



PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
14 April 2022

ITEM 06

Report sponsor: Simon Riley, Strategic Director
of Corporate Resources
Report author: Adele Ashmore – Acting
Strategic HR Manager

Attendance management – Quarter 3 - 2021/22

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on the Council's performance on attendance management at Quarter 3, 2021/22.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To note that the Council's performance on attendance management for Quarter 3 2021/22 was 3.67 days lost for each full-time equivalent colleague (FTE) against a target of 2.12 days. This shows an increase against the previous Quarter 2 2021/22 result of 2.97 days lost per FTE for the period.
- 2.2 To note that if the COVID-19 (Suspected and Confirmed) illnesses were removed from the attendance management data, the Quarter 3 performance would be 3.04 FTE days lost.
- 2.3 To note that a report will be brought to a future Personnel Committee meeting which updates the Committee on the positive approach of the Council's Occupational Health and Wellbeing offer.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 To ensure that Personnel Committee is aware of the Quarter 3 performance for the year 2021/22.

Supporting information

4.1 Attendance management performance for Quarter 3 2021/22

The top three reasons for absence in Quarter 3 are:

1. Stress/Anxiety: 19.02%, a decrease of 0.21% on Quarter 2 (position 1)
2. COVID-19 related illnesses: 13.82%, an increase of 2.49% on Quarter 2 (position 3)
3. Musculoskeletal: 12.34%, a decrease of 2.2 % on Quarter 2 (position 2)

The top three reasons for absence in Quarter 3 whilst remain the same, COVID-19 has moved from position 3 to position 2 reflecting the increase in cases reported by Public Health across the city of Derby. On Monday 4 January 2022, the Cabinet Office warned UK Public Sector employers to prepare for worst-case-scenario staff absence rates of 10-25%.

Directorate	FTE days lost Quarter 1	FTE days lost Quarter 2	FTE days lost Quarter 3	FTE days lost Quarter Target	2021/22 - FTE End of Year forecast
Communities and Place	2.82	3.35	3.91	2.03	13.45
Corporate Resources	1.45	2.04	2.41	1.75	7.95
People Services	2.66	3.22	4.23	2.41	13.60
	Overall year-end forecast as at 28/02/2022 (including COVID-19)				12.62
	Overall year end forecast as at 28/02/2022 (excluding COVID-19)				10.59
	Overall year-end target				8.5

All Directorates have reported an FTE day lost greater than their Quarter target, which impacts on the end of year forecast for 2021/22.

The overall year end forecast at the end of Quarter 3 was 12.14 FTE days against a target of 8.5 FTE days. On 28 February 2022, the end of year forecast is 12.62 FTE days against a target of 8.5 days.

We informed Personnel Committee in November 2021 that as we were in the winter months, that we would expect to see an increase in cold/flu virus transmission and COVID-19 absence levels. As anticipated, the number of cases of COVID-19 related illnesses over Quarter 3 increased.

The Corporate Leadership Team have been presented with the Quarter 3 data and an analysis of the trends and absence levels over the last three years. The presentation showed that the Council has seen sickness absence rates reduce year on year from 2018/19 to 2020/21. This has been a very encouraging trend, and whilst the absence rates have seen an increase in 2021/22, the increase needs to be seen in the context of both the direct and the indirect impact of the continuing pandemic.

The HR team and the Strategy and Performance Team are working on a joint approach to determine future attendance targets, as well as capturing the positive trend on reducing absence and mapping future actions. These will include, but aren't limited to;

- departmental targets will be monitored and reported to Service Directors
- service action plans will continue to be owned by the Head of Service, supported by advice and coaching as appropriate from HR Business Partners
- bite-size coaching presentations delivered by HR to support managers to confidently manage attendance.

The joint work by the HR team and the Strategy and Performance Team will be captured in a "Turning the Curve" report, which will also detail the positive approach of the Council's Occupational Health and Wellbeing offer.

HR and Occupational Health have been working closely to review the absence reasons currently recorded within the absence reporting system and have made recommendations for change effective from 1 April 2022. The updated absence codes should ensure that there is greater clarity recorded about the reasons for absence, and in turn, appropriate actions can be identified from the absence data.

4.2 Occupational Health and Wellbeing approach

We continue to keep our focus on the health and wellbeing of our colleagues.

Face to face statutory Health Surveillance has now re-started following a directive from the Health & Safety Executive to suspend activity over the past 18 months during the pandemic. We have potentially 1800 physical tests to undertake across 450 colleagues. The work on this has progressed well with the focus now on outstanding Driver Assessments.

The Menopause Friends sessions launched in October have been very well received and we believe between 150-200 colleagues in total have been supported. The focus for Mental Health Champions' continuing professional development session in November was the impact of menopause on mental health. Overall, we aim to provide information and opportunities to generate discussion and share experiences that empower all colleagues to support each other and their families and friends.

Occupational Health continues to perform very well with its delivery of Occupational Health appointments for colleagues. We are currently well within our service level agreement, delivering appointments within five days or less.

Public/stakeholder engagement

5.1 Public engagement has not been required for this report.

Other options

- 6.1 Do nothing. This is not considered to be a viable option, as the Council is committed to supporting colleagues to take personal ownership of their wellbeing.

Financial and value for money issues

- 7.1 None directly arising from this report.

Legal implications

- 8.1 None directly arising from this report.

Climate implications

- 9.1 None directly arising from this report.

Other significant implications

- 10.1 None identified.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal		
Finance		
Service Director(s)		
Report sponsor	Simon Riley, Strategic Director of Corporate Resources	30/03/22
Other(s)	Liz Moore, Head of HR	30/03/22

Background papers:	None
List of appendices:	None