

Report sponsor: Simon Riley, Strategic Director
of Corporate Resources
Report author: Liz Best, Strategic HR
Manager/Adele Ashmore – HR Lead

Attendance management – Quarter 4 and 2020/21 Outturn

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on the Council's performance on attendance management at Quarter 4 2020/21 and to look at the overall year's performance against the Council's attendance targets.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To note that the Council's performance on attendance management Quarter 4 for 2020/21 was 2.54 days lost for each full-time equivalent colleague (FTE) against a target of 2.36 days lost per FTE for the period.
- 2.2 To note the Council's outturn for the year 2020/21 was 10.47 FTE days lost against a target of 9.4 FTE days.
- 2.3 To note that if the COVID-19 (Suspected and Confirmed) illnesses were removed from the attendance management data, the outturn would be 8.94 FTE days lost and the Council would have achieved its attendance target of 9.4 FTE days

Reason(s)

- 3.1 To ensure that Personnel Committee is aware of the Quarter 4 performance and the Council's overall performance on attendance for the year 2021/21.

Supporting information

4.1 Attendance management performance for Quarter 4 and Outturn 2020/21

Quarter 4

The top three reasons for absence in Quarter 4 were; Coronavirus: Covid-19 related absences which increased from 14.44% in Quarter 3 to 23.8% in Quarter 4 and moved to our highest absence in Quarter 4. Stress/Anxiety, whilst being the highest absence in Quarter 3 at 26.71%, decreased to 19.93% in Quarter 4, a decrease of 6.78% from Quarter 3. The actual cases identified as Stress/Anxiety in Quarter 4 was 84 against an actual case number of 104 in Quarter 3.

Musculo skeletal absences were the third highest reason for absence in Quarter 4 at 10.11%.

The days lost per FTE in Quarter 4 shows a decrease from 2.84 in the previous quarter to 2.54 days lost.

Outturn 2020/21

The outturn for 2020/21, at 10.47 FTE days lost, is an improvement on the outturn for 2019/20 of 12.78 FTE days lost.

This reduction is notable, especially at a time of a global pandemic. Managers have continued to be accountable for managing attendance effectively within their teams. If we remove the COVID-19 (Suspected and Confirmed) illnesses the outturn would be 8.94 FTE days lost, and the Council would have achieved its attendance target of 9.4 FTE days.

The performance by Directorate against target has seen an improvement in the total FTE days lost with a reduction of 2.31 days see below:

Directorate	FTE days lost in period 2019/20	Target	FTE days lost in period 2020/21	Target
Communities and Place	12.41	10.2	11.04	9.1
Corporate Core	2.95	3.4	4.25	3.2
Corporate Resources	9.98	9.3	6.59	8.1
People Services	14.84	11.7	12.39	10.6
Total end of year	12.78	10.6	10.47	9.4

Managers are continuing to take a focused approach on attendance management with regular coaching from HR. Service Actions plans owned by the Head of Service and their Management Team will continue to identify opportunities for improvements on attendance across all teams.

The top 3 absence reasons across non-schools for the whole year 2020/21 were Stress/Anxiety at 27.99%, Coronavirus (Suspected and Confirmed) illnesses which was 14.26% of all absences; Musculo skeletal related absence was third at 11.40%.

Clearly Covid-19 has had a significant impact on absence this year. The top three absence reasons for the previous year of 2019/20 were; Stress/Anxiety at 26.28%, Surgery was second at 7.97% and third was Depression/Psychological illness at 6.85%.

Depression and Psychological illness, whilst being the third highest reason for absence in 2019/20, has reduced to be the seventh highest reason for absence in 2020/21 at 3.17%.

Managers continue to offer support and advice to colleagues absent due to stress/anxiety and to support their return to work. Significant effort has been made during the pandemic to provide colleagues with an extensive wellbeing offer. The Council has continued to provide colleagues with information, advice and signposting to a range of internal and external wellbeing advice and support. This includes the support available from the Council's external Employee Assistance Programme. A previous Personnel Committee report has detailed the usage of the Employee Assistance Programme.

The year-end forecast of 10.54 days as reported in Quarter 3 has seen an actual year end performance of 10.47 days.

The 10.47 days outturn performance is against a target of 9.4 days lost for the year 2020/21.

4.2 Wellbeing approach

We have hosted another of our continuing on-line programme of positive psychology events with our external partner, during February. This focussed on Home Schooling and further events are planned over the coming months. Content will be dependent on the context we find ourselves in at the time, and Home Schooling was the subject earlier in the year due to the challenges many colleagues were facing at that time. The sessions are recorded and available to view for a period of 15 days for those who are unable to attend the live event.

We have also made amendments to our Wellbeing pages on iDerby, the Council's intranet, to simplify navigation for those colleagues requiring immediate assistance. A "Need support now" button has been added reducing the time it takes to access information.

We continue to support colleagues through the Mental Health First Aiders (MHFA) and we have conducted a review of activity over the past 12 months to capture any lessons learnt from the mostly remote nature of the engagement that has taken place. This review has provided an opportunity to consider repositioning the role in line with expected future demands over the coming months.

We regularly remind colleagues of the range of support and resources available to them and we also keep in touch with regular colleague conferences.

The conference itself is another example of the opportunity for colleagues to see and hear from senior leaders in the Council, keep connected to the ambitions and plans for the Council and the city and what it means for them, and to ask questions. Over 840 colleagues joined live the on-line conference on 25th May, an increase of well over a hundred from the conference in March 2021.

Promoting the health and wellbeing of our colleagues is a key action in the Derby Recovery Plan Action Plan. This action supports the outcome of Empowered Colleagues.

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	
Other(s)	Liz Moore, Head of HR	11 June 2021
Background papers:	None	
List of appendices:	None	