

**MAXIMISING ATTENDANCE: COUNCIL PERFORMANCE****1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to update the Performance Review and Scrutiny (PRS) Committee on the Council's performance on Statutory Performance Indicators for Attendance Management during the period April 2012- March 2013.

**2 RECOMMENDATION**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the PRS Committee note the content of this report and that a quarterly report is submitted to the PRS committee noting PI figures for each service, quarterly and year to date costings for sickness absence and performance information on return to work interviews completed.

**3 DETAIL****3.1 Performance 2012/13****TABLE ONE: PERFORMANCE 2012/13**

	Work Days Lost	Full Time Equivalent Staff	Actual Average days lost per FTE employee	Target Days lost per FTE Employee
Adult Care	6690.52	384.625	17.39	12.80
Children and Families	2183.92	214.8325	10.17	11.90
Community and Culture	2009.33	201.66	9.96	7.80
Education	5601.91	491.43	11.40	7.50
Teachers	7271.79	891.27	8.16	7.55
<b>COMMUNITY SERVICES</b>	<b>23757.47</b>	<b>2183.82</b>	<b>10.88</b>	
Customer and Support	1223.86	199.15	6.15	7.00
Governance and Law	328.5	43.45	7.56	6.90
Facility Services	2859.15	297.105	9.62	9.00
<b>CUSTOMER SERVICES</b>	<b>4411.51</b>	<b>539.705</b>	<b>8.17</b>	
Economic Development	817.5	108.225	7.55	7.30
Planning and Regulatory	366.2	107.795	3.40	7.80
Roads and Amenity Services (including Performance and Business Improvement)	6289.23	499.9375	12.58	8.50
<b>Development and Infrastructure</b>	<b>7472.93</b>	<b>715.96</b>	<b>10.44</b>	
Strategic Finance	334.74	49.72	6.79	5.50
Directorate & Improvement and HR	816.26	110.535	7.38	6.50
<b>CEU</b>	<b>1218</b>	<b>160.255</b>	<b>7.6</b>	

Full time equivalent figures are calculated by dividing the actual hours worked in the post by the full time hours for the post which will be either 35 or 37 hours depending on each individual post.

Argyll and Bute Council aims to be in the upper quartile of councils with respect to Maximising Attendance. Table one outlines the performance of each service against their target set last year. Statutory Performance Indicator figures for 2012/13 are currently being collated by Audit Scotland and Argyll and Bute Council's performance against other authorities on these will be published after all the data is collated in August 2013.

The implementation of the Direct Absence Reporting (DAR) project means that for the first time Argyll and Bute Council is in a position to collate and report on accurate attendance information.

The direct reporting of absence replaced manual absence recording in the final quarter of 2011/12 and the figures reported for quarter four as expected, highlighted a historic degree of under reporting of sickness absence. In this regard it was agreed that figures for the first three quarters of the year would be factored up by 11% across the board when agreeing targets for 2012/13. This was based on an analysis of the first three quarters data compared to the fourth quarter.

Therefore while Table One shows relatively poor performance against targets for some services it should be noted that targets for last year were based on estimated figures and that some services may have been subject to a higher level of under reporting than estimated.

While this is unfortunate for comparison with previous years it was highlighted at the time DAR was implemented that the Council could expect an increase in reported absence before reductions would be recorded and we are now in a position to review accurate absence information for the year 2012/13 and set targets for the year ahead based on this information.

### 3.2 Cost of Sickness Absence

The table below outlines the actual cost of sick pay paid by each service of the Council during 2012/2013.

**Table Two: Sick pay by Service 2012/2013**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Cost £</b>
Adult Care	711 864
Children and Families	207 453
Community and Culture	161 457
Education	1 248 722
Directorate Community Services	520
<b>Community Services Total</b>	<b>2 330 016</b>
Facility Services	195 657
Governance and Law	20 685
Customer and Support	89 374
Directorate Customer Services	1 943
<b>Customer Services Total</b>	<b>307659</b>
Economic Development	60 587
Planning and Regulatory	39 142
Roads and Amenity Services	562 110
Directorate Development and Infrastructure	29 610
<b>Development and Infrastructure Total</b>	<b>691 449</b>
Improvement and HR (including Directorate)	68 597
Strategic Finance	29 162
<b>Chief Executive's Total</b>	<b>97 659</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>3 426 781</b>

### 3.3 Targets 2013/14

Departmental targets for maximising attendance during 2013/14 were agreed by the Council's Strategic Management Team at their meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2013. Executive directors will be meeting Heads of Service during June to agree individual service targets.

**Table Three: Departmental Targets 2013/2014**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Actual 2012/13</b>	<b>Target 2013/14</b>
Community Services(non-teaching)	12.8	11.6
Community Services (Teaching)	8.2	7.0
Customer Services	8.2	7.3
Chief Exec's Unit	7.6	6.8
Development and Infrastructure	10.4	9.6

### 3.4 Achieving 2013/14 Targets

Implemented in June 2012, the Council's policy on maximising attendance is still relatively new. During the development of the new policy, processes, procedures and trigger points were benchmarked against other organisations and therefore represent current best practice in the area of attendance management. Improvements have been made as a result of the new policy and more accurate absence recording has allowed the HR team to provide managers with more information about absence. The implementation of Direct Absence Reporting means that managers now receive an

email when an employee is absent, returns to work or hits a trigger point in the policy. This means that managers are made aware when action is required from them under the Maximising Attendance procedures. The implementation of the Direct Reporting of Absence project received a Bronze Cosla Excellence Award during 2012/2013.

With the policy still in its first year of implementation managers are adapting to the more proactive approach to managing absence. In this regard paperwork returned to HR for attendance review meetings and return to work meetings is still relatively low in some areas. Even in areas where paperwork is being submitted for return to work interviews, some services are not meeting the timescales set out within the policy for these interviews to be carried out within three days of the employees return to work.

Improved paperwork and resources for managers, including streamlined guidance notes, forms and standard letters for dealing with long and short term absence are being made available for managers on the hub (the Council's intranet). In addition to these online resources the HR team have invited managers to attend roadshows in each of the Council's four main towns where a session on Managing attendance will be delivered. The first of these sessions will take place in June 2013.

Table three below outlines the Council's performance on return to work interviews for the period March 2012- April 2013. From June 2013 monthly reports will be issued to the Strategic Management Team for monitoring each Service's performance on the completion of return to work interviews.

**Table Three: % Return to work interviews completed by department April 2012- March 2013**

<b>Section</b>	<b>Absence's Recorded</b>	<b>Completed RTWI's</b>	<b>%</b>	<b>Average time between employees return and RTWI (Days)</b>
Chief Executives Unit	218	164	75%	6.84
Community Services	1489	754	50%	10
Education	2159	1322	61%	10.26
Customer Services	793	505	64%	9.94
Development & Infrastructure	931	703	76%	8

Attendance review meetings should be held where an employee's absence is a cause for concern or meeting a trigger point. In addition to emails notifying managers that an employee has met a trigger within the procedures, senior managers are provided on a monthly basis with Management information reports outlining employees who have met absence triggers.

The HR team are keen to improve the information managers receive in relation to attendance management and are currently in the process of designing new paperwork and improving recording systems so that reporting of attendance review meetings carried out can be included in monthly management information reports

allowing senior managers, in partnership with HR, to identify and target areas where the policy is not being implemented for provision of additional support or training as appropriate.

Training on the manager's role in Maximising Attendance will be rolled out as part of the Corporate Argyll and Bute Manager programme. The Argyll and Bute manager programme aims to improve managers overall management and communication skills which will improve performance in a number of HR areas, including Maximising Attendance. In addition to this, as mentioned above, HR will be carrying out roadshows focusing on attendance management.

In order to achieve the Council's Targets set in Table two for the coming year, action is required from the following groups:

- The Human Resources team must provide the correct information, advice and resources to managers to allow them to carry out their duties with regards to attendance management
- Senior Management must communicate the message that they are committed to maximising attendance and review attendance data regularly. Senior management should work with managers in identifying absence issues and hotspots within their services and agree action and specific initiatives where necessary to address these
- Managers and employees must report, certify and discuss absence in accordance with the Council's procedures.

#### **4 CONCLUSION**

- 4.1 In conclusion this report has outlined the Statutory Performance Indicator figures on Attendance Management for the period 2012-13. As expected the implementation of the direct reporting of absence has resulted in an increase in reported sickness absence and this has been reflected in the PI figures reported. In order for the Council to achieve its target of being in the upper quartile of Scottish Local Authorities action will be required to ensure that absences are managed appropriately and in accordance with the Council's procedures.

#### **5 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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## Appendix One: Annual Trends and Analysis of absence

Figure one below shows the Council's Statutory Performance indicator figures over the last three years. As expected there has been an increase this year due to the implementation of the direct reporting of absence project.

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

Staff Group	2010/11	2011/12	2012/13
Teachers	7.9	7.6	8.2
LGE	10	9.1	10.9

**Table Five: % Absence and FTE by Service**

Figure two below shows the percentage FTE for each Service against the percentage of the Council's total work days lost it accounts for. It is expected that the percentage of work days lost would be proportionate to the size of the service. Therefore services where the %WDL is higher than the %FTE represent higher than expected levels of absence. The services where absence is higher than expected will be targeted for specific improvement based on detailed analysis of management information and spend to save measures to tackle sickness absence may be considered where appropriate.

Service	%Absence	%FTE
Adult Care	18.15	10.68
Children and Families	5.92	5.97
Community and Culture	5.45	5.60
Education	15.20	13.65
Teachers	19.73	24.76
Customer and Support	3.32	5.53
Governance and Law	0.89	1.21
Facility Services	7.76	8.25
Economic Development	2.22	3.01
Performance and Business Improvement	1.12	1.61
Planning and Regulatory Services	0.99	2.99
Roads and Amenity Services	15.94	12.27
Improvement and HR	2.13	2.67
Strategic Finance	1.09	1.38
Directorate	0.08	0.39

The main reasons for sickness absence across the Council during 2012/13 were Stress, depression and mental health (23.64%), musculoskeletal (16.84%) and Medical treatment/ operations (12.44%). The current budget situation and associated implications including job security issues, uncertain

business conditions and limited opportunities as a result of the recruitment freeze could be contributing factors in relation to stress related absence.

In response to this HR will be reviewing the Stress reduction policy during the course of this year with a view to introducing more preventative measures in relation to managing absence for stress, addiction and mental health in the workplace and ensuring our policy reflects best practice.

The Argyll and Bute Manager Programme will have a specific module dedicated to managing stress which should help tackle the issue of stress in the workplace.

Previous reports have made a distinction between work related and personal stress. However these distinctions were not fully representative since work related stress was only recorded as such when it was reported as such, in many cases a stress reaction can be triggered by a combination of work and personal factors. The stress related absence category noted below includes stress, anxiety and mental health issues under the wider banner of stress.

With respect to Musculoskeletal absence, HR and services with high levels of musculoskeletal absence will be working with Health and Safety to ensure that appropriate work station assessments and moving and handling training are being undertaken.

The tables below show a breakdown of the reasons for sickness absence for both teachers (Table Six) and Local Government Employees (Table Seven)

**Table Six: Teachers reasons for sickness absence 2012/13**

<b>Reason/ Category of illness</b>	<b>% of Absence</b>
Back Neck and other Musculoskeletal	9.38
Cancer	1.85
Chest and Respiratory	4.86
Eye ear nose mouth dental	3.29
Genito Urinary/ Gynaecological	1.14
Heart Blood Pressure and Circulation	0.35
Infections	9.89
Injury/Accident	2.00
Medical Treatment/Operation	11.79
Neurological	1.19
Pregnancy Related	2.67
Skin	0.40
Stomach Liver Kidneys Digestion	8.86
Stress	41.93
Unknown	0.41



**Table Seven: LGE Employees reasons for sickness absence 2012/2013**

<b>Reason/Category of illness</b>	<b>% of Absence</b>
Back Neck other Musculoskeletal	16.76
Cancer	0.43
Chest and Respiratory	3.64
Eye ear nose mouth dental	3.26
Genito Urinary/ Gynaecological	3.10
Heart Blood Pressure Circulation	3.19
Infections	9.78
Injury/ Accident	6.16
Medical Treatment/ Operation	13.90
Neurological	3.54
Pregnancy Related	0.74
Skin	0.49
Stomach liver kidneys digestion	10.67
Stress	24.18
Unknown	0.17

**Table Eight: Breakdown of long and short term absence by Service**

<b>Service</b>	<b>% Long Term Absence</b>	<b>% Short Term Absence</b>
Adult Care	67.01	32.99
Children and Families	66.86	33.14
Community and Culture	68.21	31.79
Education	59.58	40.42
Teachers	70.45	29.55
Customer and Support	60.59	39.41
Governance and Law	76.94	23.06
Facility Services	66.02	33.98
Economic Development	68.28	31.72
Performance and Business Improvement	23.44	76.56
Planning and Regulatory Services	54.36	45.64
Roads and Amenity Services	74.38	25.62
Improvement and HR	34.65	65.35
Strategic Finance	62.88	37.12
<b>Council Total</b>	<b>66.47</b>	<b>33.53</b>

Long term absence accounted for 51.3% of all absence in 2011/12 and has risen to 66.47% during 2012/13. The Maximising Attendance policy is focussed on early intervention when dealing with long term absence. Managers are required to have the first Attendance Review meetings during the first 4-8 weeks of sickness absence.

