

**Action Plan – Average working days per employee (FTE) per year lost through sickness absence (CP08b)      Appendix 4**

		<b>Cost categories</b>		<b>Timescales</b>		
		1) No cost 2) Low cost 3) Off the wall		a) Short term:0-4 months b) Medium term: 5-10 months c) Long term: 10 months+		
Ref	Action	Cost	Effect of Action	Timescales/ Deadlines	Lead Officer	Comments/updates
1	HOS and Service Directors raise the concern of the rise in absence with their teams and work with HR to reduce absence and raise profile	Low cost	Prompt review of sickness absence by management teams with follow-up as necessary.	Short term	HOS/Service Directors	
2	Encourage managers to attend the attendance management briefings that will be delivered by SHRS	Low cost	Greater awareness of the increase in sickness absence and the procedures in place to deal with them.	Short term	Service Directors/DMTs	A programme of monthly manager briefings started in October 2012. So far, 178 managers have attended the briefings. A further 12 managers are so far booked in on future courses up to December 2013. Managing Difficult Conversations briefings have also been delivered. The content of the briefing can be helpful when dealing with sensitive conversations around absence. A total of 75 managers have attended so far with a further 7 scheduled to attend.

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3	Put attendance management as an agenda item on DMTs and SMTs	Low cost	Prompt review of sickness absence by management teams with follow-up as necessary.	Short term	SHRS/Business Partners	Sickness absence is regularly discussed at DMTs and SMTs. Where hotspots are highlighted by Strategic HR Support, Business Partners raise this with the relevant Director/HOS.
4	Review what figures are included in BVPI figures, e.g. non Local Authority Schools to ensure it is representative and accurate	Low cost	Review of definition in light of LEA changes in greater flexibility in performance monitoring.	Short term	Management Information	Since the start of the current financial year, two sickness absence figures - including and excluding schools - are provided. For previous years' comparisons, the including schools figure is still used.
5	Provide absence data at DMTs and SMTs	Low cost	Prompt review of sickness absence by management teams with follow-up as necessary.		Performance and Improvement Team	

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6	Benchmark against other similar profile authorities	Low cost	Comparison of trends (e.g. long term sickness) and identification of good practice	Medium term	Performance Team/SHRS	The Council is a member of this year's CIPFA HR Benchmarking Club. The overall report containing all member organisations was published on 15 July 2013. Opportunity now exists for each member organisation to have their own bespoke report by selecting up to 18 closely comparable organisations from the overall list. Nottingham, Plymouth and Stoke-on-Trent are amongst the list of similar organisations.

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7	Review the take up of the Care First employee assistance programme.	Low cost	Evaluate the impact of the assistance scheme and make changes if required.	Long term	HR Operations	<p>Cabinet approval is being sought in October to extend the current contract with Care First for a further 12 months.</p> <p>Care First are working more closely with the Council, and now offering face to face counselling for employees in addition to the existing telephone counselling service. From 1 October 2012 to 30 September 2013, usage of the counselling service has increased by 67% from the previous year's annual usage.</p> <p>In addition, Care First are providing presentations to managers within the HR-led Attendance Management training, and plans are being developed for Care First to support Council managers in managing the impact of major Council initiatives such as Pay and Reward.</p>
8	Provide temporary cover within the Occupational Health Team	Low cost	Provide additional capacity to reduce long term sickness rates.	Short term	H & S/ HR	A temporary Occupational Health Manager was recruited in October 2013 bringing the team back up to full establishment.

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9	Work with Health and Safety to promote health and wellbeing	Low cost	Raise awareness about the prevention of accidents and minimise related sickness absence.	Long term	H & S/ HR	<p>Accident Investigation and Reporting is a mandatory course for managers in tiers 4 and 5. A total of 735 managers have attended the mandatory training so far. A new e-learning course was launched in June 2013 and is mandatory for managers in tiers 6 and below. A total of 22 managers have completed the e-learning programme so far.</p> <p>Overall, the total number of accidents has fallen; figures for Q1 2013/14 are 108 compared to 127 in the same quarter in 2012/13. Managers and employees are encouraged to report all accidents so that accidents are not under-reported.</p>

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10	Compulsory attendance of managers at Stress Risk Assessment courses	Medium cost	Greater awareness of the need to actively manage stress and reduce current long term sickness levels.		DMTs	<p>The Stress Risk Assessment course has been mandatory for tier 3 to 5 managers since November 2010. So far, 781 managers have attended the course. The subject is also a component in the new Health and Safety for Managers course which is compulsory for managers in tiers 6 and below. This course is currently being piloted and will be rolled out fully from September 2013.</p> <p>Stress-related absence is being reviewed by a working group comprising representatives from HR, Occupational Health, Public Health and Health and Safety. An initial meeting has been held developing possible actions and interventions will be the next stage.</p>
11	Continually review HR policies and procedures to meet the aims of ODOC transformation programme	Low cost	Ensure policies are relevant and fit for purpose in supporting managers to deal with sickness absence.	Medium term	HR	Policy development has had to be re-prioritised to ensure compliance with legislative changes, however work is currently underway with key partners such as Occupational Health to update the Managing Attendance policy.

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12	Review the provision of the Occupational Health Service	Low cost	Improvement of OH services to support the reduction of sickness absence across the organisation.	Medium term	H & S/ HR	The Director of Environment and Regulatory Services is currently reviewing Occupational Health Service provision.
13	Collaboration with the Public health Service to promote improvements in employee health	Low cost	Greater partnership working to prevent future sickness absence through healthy lifestyles.	Long term	HR Management Team	<p>A Health and Well Being Task Group was established to coordinate developments across the Council and to also ensure collaboration between directorates and wider partnership working on health and well-being initiatives. A Health and Well Being Task Group has been established and has met on 3 occasions since May 2013. A further meeting is scheduled for November. This includes representatives from HR, Occupational Health, Public Health, Health and Safety and Leisure and Culture's Health and Well Being Team.</p> <p>COG agreed the main terms of reference for the task group.</p> <p>An action plan is being developed, with key deliverables, and performance indicators, to track the business benefits of the initiatives.</p>

Sickness Absence Action Plan update

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14	Review the recent Employee Survey findings in relation to the new well-being questions, and benchmark against findings of future surveys	Low cost	Greater understanding	Medium term	HR	The findings of the Employee Survey will be shared with the Health and Well-being Task Group, and appropriate actions will be built in to the over-arching action plan.
15	Offer MBTI development workshops	Low cost	Improve capacity and offer tools to build resilience in individuals and teams	Ongoing	OD Team	Some work already in place with a number of senior management teams.

Sickness Absence Action Plan update