

Report sponsor: Simon Riley, Strategic Director
of Corporate Resources
Report author: Liz Moore, Head of HR

Attendance management – Quarter 3 2020/21 update

Purpose

- 1.1 To provide an update on the Council's performance on attendance management at Quarter 3 2020/21.

Recommendation

- 2.1 To note that the Council's performance on attendance management Quarter 3 for 2020/21 was 2.84 days lost for each full-time equivalent colleague (FTE) against a target of 2.36 days lost per FTE for the period.

Reason(s)

- 3.1 To ensure that Personnel Committee is aware of the Quarter 3 performance on attendance.

Supporting information

4.1 Attendance management performance for Quarter 3 2020/21

The top 3 absence reasons across non-schools were Stress/Anxiety which was 26.71% of all absences; Coronavirus: COVID-19 (Suspected and Confirmed) illnesses which was 14.44% and absences categorised as Other make up the top 3 at 5.97%.

Whilst overall the top three reasons for absence are the same in Quarter 3 as they were in Quarter 2, the ranking has changed. Coronavirus: COVID-19 related absences increased from 9.01% of all absences in Quarter 2 to 14.44% in Quarter 3, and moved from our third highest to our second highest reason for absence. On a positive note, whilst Stress/Anxiety remained the top reason for absence, there was a reduction from 28.66% in Quarter 2 to 26.76% in Quarter 3.

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.

The days lost per FTE in Quarter 3 show an increase from 2.73 in the previous quarter to 2.84 days. The year to date figure, from April – December 2020, of 7.9 days lost per FTE means that we remain above target with the year-end forecast of 10.54 days against a target for 2020/21 of 9.4 days lost. However, the year to date figure of 7.9 days shows a decline in absence rate when compared to the corresponding April – December 2019 period where the figure was 8.91 days lost.

The decline in the absence rate for April – December 2020 compared to the absence rate for the same period in 2019 is encouraging, and managers continue to be accountable for managing attendance effectively in their teams. In addition, during the period April – December 2020 the impact of the pandemic continues to be felt, and as detailed above, Coronavirus: COVID-19 (Suspected and Confirmed) illnesses remains one of our top three reasons for absence. Excluding the Coronavirus: COVID 19 absences from the absence data shows that the year to date total for April – December 2020 would have been 7.05 FTE days lost which would be under the period target of 7.07 days. The Quarter 3 outturn excluding the same absences would have been 2.43 days lost.

A future report will be brought to Personnel Committee on the whole year 2020/21 performance when the year-end data is available.

4.2 Wellbeing approach

Previous reports to Personnel Committee have detailed the wellbeing approach the Council has taken during the pandemic, and we continue to refresh and update the comprehensive wellbeing offer available to colleagues. During Quarter 3 this has included four virtual wellbeing workshops led by an external provider which were very well attended and received positive feedback.

We regularly remind colleagues of the range of support and resources available to them, including at our recent on-line Colleague Conference on 23 March 2020. 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 700 colleagues joined the live conference.

We also continue to offer support to colleagues through our Mental Health First Aider network, and we are currently reviewing the impact of the network during the last year and options for the future.

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	29 March 2021
Other(s)	Liz Moore, Head of HR	29 March 2021
Background papers:	None	
List of appendices:	None	