

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Union/Employee Consultation Committee on 2nd March 2023

Sickness Absence - Quarter 3 (October – December 2022)

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Portfolio Holder - Corporate Governance

Classification	This report is Public
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Contact Officer	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)

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

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

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

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

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

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)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current Year 2022/23
Quarter One	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
Quarter Two	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
Quarter Three	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.
Quarter Four	1.Legal 2.Revs & Bens 3.Partnership	1. Elections 2. Governance 3. Customer Services	1.Leisure 2. Customer Services 3. Streetscene	1. 2. 3.
Overall Outturn	1.Customer Services 2.Comms 3.Housing/CS	1. Elections 2.DemocraticServices 3. LEPT	1. Elections 2. Governance 3. Streetscene	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)

	2019/20	2020/21	2021/22	Current Year 2022/23
Quarter One	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
Quarter Two	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
Quarter Three	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
Quarter Four	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
Overall Outturn	1.Performance 2.Econ Dev 3.Planning	1. Finance 2. Directors/HofS 3. Property & Estates	1. Performance 2.Communications 3.Human Resources	1. 2. 3.

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
Quarter One	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
Quarter Two	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
Quarter Three	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
Quarter Four	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.
Overall Outturn	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc. Skel 3. Operations/Hospital	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. Operations/Hospital	1. COVID19 Symptoms 2. Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1. 2. 3.

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

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>Is the decision a Key Decision? 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>Revenue - £75,000 <input type="checkbox"/> Capital - £150,000 <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p><input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>Please indicate which threshold applies</i></p>	No
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p>	No

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

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy and Environment.

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

Background Papers
(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).

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	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

Directorate	No. of FTE Employees	Short term days	No of employees absent	Long term Days	No of employees absent
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)

Directorate	No. of FTE Employees	Top 3 Reasons for Absences
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

Accumulative Total for the year	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