one day on-site interviewing a selection of managers, HR colleagues and trade union representatives.
9. The Absence Peer Review findings and feedback can be summarised as the following:
 - i. Consider introducing a 'statement of intent' into our Attendance Management policy;
 - ii. Review the process for short and long-term absence management to ensure it is effective and that a single approach is optimum;
 - iii. Review of our approach to attendance management intensive support, taking into consideration how absence is managed across the organisation in both areas in and out of scope of the project;
 - iv. Consider how effective messages from senior management to front line management regarding attendance management have been and review how Departmental Management Team meetings make managers more accountable for performance;
 - v. Review of our Occupational Health contract;
 - vi. Streamline our wellbeing offer to improve its accessibility for the user;
 - vii. Review our other supporting policies to give employees alternative options to taking sick leave; this will include a review of our bereavement leave/compassionate leave entitlement.
10. It is reassuring that the reviewers did not flag or recommend anything fundamental, such as initiatives that should stop, or significant gaps in our provision or approach.
11. Work is currently being undertaken by the Council's People Services on the above points; detail and outcomes of which will be reported to the Employment Committee at future meetings.

Attendance Management Intensive Support Project

12. The Attendance Management Intensive Support Project (IS) has been in place since August 2017. During the lifetime of the project the focus has been on training managers on basic attendance management as well as specific mental health management and support. Managers have also received coaching to improve their knowledge, skills and confidence in dealing with all attendance management issues and the project has also undertaken direct work with managers to support individual complex cases and where there is a high volume of absence.
13. The project has delivered a reduction in absence and it is also likely, based on the increases that were taking place before the project began, that absence would have continued to rise without this intervention across departments. Feedback collected through the peer review shows that the project is highly valued by those areas in scope and managers were complimentary about the support with which they had been provided.

14. Funding for the project currently ends in July 2020. A further period of funding to support the project has been agreed in principle and a review of the current model will take place this year, with proposals for its continuation being developed.

Recommendations

15. The Committee is asked to note the update provided on the County Council's overall position on sickness absence as at the end of September 2019, particularly the outcome of the Peer Review completed by North Yorkshire County Council and to provide any comments or feedback.

Background papers

16. Report to the Employment Committee 26 September 2019 – Attendance Management
[http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s148256/Attendance%20Management.pdf?\\$LO\\$=1](http://politics.leics.gov.uk/documents/s148256/Attendance%20Management.pdf?LO=1)

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

17. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

18. There are no equalities and human rights implications arising directly from this report.

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