

EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 28 FEBRUARY 2012**REPORT ON SICKNESS ABSENCE - Q3****REPORT FROM 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 overall County Council and departmental performance in relation to sickness absence for the period 1st October 2011 to 31st December 2011 (Q3).

Background

2. The overall absence figure (number of days of absence per FTE) for the County Council in 2010/11 was 7.85 days. The proposed absence target (including schools) for 2011/12 is 7.5 days.

Key Issues

3. The County Council's performance with regard to sickness absence is 7.06 days as at 31st December 2011. The Council is on track to meet its absence target, although sickness has increased slightly during the winter months.
4. The absence data in this report (table 9) shows the projected outturn figure with the inclusion of the schools data. The projected outturn figure without the schools data is shown in paragraph 11.
5. The HR service is continuing to work with individual schools whose sickness levels are high. This has involved producing data similar to that provided to departments and discussing and agreeing strategies with schools to reduce levels of absence. Schools are also being reminded of the importance of recording reasons for absence, so this information can be analysed and any necessary action taken.
6. The Council's Corporate Management Team (CMT) has previously funded an additional resource to work with managers within the Adults and Communities and Children and Young People's departments to improve attendance and achieve a reduction in sickness absence levels. This project is currently working with Corporate Resources and Environment & Transport departments with effect from 1st April 2011 until 31st December 2011. There has been a reduction in absence levels from the 2010/11 outturn position for both of these departments.

7. At its meeting on 16th February, CMT agreed an absence target for 2012/13 of 7.5 days per employee. This reflects the Q3 projected outturn figure excluding schools of 7.71 days. Had schools continued to be included in the 2012/13 data, a target of 7.0 days would have been proposed.

Absence data

8. The table below shows the outturn performance for 2009/10 and 2010/11. It also shows the Q1 (April – June 2011), Q2 (July - September 2011) and Q3 (October – December 2011) projected outturn performance for 2010/11.

Department	2009/2010	2010/2011	April – Jun 2011 (Q1)	Jul – Sep 2011 (Q2)	Oct – Dec 2011 (Q3)
Chief Executive's	8.44	5.75	7.21	6.30	5.54
E&T	7.26	7.16	6.32	6.01	6.52
CYPS – Non School Based	7.55	7.57	5.15	6.35	6.53
CYPS – School Based	5.95	7.56	6.14	5.69	6.65
Resources	6.15	7.52	6.23	5.52	6.12
Adults and Communities	12.19	10.25	10.35	9.79	10.24
Total	7.00	7.85	6.65	6.33	7.06

9. By removing the absence data for schools from the above table the projected outturn figure for the County Council is 7.71 days per employee.
10. There are currently 11 schools which have converted to academies between August 2011 and January 2012. At the point of conversion sickness data is no longer used for the purposes of reporting.
11. As agreed at CMT on 24th November 2011 - quarterly sickness absence reporting will not include school's data with effect from 1st April 2012.
12. The Q3 performance of 7.06 days per FTE demonstrates a continued reduction in levels of sickness absence from the 2010/11 outturn position, but is continuing to rise during this financial year.

Reasons for Absence

13. The table below shows the reasons recorded for absence. This data does not include schools. 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' has increased slightly in Q3 but has reduced significantly in comparison to Q1.

Reason for Absence	2009/2010	2010/2011	April – Jun 2011	Jul – Sept 2011	Oct – Dec 2011
	%	%	Q1	Q2	Q3
			%	%	%
Back and Neck Problems	3.03	3.67	4.87	4.13	3.92
Other Musculo-Skeletal Problems	5.51	6.16	6.81	7.94	6.32
Stress/depression, Mental Health and Fatigue	5.82	5.76	9.38	9.22	7.89
Viral Infection	11.69	22.41	12.46	12.50	18.14
Neurological	3.31	3.94	3.93	4.17	3.53
GenitoUrinary/ Gynaecological	2.17	3.03	3.38	3.61	2.80
Pregnancy Related	1.33	1.20	1.67	1.54	1.31
Stomach, Liver, Kidney, Digestion	6.43	12.60	12.77	12.93	12.61
Heart, Blood Pressure, Circulation	1.30	0.78	1.06	1.21	0.82
Chest, Respiratory	2.33	2.80	2.24	2.40	2.90
Eye, Ear, Nose & Mouth/Dental	2.70	3.56	3.20	3.51	3.12
Other	6.30	10.23	14.51	13.33	11.51
Not Known	48.06	26.22	40.31	23.62	25.11

15. The table below details the departmental percentage of employee's sickness absence in Q1 (April – June 2011), Q2 (July – September 2011) and Q3 (October – December 2011) for which the reason for absence is not known.

Department	2007/2008	2009/2010	April - Jun 2011 (Q1) %	Jul – Sept 2011 (Q2) %	Oct – Dec 2011 (Q3)
Chief Executive's	9.28%	9.64%	6.79	7.55	5.70
E & T	33.02%	28.6%	15.08	17.59	13.10
CYPS – Non School Based	33.74%	32.28%	19.96	18.57	22.68
CYPS – School Based	72.25%	73.20%	32.06	33.20	32.86
Resources	7.74%	19.74%	20.22	20.75	19.52
Adult and Communities	28.04%	26.55%	12.55	13.55	14.27

Conclusion

17. Whilst the data is extracted Oracle there remains some risk to the accuracy of the data.
18. Absence levels in relation to stress/depression, mental health and fatigue have improved slightly in Q3 but remain high in relation to the outturn position for 2010/11.

Recommendations

19. It is recommended that the Employment Committee notes:
- i) The performance of sickness absence levels across the Council for October to December 2011.
 - ii) The 2012/13 target of 7.5 days per employee

Background Papers

Report on Absence – Update, 15 April 2010
 Report, Sickness Absence 2009/10, 9 September 2010
 Report on Absence, 29 October 2009
 Report, Managing Attendance Update, 2 December 2010
 Report, Sickness Absence, Q3 Performance, 31 March 2011
 Report, Managing Attendance – Outturn Performance 2010/1, 30 June 2011
 Report, Managing Attendance – Q1 Performance, 9 September 2011

Report, Managing Attendance – Q2 Performance, 8 December 2011
Report, Managing Attendance

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

None.

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Equal Opportunities Implications

There are no implications arising from this report.