



## EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 6 FEBRUARY 2020

### 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 December 2019.

#### Background

2. On 5 December 2019, the Committee considered the Council's absence position as at the end of September 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 Q3 2019/20.

Department	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19 Q4	19/20 Q1	19/20 Q2	19/20 Dec 19 Q3	Total FTE days lost 01/01/19 – 31/12/19	Total cost of absence 01/01/19 – 31/12/19
Chief Executive's	5.55	6.99	6.03	<b>6.38</b>	7.60	6.98	<b>6.46</b>	5.53	1,254	£147,419
E&T	8.23	8.80	9.68	<b>10.09</b>	9.16	8.77	<b>8.36</b>	8.52	6,678	£592,996
C&FS	10.37	10.06	10.05	<b>10.25</b>	10.55	10.00	<b>9.69</b>	10.22	10,173	£1,165,405
Corporate Resources	7.86	6.95	7.94	<b>8.12</b>	7.39	7.85	<b>8.24</b>	8.87	10,246	£906,719
A&C	12.24	11.31	12.57	<b>11.26</b>	10.02	10.72	<b>11.00</b>	11.63	14,464	£1,392,507
Public Health	9.14	7.84	7.43	<b>6.49</b>	8.57	8.45	<b>7.93</b>	6.25	588	£67,039
<b>LCC total</b>	<b>9.83</b>	<b>9.32</b>	<b>10.01</b>	<b>9.73</b>	<b>9.18</b>	<b>9.26</b>	<b>9.25</b>	<b>9.65</b>	<b>43,403</b>	<b>£4,272,085</b>
ESPO	12.07	10.88	9.75	<b>11.70</b>	9.55	9.52	<b>8.73</b>	8.05	2,529	£212,367
EMSS	6.65	6.69	9.27	<b>7.42</b>	7.54	7.30	<b>7.87</b>	9.69	1,468	£119,229

4. By the end of December 2019, although most departments have made reductions, only Public Health and 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	2019/20 Dec 2019 Q3
Stress/depression, mental health	26.8%	27.2%	28.5%	29.9%	29.9%	30.5%	<b>29.7%</b>
Other musculo-skeletal	17.0%	17.6%	17.1%	16.6%	16.5%	14.8%	<b>13.0%</b>
Gastro-stomach, digestion	7.8%	8.4%	8.3%	8.2%	8.6%	8.2%	<b>8.4%</b>
Cancer	3.0%	3.0%	3.4%	4.4%	5.5%	6.2%	<b>6.3%</b>
Cough/cold/flu	7.9%	8.0%	7.8%	6.2%	6.0%	5.8%	<b>6.0%</b>
Back & neck	4.9%	4.4%	4.6%	4.9%	5.0%	5.5%	<b>5.3%</b>
Chest, respiratory	4.8%	4.9%	4.8%	4.2%	4.0%	4.1%	<b>5.0%</b>
Neurological	4.2%	3.8%	4.4%	4.9%	4.9%	5.1%	<b>4.8%</b>
Viral infection, not cough/cold/flu	5.8%	5.7%	5.4%	5.1%	4.9%	4.5%	<b>4.7%</b>
Eye, ear, nose, mouth/dental	3.9%	4.1%	3.8%	3.7%	3.6%	4.1%	<b>4.5%</b>
<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>	<b><i>3.9%</i></b>

### 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 3 2019/20.

<b>2019/20 as at end of Quarter 3, December 2019</b>						
<b>12 months cumulative</b>						
<b>Department</b>	<b>Long term</b>			<b>Short term</b>		
	FTE days lost	% FTE days lost	Individual occurrences	FTE days lost	% FTE days lost	Individual occurrences
Chief Executive's	932.78	54.7%	21	770.99	45.3%	229
Environment and Transport	3,994.29	58.4%	93	2,845.59	41.6%	930
Children and Family Services	6,777.03	67.3%	168	3,300.12	32.7%	1141
Corporate Resources	5,245.70	54.8%	204	4,328.99	45.2%	1792
Adults and Communities	7,801.45	60.7%	259	5,042.84	39.3%	1616
Public Health	495.26	63.7%	11	282.73	36.3%	90

**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 2 and quarter 3 2019/20, for service areas by department. The table below 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 December 2019.

<b>Department</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Jan 19 – Dec 19</b>	<b>Jan 19 – Dec 19</b>	<b>Jan 19 – Dec 19</b>	<b>Jan 19 – Dec 19</b>
<b>Days per FTE</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>End of Q2</b>	<b>End of Q3</b>	<b>Individual occurrence</b>	<b>Emps with absence</b>	<b>Head-count</b>	<b>Emps with absence /Headcount</b>
<b>12 months cumulative</b>	<b>(Mar 17)</b>	<b>(Mar 18)</b>	<b>(Mar 19)</b>	<b>(Sep 19)</b>	<b>(Dec 19)</b>				
<b>Chief Executive's</b>	6.03	6.38	7.6	6.46	5.53	261	<b>143</b>	<b>303</b>	47.19%
Planning and Historic and Natural Environment	3.81	4.04	14.92	11.04	8.70	22	13	20	65.00%
Regulatory Services	6.95	4.87	6.2	6.28	6.78	35	43	66	65.15%
Trading Standards	8.76	9.65	7.24	8.18	8.26	57	25	39	64.10%
Strategy and Business Intelligence	6.28	8.04	6.93	6.32	4.75	72	47	88	53.41%
Democratic Services	10.69	8.91	14.81	12.13	9.43	34	15	20	75.00%
Legal Services	3.01	4.02	5.48	3.92	3.45	35	22	62	35.48%
<b>Environment and Transport</b>	9.68	10.09	9.16	8.36	8.52	1084	562	<b>996</b>	56.43%
Highways and Transport	10.38	10.62	8.96	7.97	7.79	623	325	559	58.14%
Environment and Waste Management	4.85	7.98	10.07	10.14	11.81	207	101	155	65.16%
<b>Children and Family Services</b>	10.05	10.25	10.55	9.69	10.22	1377	689	1188	58.00%
Education and Early Help	9.13	9.28	8.42	8.75	9.94	719	359	604	59.44%

<b>Department</b>	<b>2016/17</b>	<b>2017/18</b>	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>Jan 19 –</b>	<b>Jan 19 –</b>	<b>Jan 19 –</b>	<b>Jan 19 –</b>
<b>Days per FTE</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>Year end</b>	<b>End of</b>	<b>End of</b>	<b>Dec 19</b>	<b>Dec 19</b>	<b>Dec 19</b>	<b>Dec 19</b>
<b>12 months cumulative</b>	<b>(Mar 17)</b>	<b>(Mar 18)</b>	<b>(Mar 19)</b>	<b>(Sep 19)</b>	<b>(Dec 19)</b>	<b>Individual occurrence</b>	<b>Emps with absence</b>	<b>Head-count</b>	<b>Emps with absence /Headcount</b>
Children's Social Care	11.90	11.62	14.18	11.66	10.64	399	210	408	51.47%
<b>Corporate Resources</b>	7.94	8.12	7.41	8.20	8.96	2148	1116	1989	56.11%
Strategic Finance and Assurance	4.89	4.25	6.63	9.89	10.02	143	82	170	48.24%
Corporate Services	4.68	5.88	4.18	3.86	3.89	247	145	302	48.01%
Commercial and Customer Services	10.55	10.04	8.91	9.65	10.62	1555	772	1325	58.26%
<b>Adults and Communities</b>	12.57	11.26	10.02	11	11.63	1990	1050	1730	60.69%
East care pathway	n/a	11.06	9.51	10.58	10.99	313	177	292	60.62%
West care pathway	n/a	13.16	12.01	12.08	13.95	283	133	201	66.17%
Commissioning and Quality	n/a	8.01	8.02	8.53	7.68	169	93	117	79.49%
Promoting Independence	12.26	15.11	13.26	13.04	12.83	270	150	228	65.79%
Personal Care and Support	15.62	11.99	13.86	15.83	16.84	496	231	282	81.91%
Communities and Wellbeing	7.67	7.98	6.97	8.37	8.58	401	233	543	42.91%
<b>Public Health</b>	7.43	6.49	8.57	7.93	6.25	109	60	106	56.60%

### **Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)**

8. To strengthen the Council's current wellbeing support offer, from 1 April 2019 all County Council employees have had access to a confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) via the Council's Occupational Health provider. This works alongside our current Wellbeing Service (counselling service) and acts as an additional confidential telephone counselling and self-help resource managed via our external Occupational Health provider. This service is currently engaged on a 12-month pilot.

9. Despite a promotion campaign, reports show a relatively low take up of the service with a total of 97 employees contacting the helpline between April and December, with 9 of these being referred to 6 structured counselling sessions.
10. Given the Council's commitment to wellbeing, it is intended that the pilot is extended for a further 12 months. This ties in with the procurement of an Occupational Health provider with a contract start date of 1 April 2020.

### **Attendance Management Intensive Support Project**

11. The Attendance Management Intensive Support Project (IS) has been in place since August 2017. 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.
12. A further period of funding to support the project has been agreed with a small increase in investment. This will enable the scope of the project to be extended across the whole of the Council helping to achieve an improvement in the consistency of support and approach. It is intended to appoint a Coordinator which will release the time of the three Human Resources Advisers to enable them to cover more complex attendance and performance management cases. It is expected that this will deliver further improvements in sickness absence management, improve support to managers around performance management and result in savings and reductions in absence levels.

### **Communication**

13. Although there is senior commitment to tackling sickness absence and promoting good attendance, there is a need to consider the Council's communication and engagement. The recent peer review also questioned whether the Council had a clear message and set of expectations.
14. Work is underway with the Communications Team to create a number of cohesive, consistent 'top down' messages that can be used. This will include a statement of intent (Appendix) for the attendance management policy which was discussed by the Employment Committee at its meeting in December 2019.

### **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 December 2019, particularly the update on Intensive Support Project, the Employee Assistance Programme and the work started around communication and to provide any comments or feedback.

### **Background papers**

16. Report to the Employment Committee 5 December 2019 – Attendance Management.  
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=5777&Ver=4>

**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.

**Appendix**

Draft Statement of Intent – Purpose and Aims

**Officer to Contact**

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