

Time began: 10.30am
Time ended: 10:57am

**Personnel Committee
2 November 2023**

Present Councillor Evans (Chair)
 Councillors Bonser, A Holmes, Nawaz, J Khan

Officers present Nicola Gerrard – HR Advisor
 Adele Ashmore – Strategic HR Manager
 Carl Ward – Occupational Health and Wellbeing Manager
 Paul McMahan - Principal Lawyer
 Liz Moore - Head of HR and OD
 Sara Clarke - HR Advisor

14/23 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received for Councillors Eyre, Smale and Amin.

15/23 Late Items to be Introduced by the Chair

There were no late items.

16/23 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

**17/23 Minutes of the Meeting held on 14 September
 2023**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 September were agreed as an accurate record.

**18/23 Colleague health and wellbeing update and
 Quarter two Attendance Management
 Performance**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Corporate Management which provided an update on Colleague health and wellbeing update and Quarter two Attendance Management Performance.

It was noted that the Council provided an in-house, doctor-led Occupational Health service and that the Council had recently exceeded its SLA by 2 days (17 days). This was for the month of September and was now back on track.

The committee noted that referring managers were supporting colleagues through the OH referral service which had an impact on clinic times and

resource. It was noted that the Council had managed to support these colleagues who had experienced trouble accessing NHS or GP support and were now back in target.

It was noted that at the previous Personnel Committee officers were asked to clarify the percentage usage numbers. The Committee noted that the usage figure (4.5%) was of the total workforce. This equated to 145 people accessing the counselling sessions available.

It was reported that a total of 10 new counselling cases were opened in August and a further 6 in September. It was noted that the People Services directorate remained the highest user of the counselling service at of all sessions during the period August to September. It was noted that personal issues accounted for 68% of access and work-related issues accounted for 32% of access which was a slight decrease on the last report.

It was reported that the Council's performance on attendance for the current financial year quarter two result of 2.96 FTE days lost showed a positive decrease with a year-to-date result of 5.66 days per FTE against the 2022/23 period actual year to date result of 6.82 FTE days lost. There had not been a significant increase from the quarter one period actual result of 2.78 FTE days lost.

It was noted that the quarter two result gave a year-end forecast of 11.32 FTE days lost which would be 0.82 days higher than the year-end target of 10.5 FTE days lost.

The Committee noted that the top three absence reasons for quarter two were:

1. Stress/Anxiety - 21.01% of all absence. (not including Depression/Psychological illness related absences)
2. Musculoskeletal - 16.06% of all absence.
3. Operations Post operative recovery & other hospital treatments – 8.32% of all absence.

It was reported that the largest increase over the top 3 absences was in Operations Post operative recovery which for quarter 1 was 6.87%.

A councillor asked whether absence figures had decreased or increased since colleagues had been working from home. It was noted that there was no overall trend but that figures had decreased in some services.

A councillor asked what the Council was doing to support colleagues in the People Services directorate who were suffering from work related stress and anxiety. It was noted that managers received training on how to support colleagues and how to find the route causes of stress and anxiety. It was reported that managers were encouraged to have early conversations with colleagues to prevent stress and anxiety and wellbeing support plans were put in place for colleagues returning to work.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the colleague health and wellbeing offer that is available to the Council's colleagues, and the importance of supporting colleagues to take personal responsibility for their wellbeing.**
- 2. to note that Public Health has identified the spread of a new COVID variant which has led to a rise of cases in Derby City.**
- 3. to note the Council's attendance management performance for quarter two of 2.96 FTE days lost and a year-end forecast of 11.32 FTE days lost for 2023/24, against a year-end target of 10.5 FTE days lost.**

**19/23 Market Rate Supplement Policy Update –
School Support Staff Policy**

The Committee received a report of the Director of Corporate Management which provided an update on the Market Rate Supplement Policy Update – School Support Staff Policy.

It was noted that the main purpose of the policy was to clarify the process for schools assessing whether an MRS was appropriate in the first instance and then making an MRS application for the Governing Body to consider. The policy also clearly set out expectations on how an MRS would be applied, reviewed and subsequently adjusted or removed.

It was reported that under policy aspects, the policy still emphasised that an MRS should only be used in exceptional circumstances but was strengthened to make clear there should be evidence to show both recruitment and retention issues with a post, along with service disruption.

It was noted that roles and responsibilities within the MRS policy remained largely unchanged, but titles had been refreshed to make current. Roles and responsibilities within the policy were expanded upon as part of the procedure.

It was noted that once in place, an MRS must be reviewed regularly to ensure it remained objectively justified. The review process had been updated to remove any ambiguity as to the review period and reiterated expectations on schools to ensure a review occurred within the 24 months' timeframe.

It was reported that previously MRS recipients were given 3 months' notice of reductions or withdrawals of an MRS following a review, should the evidence indicate that the payment was no longer justified and therefore needs to be removed, or should the payment need to be reduced to bring in-line with changes to the labour market, MRS recipients would now be given one month's notice of the change.

A councillor asked how the policy update would be communicated to staff in schools. It was noted that this information was shared with school business managers at school business manager meetings. It was noted that this

information was also shared with colleagues through dissemination by head teachers, trade unions and through the schools' newsletter.

A councillor asked whether gender monitoring would be carried out by schools as part of the EIA. It was noted that schools would work with the Council and would receive support in doing this.

Resolved:

- 1. to note the proposed main changes to the revised school's Market Rate Supplement Policy as set out in the Supporting Information section.**
- 2. to approve the revised policy (Appendix 1) and to note that subject to this ratification the revised policy, application forms and guidance will be published on the School's Information Portal and a communication roll out of the changes will be shared with colleagues.**

MINUTES END.