



Derby City Council

**Personnel Committee  
14 November 2018**

**ITEM 06**

Report of the Strategic Director of Corporate Resources

**FirstCare update**

**SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report provides an update on the sickness absence for Council employees as at the end of August 2018. This data is supplied by the FirstCare absence reporting system which has been in place since 1 June 2017.
- 1.2 The implementation of the FirstCare system was agreed by the Chief Officer Group, after a number of options were considered. It is acknowledged that accurate recording of absence is essential to enable an improved management approach to attendance and aid the implementation of the Health and Wellbeing Strategy.
- 1.3 There has been an improvement in attendance in August compared to the previous month, with 0.94 days lost per full time equivalent employee, or FTE. However the year end forecast is still above the current Council target of 8.4 FTE days lost for each employee. Headline details of sickness absence rates across the Council can be found in Appendix 2.
- 1.4 The Return To Work discussion compliance rate for the Council in August 2018 was 65.6% which is a 4.8% drop from July's 70.4% compliance rate

**RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 To note the attendance management data and Return to Work discussion compliance data produced by FirstCare.

**REASONS FOR RECOMMENDATION**

- 3.1 Personnel Committee had requested an update on the FirstCare system and its attendance management data.

**SUPPORTING INFORMATION**

- 4.1 The Corporate Leadership Team has confirmed their commitment to managers managing attendance and delivering an improvement in performance. Monthly data reports on sickness absence rates are presented to Directorate Management Team meetings, and also to the Corporate Leadership Team Performance Board.
- 4.2 The Health, Wellbeing and Attendance Team continue to manage the administration of the FirstCare system.
- 4.3 Training sessions have been run for managers to demonstrate the functionality of the FirstCare system, and how managers can run reports and use the data for their teams to more robustly manage attendance. Records of support offered and action taken by managers is recorded on FirstCare on the individual employee record, to demonstrate the management action taken.
- 4.4 A managing attendance module for the FirstCare system is in the final stages of being developed to suit the needs of the Council and will be rolled out by the end of 2018. This will enable managers to track where an employee is within the attendance process, ie the informal or formal stage of the managing attendance process. This should enable more effective monitoring and management of employees' attendance.
- 4.5 The Corporate Leadership Team have again recently emphasised the importance of carrying out timely Return to Work discussions, and a recent bulletin from the Chief Executive stressed the managers responsibility to do this. The Corporate Leadership Team Performance Board will continue to receive monthly updates on both the Council's performance on attendance and also Return to Work discussions.

<b>OTHER OPTIONS CONSIDERED</b>
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- 5.2 Do nothing. This is not considered to be a viable option, as the Council needs to reduce the current levels of sickness absence. The FirstCare system has been introduced to help support the reduction in sickness absence rates.

**This report has been approved by the following officers:**

<b>Legal officer</b> <b>Financial officer</b> <b>Human Resources officer</b> <b>Estates/Property officer</b> <b>Service Director(s)</b> <b>Other(s)</b>	Liz Moore, Head of HR  Nicola Sykes, Director of HR and OD
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<b>For more information contact:</b>  <b>Background papers:</b> <b>List of appendices:</b>	Hanna Prince <a href="mailto:hanna.prince@derby.gov.uk">hanna.prince@derby.gov.uk</a> 01332 643675  None Appendix 1 Implications
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## IMPLICATIONS

### Financial and Value for Money

- 1.1 Managing attendance in a more consistent and timely way should reduce costs of covering sickness absence, in addition to significantly improving productivity.
- 1.2 As the action plans for the key lines of activity are developed, any additional resource requirements will be fully costed and developed for consideration.

### Legal

- 2.1 There may be an increase in legal challenge dependent on any changes in the Council's approach to managing attendance.

### Personnel

- 3.1 Due to a number of changes there is likely to be an impact on priorities and workload in the appropriate support services. Requests for additional resources may need to be developed.

### IT

- 4.1 As data is appropriately used by and also shared between departments supporting the corporate project on attendance management, in line with information governance requirements, there may be a requirement for additional support from the ICT service.

### Equalities Impact

- 5.1 Equalities considerations were taken into account in the development of the revised Attendance Management Policy introduced in January 2017. The partnership approach to attendance management supports the Council's Equality Policy.

### Health and Safety

- 6.1 Overwhelming research demonstrates that improving the health and wellbeing of employees has a positive impact on engagement and attendance.
- 6.2 Managers have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of their employees and developing their leadership capabilities will help this.

### Environmental Sustainability

- 7.1 None arising directly from this report.

### Property and Asset Management

8.1 None arising directly from this report.

### **Risk Management and Safeguarding**

9.1 The level of absence within the Council has a critical impact on service delivery.

### **Corporate objectives and priorities for change**

10.1 A modern, flexible and resilient workforce