PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
4 July 2019

Derby City Council

Report sponsor: Don McLure, Strategic Director - Corporate Resources
Report authors: Hanna Prince and Kristian Ludlow, Health, Wellbeing and Attendance Advisors

ITEM 05

Attendance Management Project Update

Purpose

1.1 To update the committee on recent progress including support measures that have been put in place for managers and colleagues.

Recommendations

2.1 To note that at the end of March 2019, the full time equivalent days lost per FTE was 12.07 days over the 12 month rolling period, against a current Council target of 11.5 FTE days for 2018/19.

2.2 For the Committee to note the updated absence data and the continued support from the Project Group, with the aim of reducing sickness absence rates in the Council.

Reason

3.1 Personnel Committee have requested that an update on attendance management is a standing agenda item and it is a corporate priority.

Supporting information

4.1 The Attendance Management Project Group continues to provide direction in order to support the aim of reducing sickness absence rates in the Council and it is a high priority for Corporate Leadrship Team (CLT).

4.2 4.2 CLT has confirmed their commitment to 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 CLT Performance Board.

4.3 Up to 31 May 2019 the days lost per FTE is 12.42 which is not good enough and we need to improve for the benefit of all of our colleagues.

4.4 The Council's Return to Work compliance for 2018/19 was 68.9%. April and May have demonstrated improvement with a compliance rate of 79.5% and 76.9% respectively

4.5 Absence targets have been set for each Strategic and Service Director. The targets took effect from April 2019. Committee to note the targets as set out in *Appendix 1.*

4.6   Data on sickness absence rates is presented to Directorate Management Team meetings and Corporate Leadership Team Performance Board on a monthly basis.

Directorate targets have now been developed and issued to all Directors. The targets were developed after the Health, Wellbeing and Attendance Team (HWAT) carried out a review of absence across the Council. The team identified 4 common factors in with high absence which consisted of:

- Age profile of the workforce (staff between 45 – 65, taking more absence)
- Non office based operational model
- High number of FTE within the service
- Poor sickness absence performance from the previous year.

4.7   Five services were identified as meeting all four common factors as listed above, therefore making them more vulnerable to high sickness absence

The Chief Executive has endorsed the importance of these targets directly to Strategic and Service Directors.

4.8   The Project Group continues to meet and the action plan is currently being updated to reflect the current and future priorities. The Project Group has been extended to include Heads of Service and managers from high absence areas. This will help inform and update the action plan which will be shared with the Corporate Leadership Performance Board. The Health, Wellbeing and Attendance Action Plan is set out in *Appendix 2.*

4.9   In order to reduce the impact of the factors above, the HWAT have the following support in place for managers to access to ensure that they are effectively managing their employee's health, wellbeing and attendance:

- **Health and Attendance Clinics –** available weekly for all managers to assist with health, wellbeing and attendance issues. The clinics will now include a HR Adviser.
- **FirstCare system –** all support/management actions should be recorded on FirstCare under the employee notes tab.
- **Absence monitoring on FirstCare** – allows managers to record what action/support is being taken with regards to absence management.
- **Training** – there are a range of courses available to managers to assist with effectively managing health and attendance. These include; health, wellbeing and attendance new manager Induction, stress management for managers, using FirstCare effectively, effective return to work interviews, effective OH referrals stress risk assessment and leadership development.

4.1   Mental Health and stress related absence is the biggest cause of sickness by
0   absence spells and working days lost across the organisation. This is particularly high within People Services where every 1 in 3 days lost to sickness absence is

mental health related. Peoples Service Directors are promoting Mental Health First across the service, along with looking at other ways of supporting colleagues and promoting our support services.

4.1
1
An Employee Assistance Programme has been put in place to ensure all colleagues have access to wellbeing support including counselling 24 hours per day. HWAT and OH are currently working on a communications plan to ensure that the service is effectively promoted across all work areas.

4.1
2
Mental Health First Aider training is in place to recruit and Train 400 Mental Health First Aiders. The Council currently has 125 accredited Mental Health First Aiders trained and a further 16 will be trained by end of June 2019. HWAT has started targeted recruitment of MHFA to ensure our most vulnerable work areas have sufficient provision.

4.1
3
FirstCare now has an absence monitoring tracking facility which has been added to the system. This allows managers to track and update any action that they are taking when employees are hitting absence trigger alerts. This makes it easier for managers to use and keep all of their health, wellbeing and attendance support and actions in one central system, as well as allowing the HR and HWAT Teams to run reports on where employees are in the management progress.

4.1
4
The HWAT are currently reviewing the council's approach to safeguarding colleague wellbeing. The aim is to create a plan that will ensure the governments Thriving at Work standards are met and where possible exceeded throughout the organisation

Public/stakeholder engagement

5.1 Significant communication has been disseminated to managers and colleagues, confirming the importance of attendance management and help available to support colleague wellbeing.

Other options

6.1 Doing nothing is not considered to be a viable option. The Council needs to reduce the current levels of sickness absence and work towards achieving the current sickness absence performance target of 10.5 FTE days lost for 2019/20.

Financial and value for money issues

7.1 Managing attendance in a more consistent and timely way should reduce costs of covering sickness absence, in addition to significantly improving productivity.

Legal implications

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

Other significant implications

9.1 Employee capacity is identified as a significant risk in the corporate risk register and high levels of sickness absence impact on this.

This report has been approved by the following people:

Role	Name	Date of sign-off
Legal	N/a	
Finance	N/a	
Service Director(s)	Nicola Sykes, Director of HR and OD	
Report sponsor	Don McLure, Strategic Director - Corporate Resources	13 June 2019
Other(s)	Diane Sturdy, Organisational Development, Health and Wellbeing Manager	

Background papers	None
List of appendices:	**Appendix 1 -** Director targets **Appendix 2 -** HWA action plan document