

Bolsover District Council

Meeting of the Safety Committee on 3 June 2025

Sickness Absence - Quarter 4 (January - March 2025)

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Resources

Classification	This report is Public
Report By	Oliver Fishburn HR and Payroll Manager

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 4 (January - March 2025).

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months January – March 2025.
- 1.2 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 Councils. For other employees the absences included are for the employing authority only.
- 1.3 **The average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 4 was 2.8 days.**
- 1.4 **The 2024/25 actual outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee is 9.5 days.**
- 1.5 The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2025 is 8.5 days.
- 1.6 For the purposes of sickness reporting, Senior Management is accounted for as follows:

1 Joint Assistant Director Post (0.5 FTE). 0 days sickness experienced during Quarter 4.

2. Details of Proposal or Information

2.1 Tables 1, 2 and 3 in Appendix 1 detail the key patterns and trends being experienced corporately in relation to sickness absence.

2.2 Key Trends

- The overall average days lost due to sickness in Quarter 4 was 2.8 days, this is higher than Quarter 4 in 2023/23.
- 6 Services experienced zero sickness during Quarter 4 and 4 Services experienced less than 1 day per FTE employee.
- Stress/Depression has remained in the top three reasons for absence since Quarter 2 of 2019/20.
- There were 11 cases of absence due to Stress/Depression during Quarter 4, 3 of which were work related, 8 were none work related.
- 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.
- There were 0 days sickness recorded for Covid19 in Quarter 4 this is the first quarter not to have recorded this reason for absence during 2024/5.
- There are 19 long term cases in this quarter. 14 are due to physical health ailments and 5 cases are related to stress/depression (3 of which were work related 10 Employees have now returned to work, 7 remain absent, 2 have left the Council's employ. Appropriate support and assistance are being provided to facilitate employees who have returned to work and those planning to do so.

Actions

2.3 Managers have support from the HR Advisor and are issued monthly sickness absence information. Managers are also able to access sickness information for their teams daily via HR21 Self Service.

2.4 Steps the Council has taken to support employees include:

Promoting Health & Wellbeing at Bolsover District Council

We continuously share information on health and wellbeing initiatives, as well as available support, through Eric and the weekly bulletin. Recent highlights include:

- **Support When You Need It – Vivup's Confidential Employee Assistance Programme (EAP):** A guide to accessing confidential support services whenever you need them.
- **World Menopause Day 2024:** We celebrated the occasion by highlighting our dedicated Menopause Policy, which outlines the support available for colleagues going through menopause. The **Menopause Policy Handbook** is accessible on the S Drive (Public HR and Payroll folder). Additionally, the **Bolsover Wellness Programme**, a free 12-week initiative providing access to Go! Active facilities is available for employees experiencing menopause.

- **International Men's Day 2024:** We marked the day by featuring inspiring role models within the Council and raising awareness of men's wellbeing.
- **Fraud Awareness Week (17th – 23rd November):** Employees were provided with key fraud prevention tips, reinforcing that fraud awareness is a collective responsibility.
- **Online Fire Safety Checks:** A timely reminder that between 2020 and 2024, Derbyshire Firefighters attended 110 fires caused by white goods. Employees were encouraged to complete an online fire safety check to reduce risks, noting that 59% of electrical fires occur between 8am and 8pm.
- **Menopause Support Group:** Our first session took place on Wednesday, 22nd January, with the next one scheduled for Tuesday, 18th March—providing a safe space for colleagues to connect and share experiences.
- **Cervical Cancer Awareness Week (21st – 28th January):** With around 3,200 women diagnosed annually in the UK and over 800 lives lost, raising awareness is critical. Employees were directed to NHS resources for more information:
 - [Cervical Cancer – NHS](#)
 - [Cervical Screening – NHS](#)
- **Macmillan Monthly Walking Groups:** Chesterfield Royal Hospital hosts monthly walks for those diagnosed with or recovering from cancer. Employees were encouraged to join as a source of support and community.
- **Race Equality Week (3rd – 9th February):** As part of this UK-wide movement, we raised awareness about barriers to race equality in the workplace. We also shared a thought-provoking short film by The University of Sheffield on Sheffield's historical links to slavery.
- **Eating Disorders Awareness Week (24th February – 2nd March):** This initiative focused on increasing understanding, empathy, and support for individuals affected by eating disorders. Employees were provided with information on available resources.

[EDAW - National Eating Disorders Association](#)

[Overview – Eating disorders - NHS](#)

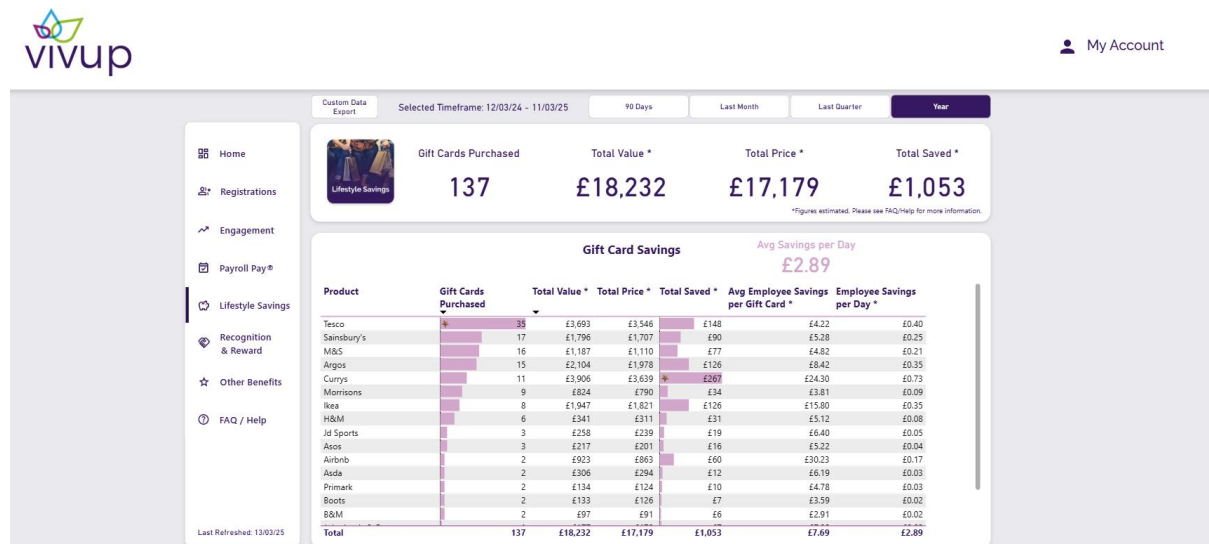
By sharing these initiatives, we aim to foster a workplace culture that prioritises wellbeing, inclusivity, and support for all employees.

Vivup Rewards & Benefits: platform provides tools and solutions to support mental, financial and physical wellbeing all under one online platform. Below are the key features of Vivup:

- ✓ **EAP (Employee Assistance Programme)**
- ✓ **Your Care**

- ✓ **Cycle to Work Scheme**
- ✓ **Lifestyle Savings**
- ✓ **Home & Electronics**

Since the launch in September 2024, the Lifestyle Savings feature of Vivup has helped our employees save a combined total of £1053



Your Financial Wellbeing Courses: Free financial wellbeing courses were offered to our employees. During the course staff had the opportunity to learn the four key steps to being financially well:

- Understand your income and plan your spending
 - Review and keep track of your borrowing
 - Plan your financial goals and prepare for those unexpected costs
 - Start planning for life beyond work whenever that may be
- **Go-Active @ the Arc**
 - The number of Employees subscribing to the Gym for Quarter 4 2024/25 are 64.
 - 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, all employees can access the Bolsover Wellness Programme if they meet the criteria. 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.

2.5 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.

3. **Reasons for Recommendation**

3.1 The report contains data relating to employees' absence levels.

4 **Alternative Options and Reasons for Rejection**

4.1 Not applicable – this report is for information.

RECOMMENDATION(S)

1. That the report be noted.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby Portfolio Holder for Resources

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: Yes ☐ No ☒

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

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

District Wards Significantly Affected	None
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.
N/A

DOCUMENT INFORMATION

Appendix No	Title
1	Figures for the Quarter by Directorate

Background Papers
<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>
None

Appendix One

Table One: Organisational Outturn Average Number of Days Absence

(Average sickness days per fte employee)

	2021/22	2021/22 Costs	2022/23	2022/23 Costs	2023/24	2023/24 Costs	2024/25	2024/25 Costs
Quarter One	1.91	£81,917.94	2.29	£84,309.63	2.26	£74,265.11	2.26	£88,097.39
Quarter Two	2.31	£91,025.58	2.02	£84,144.83	2.39	£86,396.88	2.35	£97,373.93
Quarter Three	2.29	£85,306.37	2.27	£93,954.00	1.89	£73,327.02	2.09	£96,052.51
Quarter Four	2.19	£84,857.65	2.82	£118,763.85	2.44	£99,520.51	2.80	£121,809.68
Overall Outturn	8.7	£343,107.54	9.4	£381,172.31	8.98	£333,509.52	9.5	£403,333.51

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

	2021/22		2022/23		2023/24		2024/25	
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
Quarter One	40%	60%	48%	52%	23%	77%	28%	72%
Quarter Two	67%	33%	46%	54%	37%	63%	35%	65%
Quarter Three	48%	52%	46%	54%	41%	59%	45%	55%
Quarter Four	69%	31%	43%	57%	41%	59%	34%	66%
Overall Outturn	57%	43%	46%	54%	36%	64%	35%	65%

Table Three: Top Three Reasons for Absence

(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost)

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Current Year 2024/25
Quarter One	1.Stress/Depression 2. Other Musc Skeletal 3.Operations/Hospital	1. COVID Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3.Stress/Depression	1. Operations/Hospital 2.Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1.Other Musc. Skeletal 2.Operations/Hospital 3.Stress/Depression
Quarter Two	1. COVID 19 Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3.Stress/Depression	1. Stress/Depression 2. COVID 19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1 Operations/Hospital 2. Stress/Depression 3.Other Musc. Skeletal	1.Other Musc. Skeletal 2.Stress/Depression 3.Other

Quarter Three	1.Stress/Depression 2.COVID19 Symptoms 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1. Stress/Depression 2.COVID 19 Symptoms 3.Other Musc. Skeletal	1. Stress/Depression 2. Other 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1, Operations/Hospital 2.Stress/Depression 3.Other Musc. Skeletal
Quarter Four	1.COVID19 Symptoms 2. Other Musc. Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression	1.Stress/Depression 2.Operations/Hospital 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1. Stress/Depression 2.Other Musc. Skel 3.Operations/Hospital	1.Operations/Hospital 2.Stress/Depression 3.Other Musc/Skeletal
Overall Outturn	1.COVID19 Symptoms 2. Stress/Depression 3. Other Musc. Skeletal	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. COVID19 Symptoms	1.Stress/Depression 2.Other Musc. Skeletal 3.Operations/Hospital	1. Operations/Hospital 2. Other Musc/Skeletal 3. Stress/Depression

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 Assistant Directors	0	0	0	0	0	9.5	0
Governance	0	0	0	0	0	4	0
Elections	4	1	0	0	4	2.5	1.6
Health & Safety	11	1	0	0	11	5	2.2
Human Resources & Payroll	0	0	0	0	0	8.43	0
Legal	3	1	33	1	36	6	6
Communications	1	1	0	0	1	6	0.17
Procurement	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0
Performance	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
Finance	0	0	24	1	24	9	2.7
Revenues & Benefits	3	2	0	0	3	25.08	0.12
Customer Services	18	6	0	0	18	25.09	0.72
Leisure	47	7	200	5	247	47.66	5.18

Leaders/Executive Team	0	0	0	0	0	9.8	0
Streetscene (including CS)	177	41	348	10	525	114.15	4.6
Housing Management	66	14	55	2	121	58.19	2.08
Planning	5	2	0	0	5	21.35	0.23

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	35	8	0	0	35	49.27	0.71
ICT	32	10	0	0	32	32.55	0.98

Figure Two: Stress Cases During Quarter Four

Work Related	Outside of Work Related	Total
3	8	11