

## **Bolsover District Council**

### **Report of HR & OD Manager**

#### **Sickness Absence - Quarter 3 (October – December 2021)**

1. Purpose of the Report
  - 1.1 To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 3, (October – December 2021).
2. Issues for Consideration
  - 2.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months October to December 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 3 was **2.29 days**
  - 2.4 The projected 2021/22 outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee is **7.27 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, Senior Management is accounted for as follows:
    - 3 Joint Assistant Director Posts (1.5 fte).

### 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)

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2019/20 Costs</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2020/21 Costs</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>Current Year Costs</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	2.23	1.85	£79,136.56	1.50	£51,292.61	1.91	£81,917.94
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1.86	1.84	£69,134.38	1.35	£52,351.59	2.31	£91,025.58
<b>Quarter Three</b>	2.52	2.43	£84,863.87	1.14	£46,411.80	2.29	£85,306.37
<b>Quarter Four</b>	2.09	1.68	£56,257.50	1.58	£66,731.07		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>£289,392.31</b>	<b>5.57</b>	<b>£216,787.07</b>		

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

	<b>2018/19</b>		<b>2019/20</b>		<b>2020/21</b>		<b>2021/22</b>	
	Short term	Long Term	Short term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
<b>Quarter One</b>	34%	66%	43%	57%	33%	67%	40%	60%
<b>Quarter Two</b>	35%	65%	54%	46%	37%	63%	67%	33%
<b>Quarter Three</b>	33%	67%	45%	55%	47%	53%	48%	52%
<b>Quarter Four</b>	44%	56%	60%	40%	43%	57%		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>36%</b>	<b>64%</b>	<b>48%</b>	<b>52%</b>	<b>41%</b>	<b>59%</b>		

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
<b>Quarter One</b>	104	18	94	15	48	15	90	15
<b>Quarter Two</b>	85	14	87	11	50	11	115	12
<b>Quarter Three</b>	98	21	102	14	48	6	105	13
<b>Quarter Four</b>	103	14	90	9	57	10		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>42</b>		

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
<b>Quarter One</b>	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 Services 3.Streetscene
<b>Quarter Two</b>	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.Elections 2.DemocraticServices 3.Customer Services
<b>Quarter Three</b>	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.DemocraticServices 2.Health & Safety 3. Housing Mgt.
<b>Quarter Four</b>	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.

<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>1. Customer Services</b> <b>2 .CEO/Dir/HoS</b> <b>3. HR &amp;Payroll</b>	<b>1.Customer Services</b> <b>2.Comms</b> <b>3.Housing/CS</b>	<b>1. Elections</b> <b>2.DemocraticServices</b> <b>3. LEPT</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>
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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)*

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Current Year 2021/22</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	1. HR & Payroll 2. Elections 3.Procurement	1. Performance 2. HR& HS 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Democratic Services 3. Customer Services	1. Human Resources 2. Revs. & Bens 3. Customer Services
<b>Quarter Two</b>	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. Legal 2. Communications 3. Revs & Bens
<b>Quarter Three</b>	1. Procurement 2. Partnerships 3. Finance	1. Elections 2. Performance 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Customer Services 3. Property & Estates	1. Dirs/HofS 2. Legal 3. Communications
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1. Finance 2. Partnerships 3. Procurement	1.Elections 2.Econ Dev 3.Legal	1. Finance 2. Planning 3. LEPT	1. 2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>1. Procurement</b> <b>2. Finance</b> <b>3. CEPT</b>	<b>1.Performance</b> <b>2.Econ Dev</b> <b>3.Planning</b>	<b>1. Finance</b> <b>2. Directors/HofS</b> <b>3. Property &amp; Estates</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>

Table Six: Top Three Reasons for Absence

*(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost)*

	<b>2018/19</b>	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>Current Year 21/22</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	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
<b>Quarter Two</b>	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. COVID 19 Symptoms 2.Other Musc.Skeletal 3.Stress/Depression

<b>Quarter Three</b>	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.Stress/Depression 2.COVID19 Symptoms 3.Other Musc. Skeletal
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1. Ops/Hospital 2. Stress/Depression 3. Viral	1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skel	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital	1. 2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	1. <b>Other Musc Skeletal</b> 2. <b>Stress/Depression</b> 3. <b>Back Problems</b>	1. <b>Stress/Depression</b> 2. <b>Other Musc. Skel</b> 3. <b>Operations/Hospital</b>	1. <b>Other Musc. Skeletal</b> 2. <b>Stress/Depression</b> 3. <b>Operations/Hospital</b>	1. 2. 3.

### Key Trends

- 166.5 days were lost in Q3 due to Covid19 symptoms (employees unfit for work), this is a decrease of 104.5 days in comparison with Q2 and an increase of 96.5 days in comparison to Q1.
- The highest short term sickness for the last four years has been experienced in Q3. Covid19 has been a significant factor in this increase and the key reasons why are return to normal social mixing, schools returning and employees returning to the office and some staff choosing not to be vaccinated. This is also a reflection of an increase nationally and locally with the number of Covid cases.
- Long term sickness cases have remained at a similar level through the first three quarters.
- There is a direct correlation between employees undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness. This is reinforced by Muscular/Skeletal absences being in the top three reasons for sickness absence.
- Five Services experienced zero sickness in Q3 and a further five Services have experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee.
- Stress /Depression has remained in the top three reasons for absence since Q2 of 2019/20.

- There were 12 cases of absence cases due to Stress/Depression during Q3, 11 were not work related and 1 case was work related.
- There are 13 long term cases in this quarter, 9 are physical health ailments and 4 are stress/depression, none of these cases are work related.
- Covid19 sickness remains in the top 3 reasons for sickness, continuing from Q2.
- In comparison to Q2, Stress/Depression cases have increased by 153 days in Q3.
- In comparison to Q2, Other Musc. Skeletal cases have decreased by 106 days in Q3

## 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 Steps the Council has taken to support employees include:

- Mental Health awareness sessions are being delivered across the Council as part of the Council's quarterly corporate training programme.
- Awareness training explains that colleagues and managers are not specialists in mental health and their role is to listen to employees and signpost them to appropriate support.
- Resilience Training was rolled out and made available to managers and employees to support workforce mental and physical health
- Health and Wellbeing Bulletins are produced every three months.
- Managers and Employees have accessed Occupational Health, Counselling, Physiotherapy, the Council's Employee Assistance Programme and other support.
- Employees are signposted to incentives which are available via Leisure i.e.:-
  - To encourage health and wellbeing staff can take up membership for Go! Active which includes gym, swim and classes for only £15 per month.
  - There is a Health Referral Programme (Physical Activity & Lifestyle Support) which is available to Employees residing within the BDC Area – This is a programme aimed at changing behaviours and finding

solutions to assist people facing daily challenges resulting in a concentrated approach regarding service users health and wellbeing.

- 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**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Short term days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>	<b>Long term days</b>	<b>No. of Employees Absent</b>	<b>Total Days lost</b>	<b>FTE No. in Section</b>	<b>Average days lost per FTE</b>
Directors and Assistant Directors	0	0	0	0	0	9	0
Governance	2	1	118	2	120	6.51	18.43
Elections	6	1	0	0	6	4	1.5
Health & Safety	28	3	0	0	28	5	5.6
Human Resources	0	0	0	0	0	2.43	0
Legal	0	0	0	0	0	7.09	0
Communications	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
Performance	0	0	0	0	0	2.81	0
Finance	1.5	2	0	0	1.5	13.62	0.11
Revenues & Benefits	22	8	0	0	22	27.59	0.8
Customer Services	43	7	0	0	43	18.38	2.34
Leisure	43.5	15	29	1	72.5	41.88	1.73

Leaders/Executive Team	4	2	0	0	4	5.13	0.78
Streetscene	129.5	34	144	4	273.5	92.57	2.95
Development/Business Growth	7	2	0	0	7	7.91	0.88
Housing Management (including CS)	36	6	198	6	234	65.72	3.56
Housing Repairs (BDC)	94	18	0	0	94	60	1.57
Planning	10	3	0	0	10	19.46	0.51
Prop/Commercial/Estates	30	3	0	0	30	17.9	1.68

#### **FOR INFORMATION ONLY – EMPLOYEES HOSTED BY NEDDC**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Short term Days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>	<b>Long term days</b>	<b>No. of Employees absent</b>	<b>Total Days lost</b>	<b>FTE No. in Section</b>	<b>Average days lost per FTE</b>
Environmental Health	37.5	13	0	0	37.5	44.38	0.84
ICT	19.5	12	0	0	19.5	31.95	0.61

**Figure Two: Directorate Breakdown Short/Long Term Split**

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>No. of FTE Employees</b>	<b>Short term days</b>	<b>No of employees absent</b>		<b>Long term Days</b>	<b>No of employees absent</b>
Executive Directors/Assistant Directors	9	0	0		0	0
Strategy & Development	138.25	181	31		118	2
Resources	264.75	275.50	74		371	11



**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
Executive Directors/Assistant Directors	9	Zero Absence
Strategy and Development	138.25	1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID19 Symptoms 3.Heart/Blood Pressure
Resources	264.75	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3.COVID 19 Symptoms

**Figure Four: Stress Cases During Quarter Three**

Work Related	Outside of Work Related	Total
1	11	12

**Figure Five: COVID-19 During Quarter Three 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

<b>Quarter 2</b>	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	30	39	0	4	73
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	10	26	0	3	39
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	111	132	1	27	271

<b>Quarter 3</b>	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	4	5	0	1	10
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	9	16	1	2	28
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	38	46.5	7	8	99.5

<b>Accumulative Total for the year</b>	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	37	57	0	5	99
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	19	50	1	6	76
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	149	247.5	8	36	440.5