

**Bolsover District Council**

**Meeting of the Safety Committee on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2023**

**Sickness Absence - Quarter 3 (October – December 2022)**

**Report of the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder - Corporate Governance**

<b>Classification</b>	This report is Public
<b>Report By</b>	Oliver Fishburn, HR and Payroll Manager Tel 01246 242525 <a href="mailto:oliver.fishburn@bolsover.gov.uk">oliver.fishburn@bolsover.gov.uk</a>
<b>Contact Officer</b>	As above

**PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT**

1. **Purpose of the Report**

1.1 To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 3, (October - December 2022).

**REPORT DETAILS**

2. **Background**

2.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months October - December 2022.

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 2.27 days.
- 2.3.1 The 2022/23 forecast figure for the average number of days lost per employee is 8.76 days.
- 2.3.2. The Quarter 3 figure for the average number of days lost per employee if COVID related symptoms were discounted was 1.89 days.
- 2.4 The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2023 is 8.5 days.
- 2.7 For the purposes of sickness reporting, Senior Management is accounted for as follows:-
- 1 Joint Assistant Director Post (0.5 fte).

### 3. Details of Proposal or Information

#### 3.1 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>2019/20</b>	<b>2019/20 Costs</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2020/21 Costs</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>2021/22 Costs</b>	<b>2022/23</b>	<b>2022/22 Costs</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	1.85	£79,136.56	1.50	£51,292.61	1.91	£81,917.94	2.29	£84,309.63
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1.84	£69,134.38	1.35	£52,351.59	2.31	£91,025.58	2.02	£84,144,83
<b>Quarter Three</b>	2.43	£84,863.87	1.14	£46,411.80	2.29	£85, 306.37	2.27	£93954.00
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1.68	£56,257.50	1.58	£66,731.07	2.19	£84,857.65		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>7.8</b>	<b>£289,392.31</b>	<b>5.57</b>	<b>£216,787.07</b>	<b>8.7</b>	<b>£343,107.54</b>		

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

	<b>2019/20</b>		2020/21		<b>2021/22</b>		<b>2022/23</b>	
	Short term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
<b>Quarter One</b>	43%	57%	33%	67%	40%	60%	48%	52%
<b>Quarter Two</b>	54%	46%	37%	63%	67%	33%	46%	54%
<b>Quarter Three</b>	45%	55%	47%	53%	48%	52%	46%	54%
<b>Quarter Four</b>	60%	40%	43%	57%	69%	31%		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>48%</b>	52%	41%	<b>59%</b>	<b>57%</b>	<b>43%</b>		

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

	<b>2019/20</b>		<b>2020/21</b>		<b>2021/22</b>		<b>2022/23</b>	
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
<b>Quarter One</b>	94	15	48	15	90	15	116	14
<b>Quarter Two</b>	87	11	50	11	115	12	99	17
<b>Quarter Three</b>	102	14	48	6	105	13	122	16
<b>Quarter Four</b>	90	9	57	10	126	13		
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>373</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>203</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>436</b>	<b>53</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)*

	<b>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>Current Year 2022/23</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	1.Elections 2.Customer Services 3.CEO/Dir/HoS	1. Leaders/Exec. Team 2. Legal 3. Planning	1. Elections 2.Democratic Services 3.Streetscene	1. LEPT 2. Property & Estates 3. Finance
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1.Customer Services 2.Revs & Bens 3.Housing	1. Dev/Bus. Growth 2. Elections 3. Housing Repairs	1.Elections 2.DemocraticServices 3.Customer Services	1. Streetscene 2. Housing Mgt. 3. Housing Repairs
<b>Quarter Three</b>	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.	1. 2. 3.
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1.Legal 2.Revs & Bens 3.Partnership	1. Elections 2. Governance 3. Customer Services	1.Leisure 2. Customer Services 3. Streetscene	1. 2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</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. Elections</b> <b>2. Governance</b> <b>3. Streetscene</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>

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>2019/20</b>	<b>2020/21</b>	<b>2021/22</b>	<b>Current Year 2022/23</b>
<b>Quarter One</b>	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	1.Dirs/Heads of Service 2. Governance 3. Planning
<b>Quarter Two</b>	1.Legal 2.Governance 3.HR&Health& Safety	1. Finance 2. Revs & Bens 3. Directors/HofS	1. Legal 2. Communications 3. Revs & Bens	1. Finance 2. Comms. 3. Governance
<b>Quarter Three</b>	1. Elections 2. Performance 3. Econ Dev	1. Finance 2. Customer Services 3. Property & Estates	1. Dirs/HofS 2. Legal 3. Communications	1.Dirs/HofS 2.HR & Payroll 3.Governance
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1.Elections 2.Econ Dev 3.Legal	1. Finance 2. Planning 3. LEPT	1. Dirs/HofS 2. Legal 3. Communications	1.Performance 2.Housing Mgt 3.Streetscene
<b>Overall Outturn</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. Performance</b> <b>2.Communications</b> <b>3.Human Resources</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)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current Year 2022/23
<b>Quarter One</b>	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	1. COVID Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression
<b>Quarter Two</b>	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	1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal
<b>Quarter Three</b>	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	1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal
<b>Quarter Four</b>	1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skel	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Operations/Hospital	1. COVID19 Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression	1. 2. 3.
<b>Overall Outturn</b>	<b>1. Stress/Depression</b> <b>2. Other Musc. Skel</b> <b>3. Operations/Hospital</b>	<b>1. Other Musc. Skeletal</b> <b>2. Stress/Depression</b> <b>3. Operations/Hospital</b>	<b>1. COVID19 Symptoms</b> <b>2. Stress/Depression</b> <b>3. Other Musc. Skeletal</b>	<b>1.</b> <b>2.</b> <b>3.</b>

#### 4. Key Trends

- The overall average days lost due to sickness has increased to 2.27 in Quarter Three, this has increased from Quarter 2 (2.02 days) but is marginally lower Quarter One (2.29 days)
- 160 days were lost in Q3 due to Covid19 symptoms (employees unfit for work) compared with 157.5 days lost in the last quarter.
- The short term sickness has increased from Q2, however long term sickness has slightly reduced.
- There is a direct correlation between employees undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness. This is reinforced by Muscular/Skeletal absences regularly being in the top three reasons for sickness absence.
- 4 Services experienced zero sickness in Q3 and a further 6 Services 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 6 cases of absence due to Stress/Depression during Q3, one of which was work related, and 5 were not work related.

- There are 16 long term cases in this quarter, 7 are due to physical health ailments and 1 is related to stress/depression (work related), appropriate support and assistance has/is being provided to facilitate support for those who have returned to work and those planning to do so. 7 have returned to work and 1 has chosen to resign (the absence was not work related).
- Covid19 sickness remains in the top 3 reasons for sickness, continuing from Q1 (2021/2). Covid19 has remained a significant factor for the Council's sickness absence, this may be as a result of the Government relaxing restrictions and mutations of the Virus. This is also a reflection of an increase nationally and locally with the number of Covid cases.

## 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 the number of attendees will be reported at year end.
  - 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.
  - Cycle to Work Scheme is also available to encourage health and wellbeing and to address carbon emissions, the number of employees subscribing to this will reported at year end.
  - The number of Employees subscribing to the Gym during 2022/23 will be reported at year end.
  - 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.

**6. Reasons for Recommendations**

6.1 The report contains data relating to employees absence levels.

**7. Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

7.1 N/A

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**RECOMMENDATION(S)**

1. For the Committee to consider and note the report.

**Approved by Councillor McGregor Portfolio Holder for Corporate Governance**



**IMPLICATIONS:**

**Finance and Risk:**      Yes       No

**Details:** High absence levels can contribute to poor service levels, low morale and higher costs for the Council.

On behalf of the Section 151 Officer

**Legal (including Data Protection):**      Yes       No

**Details:**

On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council

**Environment:**

Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment.

**Details:**

**Staffing:**      Yes       No

**Details:** The report's topic relates to employees and their absence levels.

On behalf of the Head of Paid Service

**DECISION INFORMATION**

<p><b>Is the decision a Key Decision?</b> A Key Decision is an executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more District wards or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:</p> <p><b>Revenue - £75,000</b>   <input type="checkbox"/>   <b>Capital - £150,000</b>   <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p><b>Is the decision subject to Call-In?</b> <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

<b>District Wards Significantly Affected</b>	(please state which wards or state All if all wards are affected)
<b>Consultation:</b> <b>Leader / Deputy Leader</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Executive</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>SLT</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Relevant Service Manager</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Members</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Public</b> <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Other</b> <input type="checkbox"/>	Details:

<b>Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.</b>

<b>DOCUMENT INFORMATION</b>	
<b>Appendix No</b>	<b>Title</b>
1	Summary Figures for the Quarter by Directorate/Service

<b>Background Papers</b>
<i>(These are unpublished works which have been relied on to a material extent when preparing the report. They must be listed in the section below. If the report is going to Executive you must provide copies of the background papers).</i>



**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	44	16	65	1	109	43.48	2.51
ICT	17	6	119	3	136	30.45	4.47

**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	151.42	117.5	32	61	2
Resources	266.54	328	90	463	14

**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)*

<b>Directorate</b>	<b>No. of FTE Employees</b>	<b>Top 3 Reasons for Absences</b>
Executive Directors/Assistant Directors.	9	1. N/A
Strategy and Development	151.42	1. Operations/Hospital 2. Viral Infection 3. COVID 19 Symptoms
Resources	266.54	1. Other Musc./Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. COVID 19 Symptoms

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

Work Related	Outside of Work Related	Total
1	5	6

**Figure Five: COVID-19 Cases During Quarter One**

Quarter 1	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	0	0	0	0	0
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	41	17	0	0	58
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	209	74	0	0	283

Quarter 2	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	0	0	0	0	0
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	21	15	0	1	37
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	64	91.5	0	2	157.5

Quarter 3	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	0	0	0	0	0
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	13	19	0	1	33
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	59	100	0	1	160

<b>Accumulative Total for the year</b>	The Arc	Depot Based	Grouped Dwellings	Remote Contact Centres	Total
No Self-Isolating	0	0	0	0	0
No Shielding	0	0	0	0	0
No of confirmed cases	75	51	0	2	128
No of Covid symptoms related absence days	332	265.5	0	3	600.5