

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE

POLICY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

JOINT REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF ENVIRONMENT, HEAD OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND HEAD OF CORPORATE STRATEGY & DEMOCRATIC SERVICES

27th November 2014

SECTION C – MATTER FOR MONITORING

WARDS AFFECTED: All

Update in relation to sickness absence data and feedback from the Sickness Taskforce

Purpose of Report

To provide Members with an update in relation to sickness absence data across the Council, feedback from the Sickness Taskforce and specifically, the review of long term sickness absence cases within the Environment Directorate.

Sickness Taskforce

Background

At the last meeting of this Committee, Members endorsed the new approach proposed to develop a sustainable strategy for managing long term absence across the Council. New arrangements for managing absence were developed and implemented in 2010, following a joint management / trade union review. This strategy has been successful in reducing the instances of short, intermittent absence, however long term absence has remained stubbornly high.

The Taskforce has been established to undertake an examination of long term sickness absence [over 28 days] to understand what actions would be needed to reduce the incidences of absence and / or the length of absences, with the aim of reducing the costs of absence. The Taskforce will report to Members on actions identified and proposals to address these actions.

The Taskforce has carried out an initial review of the arrangements for managing absence within the Environment Directorate.

Feedback from review of Environment Directorate

The Sickness Taskforce Team have produced a report setting out the findings of their review to date, of managing absence within the Environment Directorate, identifying:

- Good practice
- Constraints to managing long term sickness in a timely manner
- The support available to managers and its effectiveness
- Any training needs identified
- Patterns and behaviours of employee long term sickness and early interventions that would support an early return to work or prevent absence occurring in the first instance.

The findings report is attached at Appendix 1, and will be presented at Committee along with illustrated case study examples setting out good practice in the management of absence, as well as the pattern and behaviour of employee long term sickness, and where earlier intervention could have supported an earlier return to work.

Sickness Absence Data

Data in relation to sickness absence across the Council is attached at Appendix 2. A verbal presentation of this data will be made at Committee.

As agreed at the last meeting of this Committee, each Scrutiny Committee will receive quarterly sickness monitoring reports, in addition to the Performance Monitoring Reports already received.

Recommended

That the Scrutiny Committee note the update in relation to sickness absence across the Council and the findings of the Sickness Taskforce to date, and receive a further quarterly update from the Taskforce.

Background Papers

Maximising Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure

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