

**REPORT TO:** Corporate Policy & Performance Board  
**DATE:** 4<sup>th</sup> September 2012  
**REPORTING OFFICER:** Strategic Director – Policy & Resources  
**PORTFOLIO:** Resources  
**SUBJECT:** Sickness Absence 2011/2012  
**WARDS:** Borough-wide

## **1.0 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT**

- 1.1 To report on attendance management and interventions that have been introduced to assist managers in effectively managing employee absence in 2011/12.
- 1.2 To report on interventions planned for 2012/13
- 1.3 To report on the average days lost, due to sickness absence, per employee in 2011/12

## **2.0 RECOMMENDED:**

- 2.1 That the content of the report be noted.

## **3.0 ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT AND INTERVENTIONS 2011/12**

- 3.1 The Board has received periodic reports on sickness absence. This report updates Members on activities undertaken in 2011/12 and the outcome of that activity on sickness levels.
- 3.2 Managers have continued to attend training/refresher training on attendance management on a regular basis and actively monitored employee absence with the support of the Employee Welfare Advisers in the HR Services.
- 3.3 The Employee Welfare Advisers continue to provide monthly reports to Directorate Management Teams on sickness absence and attended Directorate Management Teams on a regular basis to provide information on attendance levels, reasons for absence and to provide advice and support on any problem areas.
- 3.4 Regular H.R. surgeries were introduced and rolled out across the Directorates throughout the year. The purpose of the surgeries was to

discuss issues around attendance and to increase the manager's knowledge and confidence when dealing with sickness absence issues.

- 3.5 The Managing Attendance Policy was reviewed and amended in consultation with the trade unions during 2010/11. Short bite size training sessions were then offered to Managers as well as attendance, by the employee Welfare Advisers, at Divisional Management Teams to go through the main changes.

#### **4.0 INTERVENTIONS PLANNED 2012/13**

- 4.1 H.R. will be rolling out a programme of bite size training for managers regarding the changes to the Capability Procedure relating to sickness absence.
- 4.2 Refresher training will continue to be offered to managers and training for new managers in the Managing Attendance policy provided so that the policy can be applied rigorously and in turn continue to reduce sickness absence.
- 4.3 The H.R. surgeries will be expanded to cover other topics which will increase managers' knowledge/skills when dealing with staff related issues.
- 4.4 H.R. surgeries will be provided in schools to try to engage schools in managing attendance to ensure that the number of days lost due to sickness absence continues to reduce.

#### **5.0 SICKNESS DATA**

- 5.1 Sickness absence continues to reduce year on year. The number of working days lost due to sickness absence, per employee 2011/12 was 9.03 as compared to 9.68 days per employee for the same period 2010/11.
- 5.2 Long term sickness absence is included in the overall calculation of working days lost due to sickness. Managers across all directorates are continuing to actively monitor employee absence with the support of the Employee Welfare Advisers.
- 5.3 The reduction is due to the hard work of both managers and the Employee Welfare Advisers supporting employees and managers by working together over the last financial year to address attendance management. This successful partnership will continue during 2012/13.

## **6.0 POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 As we continue to monitor sickness absence across the Council it is envisaged that the Sickness Absence Policy and Capability Procedure will continue to be reviewed to ensure absence is managed effectively.

## **7.0 OTHER IMPLICATIONS**

N/A

## **8.0 IMPLICATIONS FOR THE COUNCIL'S PRIORITIES**

- 8.1 Sound sickness absence management processes benefit both employee and employer, improve productivity and provide better services to the public.

## **9.0 RISK ANALYSIS**

- 9.1 Failure to monitor absence levels and trends may lead to increased levels of ill health and appropriate support may not be given to employees. This leads to increase costs to the authority and reduced capacity at a time when capacity is already stretched.

## **10.0 EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY ISSUES**

The Council is better protected from future challenge of disability or other discrimination if all employees are treated equally and fairly with regard to their sickness absences.

## **11.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS UNDER SECTION 100D OF THE LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

There are no background papers under the meaning of the Act.