



Corporate Resources Scrutiny Committee

Briefing Paper

Report of: Head of Human Resources

Date: Thursday 9th July 2009

Open

Sickness Absence Monitoring

1. Summary

- 1.1 To advise the Corporate Services Scrutiny Committee on the levels of employee absence relating to sickness for 2008/2009.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council reports sickness absence to pre-cabinet on a quarterly basis.
- 2.2 Absence has a significant ability to impact upon frontline service delivery and as a result is also monitored monthly by HR.
- 2.3 In addition Service managers monitor sickness within their sections.
- 2.4 Sickness absence had been above the national average rate for the previous year. Though, still at levels comparable with Local Government averages, 13.5 days compared to 7.9 days in the Private Sector.

3. Key Issues

- 3.1 The Council set a target for 08/09 to reduce absence by one day per employee to a maximum of 10.5 days sickness for each employee.
- 3.2 At each quarterly monitoring report the rate of sickness absence decreased and the final figure achieved was 8.8 days per employee in 08/09
- 3.3 A challenging target for 09/10 has been set at 8.5 days per employee.
- 3.4 Number of days attributed to short term absence was 1560.4 days, a total of 694 occasions.
- 3.5 Number of days attributed to long term absence was 2158.3 days, a total of 56 occasions.

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- 3.6 There were 58 referrals to Occupational Health.
- 3.7 The main reasons for absence include stress, sickness bugs and flu.
- 3.9 When separating long term absence from the short term, the absence rate drops to 3.9 days.

4. Options

- 4.1 None.

5. Consultation

- 5.1 None.

6. Related Decisions

- 6.1 To continue monthly meetings with operational managers to monitor and address sickness absence levels.

7. Relevant Council Policies/Strategies

- 7.1 Sickness Absence Policy.

8. Implications

- 8.1 Resources: Potential capacity issue now that the HR team is reduced to two HR Officers.
- 8.2 Equalities: To ensure a consistent approach to managing sickness absence is taken across the Council
- 8.3 Partnership working: Worcestershire PCT, Occupational Health.
- 8.4 Human Rights: None.
- 8.5 E-Government: None
- 8.6 Best Value: None
- 8.7 Financial: Sickness absence has a significant impact upon the cost of service delivery, particularly where overtime and/or replacement costs are incurred to deliver essential services.

9. Wards affected

- 9.1 None.

10. Appendices

10.1 None.

11. Background Papers

11.1 None.

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