

UNION / EMPLOYEE CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

Minutes of a meeting of the Union / Employee Consultation Committee of the Bolsover District Council held in the Council Chamber, The Arc, Clowne, Thursday 19th March 2026 at 1000 hours.

PRESENT:-

Members:-

Chris McKinney (Unison) in the Chair

Councillors:- Rowan Clarke, Mary Dooley, Tom Munro and Sally Renshaw.

Officers:- Peter Wilmot (HR Business Partner), Jon Hendy (Unison), and Alison Bluff (Senior Governance Officer).

UECC20-25/26. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor John Ritchie and Liz Robinson (Unison Convenor).

UECC21-25/26. URGENT ITEMS OF BUSINESS

There were no urgent items of business.

UECC22-25/26. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

UECC23-25/26. MINUTES – 18TH DECEMBER 2025

Moved by Chris McKinney (Unison) and seconded by Councillor Rowan Clarke
RESOLVED that the Minutes of a Union Employee Consultation Committee held on 18th December 2025 be approved as a true record.

UECC24-25/26. SICKNESS ABSENCE QUARTER 3 (OCTOBER 2025 TO DECEMBER 2025)

Committee considered a report, presented by the HR Business Partner, which provided sickness absence information for the Quarter 3 period (October 2025 to December 2025).

The average number of days lost per employee for Quarter 3 was 3.31 days; this was the highest Quarter 3 over the last three years. The 2025/26 projected outturn figure for the average number of days lost per employee was 12.29 days. The annual target for the Local Performance Indicator to the end of March 2026 was 8.5 days.

For the purposes of sickness reporting, Senior Management was accounted for as 1 Joint Assistant Director Post (0.5 FTE) with no days sickness experienced during

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Quarter 3.

Long term sickness cases had contributed to the escalation of the absence figures (accounting for 69% of sickness) in Quarter 3. Three services experienced zero sickness during Quarter 3. Stress/Depression 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; five of which were work related, 11 none work related and one was a combination of home and work-related issues.

There was a direct correlation between employees undertaking physically demanding work and high levels of sickness. This was reinforced by Muscular/Skeletal absences regularly being in the top three reasons for sickness absence.

8.5 days sickness was recorded for COVID19 in Quarter 3, and this was higher than Quarter 2 in 2025/6. There were 20 long term cases in Quarter 3; 10 were due to physical health ailments and 10 cases were related to stress/depression (4 of which were work related, one was a combination of home and work-related issues), eight employees had now returned to work, 10 remained absent, 2 had left the Council's employment.

Appropriate support and assistance were being provided to facilitate employees who had returned to work and those planning to do so.

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

The Council continued to prioritise the health and wellbeing of its workforce and a wide range of initiatives, events, and support services were promoted and delivered across the organisation which were set out in the report.

With regard to East Midlands Councils (EMC) proposing to undertake a benchmarking exercise due to neighbouring councils having highlighted an increase in sickness as an ongoing trend, the HR Business Partner advised the meeting that although Bolsover had submitted sickness information to EMC, this piece of work would no longer be carried out by EMC as they had not received enough interest from other local authorities to undertake the exercise.

Councillor Dooley wished it to be noted in the minutes that she was concerned about the pressure on staff who were covering for staff on sickness leave.

Moved by Chris McKinney (Unison) and seconded by Councillor Sally Renshaw
RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting concluded at 1017 hours.