



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE – 3 DECEMBER 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 September 2020.

Background

2. On 17 September 2020, the Committee considered the Council's absence position as at the end of June 2020.

Sickness absence – current position

3. The table below details the end of year sickness absence levels of the previous 6 years and the latest position at the end of quarter 1 and 2, 2020/21.

Department	14/15	15/16	16/17	17/18	18/19	19/20	20/21 Q1 Jun 20	20/21 Q2 Sept 20	Total FTE days lost 01/10/19 – 30/09/20	Total cost of absence 01/10/19 – 30/09/20
Chief Executive's	5.55	6.99	6.03	6.38	7.60	5.38	5.28	4.61	1,083	£129,176
Environment & Transport	8.23	8.80	9.68	10.09	9.16	8.88	8.46	7.85	6,259	£564,080
Children & Family Services	10.37	10.06	10.05	10.25	10.55	11.12	10.60	10.14	10,444	£1,234,715
Corporate Resources	7.86	6.95	7.94	8.12	7.39	9.39	8.25	7.25	8,661	£778,244
Adults & Communities	12.24	11.31	12.57	11.26	10.02	11.74	11.41	11.19	14,015	£1,351,237
Public Health	9.14	7.84	7.43	6.49	8.57	7.12	6.19	7.20	688	£86,414
LCC total	9.83	9.32	10.01	9.73	9.18	10.08	9.48	8.94	41,147	£4,144,866
ESPO	12.07	10.88	9.75	11.70	9.55	7.20	6.80	6.64	2,209	£113,161
EMSS	6.65	6.69	9.27	7.42	7.54	9.69	9.26	8.09	1,268	£113,161

4. All departments made reductions during quarter 2, 2020/21. The Chief Executive's department, Corporate Resources and Public Health have met the corporate target of 7.5 days per FTE.

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 Mar 2019 Q4	2019/20 June 2019 Q1	2019/20 Sept 2019 Q2	2019/20 Dec 2019 Q3	2019/20 Mar 2020 Q4	2020/21 Jun 2020 Q1	2020/21 Sept 2020 Q2
Stress/depression, mental health	29.9%	29.9%	30.5%	29.7%	29.2%	28.5%	28.9%
Other musculo-skeletal	16.6%	16.5%	14.8%	13.0%	13.1%	11.4%	10.5%
Cancer	4.4%	5.5%	6.2%	6.3%	6.3%	7.0%	7.2%
Gastro-stomach, digestion	8.2%	8.6%	8.2%	8.4%	8.4%	7.2%	6.6%
Covid-19	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	1.4%	3.6%	5.6%
Cough/cold/flu	6.2%	6.0%	5.8%	6.0%	5.9%	5.0%	6.1%
Back & neck	4.9%	5.0%	5.5%	5.3%	5.3%	5.5%	4.9%
Neurological	4.9%	4.9%	5.1%	4.8%	5.0%	4.8%	4.9%
Viral infection, not cough/cold/flu	5.1%	4.9%	4.5%	4.7%	4.8%	4.4%	4.7%
Chest, respiratory	4.2%	4.0%	4.1%	5.0%	5.4%	4.6%	4.3%
<i>Not disclosed</i>	2.5%	2.5%	2.7%	3.9%	4.1%	3.6%	4.0%

6. Stress/depression, mental health continues to be the highest reason for lost time due to sickness. Cancer continues to be the third highest reason for time lost due to sickness for the second quarter. Covid-19 enters the top ten reasons for time lost due to sickness for the first time this quarter.

Changing absence trends

The Employment Committee, at its meeting on 17 September 2020, discussed the reduction in absence levels in particular categories during the Covid-10 pandemic. The table below shows these categories over the pandemic period to date, compared with the same period last year.

Reason	FTE days lost 24/03/19- 30/09/19	FTE days lost 24/03/20- 30/09/20	FTE lost difference
Back & neck	1,264.8	718.0	-546.8
Other musculo-skeletal	3,136.2	1,598.8	-1,537.4
Stress/depression, mental health	6,494.6	5,155.6	-1,339
Gastro-stomach, digestion	1,801.7	737.5	-1,064.2
Viral infection, not cough/cold/flu	720.0	562.4	-157.6
Cough/cold/flu	586.3	423.0	-163.3
Cancer	1,550.2	1,589.4	+39.2
Covid-19	0	2,131.5	+2,131.5
Total	15,553.8	12,916.2	-2,637.6

7. During the pandemic period, since late March, instances of absence relating to back/neck, musculo-skeletal and gastro illness are half of those reported for this time last year. There are also reductions in the instances of viral and cough/cold/flu sickness absence compared to the same period last year. It is possible to speculate these changes could be due to the lockdown and social distancing preventing all types of illness caused by germs spreading, and homeworking enabling people to continue working with milder symptoms. Lockdown together with the temporary closure or reduction of services could have led to individuals having less opportunity to have accidents and/or more opportunity to rest pre-existing conditions.
8. Time lost due to absence because of stress/mental health/depression over the pandemic period has been lower than the same period the previous year. This is a positive indicator that the actions the Council has taken to support wellbeing have been effective; and this will continue.
9. Time lost due to absence because of cancer has been at a similar level to the same period last year. NHS challenges in delivering timely cancer treatment during the pandemic may impact on employees and officers will ensure that individuals are supported appropriately at this difficult time.
10. Monitoring of changing absence trends will continue as the pandemic continues and people work in and interact with the community in different ways.

Long and Short-term absence split

11. 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 2020/21.

20/21 as at end of Quarter 2, September 2020						
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	529.65	48.9%	22	553.04	51.1%	187
Environment and Transport	3,505.16	56.0%	96	2,753.80	44.0%	778
Children and Family Services	7,106.65	68.0%	168	3,336.95	32.0%	961
Corporate Resources	6,208.27	62.5%	173	3,720.83	37.5%	1,474
Adults and Communities	9,346.23	66.7%	246	4,668.34	33.3%	1,278
Public Health	500.86	57.3%	12	186.74	42.7%	67

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

Service level data

12. The table below provides details of the days lost per FTE at the end of 2016/17, 2017/18, 2018/19, 2019/20 and at the end of quarter 1 and 2, 2020/21, for service areas by department.

Department	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21
Days per FTE	Year end	Year end	Year end	Year end	End of Q1	End of Q2
12 months cumulative	(Mar 17)	(Mar 18)	(Mar 19)	(Mar 20)	(Jun 20)	(Sept 20)
Chief Executive's	6.03	6.38	7.6	5.38	5.28	4.61
Planning and Historic and Natural Environment	3.81	4.04	14.92	9.57	9.46	5.00
Regulatory Services	6.95	4.87	6.2	7.24	7.03	5.99
Strategy and Business Intelligence	6.28	8.04	6.93	4.26	4.98	4.57
Democratic Services	10.69	8.91	14.81	6.70	4.97	2.95
Legal Services	3.01	4.02	5.48	3.63	3.28	4.36
Environment and Transport	9.68	10.09	9.16	8.88	8.46	7.85
Highways and Transport	10.38	10.62	8.96	9.30	9.32	8.95
Environment and Waste Management	4.85	7.98	10.07	12.65	11.27	9.44
Children and Family Services	10.05	10.25	10.55	11.12	10.60	10.14
Education and SEND*	9.13	9.28	8.42	11.55	11.45	10.47
Children's Social Care & Targeted Early Help**	11.90	11.62	14.18	10.54	10.45	10.15
Corporate Resources	7.94	8.12	7.41	9.39	8.25	7.25
Strategic Finance and Assurance	4.89	4.25	6.63	9.67	8.37	5.47
Corporate Services	4.68	5.88	4.18	4.84	4.45	4.46
Commercial and Customer Services	10.55	10.04	8.91	11.14	9.72	8.72

Department	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21
Days per FTE	Year end	Year end	Year end	Year end	End of Q1	End of Q2
12 months cumulative	(Mar 17)	(Mar 18)	(Mar 19)	(Mar 20)	(Jun 20)	(Sept 20)
Adults and Communities	12.57	11.26	10.02	11.74	11.41	11.19
East care pathway	n/a	11.06	9.51	11.32	10.96	10.69
West care pathway	n/a	13.16	12.01	12.84	12.41	11.27
Commissioning and Quality	n/a	8.01	8.02	7.46	7.30	6.38
Promoting Independence	12.26	15.11	13.26	11.88	10.99	11.65
Personal Care and Support	15.62	11.99	13.86	18.10	18.76	20.55
Communities and Wellbeing	7.67	7.98	6.97	8.73	7.69	6.61
Public Health	7.43	6.49	8.57	7.12	6.19	7.20

*from 1st April 2020 Education & Early Help changed to Education and SEND

**from 1st April 2020 Children's Social Care changed to Children's Social Care & Targeted Early Help

Recommendations

13. 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 2020.

Background papers

14. Report to the Employment Committee 17 September 2020 – Attendance Management.
<http://politics.leics.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=212&MId=6186&Ver=4>

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

15. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

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

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