

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 31 MARCH 2011**SICKNESS ABSENCE – THIRD QUARTER PERFORMANCE****REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES****Purpose**

1. The purpose of this report is to provide Employment Committee with an update on the overall County Council and departmental performance in relation to sickness absence for the period 1 October to 31 December 2010 (Q3).

Key Issues

2. The overall absence figure (number of days of absence per FTE) for the County Council in 2009/10 was 7.00 days. The proposed absence target for 2010/11 is 6.50 days per fte.
3. In February 2010 Corporate Management Team agreed to fund an additional resource to work with managers within Children and Young People's Service during 2010/11 to improve attendance and achieve a reduction in sickness absence levels. The project supported managers to apply the Managing Attendance policy consistently and fairly across the department and had a positive impact on reducing sickness. This project finished on 31 December 2010.

Absence data

4. The table below shows the outturn performance for 2008/09 and 2009/10. It also shows the Q1 (April – June 2010), Q2 (July - September 2010) and Q3 (Oct – Dec 2010) positions for 2010/11:

Department	2008/ 2009	2009/ 2010	April – Jun 2010 (Q1)	Jul – Sep 2010 (Q2)	Oct – Dec 2010 (Q3)
Chief Executive's	7.78	8.44	6.35	4.90	5.91
E&T	10.60	7.26	5.72	7.72	7.44
CYPS – Non School Based	9.95	7.55	7.79	6.56	7.06
CYPS – School Based	5.17	5.95	6.00	4.86	5.19
Resources	9.33	6.15	5.83	5.30	7.39
Adults and Communities	16.03	12.19	9.89	9.74	10.77
Total	7.74	7.00*	6.72	5.91	6.45

**This figure includes 6.40 days lost per fte for the Community Services staff. The Community Services department ceased to exist at 31st January 2010.*

5. Quarter 3 performance for 2010/11 is 6.45 days per fte (table 5). It shows an increase from Q2 (5.91 days), but still remains lower than the Q1 and of previous year outturn positions. If the Council can hold this level of performance during Q4 then the Council will achieve its sickness absence target of 6.5 days for the financial year 2010/11.

Reasons for Absence

6. The table below shows the reasons recorded for absence. The percentage split in terms of the reasons for absence remains broadly the same, however the percentage of absences for which the reason is 'not known' remains high.

Reason for Absence	2008/2009	2009/20 10	April – Jun 2010 Q1	Jul – Sept 2010 Q2	Oct – Dec 2010 Q3
Back and Neck Problems	4.04%	3.03%	3.22%	3.86%	3.63
Other Musculo- Skeletal Problems	5.45%	5.51%	4.29%	6.10%	6.15
Stress/depres sion, Mental Health and Fatigue	5.45%	5.82%	4.13%	6.05%	5.50
Viral Infection	19.19%	11.69%	13.17%	13.97%	19.09
Neurological	4.36%	3.31%	3.98%	4.46%	4.04

GenitoUrinary/ Gynaecologica l	2.03%	2.17%	2.2%	2.98%	3.04
Pregnancy Related	0.82%	1.33%	1.30%	1.63%	1.28
Stomach, Liver, Kidney, Digestion	11.88%	6.43%	11.79%	12.74%	12.62
Heart, Blood Pressure, Circulation	1.54%	1.30%	0.77%	0.90%	0.81
Chest, Respiratory	2.75%	2.33%	2.73%	2.66%	2.74
Eye, Ear, Nose & Mouth/Dental	2.87%	2.70%	3.93%	4.48%	3.70
Other	7.51%	6.30%	8.19%	8.34%	9.37
Not Known	32.09%	48.06%	40.31%	31.82%	28.05

7. The Employee Service Centre has identified which schools and departments/sections are not completing absence returns correctly and are working to ensure that teams do complete the returns accurately.
8. The table below details the departmental percentage of employee's sickness absence for which the reason for absence is not known.

Department	2007/2008	2009/2010	April - Jun 2010 (Q1)	Jul - Sept 2010 (Q2)	Oct - Dec 2010 Q3
Chief Executive's	9.28%	9.64%	11.90%	10.43%	9.09%
E & T	33.02%	28.6%	21.74%	17.59%	15.36%
CYPS – Non School Based	33.74%	32.28%	22.51%	16.93%	17.54%
CYPS – School Based	72.25%	73.20%	55.50%	51.45%	43.41%
Resources	7.74%	19.74%	25.61%	16.63%	15.02%
Adult and Communities	28.04%	26.55%	9.40%	9.22%	9.43%

Conclusion

9. Whilst the data is extracted from both Oracle and Trent there remains some risk to the accuracy of the data; however the data input and reporting process have been quality assured.

10. Absence levels have increased during Q3 and the most significant increase in reasons for absence relates to viral infections. There have been various strains of cold/flu reported nationally and their impact on the workforce in general.
11. Analysis of the data in Q3 indicates that absence levels begin to increase in October, peak in November and decrease in December and therefore it is likely that the target of 6.50 days fte will be achieved by 31 March 2011.
12. Managers across departments now have a better understanding of the issues in respect of attendance management, are committed to reducing levels of absence and are more robust in their approach to tackling this issue.
13. Additional support and training has been made available to managers in Children and Young People's Service as part of the project as mentioned in paragraph 3 to enable managers to consistently and proactively tackle sickness absence. This project will move to the Environment and Transport and Corporate Resources departments with effect from 1 April 2011.

Recommendations

14. Employment Committee is requested to note the progress made towards achieving the corporate sickness target for 2010/11 of 6.5 days per FTE.

Background Papers

Report to Employment Committee – Managing Attendance – Update 2
December 2010

Circulation Under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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Equal Opportunities Implications

None.