ARGYLL AND BUTE COUNCIL   **Performance and Scrutiny Committee**

CUSTOMER SERVICES   **25 August 2016**

MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL PERFORMANCE APRIL - JUNE 2016

1.   EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1   This report shows absence performance during the quarter April – June 2016. For this period there has been a slight deterioration in attendance figures. The actual average days lost per FTE employee was 2.48 in quarter one of last year and has risen to 2.57 in quarter one of this year. The performance in quarter one is also above the Council's overall target of 2.37.

1.2   Targets for maximising attendance during 2016/17 were discussed and agreed by the Council's Strategic Management Team at their meeting on 13 June 2016. The have set an annual target of 9.46 days lost per FTE representing the Council's goal to see 6% reduction in the total work days lost during the period 2016/17 demonstrating a desire to attain a consistent downwards trend in absence figures and to exceed the previous year's Scottish Local Authority average figures.

1.3   The cost of sick pay in the period April – June 2016 was £771,814. This reduction in cost in comparison with the same quarter last year when the cost was £791,154.

1.4   The top three reasons for absence in the period April – June 2016 were Stress/Depression/Mental Health/Fatigue 29%, Medical Treatment 15% and Other Musculo-skeletal problems 11%.

1.5   The percentage of return to work interviews completed in each month in the reporting period was 79%. The council target of 100% completion of return to work interviews was not met and neither was the 3 working day target for average number of days taken to conduct the interview. The average number of days taken was 5.1.

1.6   The report also details the continued support offered to management to support them to achieve their attendance targets and progress made with the corporate actions to maximise attendance.

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

MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL PERFORMANCE APRIL - JUNE 2016

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 April – June 2016.

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

4   DETAIL
4.1   Table One shows the Council's Performance indicator figures over the last three years detailing a significant improvement in absence in year 2015/16 from 8.20 to 6.86 for teachers and a slight improvement, from 11.2 to 11.05, for LGE staff – this is a positive trend.

Table One: Trends in SPI figures (Average Work days lost per FTE employee)

Staff Group	2013/14	2014/15	2015/16
Teachers	6.7	8.2	6.86
LGE	11.6	11.2	11.05

4.2   Targets for maximising attendance during 2016/17 were discussed and agreed by the Council's Strategic Management Team at their meeting on 13 June 2016. These targets represent the Council's goal to see a 6% reduction in the total work days lost during the period 2016/17. SMT also agreed that Adult Care and Children & Families should now be shown separate to Community Services under the heading Health and Social Care Partnership to reflect the creation of the Argyll and Bute Health and Social Care Partnership on 1 April 2016. Community & Culture, Education (non-teaching) and Teachers will remain under the Community Services Department heading.

Table Two: Departmental Targets 2016/17

Department	Actual WDL per FTE 2015/16	Target WDL per FTE 2016/17
Health and Social Care Partnership	16.27	15.12
Community Services (including teachers)	7.55	7.19
Customer Services	8.01	7.70
Development and Infrastructure	13.39	12.12
Chief Executive Unit	6.24	6.00

4.3   The Quarterly targets in table three below have been calculated by dividing the annual service specific target by 4. However, 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.

Table three compares the performance of each service, in the first quarter of the year, against the targets set and against the last two year's performance in the same quarter.

Table Three: Performance April – June 2016

Service	Target WDL per FTE Employee Q1 16/17	WDL per FTE Employee in Q1 16/17	WDL per FTE Employee in Q1 15/16	WDL per FTE Employee in Q1 14/15	% Change from Q1 15/16
Adult Care	4.10	4.30	4.52	4.24	-5%
Children & Families	3.15	3.07	3.41	4.04	-10%
TOTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP	**3.78**	**3.92**	**4.14**	**4.17**	-5%
Community & Culture	1.50	1.55	1.48	2.43	5%
Education (Non Teaching)	2.15	2.40	2.47	2.16	-3%
Teachers	1.63	1.53	1.61	1.83	-5%
TOTAL COM SERV (INCLUDING TEACHING)	**1.80**	**1.85**	**1.90**	**2.01**	-3%
Customer and Support	1.50	2.31	1.44	1.29	60%
Governance and Law	1.50	1.19	1.88	0.32	-37%
Facility Services	2.28	2.30	2.60	2.79	-11%
Improvement and HR	1.50	0.89	2.52	0.41	-65%
TOTAL CUSTOMER SERVICES	**1.93**	**2.06**	**2.17**	**1.71**	-5%
Economic Development	1.50	1.78	1.39	3.19	28%
Planning and Regulatory Services	1.90	2.58	1.14	1.6	126%
Performance & Business Improvement	1.50	1.80	4.53	3.17	-60%
Roads and Amenity Services	3.60	4.26	3.66	2.75	17%
TOTAL DEV & INFRASTRUCTURE	**3.03**	**3.63**	**2.95**	**2.66**	23%
TOTAL CHIEF EXEC UNIT	**1.50**	**2.29**	**0.69**	**N/A***	232%
COUNCIL TOTAL	**2.37**	**2.57**	**2.48**	**2.46**	3%

*N/A – Figures not available as Chief Executive Unit at this time included Improvement & HR and did not include Directorate so to compare 2014/15 figures with 2015/16 and 2016/17 wouldn't be consistent.

Overall, it outlines a poorer quarterly performance than the same quarter last year and the year before. However, it must be acknowledged that the Council is embarking on a 3 year programme of Service Choices which is undoubtedly an uncertain time for employees which is likely to be a contributory factor in increased absence due to stress.

The Council's performance in quarter one has also not met the target set. However, the target was set in line with the Council's commitment to attain a consistent downward trend in absence and to reflect its desire to achieve a performance similar to other average Scottish Local

Authority figures. To achieve this against the backdrop of Service Choices will prove more challenging than last year when these circumstances did not exist.

There are currently only four services meeting their target (highlighted in yellow in the table above). However, eight out of the fourteen services (highlighted in green text in the table above) have improved upon their performance in the same quarter last year. In particular, Governance & Law, Improvement & HR and Performance & Business Improvement have made significant improvements.
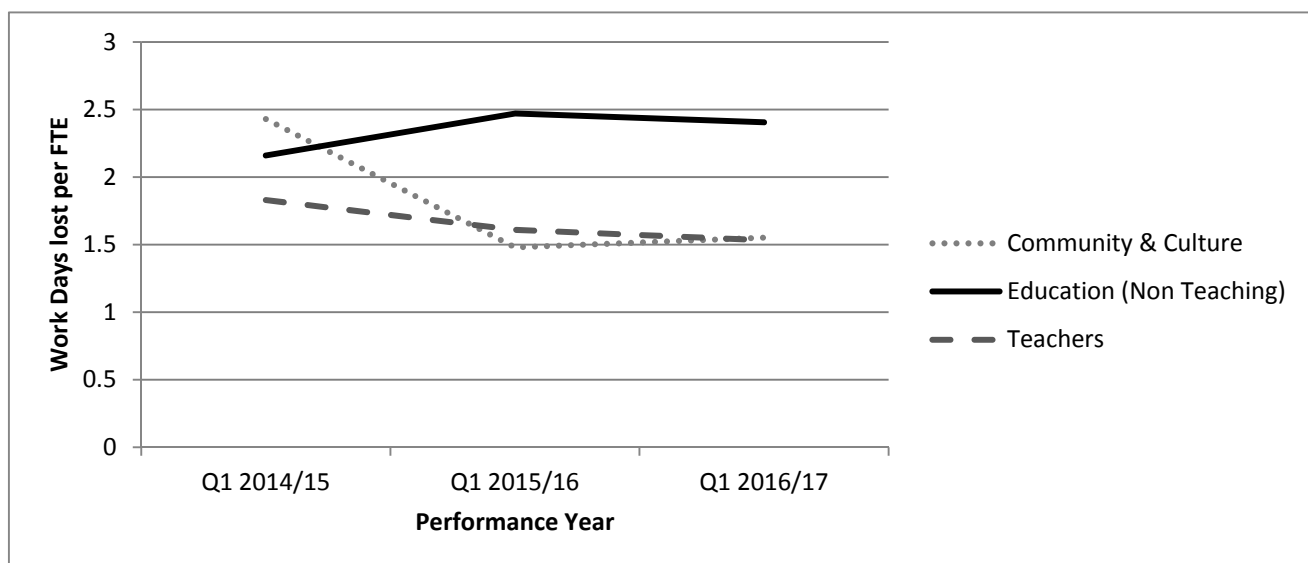
Graphs One to Four below outline the performance of each service in quarter one over the last 3 years.

**Graph One: Health and Social Care Partnership Absence Trend**
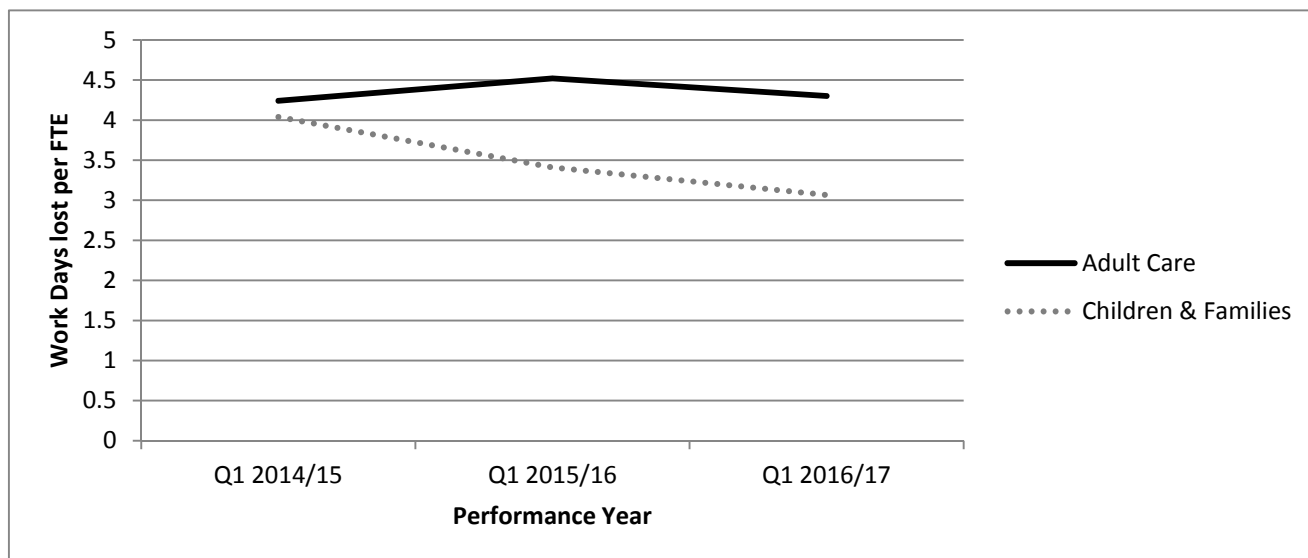
Children & Families are showing a consistent downwards trend. Adult Care's absence trend has remained fairly stationary.

Graph Two: Community Services Absence Trend

Teachers absence is showing a steady downwards trend. Education (Non –Teaching) has shown an increase and then a slight decrease. Community & Culture has shown a decrease and then has been static across the last two Q1 periods.

Graph Three: Customer Services Absence Trend
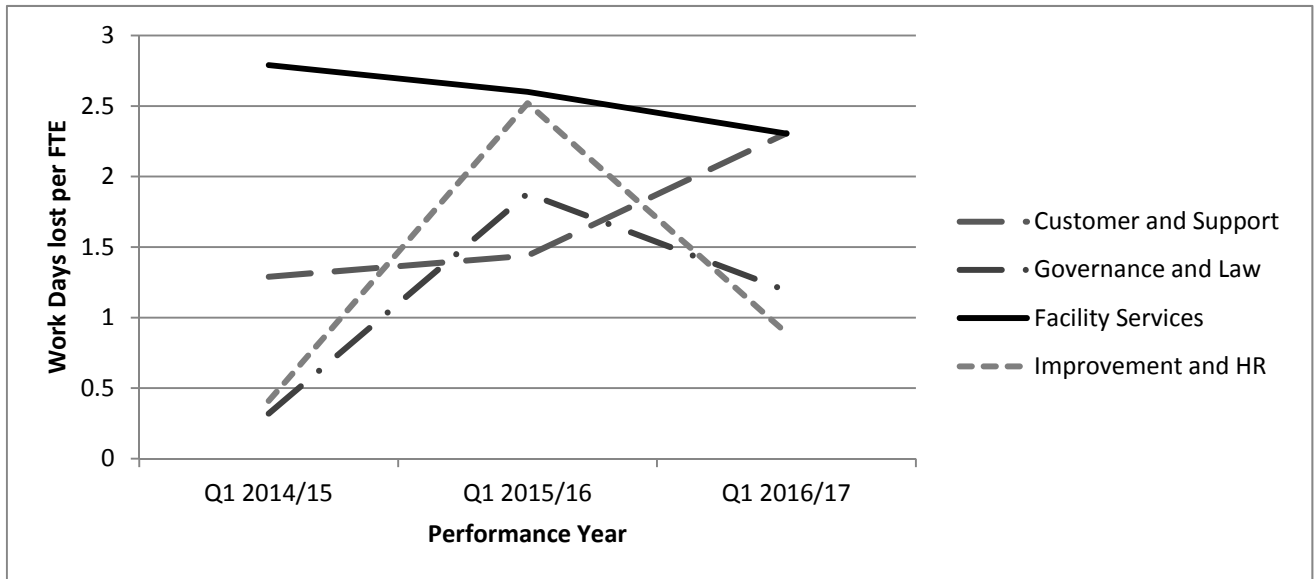
Facility services have shown a consistent downwards trend. Customer & Support have shown a consistent upwards trend. Both Governance & Law and Improvement & HR have had their absence peak in 2015/16 and then return to a similar level in 2016/17 as was in 2014/15.

**Graph Four: Development & Infrastructure Trend**
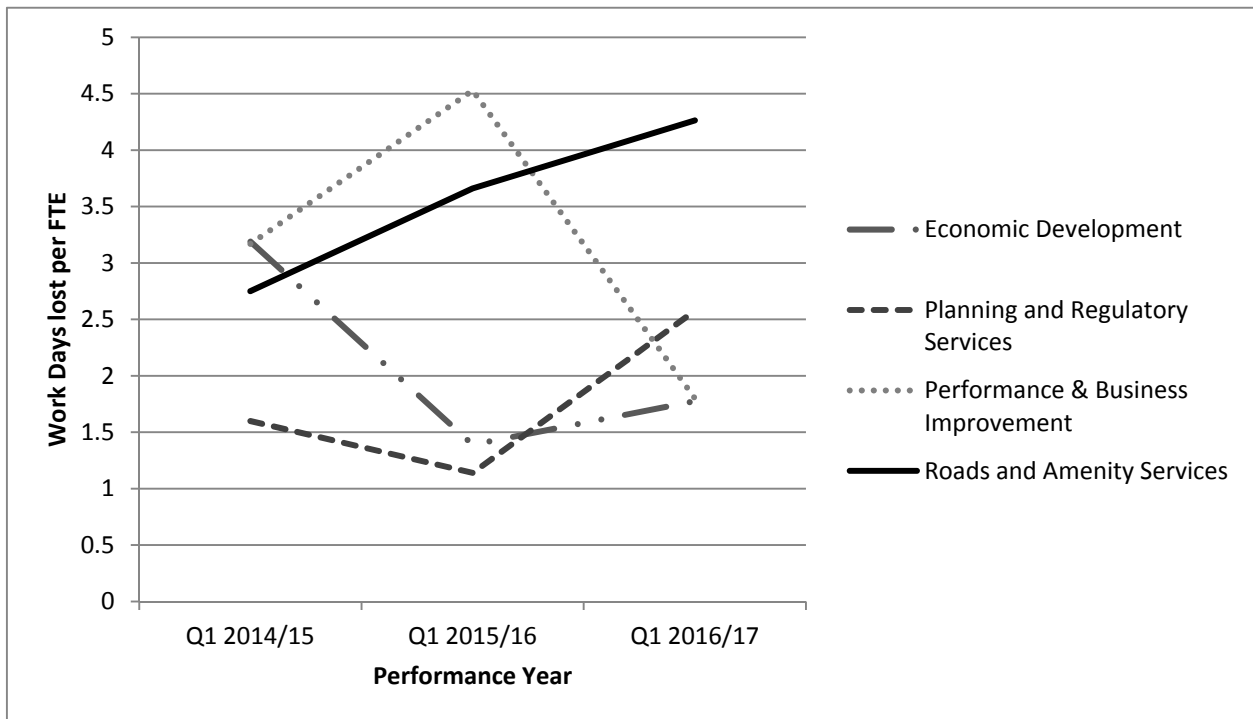
Roads & Amenity Services have shown a consistent upwards trend in their absence. Performance & Business Improvement have shown a dramatic increase and then decrease across the three years. Economic Development have shown a dramatic decrease and then

slight increase over the last three years. Planning and Regulatory Services have shown a slight decrease and then dramatic increase.

Graph Five below outlines the Council's performance in each quarter over the last 3 years.

Graph Five: Overall Council Performance in each quarter over the last 3 years
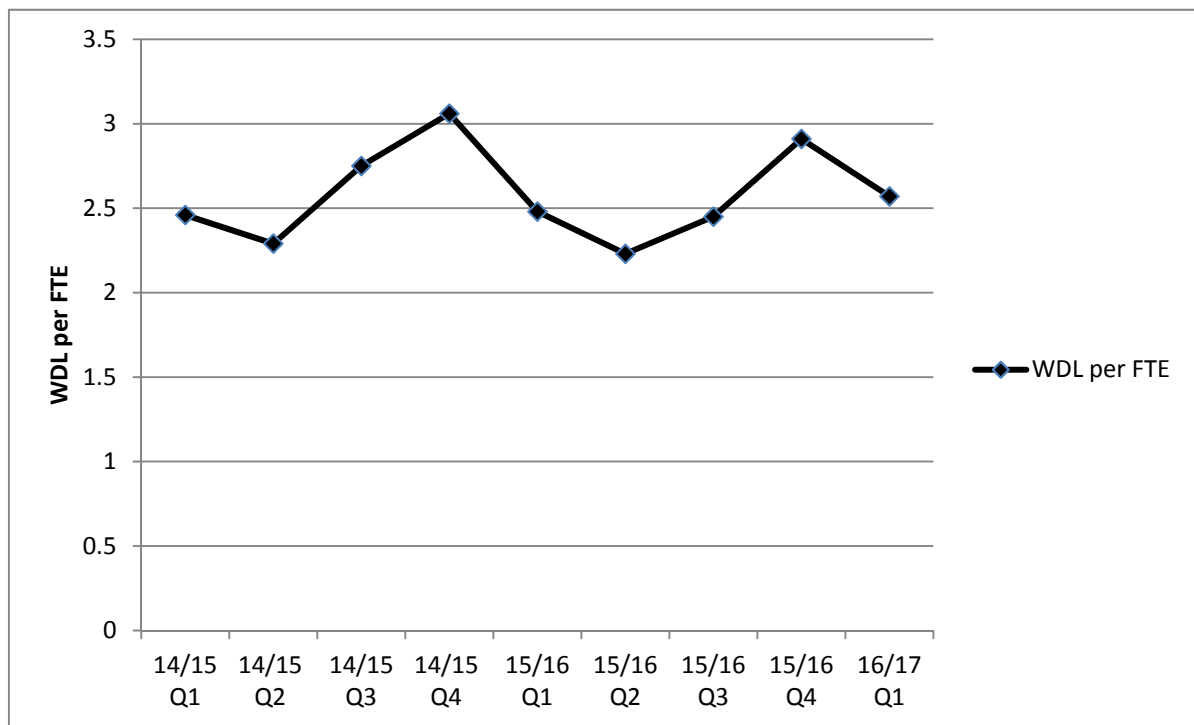

Performance in years 2014/15 and 2015/16 shows a similar trend in WDL per FTE with a dip in quarter two of around 0.2 WDL per FTE and then an increase in quarter three reaching its highest level in quarter four.

4.4 The table below outlines the actual cost of sick pay paid by each service of the Council during April-June 2016. The total cost for sick pay is £771,814 which is a decrease on the same quarter last year where the cost was £791,154. This table highlights services with the highest overall cost and cost per FTE indicates comparative cost between services. Those with the highest cost per FTE are Adult Care, Children & Families, Planning & Regulatory Services and Roads and Amenity Services.

Table Four: Sick pay by Service April – June 2016

Service	16/17 Q1 Cost	16/17 Q1 Cost per FTE £
Adult Care	£160,155	£351
Children & Families	£59,196	£288
TOTAL HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PARTNERSHIP	**£219,351**	**£331**
Community & Culture	£25,328	£127
Education (Non Teaching)	£84,832	£134
Teachers	£178,139	£196
TOTAL COM SERV (INCLUDING TEACHING)	**£288,299**	**£166**
Customer and Support	£33,493	£155
Governance and Law	£6,620	£135
Facility Services	£41,073	£118
Improvement and HR	£6,500	£81
TOTAL CUSTOMER SERVICES	**£87,686**	**£126**
Economic Development	£10,580	£162
Planning and Regulatory Services	£24,097	£228
Performance & Business Improvement	£4,005	£120
Roads and Amenity Services	£122,875	£263
TOTAL DEV & INFRASTRUCTURE	**£161,557**	**£240**
TOTAL CHIEF EXEC UNIT	**£14,921**	**£197**
COUNCIL TOTAL	**£771,814**	**£201**

Graph Six: Reasons for Absence Q1 2016/17

Reasons for Absence Q1 2016/17
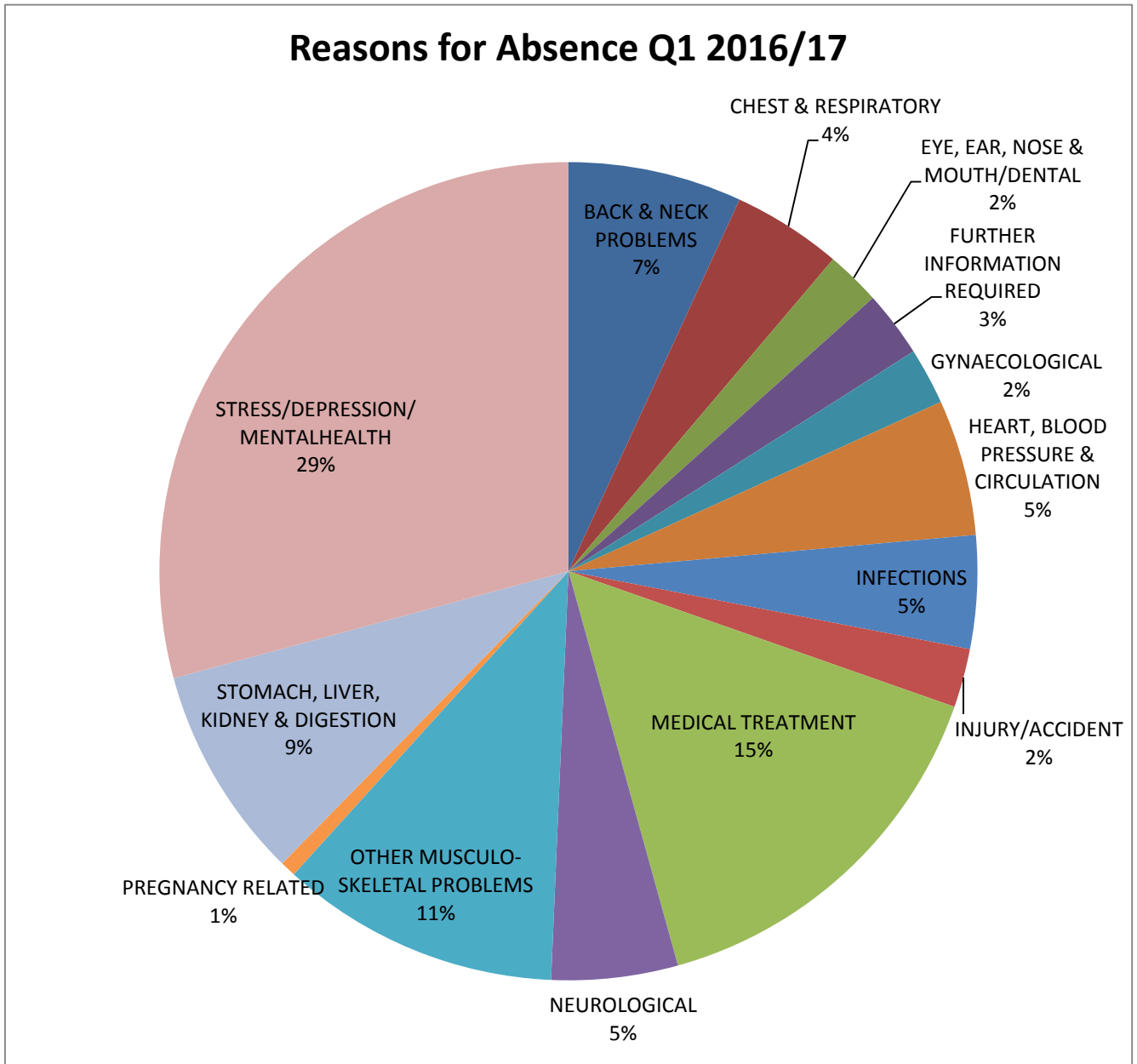
Table Five: Reasons for Absence Comparison Q1 2015/16 against Q1 2016/17

Reason for Absence	Q1 2015/16 Council Total %	Q1 2016/17 Council Total %	% change
STRESS/DEPRESSION/MENTALHEALTH/FATIGUE	25	29	14
MEDICAL TREATMENT	14	15	7
OTHER MUSCULO-SKELETAL PROBLEMS	9	11	18
STOMACH, LIVER, KIDNEY & DIGESTION	11	8	-38

The top 3 reasons for sickness absence across the Council during Q1 of 2016/17 were Stress/Depression/Mental Health/Fatigue (29%), Medical Treatment (15%) and Other

Musculo-skeletal Problems (11%). In comparison with the same quarter last year the rank order has changed slightly with Other Musculo-skeletal Problems replacing Stomach, Liver, Kidney & Digestion as the third biggest reason for absence.

Given that it is an uncertain time for employees as the Council goes through its Service Choices programme it is not surprising that there has been an increase in the number of sickness absence days attributed to Stress/Depression/Mental Health/Fatigue. Given that stress related absence accounts for nearly one third of all absence further analysis of stress related absence was conducted.

In this quarter last year 72% of stress related absences were long term (more than four weeks) and 28% short term (under four weeks). In this quarter this year 66% of stress related absence were long term and 34% short term. Although there has been an overall increase in the number of days absent due to stress there has been a reduction in the number of long term cases relating to this. Given the recent stress action plan implemented following the stress audit and the roll out of stress training to all employees this may have had an impact on reducing the length of stress related absences by giving employees and managers the tools and techniques to recognise stress and manage and support employees experiencing this.

Table Six: % of Absence due to Stress per Service

Service	% of Absence due to Stress
Adult Care	28
Children & Families	18
Community & Culture	24
Education	28
Customer and Support	66
Governance and Law	0
Facility Services	26
Improvement and HR	22
Economic Development	4
Planning and Regulatory Services	70
Performance & Business Improvement	0
Roads and Amenity Services	21
Chief Executive's Unit	26

Table Six shows what percentage of a service's absence is due to stress. Those Services highlighted in red – Customer & Support and Planning and Regulatory Services have a higher percentage than the Council average of 29%. This information will be useful going forward when considering the piloting of Mental Health first aiders and the launch of the Stress at Work Policy to target those Services who have higher than the Council average absence due to Stress.

Return to work interviews completed by Service April - June 2016

4.6

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 seven below outlines each department's performance with respect to percentage of return to work interviews carried out, in the first quarter of the year, and the average length of time for them to be completed in days (including non-work days) following the employees return to work.

The Council average for % of Return to Work Interviews completed was 79% for this quarter this year but this is a reduction in comparison to the same quarter last year where the average was 89%. No department has managed to meet the target of completing their return to work interviews within three days. However, the council's average time taken has reduced from 5.7 days this quarter last year to 5.1 days.

Table Seven: % return to work interviews completed by Service April - June 2016 (as reported each month)

Department	% RTWI Completed Q1 2015/16	% RTWI Completed Q1 2016/17	Average Time to Complete (calendar days) Q1 2016/17
Chief Executive Unit	100%	50%	12
Community Services	84%	79%	5.9
Customer Services	94%	90%	3.3
Development & Infrastructure	87%	85%	4.4
Health & Social Care Partnership	n/a	67%	5.9
Council Total	86%	79%	5.1

4.7 Specific Corporate Actions to Maximise Attendance
The following measures continue to support services in achieving their maximising attendance targets:

- Online guidance, e-learning and resources on the Hub including guidance on how to conduct attendance review meetings and how to implement reasonable adjustments and phased returns to work.

- Issue of monthly management information reports to Heads of Service and Directors outlining performance on return to work interviews and employees who have met attendance triggers.
- Occupational Health support including provision for periodic local clinics.
- Support and guidance from the HR advice line and HR Officers where appropriate. This includes the opportunity to talk through what managers might want to cover before holding any meetings with employees or what they might want to put in an OHP referral as well as attendance at meetings in a coaching role where appropriate.
- Emails to notify managers when an employee has met a trigger and what action is required.
- Emails to notify managers when an employee begins/ ends sick leave.
- An additional HR Assistant was appointed to support Community Services with their absence. This post commenced during November 2013 and provides case management advice and training to managers in Community Services. From April 2016 this resource has been shared with Development and Infrastructure and will no longer support the Services transferred to the new Health and Social Care Partnership.
- The Council's Healthy Working Lives group continue to promote awareness amongst staff on a number of health issues. Recent initiatives have included: advice on reducing the spread of infections and additional resources on the Hub to support employees through change relating to recognising stress and personal resilience. They have also added some related training on LEON, the ELearning platform.
- Availability of the E-learning module for the Maximising Attendance procedures on LEON.
- A Council Stress audit was completed and a subsequent action plan approved and implemented.

Progress is being made on the following actions to maximise attendance:

- Due to resource issues within HR over the last year, the planned update to the Maximising Attendance procedures has not been implemented. Work on these has now recommenced under the 2016/17 work plan.
- A new stress at work policy is in the final stages of approval to be approved at the next Policy and Resources Committee on 18 August 2016. This policy proposes to introduce a risk assessment framework with clear guidelines for managing stress at work
- The Council is to pilot Mental Health first aiders with a view to rolling out across the Council. This would involve staff trained on mental health issues to support staff in a similar manner to First Aiders for physical health issues.

6 **CONCLUSION**

6.1 In conclusion this report has outlined the Councils performance against targets and performance indicators for the period April - June 2016.

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

Jane Fowler, Head of Improvement and HR
Tel 01546 604466