

Report to Joint Consultative and Safety Committee

Subject: Sickness Absence: summary of current trends

Date: 28 August 2018

Author: Service Manager; Organisational Development

1. Purpose of the Report

This is an information item to inform the Committee of the current levels of sickness absence in the organisation and to examine trends. Relevant data is shown at Appendix 1; officers will present a verbal report on the context of this data.

As part of the introduction of this item, officers will also highlight to the Committee through verbal report, any matters of particular current interest in respect to absence management.

2. Summary of key data

Of particular interest to the committee may be:

• The summary of trends graph in Appendix 1 shows that the outturn for the full year up to June at 8.51 days lost per employee is well below the nine-day target (reduced in 2018-19 from ten days). Total absence over the last three months seems to have stabilised.

During the year the profile of absence management has remained high and in addition to policy change, work has continued to regularly notify employees of their team absence rates and how this compares to others and structured "case management" meetings have regularly taken place to ensure that employees on long-term absence are properly supported and managed.

• The rate of long-term absence over recent quarters is also shown at Appendix 1. The number of long-term cases has risen slightly in June and stands at eight cases. In December and March there were six and seven cases respectively. Long-term absence currently accounts for almost half of the total days lost due to sickness and 18.6% of the number of occurrences.

Long term absence is managed within teams and is supported by HR Officers and by Directors who regularly run "case management" sessions. This ensures that absence management is given a high priority within teams and also that the general management of absence is consistent in its nature between teams. Members will recall that the recent policy changes mean that no absence can now extend beyond one year.

 Both Customer Services and Revenues are large teams that showed a marked improvement in attendance rates this month although PASC, Waste and Transport and Public Protection are large teams that still have high rates of total absence above target. Appendix 2 shows the breakdown of information relating to the reasons for sickness absence for last year and the preceding two years. The "top five" reasons have been highlighted.

Although for some absence reasons there is no discernible short-term pattern of absence, some of the absence reasons do show a pattern between years:

- Muscular/ skeletal problems showed a sharp increase in the number of days lost in 2016-17 and a slight reduction last year in 2017-18. Introduced from January this year was the "fast track" physiotherapy referral scheme. Although too early to assess if this has had any material positive effect, a number of referrals have been made through the scheme to a local physiotherapist.

- Absences relating to colds occur at a reasonably consistent rate at just below 10% of days lost. There may be little that can be done for absences of this type although increasing opportunity for office-based staff to work in more flexible and "agile" ways may lead to a slight reduction in such absences as people can work from home and outside normal hours or days of work.

- At a consistent rate of absence similar to "colds", absence due to injury not sustained at work is a "top five" cause of non-attendance in each of the last three years. As the range of injuries is likely to be broad then it may be difficult to address specific issues although there may be merit in running a campaign to remind and inform staff that not taking simple safety measures at home might affect their ability to attend work; this will be discussed with the Safety Officer.

- The proportion of days lost due to accidents at work increased by almost four times in 2017-18 against the previous year. The Safety Officer reports that this change is due predominantly to a small number of employees on long-term absence due to work-related accidents.

- Days lost due to reasons of depression, stress and similar mental health problems represented the greatest loss in terms of proportion of days absent from work in 2017-18. The proportion did substantially decreased from the previous year (by around 25%). The rate of absence attributed to this reason is not particularly unusual across industry or the public sector and a number of measures have been put into place over the last year to continue to support employees effectively;

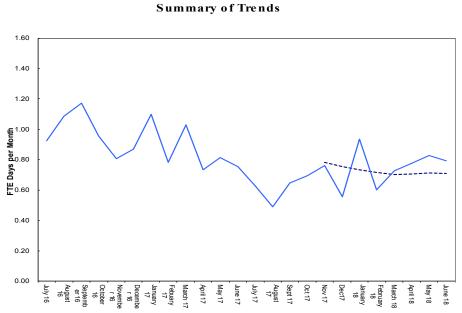
- Employee Assistance Programme; 24/7 access to employee support. Again, it is too early to establish whether or not this facility has had any material positive effect.
- A number of mental health awareness events run throughout the year for staff and managers
- Mindfulness sessions run fortnightly at lunchtimes
- Attendance by mental health practitioners at last year's Employee Conference
- Mental health issues being the subject of focus in some of the regular employee Wellbeing Bulletins that go out to all staff.
- Links to advice being provided through the annual employee health fair.

Support for employees who are suffering both short and long-term mental health issues will continue.

3. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to note this report.

Summary of trends graph; year to date at June 2018



--- 12 Month Rolling Average

Month	Total Absence %	No of FTE Staff	12 Month Average (%)	FTE Days per FTE in Current Month	FTE Days per FTE 12 Month Average	FTE Days per FTE per Month Average
July 16	4.40	387.34	3.64	0.92	9.36	0.78
August 16	4.93	390.93	3.91	1.09	10.02	0.84
September 16	5.32	390.53	4.18	1.17	10.81	0.90
October 16	4.55	389.26	4.27	0.96	11.07	0.92
November 16	3.67	389.12	4.24	0.81	11.00	0.92
December 16	4.34	387.30	4.23	0.87	11.00	0.92
January 17	5.23	387.81	4.32	1.10	11.22	0.94
Febuary 17	3.90	387.61	4.41	0.78	11.42	0.95
March 17	4.47	385.87	4.47	1.03	11.73	0.98
April 17	4.06	379.37	4.47	0.73	11.61	0.97
May 17	3.88	384.12	4.41	0.81	11.38	0.95
June 17	3.43	379.47	4.35	0.75	11.25	0.94
July 17	2.99	378.65	4.23	0.63	10.84	0.90
August 17	2.22	378.65	4.01	0.49	10.23	0.85
Sept 17	3.07	374.69	3.82	0.64	9.75	0.81
Oct 17	3.16	379.55	3.70	0.69	9.42	0.79
Nov 17	3.46	383.00	3.68	0.76	9.38	0.78
Dec17	2.93	379.78	3.57	0.56	9.05	0.75
January 18	4.25	378.25	3.48	0.93	8.80	0.73
February 18	3.01	374.84	3.41	0.60	8.59	0.72
March 18	3.46	373.69	3.33	0.73	8.41	0.70
April 18	3.88	366.58	3.31	0.78	8.48	0.71
May 18	3.94	359.94	3.32	0.83	8.54	0.71
June 18	3.60	365.97	3.33	0.79	8.51	0.71

Year to date absence data, by service area with six month trend

Days Lost Per FTE Employee: Year to June 2018

Year to date trend

Service	Section	Fte At Start	Fte At End	Average Fte	No Emps Sick FTE	FTE Days Lost	FTE Days Lost per FTE	% Rate of absence	Days Iost 1 month ago	Days Iost 2 months ago	Days Iost 3 months ago	Days Iost 4 months ago	Days Iost 5 months ago	Days lost 6 months ago
Chief Executive		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	0.79%	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00	2.00
Service Total:		1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	0.79%						
Deputy Chief Exec & Director of Finance	Financial Services	15.30	14.11	14.70	7.00	22.91	1.56	0.62%	1.56	2.17	3.88	6.21	7.78	8.41
	Health, Safety & Emergency Planning	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Parks and Street Care	45.39	50.93	48.16	32.08	440.65	9.15	3.62%	8.96	9.74	11.00	12.54	14.46	16.67
	Property	8.15	10.42	9.28	5.62	105.24	11.34	4.48%	11.39	11.07	10.01	9.49	8.74	7.82
	Revenues and Welfare Support	38.43	35.90	37.17	24.12	224.71	6.05	2.39%	6.77	6.40	5.86	5.53	5.73	6.37
	Sales and Marketing	0.00	1.00	0.50	1.00	21.00	42.00	16.60%	38.00	38.00	38.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Transport and Waste	68.16	65.66	66.91	40.89	982.48	14.68	5.80%	14.82	14.68	14.80	14.80	13.72	13.07
		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		177.43	180.02	178.73	110.72	1796.99	10.05	3.97%						
Director of Health & Community Wellbeing	Community Relations	12.11	12.32	12.22	6.16	180.89	14.81	5.85%	13.20	13.18	13.96	12.76	12.33	10.60
	Leisure Services	62.86	56.75	59.80	32.31	352.12	5.89	2.33%	5.66	5.51	5.36	5.42	5.79	6.12
	Public Protection	27.46	30.95	29.20	10.85	138.15	4.73	1.87%	4.20	4.20	4.10	5.70	6.45	6.69
		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		103.43	101.02	102.22	49.32	671.16	6.57	2.60%					. <u> </u> !	
Director of OD & Democratic Services	Customer Services and Communications	43.86	39.02	41.44	29.76	492.89	11.89	4.70%	12.35	11.69	10.31	9.92	9.52	9.20
	Democratic Services	8.18	8.39	8.28	5.16	78.42	9.47	3.74%	9.22	8.60	8.88	8.32	7.97	7.57
	Legal Services	6.01	6.01	6.01	2.15	11.61	1.93	0.76%	2.41	2.23	2.43	2.40	2.40	2.79
	Organisational Development	6.55	6.53	6.54	1.42	49.66	7.59	3.00%	9.09	7.19	4.38	4.05	3.41	4.00
		2.00	1.00	1.50	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		66.60	60.95	63.78	38.49	632.58	9.92	3.92%						
Planning, Economic Growth & Regeneration	Development Services	16.59	16.59	16.59	9.00	61.00	3.68	1.45%	3.31	3.68	3.68	3.20	3.45	3.80
	Economic Growth and Regeneration	5.01	3.98	4.49	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Planning Policy	5.24	5.24	5.24	0.41	2.03	0.39	0.15%	0.39	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.38	0.63
Service Total:		26.85	25.82	26.33	9.41	63.03	2.39	0.95%						
Grand Total:		375.31	368.81	372.06	208.93	3165.76	8.51	3.36%	8.54	8.48	8.41	8.59	8.80	9.05

Current month's absence data, by service area with six month trend

Days lost per FTE employee: June 2018

Current month trend

Service	Section	Fte At Start	Fte At End	Average Fte	No Emps Sick FTE	FTE Days Lost	FTE Days Lost per FTE	% Absence	-	-	-	Days lost 4 months ago	-	Days lost 6 months ago
Chief Executive		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%						
Deputy Chief Exec & Director of Finance	Financial Services	14.11	14.11	14.11	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.23	0.00	0.13	0.50
	Health, Safety & Emergency Planning	1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Parks and Street Care	48.93	50.93	49.93	6.00	47.00	0.94	4.19%	0.65	0.73	0.80	0.63	0.70	0.82
	Property	10.42	10.42	10.42	0.27	5.68	0.54	2.48%	0.60	0.54	0.57	0.75	1.71	1.60
	Revenues and Welfare Support	36.90	35.90	36.40	3.00	5.01	0.14	0.63%	0.90	0.61	0.44	0.37	0.75	0.32
	Sales and Marketing	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.00	9.09%	0.00	0.00	19.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Transport and Waste	65.66	65.66	65.66	8.00	81.78	1.25	5.66%	1.10	1.18	1.27	1.63	1.67	0.67
		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		179.02	180.02	179.52	18.27	141.47	0.79	3.57%						
Director of Health & Community Wellbeing	Community Relations	12.32	12.32	12.32	1.41	28.51	2.31	10.52%	0.76	0.86	1.50	0.66	1.38	1.38
	Leisure Services	55.48	56.75		5.82	40.97		3.28%	0.81	0.27	0.52	0.30	0.67	0.51
	Public Protection	30.95	30.95		4.00	39.57		5.81%	0.84	0.97	0.47	0.00	0.24	0.00
		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		99.75	101.02	100.38	11.22	109.05	1.09	4.91%						
Director of OD & Democratic Services	Customer Services and Communications	39.02	39.02	39.02	4.32	16.40		1.91%	1.53	1.72	0.69		1.56	
	Democratic Services	5.99	8.39	7.19	1.00	14.00		7.58%	0.31	0.00	0.00	0.38	2.17	0.00
	Legal Services	6.01	6.01	6.01	0.61	3.04		2.30%	1.01	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.41	0.00
	Organisational Development	5.53	6.53	6.03	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	1.49	2.94	0.34	0.68	1.02	0.65
		1.00	1.00	1.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		57.54	60.95	59.25	5.93	33.44	0.56	2.49%						
Planning, Economic Growth & Regeneration	Development Services	16.59	16.59	16.59	1.00	6.00	0.36	1.64%	0.00	0.00	0.47	0.22	0.00	0.12
	Economic Growth and Regeneration	3.98	3.98	3.98	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Planning Policy	5.24	5.24	5.24	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00%	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Service Total:		25.82	25.82	25.82	1.00	6.00	0.23	1.06%	L					
Grand Total:		363.13	368.81	365.97	36.42	289.96	0.79	3.57%	0.83	0.78	0.73	0.60	0.93	0.56

Long term (20 days+ in month)/ short term sickness analysis for June 2018

Analysis of Short and Long Term Absence June 2018

	Section	No Occurrences	Total No	Long Term	Total FTE	Long Term as a	Long Term as a
Service		Long Term	Occurrences	FTE Days Lost	Days Lost	% of Days Lost	% of Occurrences
Deputy Chief Exec & Director of Finance	Parks and Street Care	1	6	20.55	45.98	44.68%	16.67%
	Property	1	1	5.68	5.68	100.00%	100.00%
	Revenues and Welfare Support	0	3	0.00	4.90	0.00%	0.00%
	Sales and Marketing	0	2	0.00	1.96	0.00%	0.00%
	Transport and Waste	2	8	41.09	80.31	51.16%	25.00%
Head of Service Total:		4	20	67.31	138.83	48.49%	20.00%
Director of Health & Community Wellbeing	Community Relations	2	2	28.08	28.08	100.00%	100.00%
	Leisure Services	1	9	20.00			11.11%
	Public Protection	1	9	20.55			25.00%
			· ·	20.00	00.71	00.01 /0	20.007
Head of Service Total:		4	15	69.17	106.56	64.91%	26.67%
			15				
	Customer Services and Communications	4		0.00	16.05	0.00%	0.00%
	Customer Services and Communications Democratic Services	0			16.05 13.70	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total: Director of OD & Democratic Services Head of Service Total:	Customer Services and Communications	0		0.00	16.05 13.70 2.96	0.00%	0.00%
Director of OD & Democratic Services	Customer Services and Communications Democratic Services	0 0 0		0.00 0.00 0.00	16.05 13.70 2.96 32.71	0.00% 0.00% 0.00% 0.00%	0.00% 0.00% 0.00% 0.00%
Director of OD & Democratic Services Head of Service Total:	Customer Services and Communications Democratic Services Legal Services	0 0 0 0 0		0.00 0.00 0.00 0.00	16.05 13.70 2.96 32.71 5.87	0.00% 0.00% 0.00% 0.00%	0.00% 0.00% 0.00%

Long term (20 days+ in month)/ short term sickness analysis for March 2018

Head of	Section	No Occurrences	Total No	Long Term	Total FTE	Long Term as a	Long Term as a
Service		Long Term	Occurrences	FTE Days Lost	Days Lost	% of Days Lost	% of Occurrences
Deputy Chief Exec & Director of Finance	Financial Services	0	2	0.00	3.19	0.00%	0.00%
	Parks and Street Care	1	6	21.52	39.14	55.00%	16.67%
	Property	1	1	5.95	5.95	100.00%	100.00%
	Revenues and Welfare Support	0	6	0.00	16.34	0.00%	0.00%
	Sales and Marketing	0	1	0.00	18.59	0.00%	0.00%
	Transport and Waste	1	11	21.52	85.01	25.32%	9.09%
Head of Service Total:		3	27	48.99	168.21	29.13%	11.11%
Director of Health & Community Wellbeing	Community Relations	2	3	17.03	18.43	92.41%	66.67%
	Leisure Services	0	12	0.00	29.24	0.00%	0.00%
	Public Protection	0	3	0.00	13.79	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total:		2	18	17.03	61.46	27.70%	11.11%
Director of OD & Democratic Services	Customer Services and Communications	1	5	21.52	27.10	79.42%	20.00%
	Organisational Development	0	1	0.00	1.97	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total:		1	6	21.52	29.08	74.03%	16.67%
Planning, Economic Grow th & Regeneration	Development Services	0	2	0.00	7.83	0.00%	0.00%
Head of Service Total:		0	2	0.00	7.83	0.00%	0.00%
Grand Total:			E0	07 EE	266 E7	32.84%	11.32%
		6	53	87.55	266.57	52.04 /0	11.52/0

Long term (20 days+ in month)/ short term sickness analysis for December 2017

Section	No Occurrences	Total No	Long Term	Total FTE	Long Term as a	Long Term as a
	Long Term	Occurrences	FTE Days Lost	Days Lost	% of Days Lost	% of Occurrences
Financial Services	0	4	0.00	7.44	0.00%	0.00%
Parks and Street Care	1	7	18.59	39.14	47.50%	14.29%
Property	1	3	5.68	13.78	41.18%	33.33%
Revenues and Welfare Support	0	5	0.00	11.76	0.00%	0.00%
Transport and Waste	1	6	20.55	47.05	43.67%	16.67%
•	3	25	44.81	119.16	37.60%	12.00%
Community Relations	2	2	17.03	17.03	100.00%	100.00%
Leisure Services	1	13	6.53	30.88	21.13%	7.69%
•	3	15	23.55	47.91	49.16%	20.00%
Customer Services and Communications	1	9	20.55	34.96	58.77%	11.11%
Organisational Development	0	2	0.00	3.95	0.00%	0.00%
·	1	11	20.55	38.90	52.81%	9.09%
Development Services	0	1	0.00	1.96	0.00%	0.00%
•	0	1	0.00	1.96	0.00%	0.00%
	7	52	88.91	207.94	42.76%	13.46%
	Financial Services Parks and Street Care Property Revenues and Welfare Support Transport and Waste Community Relations Leisure Services Customer Services and Communications	Long TermFinancial Services0Parks and Street Care1Property1Revenues and Welfare Support0Transport and Waste13Community Relations2Leisure Services13Customer Services and Communications10111Development Services0	Long TermOccurrencesFinancial Services04Parks and Street Care17Property13Revenues and Welfare Support05Transport and Waste16325Community Relations22Leisure Services113Organisational Development0211111Development Services010101	Long TermOccurrencesFTE Days LostFinancial Services040.00Parks and Street Care1718.59Property135.68Revenues and Welfare Support050.00Transport and Waste1620.5532544.81Community Relations2217.03Leisure Services1136.5331523.55Organisational Development020.0011120.55Development Services010.00010.0010.00	Long Term Occurrences FTE Days Lost Days Lost Financial Services 0 4 0.00 7.44 Parks and Street Care 1 7 18.59 39.14 Property 1 3 5.68 13.78 Revenues and Welfare Support 0 5 0.00 11.76 Transport and Waste 1 6 20.55 47.05 3 25 44.81 119.16 Community Relations 2 2 17.03 17.03 Leisure Services 1 13 6.53 30.88 3 15 23.55 47.91 Customer Services and Communications 1 9 20.55 34.96 Organisational Development 0 2 0.00 3.95 1 11 20.55 38.90 3 9 Development Services 0 1 0.00 1.96	Long Term Occurrences FTE Days Lost Days Lost % of Days Lost Financial Services 0 4 0.00 7.44 0.00% Parks and Street Care 1 7 18.59 39.14 47.50% Property 1 3 5.68 13.78 41.18% Revenues and Welfare Support 0 5 0.00 11.76 0.00% Transport and Waste 1 6 20.55 47.05 43.67% 3 25 44.81 119.16 37.60% Community Relations 2 2 17.03 100.00% Leisure Services 1 13 6.53 30.88 21.13% 3 15 23.55 47.91 49.16% Customer Services and Communications 1 9 20.55 34.96 58.77% Organisational Development 0 2 0.00 3.95 0.00% 0 1 0.00 1.96 0.00% 0.00% 0.1.96 </td

Appendix 2

Reason 2017-18	Self Cert	Med Cert	As a % of Total	2016-17 % Total	2015-16 % Total
	0	9	0.26%	0.26%	0.00%
(0000) Unknown or unspecified sickness absence	6	0	0.17%	0.11%	0.07%
(0001) Injury at work	16	268	8.21%	2.14%	2.37%
(0002) Injury, not at work	51	263	9.07%	6.74%	7.92%
(0003) Respiratory system problems	40.5	38	2.27%	6.36%	8.40%
(0004) Cold, flu, sore throat or similar	211.5	102	9.06%	8.28%	7.61%
(0005) Digestion	127.5	35	4.70%	3.86%	5.00%
(0006) Depression, stress or similar	40	488	15.26%	20.56%	11.35%
(0007) Headache, migraine or similar	5	0	0.14%	0.48%	0.46%
(0008) Pregnancy- related	4	19	0.66%	1.13%	2.22%
(0009) Gynaecological problems	10	9.5	0.56%	0.28%	0.20%
(0010) Operation or post-operative recovery	15	248	7.60%	16.59%	16.84%
(0011) Hospital visit	3	29	0.92%	0.27%	0.40%
(0012) Kidney problem or similar	20	118	3.99%	3.35%	4.63%
(0013) Heart or circulation problems	26.5	243	7.79%	3.15%	2.12%
(0014) Allergy, hayfever or similar	5	17	0.64%	0.07%	0.00%
(0015) Arthritis, rheumatism or similar	7	22	0.84%	0.43%	0.23%
(0016) Dental problems	15	0	0.43%	0.48%	0.25%
(0017) "Childhood" Illness	0	0	0.00%	0.00%	0.07%
(0018) Nasal problems	4	0	0.12%	0.00%	0.23%
(0019) Dizziness, vertigo or similar	30	0	0.87%	1.85%	0.93%
(0020) Other reason for absence	3	10	0.38%	0.52%	12.44%
(0021) Problems with glands	3	23	0.75%	0.00%	0.23%
(0022) Problems with ears	14	0	0.40%	0.54%	0.30%
(0023) Problems with eyes	7	0	0.20%	0.09%	0.23%
(0024) Viral infection (not cold etc)	13	0	0.38%	0.67%	1.95%
(0025) Back problem	13	213	6.53%	3.79%	5.89%
(0026) Muscular/ skeletal problems (not back)	53	433	14.04%	16.33%	4.52%
(0027) Cancer Treatment (not screening visits)	0	130	3.76%	1.63%	3.16%
(0028) Liver problems or similar	0	0	0.00%	0.05%	0.00%
	743	2717.5	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%