



To: Chair & Members of the Union /
Employee Consultation Committee

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Wednesday 15th September 2021

Dear Councillor

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

You are hereby summoned to attend a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee of Bolsover District Council to be held at the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne on Thursday, 30th September, 2021 at 10:00 hours.

Whilst COVID restrictions have now been eased, we are still taking social distancing measures where possible for the safety of everyone involved in meetings.

Register of Members' Interests - Members are reminded that a Member must within 28 days of becoming aware of any changes to their Disclosable Pecuniary Interests provide written notification to the Authority's Monitoring Officer.

You will find the contents of the agenda itemised onwards.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Sarah Steenberg".

Solicitor to the Council & Monitoring Officer



We speak your language

Polish **Mówimy Twoim językiem**

Slovak **Rozprávame Vaším jazykom**

Chinese **我们会说你的语言**

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If you require an adjustment to enable you to participate in or access the meeting please contact the Governance Team at least 72 hours before the meeting starts.

**UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE
AGENDA**

***Thursday, 30th September, 2021 at 10:00 hours taking place at the Council Chamber, The
Arc, Clowne***

Item No.	PART 1 – OPEN ITEMS	Page No.(s)
1.	Appointment of Vice-Chair for 2021/22	
2.	Apologies For Absence	
3.	Urgent Items of Business To note any urgent items of business which the Chairman has consented to being considered under the provisions of Section 100(B) 4(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.	
4.	Declarations of Interest Members should declare the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest and Non Statutory Interest as defined by the Members' Code of Conduct in respect of: a) any business on the agenda b) any urgent additional items to be considered c) any matters arising out of those items and if appropriate, withdraw from the meeting at the relevant time.	
5.	Minutes To consider the minutes of the last meeting held on 11 th February 2021.	3 - 5
6.	Sickness Absence Quarter 1 (April – June 2021)	6 - 15

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council held as a Virtual Meeting on Thursday, 11 February 2021 at 10:00.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Chris McKinney (Unison Representative) in the Chair

Councillors Derek Adams, Maxine Dixon, Mary Dooley and Tom Kirkham.

Kevin Shillitto (UNISON) and Liz Robinson (UNISON).

Officers:- , Sara Gordon (Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager), Tom Scott (Governance Officer), and Hannah Douthwaite (Democratic Services Assistant).

UECC7- APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE 20/21

No apologies for absence were received.

UECC8- URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS 20/21

There was no urgent business to be considered at the meeting.

UECC9- DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST 20/21

There were no declarations of interest made at the meeting.

UECC10- MINUTES 20/21

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley

RESOLVED that the minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee held on 17th September 2020 be approved as a true and correct record.

UECC11- SICKNESS ABSENCE QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2020) 20/21

The Human Resources & Organisational Development Manager presented the Sickness Absence Report for Quarter 3 (October 2020 – December 2020) and advised that the average number of days lost per employee in this quarter was 1.14. This resulted in the projected outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee to be 5.32 days for the full year.

Table four in the report detailed the top three service areas per quarter for absence and table five detailed the service areas with the lowest sickness absence for the quarter in comparison to previous years. The main three reasons for absence were shown in table six with Covid-19 symptoms being the third most common reason having not made the top three in previous quarters.

Quarter three is the lowest quarter for sickness absence reported over the last 4 financial years, possible factors for the reduction in average days lost included the increased capacity and availability for employees to work from home and also limited interaction with others both inside and out of work due to lockdown and associated restrictions.

Members noted that it had been a particularly challenging time for employees yet they had risen to all challenges thrown at them and continued to work effectively and had kept all essential services operating.

A question was raised surrounding the take up of the mental health awareness training. The HR and Organisational Development Manager advised that over 100 employees had signed up to attend the training and it would be run quarterly for any new starters and as a refresher for any other employees who wished to attend.

Due to the lockdown restrictions there was limited social interaction between staff so frequent team meetings and 121's were essential to check in on employees and address any concerns with managers / senior members of the team.

Moved by Councillor Maxine Dixon and seconded by Councillor Mary Dooley.
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

UECC12- GENDER PAY GAP 2019/2020 20/21

The HR and Organisational Development Manager presented the Gender Pay Gap report for 2019/20. It was noted that the gender pay gap did not indicate any pay equity issue or an imbalance in the Council's pay structures and policies. The report only looked at the average earnings between male and female employees.

Table four of the report illustrated the proportion of men and women in the four different quartile bands which show that the Council has a higher proportion of men in the upper pay quartile and upper middle pay quartile however, the Council's pay gap was well below the National Pay Gap average of 15.5%. The report also compared the data with other Local Authorities mean and median hourly rates.

Members discussed the factors that influenced the gender pay gap such as women being more likely to take on family responsibilities, career breaks and also stereotypes, culture

and societal norms which influenced the types of roles men and women were attracted to undertake.

A question was raised regarding the number of employees that were employed by the Council and what the percentage split was between male and female. It was confirmed there were 508 employed staff, 251 male and 257 female so almost a 50% split.

The Chair asked if the Council knew whether the good policies that have been brought in work or have made a difference to the gender pay gap, and asked if any research had been done to understand this. The HR and Organisational Development Manager advised that the staff survey covers this in general terms but further research would be required to understand the impact of specific policies. The HR and Organisational Development Manager advised that she would look into this to see what evidence the Council currently has and what further information could be captured.

Councillor Tom Kirkham left the meeting.

Members thanked the HR and Organisational Development Manager for the detail and breakdowns included in the report and the way in which employees were supported by the HR team.

The HR and Organisation Development Manager reported that she would work with the Communications team to ensure that all information was up to date on the website and no information was missing.

Moved by Chris McKinney and seconded by Councillor Derek Adams
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 10:40 hours.

Bolsover District Council

Report of HR & OD Manager

Sickness Absence Quarter 1 (April – June 2021)

9

1. Purpose of the Report

1.1 To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 1, (April – June 2021).

2. Issues for Consideration

2.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months April to June 2021.

2.2 Absence for the Senior Managers Group is shown as 50% of the total absence for Joint Senior Managers as this is split with Bolsover/NE Derbyshire District Council. For other employees the absences included are for the employing authority only.

2.3 The average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 1 was **1.91 days**

2.4 The projected 2022/21 outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee is **7.64 days**.

2.5 The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2022 is **8.5 days**.

2.6 For the purposes of sickness reporting, following recent restructures Senior Management is split as follows

- 1 x Joint Director (2 x 0.5 fte), 1 x Director (BDC), 1 Assistant Director (BDC only), 1.5 x Joint Heads of Service (3 x 0.5 fte), 0.5 Joint Assistant Director (1 X 0.5 fte) and 4 x Heads of Service (BDC). There was 14 days sickness (50% which equates to 7 days for BDC reporting purposes) experienced during Quarter 1.

3. Summary of Key Corporate Trends

The following tables detail the key pattern and trends being experienced corporately in relation to sickness absence.

Table One: Organisational Outturn Average Number of Days Absence
(Average sickness days per fte employee)

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current Year Costs
Quarter One	2.23	1.85	1.50	1.91	£81917.94
Quarter Two	1.86	1.84	1.35		
Quarter Three	2.52	2.43	1.14		
Quarter Four	2.09	1.68	1.58		
Overall Outturn	8.7	7.8	5.57		

Table Two: Organisational Long Term/Short Term Split Days Percentage

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	Short term	Long Term	Short term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
Quarter One	34.0%	66.0%	43%	57%	33%	67%	40%	60.0%
Quarter Two	35.0%	65.0%	54%	46%	37%	63%		
Quarter Three	32.4%	67.6%	44.8%	55.2%	47.1%	52.9%		
Quarter Four	43.6%	56.4%	60.1%	39.9%	42.90%	57.10%		
Overall Outturn	36.25%	63.75%	48.1%	51.9%	40.71%	59.29%		

Table Three: Number of Long Term/Short Term Cases
(long and short term occurrences of sickness in the quarter)

	2018/19		2019/20		2020/21		2021/22	
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
Quarter One	104	18	94	15	48	15	90	15
Quarter Two	85	14	87	11	50	11		
Quarter Three	98	21	102	14	48	6		
Quarter Four	103	14	90	9	57	10		
Overall Outturn	390	67	373	49	203	42		

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Table Four: Top Three Services Proportionately Experiencing Highest Levels of Absence
(The three service areas who have the highest average fte employee sickness absence days in the quarter)

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Current Year 2021/22
Quarter One	1.Customer Services 2.Property/Estates 3.Housing/CS	1.Elections 2.Customer Services 3.CEO/Dir/HoS	1. Leaders/Exec.Team 2. Legal 3. Planning	1. Elections 2.Democratic 3.Streetscene
Quarter Two	1. Customer Services 2. Elections 3 .Revs & Bens	1.Customer Services 2.Revs & Bens 3.Housing	1. Dev/Bus. Growth 2. Elections 3. Housing Repairs	1. 2. 3.
Quarter Three	1. Elections 2..HR/Payroll/H&S 3 CEO/Dir/HoS	1. Customer Services 2.HR/Health & Safety 3. Revs & Bens	1. Elections 2. Streetscene 3. Democratic Services	1. 2. 3.
Quarter Four	1. CEO/Dir/HoS 2. Democratic 3. Customer Services	1.Legal 2.Revs & Bens 3.Partnership	1. Elections 2. Governance 3. Customer Services	1. 2. 3.
Overall Outturn	1. Customer Services 2 .CEO/Dir/HoS 3. HR &Payroll	1.Customer Services 2.Comms 3.Housing/CS	1. Elections 2. Democratic 3. LEPT	1. 2. 3.

Table Five: Top Three Services Proportionately Experiencing Lowest Level of Absence

(The three service areas who have the lowest average fte employee sickness absence days in the quarter)

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Current Year 2021/22
Quarter One	1. HR & Payroll 2. Elections 3. Procurement	1. Performance 2. HR& HS 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Democratic 3. Customer Services	1. Human Resources 2. Revs. & Bens 3. Customer Services
Quarter Two	1. Perf/Comms 2. CEPT 3. Econ Growth	1. Legal 2. Governance 3. HR&Health& Safety	1. Finance 2. Revs & Bens 3. Directors/HofS	1. 2. 3.
Quarter Three	1. Procurement 2. Partnerships 3. Finance	1. Elections 2. Performance 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Customer Services 3. Property & Estates	1. 2. 3.
Quarter Four	1. Finance 2. Partnerships 3. Procurement	1. Elections 2. Econ Dev 3. Legal	1. Finance 2. Planning 3. LEPT	1. 2. 3.
Overall Outturn	1. Procurement 2. Finance 3. CEPT	1. Performance 2. Econ Dev 3. Planning	1. Finance 2. Directors/HofS 3. Property & Estates	1. 2. 3.

Table Six: Top Three Reasons for Absence

(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost)

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Current Year 21/22
Quarter One	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Other	1. Viral Infection 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Other	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other 3. Headaches/Migraines	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital
Quarter Two	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3. Other	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Chest/Respiratory	1. Operations/Hospital 2. Other-Musc Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression	1. 2. 3.
Quarter Three	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Operations/Hosp 3. Stress/Depression	1. Stress/Depression 2. Chest/Respiratory 3. Other Musc. Skel	1. Other Musc. Skel 2. Stress/Depression 3. COVID 19 Symptoms	1. 2. 3.
Quarter Four	1. Ops/Hospital	1. Stress/Depression	1. Stress/Depression	1.

	2. Stress/Depression 3. Viral	2. COVID19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skel	2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital	2. 3.
Overall Outturn	1. Other Musc Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. Back Problems	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skel 3. Operations/Hospital	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. Operations/Hospital	1. 2. 3.

Key Trends

- Sickness levels for Quarter 1 2021/22 are at their highest since Quarter 1 of 2018/19.
- 6 Services experienced zero sickness in Quarter 1 and a further 7 Services have experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee.
- Stress/depression remains consistently high, most cases are as a result of non-work related issues. Steps the Council has taken to support employees include:
 - Mental Health awareness sessions have been rolled out across the Council and are now included on the quarterly corporate training programme
 - Resilience Training rolled out in April, made available to managers and employees to support workforce mental and physical health
 - Health and Wellbeing Bulletins have been issued on a monthly and bi-weekly basis during the pandemic
 - Managers and Employees have accessed Occupational Health, Counselling, Employee Assistance Programme and other support.
- There appears to be a direct correlation between employees aged over 50 undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness.
- There were 70 days lost in quarter 1 due to Covid19 symptoms (employees reporting unfit for work).
- In comparison to Quarter 4 2020/21, Quarter 1 2021/22 has reduced Short Term sickness and increased Long Term sickness cases.
- Analysis work has been undertaken on whether the lockdown periods have increased specific sickness issues. There has been an increase in days lost due to stress and depression and other muscular/skeletal. The Council continues to be proactive in supporting employees whatever the reason.
- Possible factors which may be impacting on sickness include:
 - Housing Repairs, Streetscene and Customer Services have maintained service provision throughout the lockdown periods. Sickness levels in terms of days lost have reduced significantly in Customer Services and Housing Repairs However they have increased within the Streetscene.

- Many employees have been working at home therefore limiting personal interaction and adhering to social distancing practices, resulting in less infections being transmitted between employees leading to reduced sickness. This is reinforced by significant reductions across the range of short term absences and specific sickness reasons such Viral Infections and Chest/Respiratory issues.
- There is also the possibility that in some cases employees may not have reported poor health as they were working at home.

5. Actions

- 5.1 Managers have support from dedicated service area HR Link Officers and are issued monthly sickness absence information. Managers are also able to access sickness information for their teams' on a daily basis via HR21 Self Service.
- 5.2 Support for managers and employees is provided by Occupational Health where appropriate and employees have access to a 24 hour, 7 days a week Employee Assistance Programme where confidential advice is provided on a range of issues
- 5.3 Operational concerns about the management of sickness absence cases that exist are being raised with the respective managers and dealt with as per standard practice and policy.

Recommendations

- 6.1 To note the contents of this report

Appendix One: Summary Figures for the Quarter by Directorate/Service

Figure One – Service Breakdown Short/Long Term Split

Service	Short term days	No. of Employees absent	Long term days	No. of Employees Absent	Total Days lost	FTE No. in Section	Average days lost per FTE
Directors and Heads of Service	7	1	0	0	7	9	0.78
Democratic	0	0	37	1	37	6.51	5.68
Elections	0	0	65	1	65	4	16.25
Health & Safety	1	1	0	0	1	5	0.2
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	2.43	0
Legal	0	0	0	0	0	8.69	0
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Performance	0	0	0	0	0	2.82	0
Finance	0	0	0	0	0	12.42	0
Revenues & Benefits	10	6	0	0	10	28.38	0.35
Customer Services	9	5	0	0	9	21.67	0.41
Leisure	20	12	0	0	20	41.27	0.48
Leaders/Executive Team	5	1	0	0	5	9.32	0.54
Streetscene	197.5	43	212	6	409.5	97.82	4.19
Development/Business Growth	16	5	0	0	16	9.3	1.72
Housing Management (including CS)	22	6	102	4	124	63.04	1.97
Housing Repairs (BDC)	23	7	28	1	51	61	0.84
Planning	12	2	0	0	12	19.05	0.63
Prop/Commercial/Estates	1	1	44	2	45	17.09	2.63

FOR INFORMATION ONLY – EMPLOYEES HOSTED BY NEDDC

Service	Short term Days	No. of Employees absent	Long term days	No. of Employees absent	Total Days lost	FTE No. in Section	Average days lost per FTE
Environmental Health	4	3	22	1	26	40.78	0.64
ICT	3	2	21	1	24	30.95	0.78

13

Figure Two: Directorate Breakdown Short/Long Term Split

Directorate	No. of FTE Employees	Short term days	No of employees absent		Long term Days	No of employees absent
Directors/Heads of Service	9	7	1		0	0
Corporate Services	147.51	45	25		102	2
Development BDC	106.44	52	15		72	3
Env/Enforcement	160.86	219.5	49		314	10

Figure Three: Top Three Reasons for Absence per Directorate

(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost – Also include the number of employees in brackets in each directorate)

Directorate	No. of FTE Employees	Top 3 Reasons for Absences
Directors/Heads of Service	9 (9)	1.Stomach/Kidney/Liver
Corporate Services	147.51 (186)	1. Other and Viral Infection and Genito-Urinary 2. Pregnancy Related 3. Other Mus/Skel. and Stomach/Kidney/Liver
Development	106.44 (120)	1. Operations/Hospital 2. Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal
Env/Enforcement	160.86 (175)	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Headaches & Migraines

Figure Four: Stress Cases During Quarter One

Work Related	Outside of Work Related	Total
1	8	9

Figure Five: COVID-19 During Quarter One and Totals for 2021/22

Quarter 1	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	3	13	0	0	16
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	0	8	0	1	9

No of Covid symptoms related absence days	0	69	0	1	70
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