

BOLSOVER DISTRICT COUNCIL

Safety Committee on 5th March 2026

Report of the Head of Human Resources & Payroll

Classification	This report is Public
Contact Officer	Oliver Fishburn Head of Human Resources & Payroll

PURPOSE/SUMMARY OF REPORT

To report the sickness absence figures throughout the Council for Quarter 3 (October - December 2025).

REPORT DETAILS

1. Background

- 1.1 Figure 1 shows a summary of sickness absence levels within Bolsover District Council for the months October - December 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 3 was 3.31 days.
- 1.4 The 2025/26 projected outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee is 12.29 days.
- 1.5 The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2026 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 3.

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

- East Midlands Councils are undertaking a benchmarking exercise as neighbouring Councils have highlighted an increase in sickness as an ongoing trend. These results will be provided in future Quarterly reports.
- The overall average days lost due to sickness in Quarter 3 was 3.31 days, this is the highest Quarter 3 over the last three years. Long term sickness cases have contributed to the escalation of the absence figures (accounting for 69% of sickness) in this Quarter.
- 3 Services experienced zero sickness during Quarter 3.
- Stress/Depression has remained in the top three reasons for absence since Quarter 3 of 2019/20.
- There were 17 cases of absence due to Stress/Depression during Quarter 3. 5 of which were work related, 11 were none work related, 1 was a combination of home and work-related issues.
- 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 8.5 days sickness recorded for COVID19 in Quarter 3 this is higher than Quarter 2 in 2025/6.
- There are 20 long term cases in this quarter. 10 are due to physical health ailments and 10 cases are related to stress/depression (4 of which were work related, 1 was a combination of home and work-related issues), 8 Employees have now returned to work, 10 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

At Bolsover District Council, we continue to prioritise the health and wellbeing of our workforce. Over the past quarter, a wide range of initiatives, events, and support services have been promoted and delivered across the organisation. These have been communicated via email, Eric, and the weekly bulletin.

- **Carers' Rights Day (20th November)**

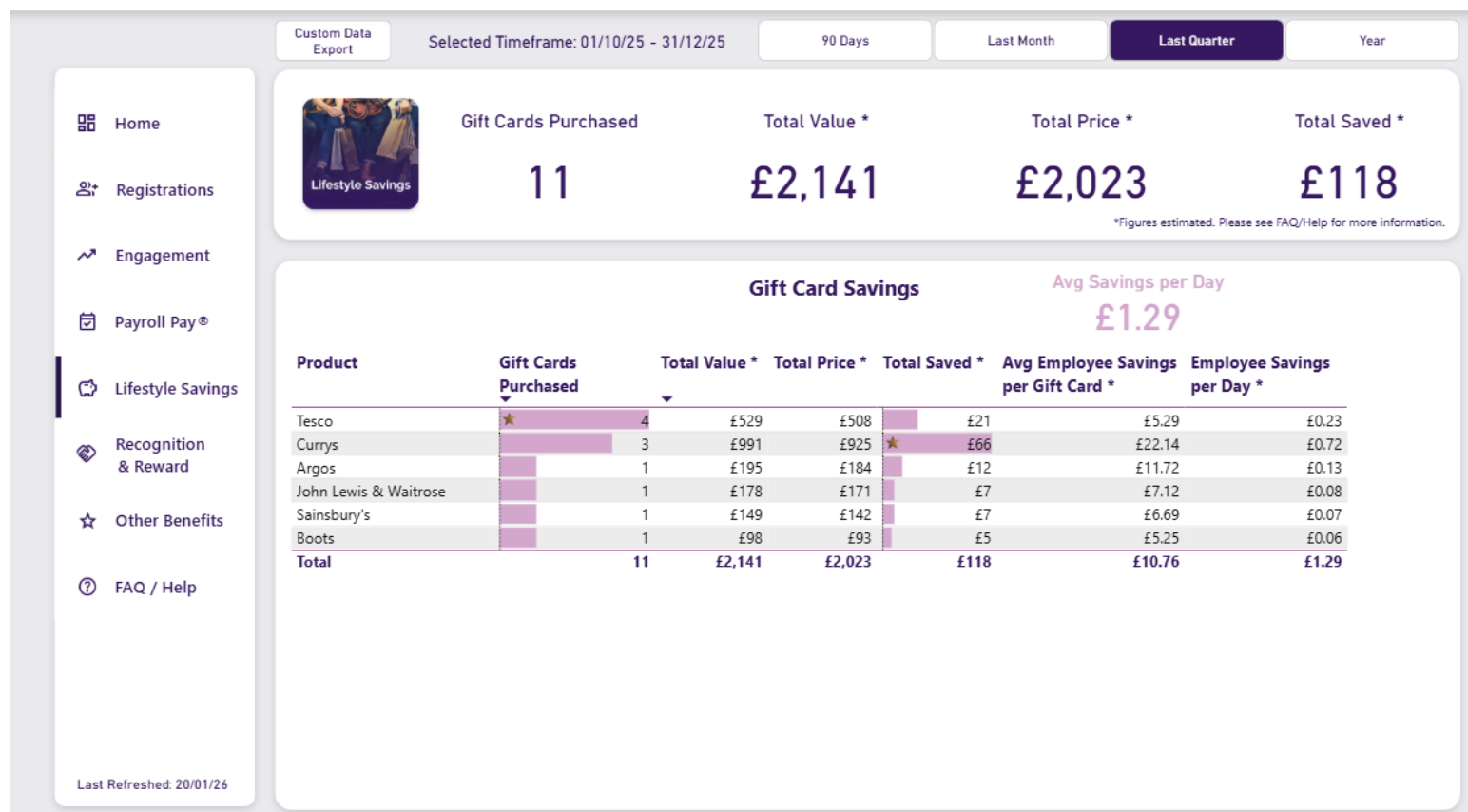
In Q3, we highlighted Carers' Rights Day, focusing on this year's theme: "*Know Your Rights, Use Your Rights.*" We shared key information on the rights of unpaid carers under the Care Act 2014, including access to carer assessments, consideration of their views in care planning, support for wellbeing and flexible working, and wider protections under equality and human rights legislation. Further information was signposted via Derbyshire County Council's Carers' Rights Day 2025 webpage.

- Menopause Support Group (12th November)**
 We promoted the Peer Support Drop-In session held on 12 November (1–2pm), available both in Committee Room 1 and via Teams. Staff were encouraged to join for an informal, supportive chat. The group has also recently introduced the free sanitary products initiative, which provides products in staff toilets across our buildings to help support colleagues' wellbeing.
- Quality Conversations – Training Opportunities (6th November)**
 In Q3, we shared information on the free *Quality Conversations* health-coaching training available to staff and volunteers through Joined Up Care Derbyshire. November sessions included Core Skills, Health Literacy Awareness, Having Better Mental Health Conversations, and Behaviour Change Conversations. The workshops were interactive and designed to build confidence, support sensitive conversations, and provided practical tools for everyday communication. Staff were signposted to the Joined Up Care Derbyshire webpage for full details and booking.
- Flu Vaccination Clinic – (7th October 2025)**
 In Q3, we reported that the Flu Vaccination Clinic held at The Arc and the Depot on 7 October delivered 60 vaccinations. Staff were also reminded that they can continue to claim reimbursement of up to £18 for flu jabs received at a provider of their choice throughout the Flu Season.
- NHS Health Checks (July–October 2025)**
 In Q3, we reported that NHS Health Checks were delivered between July and October 2025, with 86 employees and councillors taking up the offer of a free appointment.
- World Mental Health Day (10th October 2025) – Mental Health First Aiders Promotion**
 In Q3, we highlighted our Mental Health First Aiders as part of World Mental Health Day on 10 October 2025, sharing details via ERIC and the staff bulletin with signposting to Mental Health Foundation resources. In December 2025, new posters featuring MHFA contact information were also created and displayed in staff rooms.
- Domestic Abuse Policy – Introduction**
 In Q3, we reported that the new Domestic Abuse Policy was approved at Council on 3 December 2025. Awareness activity and staff training are scheduled to take place in early 2026.

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:

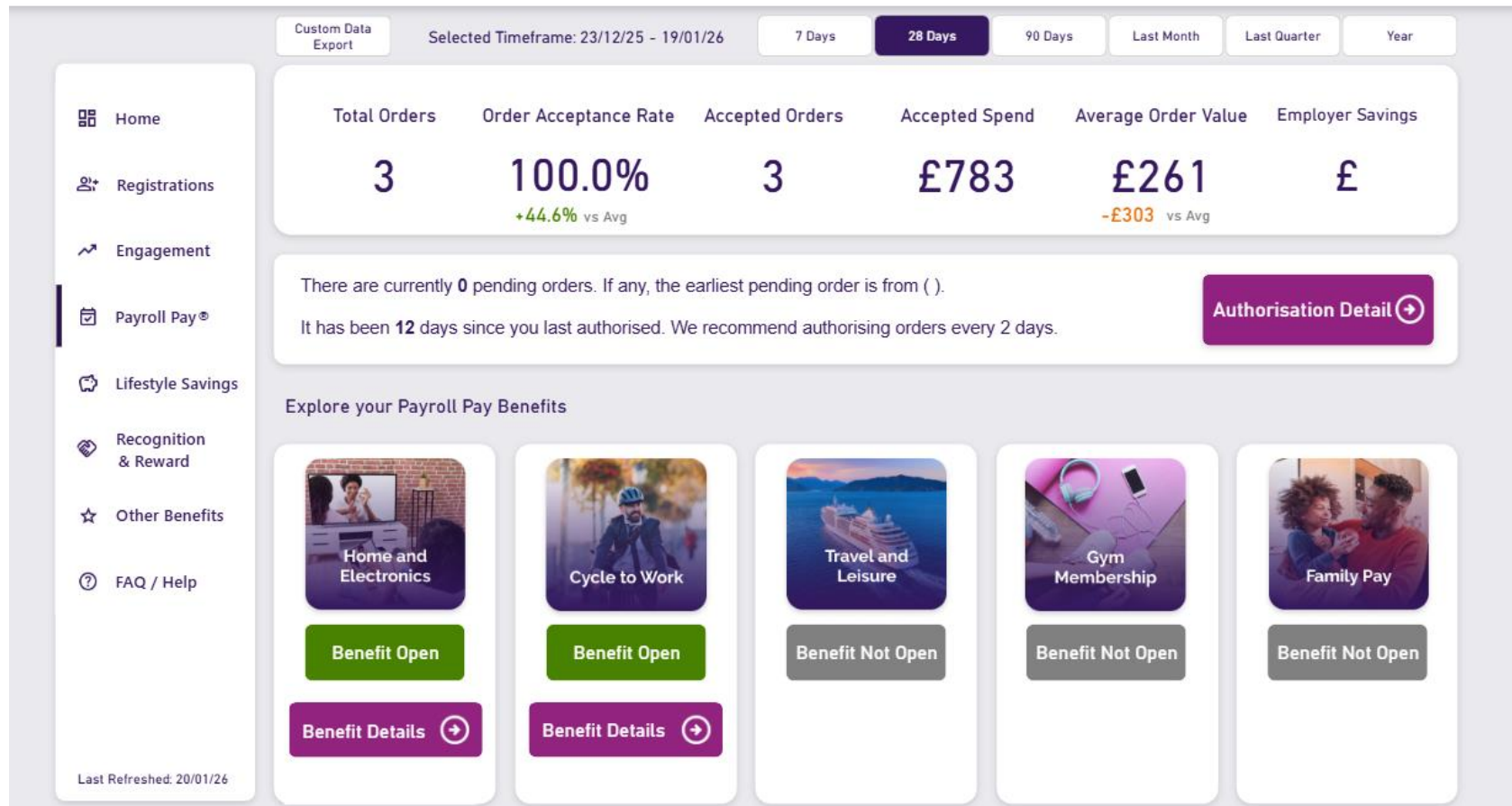
- ✓ **EAP (Employee Assistance Programme)**
- ✓ **Your Care**
- ✓ **Cycle to Work Scheme**
- ✓ **Lifestyle Savings**
- ✓ **Home & Electronics**

In the last quarter, the Lifestyle Savings feature of Vivup has helped our employees save a combined total of £118, up from £66 in the previous quarter.



In the last quarter, we approved three orders through the Home & Electronics and Cycle to Work Schemes via Vivup, a decrease of one compared to the four authorised in the previous quarter. This has given employees the flexibility to spread the cost of their purchases over 12 months through payroll deductions.

Vivup's **Home & Electronics and Cycle to Work Salary-Sacrifice Scheme** allows employees to spread the cost of home appliances, electronics, furniture, bikes, and more via interest-free monthly payments deducted from gross or net salary, no credit checks or upfront payments needed.



Vivup Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) Usage – Q3

In Q3, six employees accessed our EAP, with two referred for a full clinical assessment with a qualified counsellor.

During this period, the primary issues presented are shown in the chart below, with Stress (31%), Anxiety (17%) and Work-Related Stress (12%) forming the top three reasons for initial contact.

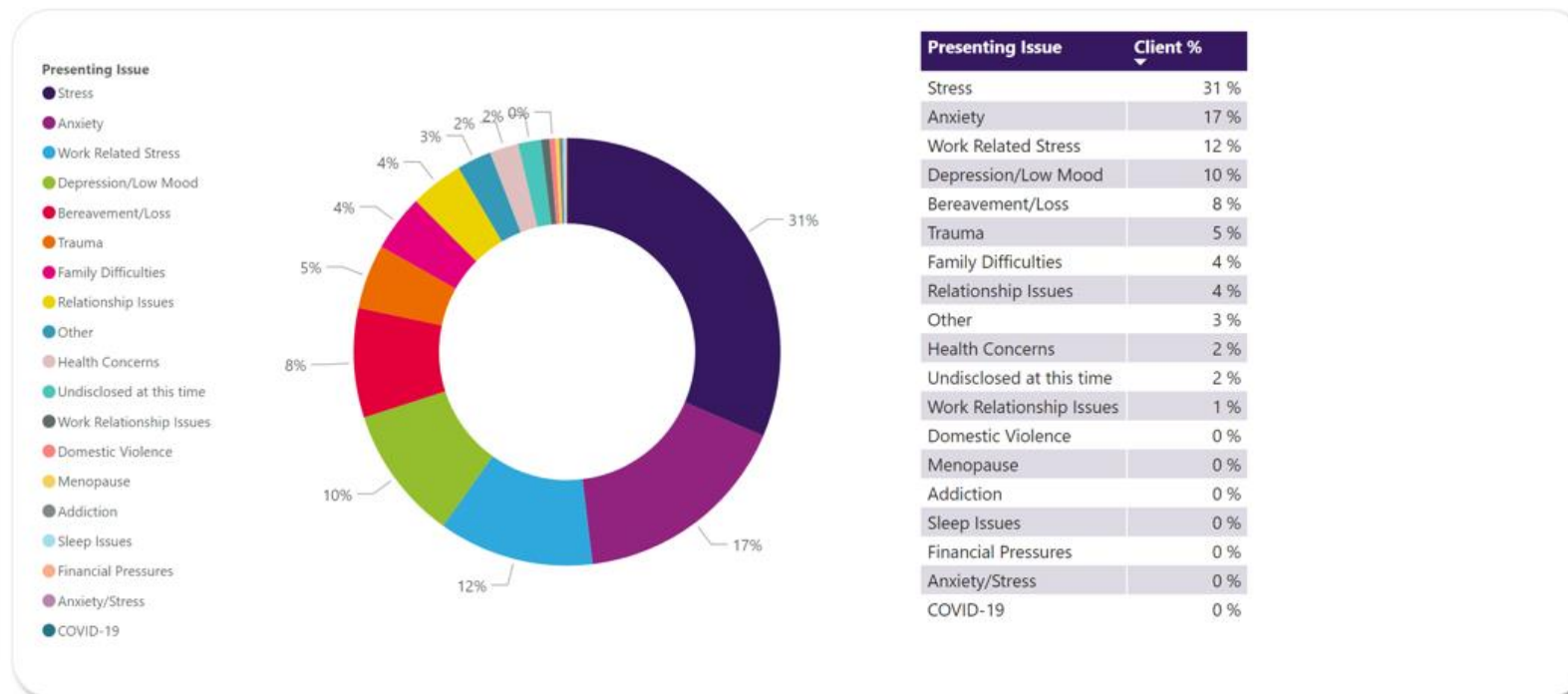
Clinical Usage: New Clients Accessing 24/7 Helpline

Every new caller to our 24/7 EAP helpline receives a clinically led telephone triage. This includes an initial risk assessment and access to in-the-moment emotional support when needed. Where appropriate, individuals are booked in for a full clinical assessment with a qualified counsellor, covering their presenting concerns and any risks. If a client presents with elevated risk, we respond promptly with tailored care planning and case management, ensuring safety and continuity of support.



Clinical Usage: **Presenting Issues**

The presenting issues identified for clients from all organisations entering the clinical service during the period.



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

That the report be noted.

Approved by Councillor Clive Moesby, Portfolio Holder for Resources

IMPLICATIONS:

<u>Finance and Risk</u>	Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
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		
<u>Legal (including Data Protection)</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Details:		
On behalf of the Solicitor to the Council		
<u>Staffing</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Details:		
On behalf of the Head of Paid Service		
<u>Equality and Diversity, and Consultation</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Details:		
<u>Environment</u>	Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Please identify (if applicable) how this proposal/report will help the Authority meet its carbon neutral target or enhance the environment		

DECISION INFORMATION:

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Please indicate which threshold applies:	
Is the decision a Key Decision? A Key Decision is an Executive decision which has a significant impact on two or more wards in the District or which results in income or expenditure to the Council above the following thresholds:	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

<p>Revenue (a) Results in the Council making Revenue Savings of £75,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Revenue Expenditure of £75,000 or more.</p> <p>Capital (a) Results in the Council making Capital Income of £150,000 or more or (b) Results in the Council incurring Capital Expenditure of £150,000 or more.</p> <p>District Wards Significantly Affected: <i>(to be significant in terms of its effects on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the District)</i> Please state below which wards are affected or tick All if all wards are affected:</p>	<p>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>(a) <input type="checkbox"/> (b) <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>None</p>
<p>Is the decision subject to Call-In? <i>(Only Key Decisions are subject to Call-In)</i></p> <p>If No, is the call-in period to be waived in respect of the decision(s) proposed within this report? <i>(decisions may only be classified as exempt from call-in with the agreement of the Monitoring Officer)</i></p> <p>Consultation carried out: <i>(this is any consultation carried out prior to the report being presented for approval)</i></p> <p> Leader <input type="checkbox"/> 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"/> </p>	<p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input checked="" type="checkbox"/></p>

Links to Council Ambition: Customers, Economy, Environment, Housing
N/A

DOCUMENT INFORMATION:

Appendix No	Title
1	Figures from 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)

	2022/23	2022/23 Costs	2023/24	2023/24 Costs	2024/25	2024/25 Costs	2025/26	2025/26 Costs
Quarter One	2.29	£84,309.63	2.26	£74,265.11	2.26	£88,097.39	2.8	£135,582.88
Quarter Two	2.02	£84,144.83	2.39	£86,396.88	2.35	£97,373.93	3.11	£156,829.10
Quarter Three	2.27	£93,954.00	1.89	£73,327.02	2.09	£96,052.51	3.31	£157,554.72
Quarter Four	2.82	£118,763.85	2.44	£99,520.51	2.80	£121,809.68		
Overall Outturn	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

	2022/23		2023/24		2024/25		2025/26	
	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term	Short Term	Long Term
Quarter One	48%	52%	23%	77%	28%	72%	26%	74%
Quarter Two	46%	54%	37%	63%	35%	65%	25%	75%
Quarter Three	46%	54%	41%	59%	45%	55%	31%	69%
Quarter Four	43%	57%	41%	59%	34%	66%		
Overall Outturn	46%	54%	36%	64%	35%	65%		

Table Three: Top Three Reasons for Absence

(Top 3 reasons based on sickness days lost)

	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25	Current Year 2025/26
Quarter One	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	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. Operations/Hospital
Quarter Two	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	1. Other Musc. Skeletal 2. Stress/Depression 3. Operations/Hospital

Quarter Three	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	1.Stress/Depression 2. Operations/Hospital 3.Other Musc. Skeletal
Quarter Four	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	1. 2. 3.
Overall Outturn	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	1. 2. 3.

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	65	2	65	8.5	7.65
Governance	5.5	1	0	0	5.5	4	1.4
Elections	0	0	0	0	0	2.5	0
Health & Safety	3	2	43	1	46	5	9.2
Human Resources & Payroll	1	1	0	0	1	8.43	0.12
Legal	5	2	23	1	28	6	4.7
Communications	4	2	0	0	4	4.6	0.87
Procurement	0	0	0	0	0	1.5	0
Performance	0	0	0	0	0	3	0
Finance	0	0	37	1	37	9	4.11
Revenues & Benefits	25	7	0	0	25	26.23	0.95
Customer Services	20	8	0	0	20	23.2	0.86
Leisure	64	16	21	1	85	49.67	1.7

Leaders/Executive Team	1	1	96	2	97	5	19.04
Devolution	3	2	72	2	75	6.8	11.03
Streetscene/Enforcement	134	33	345	8	479	105.47	4.54
Housing Management	76	16	66	1	142	57.23	2.48
Planning	20	2	23	1	43	22.35	1.92

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	52	8	20	1	72	51.27	1.40
ICT	9	7	0	0	9	34.58	0.26

Figure Two: Stress Cases During Quarter Three

Work Related	Outside of Work Related	Combination of Work Related and Outside of Work Related	Total
5	11	1	17