

MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL PERFORMANCE July - September 2015

1 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 For the period July - September 2015 there has been a slight improvement in attendance figures from the last quarter (April – June 2015) which reported the average days lost per FTE employee as 2.48 compared with this quarter (July – September 2015) which reports 2.23.
- 1.2 In comparison with the same quarter last year (July – September 2014) there has been a slight decrease in the actual average days lost per FTE employee from 2.29 to 2.23.
- 1.3 The cost of sick pay in the period July - September 2014 was £749,752 compared with £791,154 in the last quarter of this year and £756,217 in the same quarter last year.
- 1.4 The percentage of return to work interviews completed in each month in the reporting period was 87% in July, 91% in August and 79% in September. The council target of 100% completion of return to work interviews is not being met.
- 1.5 The report also details progress made with the corporate actions to maximise attendance.
- 1.6 It is recommended that the PRS Committee note the content of this report.

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2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Performance Review and Scrutiny (PRS) Committee on the Council's performance against targets and performance indicators for Maximising Attendance during the period July - September 2015.

3 RECOMMENDATION

- 3.1 It is recommended that the PRS Committee note the content of this report.

4 DETAIL

- 4.1 Table one outlines the performance of each service against the quarterly targets set at the beginning of the year. It should be noted that absence trends show fluctuations across the quarters. Historically, council wide absence figures have dipped in Quarter two and peaked in Quarter four with the exception of services dominated by term-time staff.

Overall Table One shows a positive outcome: the Council overall FTE days lost per employee at 2.23 show a reduction compared to the same quarter in 2014/15 when the average was 2.29 and the figure exceeds the 2.45 target by 9%. Community Services is performing particularly well against their 2.58 target at 2.08, only Adult care is not meeting target, though the quarters figures still show a slight improvement over the equivalent quarter from 2014/15. Customer Services is exceeding target by almost 4%, the only department failing to meet target is Improvement and HR, a relatively small department that has been impacted by a number of long term absences. The Chief Executives unit is significantly exceeding target by 25%, leaving Development and Infrastructure, failing to meet target by over 30% and showing a similar increase over the comparable quarter in 2014/15. Within Development and Infrastructure Roads and Amenity is significantly missing target and this quarters figures are up by over 40% over the same quarter last year. A number of factors have influenced this result: Roads and Amenities third tier manager was taking a personal lead in managing attendance supported by his HR officer, over this period the third tier manager and HR support have been focused on the Service Choices process. Recognising this challenge Development and Infrastructure have agreed with Community Services to share their approach and approach and resource from April next year. It is also recognised that the heavy manual nature of much of the work in Roads and Amenities precludes an early return to work that can be accommodated in sedentary posts: the department have had a number of long term sick with cancer and a fractured limb that would fall into this category. Performance and Business Improvement is also showing a significant variance from target and an over 77% increase over the same quarter last year (note that last year's performance was a combined figure with Roads and Amenity, this is a relatively small department that has had a number of long term absences that has influenced

their figure.

Table One: Performance July - September 2015

	Average days lost per FTE employee in Q2 2015/16		Target Days lost per FTE Employee per quarter 2015/16	Average days lost in Q2 2014/15
Adult Care	4.53	↑	3.73	4.72
Children & Families	3.08	↓	3.48	3.65
Community & Culture	1.60	↓	2.08	1.91
Education (non-teaching)	1.61	↑	2.85	1.18
COMMUNITY SERVICES (not including teaching)	2.65	↓	3.12	2.81
Teachers	1.18	↓	1.75	1.58
COMMUNITY SERVICES (including teaching)	2.08	↓	2.58	2.3
Customer & Support	1.55	↓	1.6	0.9
Governance & Law	1.65	↓	1.53	0.61
Facility Services	1.93	↓	2.3	2.69
Improvement & HR & Directorate	2.32	↑	1.5	2.85
CUSTOMER SERVICES	1.87	↓	1.88	1.94
Economic Development	1.70	↓	1.88	2.05
Planning & Regulatory	1.70	↑	1.5	1.93
Roads & Amenity Services	4.09	↑	2.25	2.84
Performance & Business Improvement	5.04	↑	3	2.84
DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE	3.40	↑	2.54	2.58
Strategic Finance	0.86	↓	1.55	1.97
Directorates	2.24	↓	1.55	
TOTAL CHIEF EXEC UNIT	1.32	↓	1.76	
COUNCIL TOTAL	2.23	↓	2.45	2.29

4.2

Table 2 shows the year to date performance against the annual target, so looks at the cumulative results for quarters 1 and 2 against target. The results broadly mirror those of quarter 2 in Table One: Community Services is showing significant improvement against target overall and only Adult Care is failing to meet their target. The Chief Executives unit is also greatly exceeding target. Customer Services is just outside target with Governance and Law

and Improvement and HR failing to meet their targets. Development and Infrastructure is failing to meet target. Economic Development and Planning and Regulatory Services are exceeding target whereas Performance and Business Improvement is significantly failing to meet target as is Roads and Amenity. The overall figure for the Council is positive at 9.41 against a target of 9.80.

Table Two: Performance Year to date 2015

	YTD Average days lost per FTE employee 2015/16	Target Days lost per FTE Employee 2015/16
Adult Care	18.10	14.92
Children & Families	12.96	13.92
Community & Culture	6.15	8.32
Education (non-teaching)	8.16	11.40
COMMUNITY SERVICES (not including teaching)	11.38	12.48
Teachers	5.57	7.00
COMMUNITY SERVICES (including teaching)	9.12	10.32
Customer & Support	5.97	6.40
Governance & Law	7.08	6.12
Facility Services	8.61	9.20
Improvement & HR & Directorate	9.69	6.00
CUSTOMER SERVICES	7.95	7.52
Economic Development	6.18	7.52
Planning & Regulatory	5.67	6.00
Roads & Amenity Services	15.49	9.00
Performance & Business Improvement	19.13	12.00
DEVELOPMENT & INFRASTRUCTURE	12.69	10.16
Strategic Finance	3.51	6.20
Directorates	5.08	6.2
TOTAL CHIEF EXEC UNIT	4.31	7.04
COUNCIL TOTAL	9.41	9.80

4.3

The table below outlines the actual cost of sick pay paid by service during July - September 2015. It highlights those departments with the highest cost and cost per FTE indicating comparative costs between services.

The cost of absence at just under £750k is down from the £791k of the previous quarter and

slightly down on the comparable quarter for 2014/15 at £756k. The highest costs reflect the largest departments: Adult Care, Education and Roads and Amenity Services and the cost per FTE indicates the proportion of absence and relative salary of the absent staff.

Table Three: Sick pay by Service July - September 2015

Service	Cost £	Cost per FTE £
Adult Care	191,992	503
Children & Families	89,127	402
Community & Culture	13,235	66
Education (non-teaching)	70,475	157
Teachers	114,500	127
Community Services Total	479,329	223
Customer & Support	24,079	114
Governance & Law	6092	138
Facility Services	32,487	135
Improvement & HR & Directorate	26,957	251
Customer Services Total	89,615	149
Economic Development	16,836	165
Planning & Regulatory	16,672	151
Roads & Amenity Services (including Performance & Business Improvement)	124,952	257
Directorate	19,293	
Development & Infrastructure Total	177,753	256
Strategic Finance	3,095	63
COUNCIL TOTAL	749,792	214

4.5 Return to work interviews completed by Service July – September 2015

A return to work interview is an informal meeting held between an employee and line manager following a period of sickness absence which allows the manager to welcome the employee back to work in a private setting, discuss the reason for their period of absence, acknowledge any issues in relation to the employee's attendance record over the past 12 months and let the employee catch up with any changes or updates that have taken place at work during their period of absence.

In accordance with the Council's Maximising Attendance procedures a return to work interview must be carried out by the line manager after every instance of sickness absence. Services therefore have a 100 % target when it comes to completion of return to work interviews. In order that a return to work interview is meaningful it should ideally be carried out on the day the employee returns to work or as soon as possible thereafter and certainly within three days of the employees return to work.

Table four below outlines each service’s quarterly performance with respect to percentage of return to work interviews carried out, there is no significant change from Q1 to Q2 with a 2% decrease in the overall total.

Table Four: % return to work interviews completed by Service July - September

	2015/16	FQ1	FQ2
Department	Service	%RTWI complete	%RTWI complete
Community Services	Adult Care	75.00	79.00
	Children and Families	94.00	77.00
	Community and Culture	97.00	90.00
	Education	87.00	81.00
	Total	84.00	81.00
Customer Services	Customer and Support	98.00	96.00
	Facility Services	93.00	94.00
	Governance and Law	86.00	100.00
	Directorate/Special Projects	100.00	na
	Improvement and HR	94.00	95.00
	Total	94.00	95.00
Development and Infrastructure	Economic Development	88.00	73.00
	Planning and Regulatory Services	91.00	94.00
	Roads and Amenity Services	84.00	84.00
	Directorate/ Performance and Business Improvement	100.00	100.00
	Total	87.00	85.00
Chief Executives Unit	Directorate	na	na
	Strategic Finance	100.00	100.00
	Total	100.00	100.00
Council Total		86.00	84.00

4.5

Table five below outlines the main categories of absence in Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 of this year, it clearly illustrates that there is a consistency in the proportion of absence relating to all the top categories across both quarters.

Table Five: % Reason for absence Q1 and Q2 2015/16

Reason for Absence	Q1 Council Total %	Q2 Council Total %
STRESS/DEPRESSION/MENTALHEALTH/FATIGUE	25%	25%
MEDICAL TREATMENT	14%	15%
STOMACH, LIVER, KIDNEY & DIGESTION	11%	11%
OTHER MUSCULO-SKELETAL PROBLEMS	9%	9%
BACK & NECK PROBLEMS	6%	8%
INFECTIONS	7%	6%
HEART, BLOOD PRESSURE & CIRCULATION	5%	5%
NEUROLOGICAL	4%	4%
INJURY/ACCIDENT	4%	4%
CHEST & RESPIRATORY	6%	4%
GENITO-URINARY/GYNAECOLOGICAL	2%	3%
PREGNANCY RELATED	1%	1%
SKIN	1%	1%

5 Specific Corporate Actions to Maximise Attendance

Progress has been made on a number of initiatives supporting managing attendance:

- A new Stress at Work policy is in at the final approval stage with SMT and will be agreed and implemented during the course of 2015/16. This policy introduces a risk assessment framework with clear guidelines for managing stress at work.
- A revised draft of the Maximising Attendance Procedures is currently under review with Management and the Trade Unions with a view to clarifying areas of ambiguity and further improving guidance and tools for managers and staff. A review of the final draft is set for November 2015.
- Following the closure of the Employee Counselling Service the Council is now using PAM Assist to provide a 24 hour telephone service and a face to face service providing confidential support to employees. This service including a comprehensive web page with advice for a variety of issues should provide a more comprehensive support mechanism to employees.
- More accurate reporting of absence is now in place, this is particularly case for multi-post holders: we are now recording all absence against posts, whereas our previous software necessitated all absence recorded against main posts, irrespective of whether the member of staff was absent from that post.
- Regular meetings have been conducted with our OHP provider to ensure the service offered learns from any issues and develops to suit the needs of the Council.
- It is noted that Community Services is the only Service to employ an HR Assistant to support managing attendance, in particular providing a high level of support to managers in terms of training and advising on implementation of policy and best practice to support staff back to work. The director of Community Services has taken a keen interest in attendance management and has regular review meetings with the attendance HR Assistant, such that managers within his organisation are aware that there is a high level of scrutiny of how they are managing particular cases. Recognising the success of this model Development and Infrastructure has agreed to share this support from April 2016

and will implement the same model.

- The Healthy Working lives group are working on a number of initiatives:
 - Issuing a paper to the HR Board proposing a range of methods by which employees can access stress management and resilience resources.
 - Researching the role of Mental Health First Aiders within organisations, and whether this is something that the Council could incorporate/promote.
 - A message will be going on the Hub to remind employees to take their lunch breaks.
- It is recognised that the Council is currently facing significant change and potential job losses, both of which are known stressors. The Council will take cognisance of this situation to ensure that this stress is minimised where possible by ensuring clear and regular communication with effected staff.

6 CONCLUSION

6.1 In conclusion this report has outlined the Councils performance against targets and performance indicators for the period July - September 2015.

7 IMPLICATIONS

Policy	This complies with the Council's Maximising Attendance Policy
Financial	Failure to achieve targets in relation to maximising attendance is likely to have financial implications with respect to the cost of sick pay
HR	Failure to maximise attendance is likely to have an impact on workforce productivity
Legal	None
Equal Opportunities	This complies with the Council's Equalities policy
Risk	High levels of absence present risk to organisational efficiencies
Customer Service	High levels of absence will impact on customer service

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