



Employment and Appointments Committee

Date: Tuesday, 6 March 2018
Time: 6.00 pm

Venue: Committee Room 2 - Wallasey Town Hall

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AGENDA

1. MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members are asked to consider whether they have any disclosable pecuniary and / or any other relevant interest in connection with any of the items on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of the interest.

2. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 16)

To approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings held on 27 June, 10 October and 18 December, 2017.

3. EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL MINUTES (Pages 17 - 32)

The minutes of the Employment and Appointments Panels' meetings for:

- Director for Children, held on 3 and 22 August, 2017;
- Director of Finance and Investment, held on 17 and 31 August, 2017;
- Director for Strategy and Partnerships, held on 22 August and 19 September, 2017;
- Assistant Director: Law and Governance, held on 22 August and 3 October, 2017,

are submitted for information.

4. REFERRAL FROM AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE - ABSENCE MANAGEMENT (Pages 33 - 68)

This report on Absence Management and the Council's approach to dealing with Stress was requested by the Audit and Risk Management Committee at its meeting on 21 November, 2017 to be referred to this Committee, together with the Attendance Management Action Plan. Minute 41 of the Audit and Risk Management Committee is also attached.

5. EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The public may be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information.

RECOMMENDED –

That in accordance with section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following items of business, on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to that Act. The public interest test has been applied and favours exclusion.

6. CHIEF OFFICER STRUCTURE (Pages 69 - 84)

Agenda Item 2

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 27 June 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	AER Jones (Chair)
	Councillors	P Davies G Davies P Gilchrist
<u>Deputies</u>	Councillors	C Jones (In place of M McLaughlin) C Blakeley (In place of JE Green)

1 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

2 MINUTES

The Committee were requested to approve the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of 24 November, 2016.

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of 24 November, 2016, be approved.

3 RECRUITMENT TO CHIEF OFFICER POSTS AND STRUCTURE CHANGES

The Chair advised that the Committee would be invited to consider the open part of this agenda item first prior to a proposal to move into exempt session for item 10 on the agenda, the exempt appendices to the report.

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive on recruitment to Chief Officer posts and structure changes following two recent resignations and a request for early retirement at Chief Officer level. He had also been notified of a planned retirement.

The requirement to recruit to a number of key posts also provided an opportunity to review how the Council was best organised at senior management level to deliver its plans at this time. The Council had made appointments to a number of senior positions since November 2016 and was continuing to improve its capacity to deliver the Wirral Plan, deliver

transformation plans and explore the best models to deliver services to residents of Wirral.

The report recommended recruiting to the vacant post of Director for Children, the forthcoming vacant post of Assistant Director: Law and Governance and a newly configured Director of Finance post (following retirement). The report also gave details of recommended salaries for these roles based on external benchmarking and advice.

In addition, the report set out some changes to reporting lines for some functions in response to the evolving nature of the operating model; to enable the Council to reorganise capacity and to meet future requirements.

Councillor Rennie, expressed support for some of the proposals within the report, including the proposals that the Director for Care and Health report directly to the Chief Executive and that the recruitment to a re-designated post of Director of Finance would not just be focussed within the local government arena but the search would also encompass potential candidates from the commercial sector. She did, however, express concern at the proposed increase in the salary for the Director for Children's post.

Councillor Phil Davies, referring to the comparator salaries for other Authorities' Director of Children's Services posts, spoke of the need to pay an appropriate salary to enable the recruitment of the highest quality candidate. He acknowledged that the Council should always be prudent in its expenditure of Council Tax payers' monies but this was the most important job for the Council to recruit to.

Councillor Gilchrist posed the question as to what had the creation of the Strategic Director posts achieved. He also referred to the fact that it was only recently that the Council had recruited a Director of Transformation, and queried why there was a need to change the role and title of this post now.

The Chief Executive stated that he would be happy to have a one to one with Councillor Gilchrist to talk him through the proposed changes to the structure. He had also spoken with the recruitment consultants, Penna, on the need to have a wider field of candidates from both the public and commercial sectors for the Director of Finance post.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development confirmed that she was satisfied with the service provided by Penna who had successfully tendered twice for the position of recruitment consultants. She stated that the Council did have a challenging relationship with Penna and that they provided advice all the way through the recruitment process.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor George Davies, it was –

Resolved (4:3) –

- (1) That the revised Chief Officer structure of the Council, detailed in Appendix Two (including the deletion, creation and change of roles) with the new structure effective from 1 September 2017, be approved.**
- (2) Politically proportionate Appointments Panels, be established, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix Seven of the report, for the following posts to be advertised internally and externally at the following salary:**
 - **Director for Finance (S151 Officer), Director 1, £103k-115k**
 - **Director for Children SD2 (new grade), £140-155k**
 - **Assistant Director: Law and Governance (Monitoring Officer) AD 1/Director 2, £79-93k**
- (3) To agree that the posts specified in (2) above be advertised as soon as possible following the meeting of this Committee on 27 June 2017.**
- (4) To agree that the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development be authorised to make and undertake all requisite arrangements necessary for the appointments to be made.**
- (5) That it be RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL that the Employment and Appointments Committee and its Appointment Panels have delegated authority to formally agree and confirm the appointment of all the posts specified in (2) above.**
- (6) That it be RECOMMENDED to COUNCIL that the Chief Officer pay scales as set out in the Council's Pay Policy be amended to incorporate proposed salary for Director for Children's Services post (appendix three to the report).**

4

EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 (in that it relates to an individual) of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

RECRUITMENT TO CHIEF OFFICER POSTS AND STRUCTURE CHANGES - EXEMPT APPENDICES

The Committee considered the exempt appendices to the report regarding a request for early retirement from the Executive Director of Strategy.

Having regards for all the circumstances including the best interests of the Council the Chief Executive proposed that the Committee agree to this request for early retirement.

This request provided an opportunity for the Council to make some changes to managerial arrangements in the strategic hub and also achieve a reduction in salary costs. It was proposed that the Executive Director role would therefore be re-designated as Director of Strategy and Partnerships at a lower level.

The Council had undertaken some benchmarking of similar roles at Director level. The Executive Recruitment Consultancy, Penna, had advised that a competitive market rate for this role would be circa £110,000. Therefore it was proposed the salary range for this post was Director 1 (£103,606-£115,117). This was at a lower level than the current post. An external recruitment process, (assuming a standard notice period of a successful candidate at this level) might take around 6 months which was a further cost saving. However, there would need to be some management arrangements in place in the hub and therefore it was proposed that there would be an opportunity for a 6 month internal acting up at Director 1 level.

There were no severance costs associated with the request for early retirement. There would be a significant difference in costs to the Council arising from release of pension if it was part of a redundancy situation. The cost to the Council of pension release with employer consent under the '85 year rule' would be £105,000, however, with the SD post being held vacant for 6 months there would be a saving of £79,389 (including oncosts), the cost of a 6 month internal acting up would be approximately £15,000 (including oncosts), so the overall cost to the Council of early release of pension would be £40,612.

Councillor Blakeley, although not disagreeing with the request for retirement, commented that he did not see a need to employ somebody else to do this job and that this should be a saving for the Council.

The Chief Executive responded that there was a need to fill this post at a Director level to provide leadership for the Council on key strategies.

On a motion by Councillor Phil Davies, seconded by Councillor Mooney, it was –

Resolved (4:3) –

- (1) That the request for Early Retirement with employer consent from the Executive Director of Strategy, be agreed.**
- (2) That it be agreed to recruit immediately to the post of Director of Strategy and Partnerships at salary D1 (£103k-115k).**
- (3) That it be agreed that the arrangements set out in paragraphs 2.2 to 2.5 of the report are applied to this post.**

The Assistant Director: Law and Governance informed the Committee that they should now consider removing the exemption in respect of the financial information in the appendix as it was in the public interest for this to be made known where public funds were being used.

Resolved (unanimously) –

That the exemption be lifted in respect of the financial implications and costs of pension release and that this be published in the minutes of the meeting.

6

FOSTERING FRIENDLY EMPLOYER

The Senior HR Manager – Policy, Strategy and Change introduced a report which gave details of proposals for the Council to be a ‘Fostering Friendly Employer’ through support to Council employees who were prospective or existing foster carers.

It was proposed that the following key principles were applied as policy:

- Up to 5 days paid additional leave for employees who are going through the application process to become a foster carer, as part of the fostering assessment process.
- Up to 5 days paid additional leave each year for employees who are foster carers in order to attend training related to their position as foster carers and/or to attend meetings, panels, hearings or any other key events or activities in support of foster children and young people in their care.
- The Council adopts a flexible and accommodating approach to requests for time off, leave and flexible working arrangements from foster carers and prospective foster carers in relation to their care of a looked after child or during their journey through the process to become foster carers.
- Further support to cover any extra training which may be needed or to cover unforeseen emergencies related to their fostering role remains at their line manager’s discretion.
- As a ‘Fostering Friendly’ Council, the Council will commit to supporting the annual fostering awareness campaign, Foster Care Fortnight.

These principles were in accordance with best practice for employers run by the charity the Fostering Network. The Council was the first Local Authority on Merseyside to formally sign up to be a fostering friendly employer.

All Members welcomed the proposal and Councillor Phil Davies spoke of the need to encourage more people to take up the role of foster carer and publicise the need for more foster carers.

Resolved – That this Committee approves the Council's policy to support employees who are prospective or existing foster carers.

7 EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

The Senior HR Manager – Policy, Strategy and Change introduced a report which gave details of proposals for the Council to support employees who wished to volunteer their help and support to the local community.

It was proposed that the following key principles were applied as policy:

- The volunteering activity will:
 - Support the learning and development needs of the employee;
 - Support the sharing of skills, talents and creativity; and/or
 - Support the Council's corporate objectives.
- The volunteering activity will add value/benefit the local community.
- The volunteering activity will be with a registered charity, recognised voluntary organisation, or will be in response to a local crisis or need for local emergency aid. Employees are encouraged to use the Community Action Wirral Volunteer Centre Website which carries the unique Volunteer Centre Quality Accreditation.
- Employees who commit to volunteering in the community may be supported up to a maximum of 2 days per 12 month period (14.4 hours). This may increase to up to a maximum of 5 days (36 hours) in the 12 month period before retirement.

The report also outlined the support, resources and opportunities employee volunteers would receive to ensure volunteering was a positive experience.

All Members welcomed the report and it was suggested that policy be monitored during the year with a report back to the committee in 12 months time.

Resolved – That this Committee:

- (1) approves the proposed approach to support employee volunteering outlined in the report;**
- (2) approves the Volunteering Policy at Appendix 1 to the report;**
- (3) delegates authority to the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development to develop, approve and implement associated protocols considered necessary to give effect to the Volunteering Policy (including the spirit of the Policy).**

8 WORKFORCE EQUALITY REPORT 2016/17

The Senior HR Manager – Policy, Strategy and Change introduced a report which provided the Committee with an annual Workforce Equality Report for 2016/17.

The Equality Act 2010 came into force in October 2010, the general duty of which had 3 goals:

- To eliminate any unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation
- To advance equality of opportunity
- To foster good relations between different groups of people

In April 2011, the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) was introduced and placed a duty on public authorities to apply the specific duty with the following 4 aims:

1. Give due regard to the impact of the Council's policies and decisions on people who share protected characteristics: Race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, age, religion / belief, gender re-assignment, marriage / civil partnership, pregnancy / maternity
2. Publish information relating to employees who share protected characteristics: Workforce profile, pay gaps, job application success rates, take up rates of training, promotion success rates, return to work rates after maternity leave, reasons for termination of employment, length of service, time on pay grade.
3. Publish information relating to people who are affected by the Council's policies and practices who share protected characteristics, i.e. customers: Who accesses our services? Do they need reasonable adjustments? How satisfied are they? What feedback do they give us? What is the number / type of complaints we receive? Do we have different service outcomes for different people?

4. Set and publish measurable equality objectives, at least every 4 years:
What are Wirral's biggest equality challenges? What evidence base do we have? Where is equality performance poor? Do we benchmark ourselves against others? How will progress be measured?

The Council had previously met its obligations and published workforce equality data. However, the Council had reviewed its approach and best practice and this was a significantly more comprehensive report.

Members welcomed the report, although some concerns were expressed at the discrepancy between the lower numbers of the workforce from a black and minority ethnic (BME) background compared with the BME numbers in the Wirral population. A high percentage of the workforce also appeared to be approaching retirement age and there were a large number of 'prefer not to say' in some of the statistics.

The Senior HR Manager, in response stated that figures for BME employees were on the low side, though recruitment had been fairly limited for a number of years. It was hoped that this could be addressed some way with the recruitment of apprentices. He was aware that a large percentage of the workforce were approaching retirement age and of some areas where there were recruitment and retention issues. Work was being undertaken with individual service areas to help with succession planning. He also acknowledged the large number of 'unknowns' and that there was a need to give employees confidence as to what the information was used for. There would be a planned communications campaign around this in the autumn.

Resolved – That the publication of the annual Workforce Equality report, to meet the Council's legal requirements under the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) 2011, be approved.

9

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL

The minutes of the Employment and Appointments Panel meetings for the post of Deputy Director: Children's Care Services, held on 14 and 20 December, 2016 and 18 January, 2017, were submitted for information.

Resolved – That the minutes be noted.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Tuesday, 10 October 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	AER Jones (Chair)
	Councillors	P Davies G Davies P Gilchrist
<u>Deputies</u>	Councillors	J Williamson (In place of B Mooney) T Anderson (In place of J Green)

10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J Green and B Mooney.

11 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

12 ESTABLISHMENT OF CHIEF OFFICER POST - ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: FINANCE INVESTMENT LEAD

A report by the Director of Corporate Resources and Reform (DCRR) reminded the Committee that the Council's revised Chief Officer structure had come into effect on 1 September 2017 and that since that date it had made some key appointments including the Director for Children and the Director for Finance and Investments.

The DCRR informed the committee that during discussions with the incoming Director for Finance and Investments the need to establish a bespoke Investments and Income Team with Corporate Finance to drive the Investment Strategy had been identified. This would enable the Council to take advantage of the commercial opportunities that were available to generate income directly for the Council. This would then contribute to its treasury management and budget for future years.

The DCRR informed the Committee that there was a gap in existing officer capability to address the emerging need for the Council to have a focus on commercial growth. Such a role was critical to the Council and required a high level of decision-making and judgemental skills in order to build relationships and commercial partnerships.

During the appointments process for the Director for Finance and Investments post it had been highlighted that there were individuals with a track record of delivery in this role and that the Council should consider such an appointment.

The report, therefore, recommended the establishment of a new post of Assistant Director: Finance Investment Lead. The post could be funded from within existing resources in this Service area.

Appended to the report were:

- Appendix One – The Proposed Terms of Reference for the Appointment Panel; and
- Appendix Two – The Job Profile: Assistant Director – Finance Investment Lead.

Members considered the report and its appendices in detail and asked relevant questions which were answered appropriately by the Director of Corporate Resources and Reform and the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development.

Consequently, it was noted that the proposed new post could be funded from two existing vacant posts that would be deleted and that this would result in a small saving overall. One of the posts being deleted was that of an administrative officer but as the post had been vacant for some time, this was considered proof that the Council was able to manage without it.

Also, it was pointed out that the person specification for the new post made no mention of business experience which Members considered would be very desirable for the successful candidate to have.

A Member proposed that the Council should give consideration to where the post would be advertised, in the light of the skills it required the applicants to have.

It was noted that in terms of professional qualifications and memberships of professional bodies, the new appointment would not be limited to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA).

RESOLVED: That

- (1) **the proposal to establish a new Chief Officer post of Assistant Director: Finance Investment Lead, reporting to the Director for Finance and Investments be approved;**

- (2) the person specification for the post of Assistant Director: Finance Investment Lead be revised in the light of Members' comments e.g. business experience;
- (3) a politically proportionate Appointments Panel be established, in accordance with the terms of reference set out in Appendix One to the report;
- (4) the post of Assistant Director: Finance Investment Lead be advertised both internally and externally (having first considered where the best places to advertise are) at an Assistant Director 2 salary of £68,690 - £76,323, as soon as possible after this meeting; and
- (5) the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development be authorised to undertake all requisite arrangements necessary for the new appointment to be made.

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EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS COMMITTEE

Monday, 18 December 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	AER Jones (Chair)	
	Councillors	P Davies G Davies P Gilchrist	JE Green B Mooney L Rennie
<u>Deputy:</u>	Councillor	C Jones (In place of M McLaughlin)	

13 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Committee were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

14 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, duly seconded, it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 (in that it relates to an individual) of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

15 SENIOR MANAGEMENT RESOURCES

The Chief Executive introduced a report which, within the context of a continually changing operating environment, significant financial challenges for the Council and the need to ensure that resources were managed efficiently at senior level and opportunities to reduce senior management costs were explored, sought the Committee's approval to delete the post of Managing Director Delivery Services. This would form the first part of further planned savings of approximately £750k from senior managers over the next 12 months which were in the proposed budget for 2018/19.

The report also updated the Committee on recruitment to the vacant Assistant Director: Law and Governance post (Monitoring Officer) and proposed an additional salary option for that post.

The number and type of roles required at management level were continually under review and had to constantly evolve to reflect the changing organisation and external environment.

The report contained personal information about an individual and was therefore exempt by virtue of paragraph 1 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

Responding to comments from Members the Chief Executive outlined the way in which performance monitoring of the Managing Director of Delivery was undertaken. The Director of Corporate Resources and Reform was currently looking at the arrangements in place for attendance management.

The Chief Executive also stated that the postholder's duties would be reducing significantly over the coming months because of the transformation programme. The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development confirmed that the Assistant Chief Executive would take over the management of these duties in the first instance and that the Chief Executive would bring a report back on future changes. Revenue savings of £158,000 per annum would be made from the deletion of the post.

Councillor Gilchrist moved and it was seconded by Councillor Lesley Rennie, that –

'This Committee is unwilling to release the individual concerned on the terms suggested and officers consider the individual for a lesser role on a lesser salary.'

The motion was put and lost (3:4)

It was moved by Councillor Phil Davies and seconded by Councillor George Davies, that –

- (1) "The deletion of the post of Managing Director Delivery Services and the subsequent severance and release of pension for the post holder by 31 March 2018, be approved.
- (2) A revised Chief Officer structure of the Council, (subject to any further proposals arising from (4) below), be approved.
- (3) The proposal to make approximately £750k savings at senior management level (post deletions and re-structures below Chief Officer did not require approval by Employment and Appointments Committee) be noted.
- (4) The Chief Executive be authorised to develop further proposals for the Chief Officer structure of the Council, consulting with Chief Officers as required and bring a report back to this committee.

- (5) The revised remuneration for the Assistant Director: Law and Governance post and this post to be redesignated as Director, be approved and the Appointments Panel be delegated the ability to offer the Market Rate supplement of up to 5% of the salary if required.
- (6) The exemption relating to this report be lifted and relevant information including financial implications and costs of pension release in relation to (1) above be published in the minutes of the meeting.”

It was moved as an amendment by Councillor Jeff Green and seconded by Councillor Phil Gilchrist, that –

“Committee lifts the exemption relating to this report and publishes relevant information including financial implications and costs of pension release in relation to recommendation (1) of the report, in the minutes of the meeting.”

The amendment was put and lost (3:4).

The motion was put and carried (4:3).

Resolved (4:3) (Councillors Phil Gilchrist, Jeff Green and Lesley Rennie voting against)

- (1) **The deletion of the post of Managing Director Delivery Services and the subsequent severance and release of pension for the post holder by 31 March 2018, be approved.**
- (2) **A revised Chief Officer structure of the Council, (subject to any further proposals arising from (4) below), be approved.**
- (3) **The proposal to make approximately £750k savings at senior management level (post deletions and re-structures below Chief Officer did not require approval by Employment and Appointments Committee) be noted.**
- (4) **The Chief Executive be authorised to develop further proposals for the Chief Officer structure of the Council, consulting with Chief Officers as required and bring a report back to this committee.**
- (5) **The revised remuneration for the Assistant Director: Law and Governance post and this post to be redesignated as Director, be approved and the Appointments Panel be delegated the ability to offer the Market Rate supplement of up to 5% of the salary if required.**
- (6) **The exemption relating to this report be lifted and relevant information including financial implications and costs of pension**

release in relation to (1) above be published in the minutes of the meeting.

The summary of costs in relation to (1) above are as follows:

Severance	£93,412.60
Employer cost*	£296,763.43
Total	£390,176.03
Annual Saving	£158,300.82
Recovery period	29.53 months

**Pension release figures provided by Merseyside Pension Fund – 20 November, 2017*

Agenda Item 3

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN)

Thursday, 3 August 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillors	G Davies P Davies P Gilchrist	P Hayes M McLaughlin B Mooney
<u>Deputy:</u>	Councillor	D Burgess-Joyce (In place of L Rennie)	

1 APPPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor George Davies, seconded by Councillor Moira McLaughlin, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Phil Davies be appointed Chair of this Panel.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

3 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

4 APPPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development welcomed Garfield Cameron, Yvonne Skingle and Amanda Riley from the recruitment consultants, Penna, and then gave an overview of the post.

Yvonne Skingle and Amanda Riley informed the Panel of the process they had taken in their focussed search for potential candidates and responded to questions from the Panel.

The Panel then considered which of the seven candidates should be long listed for the next stage of the selection process.

Resolved (unanimously) – That candidates 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 be put forward to the next stage of the selection process.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel of the next stage of the selection process, which would be for technical assessments, to be undertaken by Penna, the results of which would be circulated to Members by email. Members would then have an opportunity to feedback their comments and approve a final selection of a maximum of three candidates for interview. Shortlisting would therefore be undertaken by email circulation.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN)

Tuesday, 22 August 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor	P Davies (Chair)
	Councillors	G Davies P Gilchrist
		M McLaughlin B Mooney
<u>Deputy:</u>	Councillor	D Burgess-Joyce (In place of P Hayes) I Lewis (In place of L Rennie)

5 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

6 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

7 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR FOR CHILDREN

Further to minute 4 and the outcome of formal interview of candidates 1, 2, 5, 6 and 7 earlier in the day, it was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies, and -

Resolved (unanimously) – That candidates 2 and 7 be put forward to the next stage of the selection process.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel of the next stage of the selection process - to include the taking up of references.

The Panel then interviewed the two candidates and on a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies, it was –

Resolved (unanimously) - That Paul Boyce, currently Executive Director (Children), Knowsley Metropolitan Borough Council, be appointed to the post of Director for Children.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENT)

Thursday, 17 August 2017

Present: Councillors D Burgess-Joyce B Mooney
G Davies J Williamson
P Gilchrist

Deputies: Councillors P Hayes (In place of D Elderton)
AER Jones (In place of P Davies)

1 APPPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor George Davies, seconded by Councillor Janette Williamson, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Adrian Jones be appointed Chair for this meeting.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

Councillor George Davies raised the matter that he knew one of the candidates, as they had previously worked for the authority but that he was not acquainted in a social capacity.

3 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies it was –

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

4 APPPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

The Chief Executive welcomed Amanda Riley from the recruitment consultants, Penna, and then gave an outline of the role.

Amanda Riley then introduced the report on the candidates and the Panel considered which of the eleven candidates should be long listed for the next stage of the selection process.

Resolved (unanimously) – That candidates 1, 2, 3 and 10 be put forward to the next stage of the selection process.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel of the next stage of the selection process, which would be for technical assessments, to be undertaken by Penna, the results of which would be circulated to Members by email. Members would then have an opportunity to feedback their comments and approve a final selection of a maximum of three candidates for interview. Shortlisting would therefore be undertaken by email circulation.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENT)

Thursday, 31 August 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillors	D Burgess-Joyce	P Gilchrist
		G Davies	B Mooney
		P Davies	J Williamson
		D Elderton	

5 APPPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor George Davies, seconded by Councillor Bernie Mooney, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Phil Davies be appointed Chair for this meeting.

6 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

7 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies it was –

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

8 APPPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND INVESTMENT

The Panel received feedback from the Chief Executive, the Director for Corporate Resources and Reform, the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development and from those members of the three political groups who had met the two candidates during the morning.

The Panel then considered which of the two candidates should be invited to attend for final interview for the post of Director of Finance and Investment.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor D Burgess-Joyce, it was –

Resolved – That candidate number 3 be invited to attend for final interview that afternoon.

Having interviewed the short listed candidate, it was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor J Williamson and then –

Resolved – That Shaer Halewood, currently Assistant Director of Finance and Deputy Section 151 Officer, Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council, be appointed to the post of Director of Finance and Investment.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS)

Tuesday, 22 August 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillors	A Brighouse	M McLaughlin
		G Davies	B Mooney
		P Davies	A Sykes

Deputy: Councillor A Hodson (In place of JE Green)

1 APPPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor Bernie Mooney, seconded by Councillor George Davies, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Phil Davies be appointed Chair of this Panel.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel that should a candidate be known to them they should so declare and inform the clerk. Members were advised that a work based relationship would not form a basis for prejudice.

Councillor Phil Davies declared that he had knowledge of two candidates through a work based relationship.

Councillor George Davies declared that he had knowledge of two candidates through a work based relationship.

Councillor Moira McLaughlin declared that she had knowledge of one candidate through a work based relationship.

3 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Bernie Mooney it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely

disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

4 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development welcomed Amanda Riley from the recruitment consultants, Penna, who provided Members with an overview of the sifting and grading of the thirty nine candidate applications for the post. Ms Riley informed that the post had attracted a very good level of response with a large number of candidates demonstrating evidence of partnership working.

Amanda Riley informed the Panel of the process they had taken in their assessment of the potential candidates and responded to questions from the Panel.

The Panel then considered which of the candidates should be short listed for the next stage of the selection process.

Resolved (unanimously) – That candidates 1, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8 and 11 be put forward to the next stage of the selection process.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel of the next stage of the selection process, which would be for technical assessments, to be undertaken by Penna, the results of which would be circulated to Members by email. Members would then have an opportunity to feedback any comments prior to the candidate interviews.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS)

Tuesday, 19 September 2017

Present: Councillor P Davies (Chair)

Councillors	A Brighouse G Davies JE Green	M McLaughlin B Mooney A Sykes
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5 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

6 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

7 APPOINTMENT OF DIRECTOR FOR STRATEGY AND PARTNERSHIPS

The Panel were informed by the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development that of the four short listed candidates, one had withdrawn from the process, the previous evening. The Panel then received feedback from the Chief Executive, the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development and from those members of the three political groups who had met the three candidates during the morning.

The Panel then considered which of the three candidates should be invited to attend for final interview for the post of Director for Strategy and Partnerships.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor G Davies, it was –

Resolved – That candidate numbers 1 and 11 be invited to attend for final interview that afternoon.

Having interviewed the short listed candidates, it was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Jeff Green, and –

Resolved (unanimously) – That neither of the candidates be appointed to the post.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LAW AND GOVERNANCE)

Tuesday, 22 August 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillors	A Brighouse	AER Jones
		A Hodson	M McLaughlin
		AER Jones	B Mooney

Deputy: Councillor A Sykes (In place of P Hayes)

1 APPPOINTMENT OF CHAIR

On a motion by Councillor Adrian Jones, seconded by Councillor Bernie Mooney, it was –

Resolved – That Councillor Phil Davies be appointed Chair of this Panel.

2 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel that should a candidate be known to them they should so declare and inform the clerk. Members were advised that a work based relationship would not form a basis for prejudice.

No such declarations were made.

3 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor Bernie Mooney it was –

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

4 ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LAW AND GOVERNANCE

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development welcomed Amanda Riley from the recruitment consultants, Penna, who

provided Members with an overview of the sifting and grading of the nine candidate applications for the post.

Amanda Riley informed the Panel of the process they had taken in their assessment of the potential candidates and responded to questions from the Panel.

Ms Riley further informed that candidate 9 would have been recommended for interview but had been offered another role earlier in the week which she had decided to accept. Her application to Wirral had therefore been withdrawn.

The Panel then considered which of the remaining eight candidates should be short listed for the next stage of the selection process.

Resolved (unanimously) – That candidates 1, 2, 3, 4 and 8 be put forward to the next stage of the selection process.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development then informed the Panel of the next stage of the selection process, which would be for technical assessments, to be undertaken by Penna, the results of which would be circulated to Members by email. Members would then have an opportunity to feedback any comments prior to the interview stage. Shortlisting would therefore be undertaken by email circulation.

EMPLOYMENT AND APPOINTMENTS PANEL (ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LAW AND GOVERNANCE)

Tuesday, 3 October 2017

<u>Present:</u>	Councillor P Davies (Chair)	
	Councillors A Brighouse A Hodson	AER Jones M McLaughlin
<u>Deputies:</u>	Councillors D Burgess-Joyce (In place of P Hayes) G Davies (In place of B Mooney)	

5 MEMBERS' CODE OF CONDUCT - DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members of the Panel were requested to declare whether they had any disclosable pecuniary interests and/or any other relevant interest in the item on this agenda and, if so, to declare it and state the nature of such interest.

No such declarations were made.

6 EXEMPT INFORMATION - EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies it was -

Resolved - That, under section 100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by paragraph 1 of Part I of Schedule 12A (as amended) to that Act.

7 APPOINTMENT OF ASSISTANT DIRECTOR: LAW AND GOVERNANCE

The Panel were informed by the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development that of the three short listed candidates, one had withdrawn from the process, that morning. The Panel then received feedback from the Director of Corporate Resources and Reform, the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development and from those members of the three political groups who had met the two candidates during the morning.

The Panel then considered which of the two candidates should be invited to attend for final interview for the post of Assistant Director: Law and Governance.

On a motion by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies, it was –

Resolved – That candidate numbers 1 and 2 be invited to attend for final interview that afternoon.

Having interviewed the short listed candidates, it was moved by the Chair, seconded by Councillor George Davies, and –

Resolved (unanimously) – That neither of the candidates be appointed to the post and the post be re-advertised.

Employment and Appointments Committee

6 March 2018

REPORT TITLE	ABSENCE MANAGEMENT
REPORT OF	CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 REPORT SUMMARY

1.1 This report contains a detailed study into levels of absence in the Council and how absence is being managed and monitored. There is a particular focus on stress and mental health related absence.

2.0 RECOMMENDATION/S

2.1 The Committee notes the detailed data and analysis of the Council's absence levels including stress and mental health related absence and how this is being managed.

3.0 REASON/S FOR RECOMMENDATION/S

3.1 To ensure that members of the Employment and Appointments Committee are updated on the Council's approach to management of absence including stress and mental health related absence.

4.0 BACKGROUND INFORMATION

4.1 There was a discussion at the Audit and Risk Management Committee on 21 November 2017 in response to an agenda item on attendance management. The Council performance in relation to absence is regularly reported to that Committee.

4.2 At that meeting it was resolved that:

- the Attendance Management Action Plan be noted and referred to the Employment and Appointments Committee for further consideration; and
- the Head of Paid Service be requested to attend the next meeting of the Employment and Appointments Committee to provide a further update on matters regarding council's approach to stress and absence management for its staff.

5.0 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

No implications in this report. The attached study includes details of the estimated cost of absence.

6.0 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 The Council manages absence in accordance with relevant employment law.

7.0 RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS: ICT, STAFFING AND ASSETS

7.1 No implications in this report. However, as outlined in the study attached, absence has an impact on staffing particularly where cover is required to maintain service delivery.

8.0 RELEVANT RISKS

8.1 There is risk to service delivery arising from employee absence and risks for individuals in relation to mental health and wellbeing if the appropriate support is not in place to support them.

9.0 ENGAGEMENT/CONSULTATION

9.1 None required.

10.0 EQUALITY IMPLICATIONS

10.1 There are no direct equality implications arising from the report. The Council manages absence included mental health and stress related absence, in accordance with its legal obligations and the Equality Act 2010.

REPORT AUTHOR (S): Chris Hyams AD HR/OD
Nancy Clarkson Head of Intelligence

APPENDICES

Appendix One Absence Management Report
Appendix Two Attendance Action Plan (November 2017)

REFERENCE MATERIAL

SUBJECT HISTORY (last 3 years)

Council Meeting	Date
Audit and Risk Management Committee	21 November 2017

REPORT TITLE	ABSENCE MANAGEMENT
REPORT OF	THE CHIEF EXECUTIVE

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides Members with a detailed study into absence levels in the organisation, alongside a summary of how this absence is being monitored, managed and improved.

Clearly, reducing sickness absence is and must remain a top priority for the Council. It is imperative that managers – starting from the Senior Leadership Team (SLT) but also throughout the organisation – follow the processes which are in place, utilise the support which is available, and spend the time required to make sure their staff are in work, healthy and productive.

This is important in relation to our duty of care to our workforce, as an employer, but also important in terms of finances and productivity: high absence levels affect the performance of services, they cost more to deliver and ultimately it is Wirral residents who are impacted.

The actions which have been designed are based on the extensive insight and management data we have on these issues. It is clear that while absence figures are higher than we want them to be, we are in line with comparator organisations.

Absence levels across the organisation are reviewed monthly by SLT, who have directed a new staff training programme which is currently being rolled out, a campaign highlighting staff wellbeing support and a programme of communications and specific interventions aimed at reducing staff absences, particularly focussing on mental health related illnesses.

The council has also enhanced the HR support which is available to managers, and implemented a new system of management reports which allows managers and supervisors to quickly identify sickness issues within their areas and take immediate action.

2.0 BACKGROUND

This report sets out a detailed study into levels of absence in the Council, and how this absence is being managed and monitored. There is a particular focus on the level and management of mental health related absence. Key findings can be summarised as:

- The Council's workforce is 3,243, within 2,725 'full time equivalent' posts. Since 2010, the Council workforce has reduced by 2,016 employees through a range of programmes including a voluntary severance, management savings, service cuts and remodelling and alternative delivery models. The Council's ongoing financial challenge mean it continues to be a challenging time for employees.
- The average days lost to sickness in 2016/17 was 10.73 days per FTE and is projected at 10.74 days for 2017/18. The estimated cost of absence was £4.4m

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in 2016/17. In comparison to the five Merseyside Local Authorities, Wirral had the third highest sickness. The reports set out how each Local Authority has different internal and external models of delivery for key services such as waste, highways and leisure which is a factor when comparing sickness absence.

- The single biggest reason for sickness is for abdominal related absence, followed by ear, nose and throat (includes coughs and colds). Mental health related absence is the third highest known reason for staff absence, 18% of all workplace absence is related to mental health issues. Approximately 10% of the workforce (2016/17 full year data) has been absent from work for a mental health related absence.
- Due to the nature of mental health illness absences are often longer-term than other types of sickness, with 40.75% of the total days lost due to staff absence being mental health related. Analysis also indicates that for each mental health related absence an average of 33.62 days are lost, which is higher than all other absence expect cancer related illness.
- The Council is proactively working across the organisation with a range of interventions including new management reports, enhanced HR support, new training and a health and wellbeing launch to act positively to reduce staff absence with a focus on mental health related absence.
- Senior leadership is regularly monitoring progress and ensuring all barriers to implementation of policy are removed. Management of absence is included as part of the Accountability Statements which senior managers have signed.
- Absence levels are higher than we want them to be and this is a priority area for the organisation. The Wirral picture is in line with National findings including mental health being a major area of concern for organisations across a range of different sectors. In dealing with these challenges our approach is consistent with how other organisations are also trying to address this; and we are committed to doing so.

3.0 INTRODUCTION

This paper provides workforce and absence data between April 2010/11 and November 2017/18 and provides context and analysis in relation to the data. It should be noted figures included for 2017/18 days lost due to sickness/mental health related conditions are either part year data (April 2017 to November 2017) or in some cases forecasted to end of year.

3.1 Local Authority Workforce

The number of employees within Wirral Council has decreased by 2,016 since 2010. Headcount data is usually recorded at year end; however for the purpose of this report 2017/18 data is correct as 30 November 2017. Leavers are counted throughout the year. The total number of leavers since 2010/11 is 4,023 which indicates a cumulative total of 2,007 new starters.

Wirral has undergone service transformation through a range of initiatives including:

- A Voluntary Leavers Programme between December 2010 and June 2011
- £5.5million management saving and significant service cuts in 2013
- A major restructure programme which oversaw staff leaving the authority both voluntarily and compulsorily over 2014/15

APPENDIX ONE

- Services have been redesigned or integrated with partners over the past two years, including the creation of Edsential and Wirral Evolutions and the integration of social care staff with Wirral Community NHS.

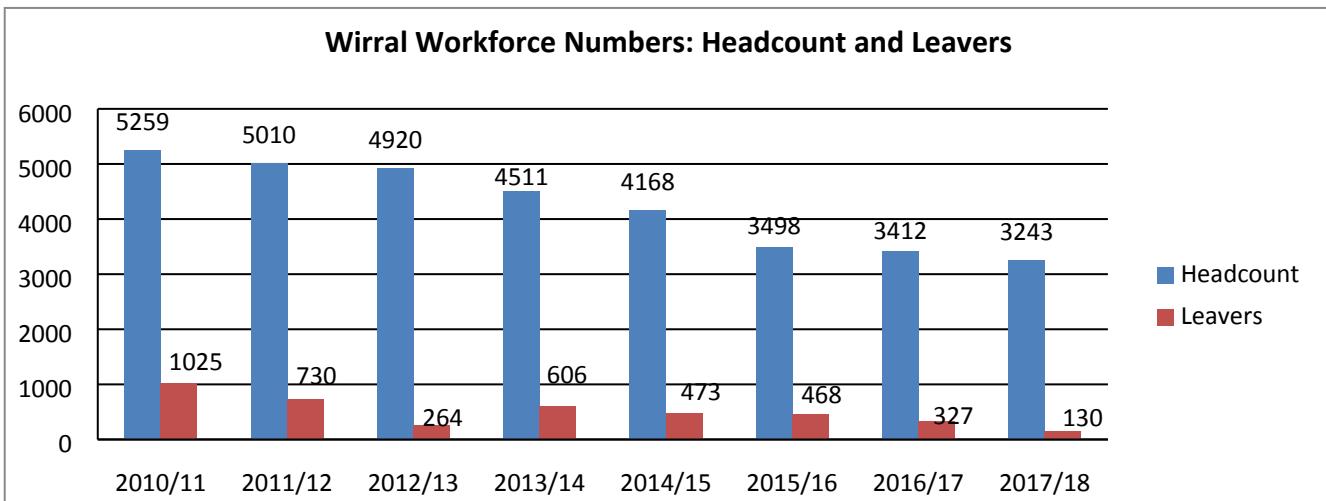


Figure 1: Wirral Workforce Numbers: Headcount and Leavers. **Source:** Wirral Council HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 headcount figure and leavers correct as at 30 November 2017.

3.2 Absence

Wirral absence figures are shown in Figure 2. In 2015/16 staff sickness absence reached the highest level since 2010/11 when 11.56 days per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff member were lost due to sickness. In 2016/17 sickness declined to 10.73 days per FTE and projections for 2017/18 indicate a slight increase to 10.74 days per FTE. During this period procedures for collecting sickness data have improved significantly, and as a result of this an increase in sickness levels is expected due to more absence being recorded.

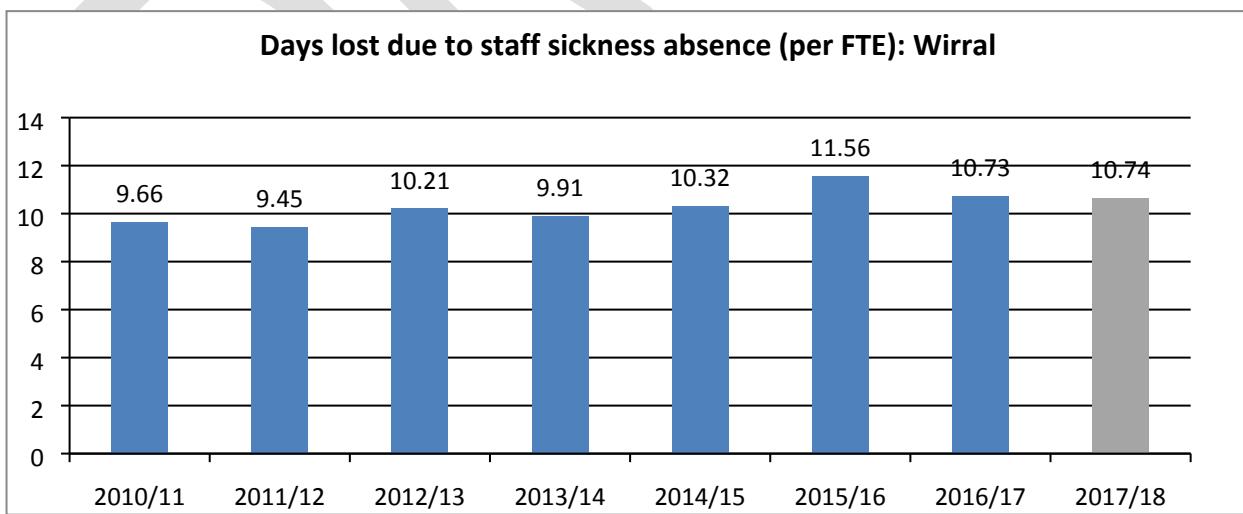


Figure 2: Days lost due to staff absence in Wirral per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff member. **Source:** Wirral Council HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 is a projected figure to end of year.

We can compare Wirral staff absence with Merseyside Local Authorities back to 2014/15 (Figure 3). In 2016/17 Wirral Council lost 10.73 days due to sickness per FTE, this was the third highest of the five Merseyside LAs. Of the comparators, the lowest was St Helens Council which lost 8.17 days and the highest was Sefton

APPENDIX ONE

Council which lost 13.31 days. For all LAs, the trend has seen an increase from 2014/15 to 2015/16, before seeing a decrease in 2016/17.

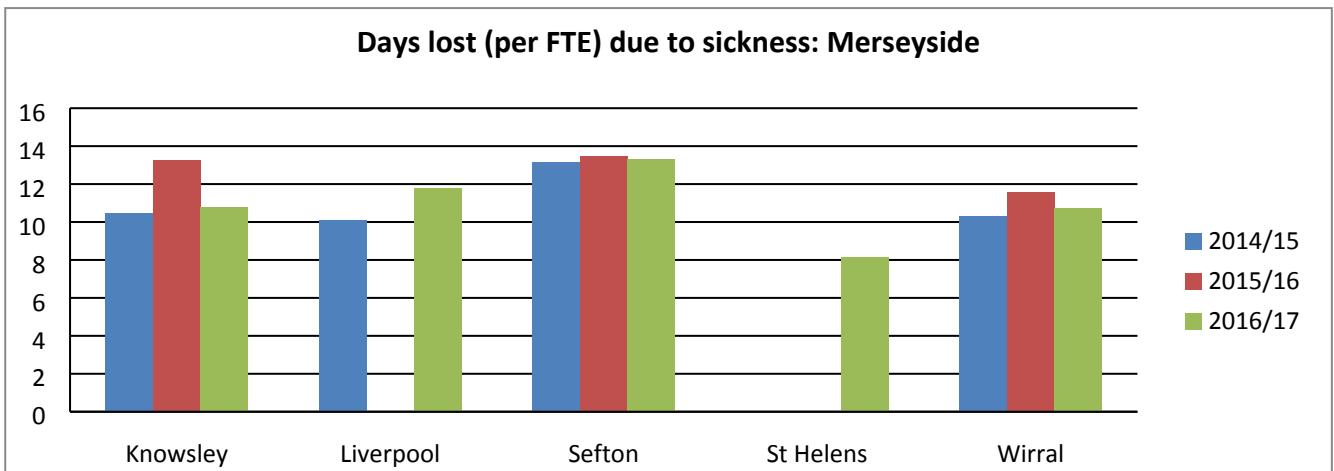


Figure 3: Days lost (per FTE) due to sickness absence in Merseyside from 2014/15 to 2016/17. Some Local Authorities have not submitted returns to the North West Employers therefore data is unavailable. **Source:** North West Employers.

As noted in 2.1 above when comparing Wirral absence with other LAs the context of the authorities' workforces can be taken into consideration. Analysis should consider the workforce size and the type of services delivered in house by individual LAs, such as waste, street cleansing, highways maintenance, homecare, and day services.

The table below provides a summary of the services provided by the five LAs. This shows the variation in how services are delivered across Merseyside. As some LAs deliver labour-intensive services in-house (such as waste) and others do not, comparing consolidated absence figures at an organisational level should be done with caution.

Local Authority	Waste	Street Cleaning Services	Highways Maintenance	Leisure	Day Services	Homecare
Knowsley	In-house	In-house	Outsourced	Delivered by LATCO	In-house	In-house
Liverpool	Delivered by LATCO	Delivered by LATCO	Outsourced	In-house	In-house	In-house
Sefton	In-house	In-house	In-house	In-house	Delivered by Sefton New Directions	Delivered by Sefton New Directions
St Helens	In-house	In-house	In-house (major works subject to external contracts)	In-house	In-house	Outsourced
Wirral	Delivered by BIFFA	Delivered by BIFFA	Delivered by BAMN. Due in-house Oct 2018	In-house	Delivered by Wirral Evolutions	Combined delivery between NHS and outsourced

Table 1: Summary of in house or external service provision for key Council services.

When reviewing national trends The Office for National Statistics found that, in 2016, public sector workers were almost twice as likely to experience sickness

absence as in the private sector. It is acknowledged that workers in the private sector may not be paid if they are absent from work due to sickness, whereas public sector workers tend to be; this may be a contributing factor of the gap.

3.3 Sickness Type

In 2017/18, as at 30 November 2017, the highest number of employees had been absent due to abdominal (including Digestive Tract) problems. The second highest was 'other', followed by 'ear, nose and throat' and 'mental health'. More than a fifth of employees have been absent due to abdominal (including Digestive Tract) problems.

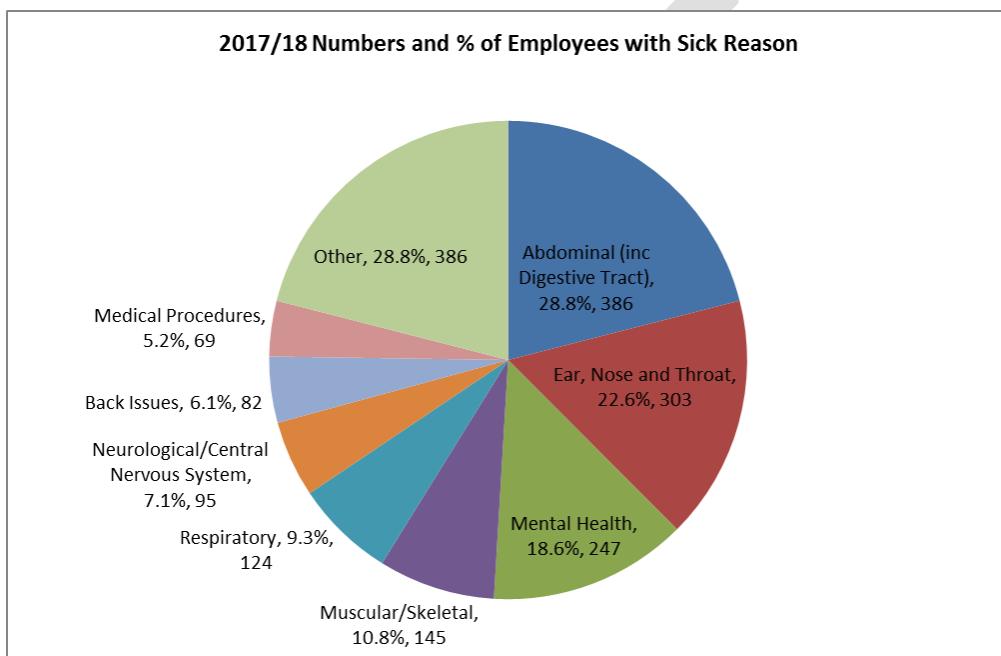


Figure 4: Of all staff with absence the numbers and percentage of employees by reason for sickness as at 30 November 2017. **Source:** Wirral HR Selfserve System. *Figures correct as at 30 November 2017.*

As the third highest known cause of staff absence, it is important to note the definition of mental health related absence for Wirral Council. This consists of a number of indicators, including anxiety, bereavement, dementia, depression, fatigue, insomnia, manic depression/bipolar depression, nervous disorder, personal problems, relationship problems, shock/trauma, and stress. Managers record the reason for absence in accordance with what the GP has recorded on employee's sick note. When a sick note is not available the manager records the cause of absence as provided by employee. Further work is required in consultation with our Occupational Health provider to categorise those employees that are referred and assessed by OH for stress into home related stress, work related stress or a combination of both. This would give us a greater insight into the issue.

The number of days lost (per FTE) due to Mental Health related conditions has seen an overall increase from 2010/11. Projections for 2017/18 indicate that 4.7 days (per FTE) will be lost due to Mental Health related conditions. If this projection is correct then this will be the highest figure for the 8 year period for this measure.

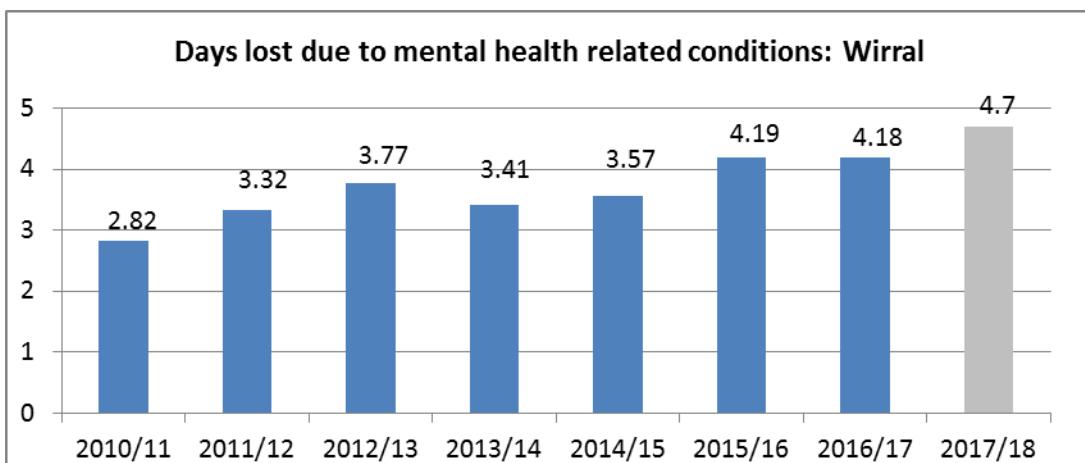


Figure 5: Days lost due to mental health related conditions in Wirral per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) staff member. **Source:** Wirral Council HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 figure is forecast.

We can also look at the number of staff with mental health related absence. This has reduced as the staff headcount has reduced. The percentage of staff with mental health related absence has fluctuated between approximately 9 - 10.5% of staff. The percentage for 2017/18 is currently 7.6%, however this is the figure as at 30 November 2017, and is therefore expected to increase before year end. The percentage of staff with mental health related absence was at its highest in 2015/16 and slightly decreased in 2016/17.

Year	Headcount	Number of staff with mental health related absence	Percentage of staff with mental health related absence
2010/11	5,259	533	10.1
2011/12	5,010	473	9.4
2012/13	4,920	515	10.5
2013/14	4,511	435	9.6
2014/15	4,168	372	8.9
2015/16	3,498	370	10.6
2016/17	3,412	341	10.0
2017/18	3,243	247	7.6 (Nov 2017)

Table 2: Number and percentage of staff with mental health related absence 2010/11 – 2017/18. **Source:** Wirral Council HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 figures correct as at 30 November 2017.

Between April 2017 and 30 November 2017 there were 1,376 Wirral Council employees absent from work due to sickness, 247 of these people were absent due to mental health related conditions – this means that 18% of the people absent were absent due to mental health related conditions.

Between April 2017 and 30 November 2017 there were 20,631 days lost due to sickness. Absence due to mental health related conditions represented 40.75% of the days lost in this period (8406 days), with an average of 33.62 days absence. Of the 8406 employees absent from work due to mental health related absence, 205 (14.9%) were absent due to anxiety, stress or depression. The only illness that resulted in a larger average amount of days absent than mental health related is cancer, which represented 65.47 days. The table below shows a breakdown of the

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number of days lost, and the average length of days that staff are absent from work, by reason for absence.

In 2016/17 there were 1,888 Wirral Council employees absent from work due to sickness, of which 341 of these people were absent due to mental health related conditions (18%). Although this is not directly comparable to the 2017/18 figures (figures based on 9 months), the overall percentage of staff that are absent are absent due to mental health conditions is consistent at 18%. Due to the nature of mental health related conditions being long-term it would be expected that this will remain relatively consistent at 2017/18 year end.

Absence Reason	Number of days lost	Average length of time absent (days)
Mental Health	8,406.11	33.62
Muscular/Skeletal (excluding Back)	2,194.63	15.03
Medical Procedures	983.23	14.05
Other	3,724.45	13.64
Back Issues	1,196.56	13.49
Respiratory	870.87	7.02
Neurological/Central Nervous System	587.98	6.19
Abdominal (including Digestive Tract)	1753.20	4.76
Ear, Nose and Throat	990.70	3.27

Table 3: Number of days lost by absence reason and the average length of time absent from work. **Source:** Wirral Council HR Selfserve. *Figures as at 30 November 2017.*

Merseyside Local Authorities do not publish the number of days lost due to mental health related conditions so direct benchmarking is not available however other national sources of information are available.

In May 2016 Unison surveyed 2,000 council workers and published the findings in a report '*Under Pressure, Underfunded and Undervalued*'. The survey found that 73% of council workers reported rising levels of stress (an increase from two thirds in 2008), and more than half reported that stress at work has affected both their job performance and personal life. This would suggest that mental health related conditions are increasingly affecting a significant number of Local Authority employees nationally; this is consistent with Wirral absence levels due to mental health related conditions.

According to the Office for National Statistics (ONS), in 2016, 7.7% of the reason for sickness absence nationally was stress, depression, anxiety. This was the fourth most common reason for sickness absence, and resulted in 15.0 million days lost nationally.

In 2016, the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) published an annual survey report in relation to absence management. This report is the findings of a survey of more than 1,000 HR professionals. The CIPD reported that stress was the most common cause of long-term absence, and second most common cause of short-term absence. Around 40% of those surveyed reported that mental health problems (such as anxiety and depression) had increased in employees over the past year. The report suggests that the average level of employee absence has decreased, although the smallest decrease has been seen in the public sector.

3.4 Absence by Directorate

Absence can be viewed by directorate over time. When reviewing the figures it must be borne in mind that there has been significant change in the structure of the directorates over time, so information should be used with caution.

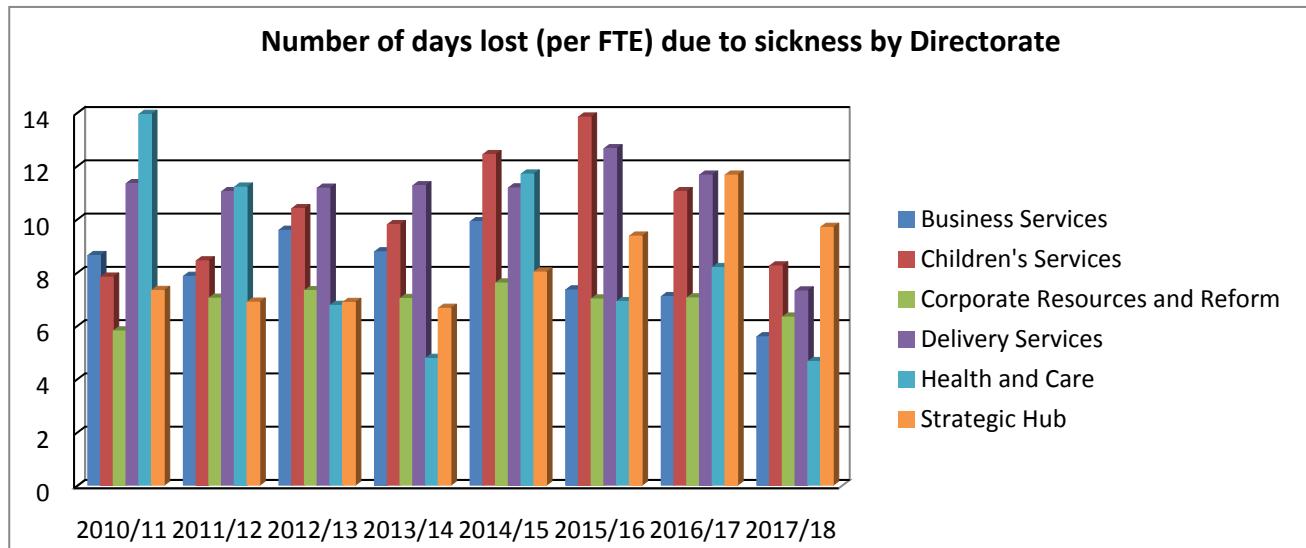


Figure 6: Days lost (per FTE) due to staff absence by Directorate. Source: Wirral Council HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 figures are correct at 30 November 2017.

It is possible to break down the number of days lost (per FTE) due to mental health conditions by Directorate. These figures may differ from the figures for Wirral Council overall, as the overall forecast accounts for over-reporting, such as managers recording sickness over the weekend whereas this data does not. Training is currently taking place to improve reporting accuracy and consistency (See 6.3). Data shows that sickness by Directorate remains fairly consistent.

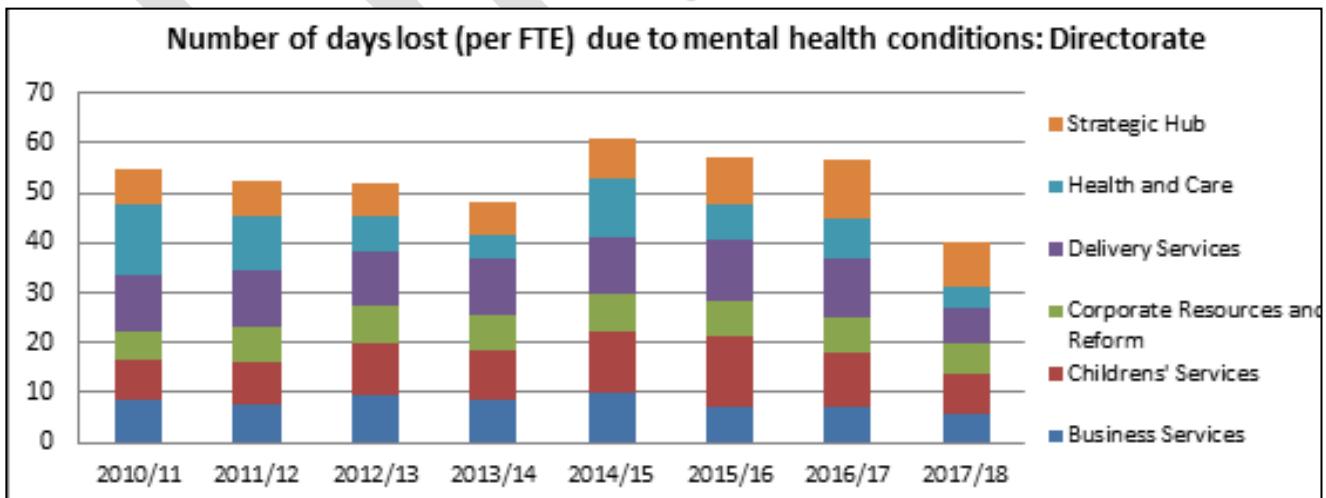


Figure 7: Number of days (per FTE) lost due to mental health conditions by Directorate. Source: HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 figures are correct at 30 November 2017.

The picture of days lost due to Mental Health related conditions within each directorate shows Business Services, Delivery Services, and Health and Care with decreases of up to 2.45% since 2010/11 in the percentage of days lost due to Mental Health related

APPENDIX ONE

conditions, whereas Children's Services, Corporate Resources and Reform, and Strategic Hub have each seen an increase since 2010/11.

In order to identify how much of staff absence is linked to anxiety, stress and depression, as opposed to the wider category of mental health related conditions, it is possible to further analyse the above information. Data shows that:

- The overall number of days lost (per FTE) by Wirral due to anxiety, stress and depression reduced in 2016/17 compared to 2015/16, when this number was at its highest.
- In 2015/16 Children's Services saw the second highest recorded number of days lost, when 5.52 days were lost per FTE, since 2010/11 (when Health and Care lost 5.92 days per FTE).
- As at 30 November 2017, anxiety, stress and depression is the result of 2.46 days lost (per FTE), as opposed to mental health related conditions being responsible for 7.12 days (per FTE). This suggests that currently anxiety, stress and depression only accounts for 34.6% of mental health related absence.

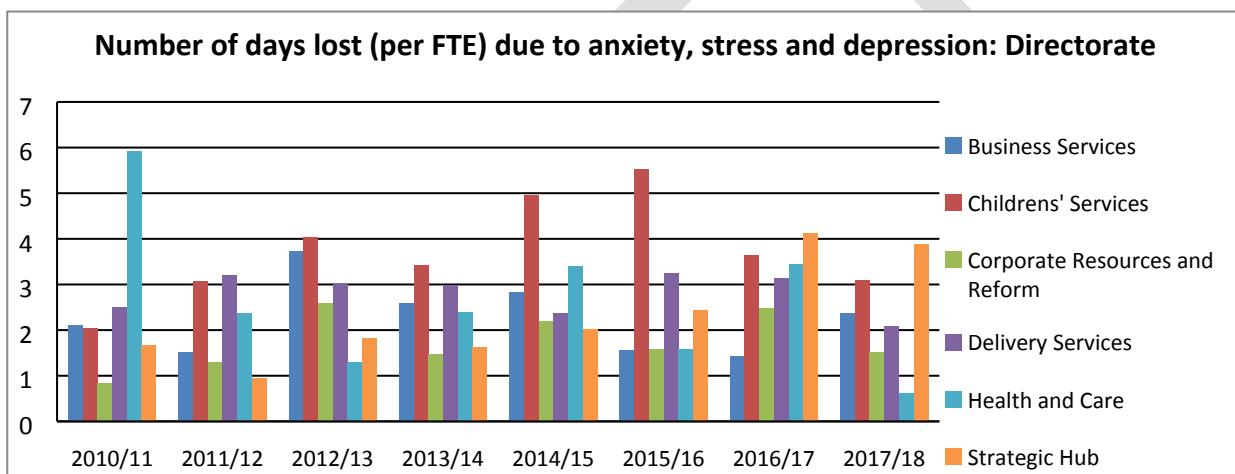


Figure 8: Number of days (per FTE) lost due to anxiety, stress and depression by Directorate. **Source:** HR Selfserve System. 2017/18 figures are correct at 30 November 2017.

Analysis is carried out on anxiety, stress and depression across the workforce. In 2017/18, as at 30 November 2017, Children's Services have the largest percentage of staff absent due to mental health, and due to anxiety, stress or depression.

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Directorate	Headcount	Number of staff absent due to mental health related conditions	% of headcount absent due to mental health related conditions	Number of staff absent due to anxiety, stress or depression	% of headcount absent due to anxiety, stress or depression	% of those staff that were absent due to mental health related conditions absent due to anxiety, stress or depression
Business Services	335	21	6.27%	18	5.37%	86%
Children's Services	602	67	11.13%	56	9.30%	84%
Customer Resources & Reform	173	8	4.62%	6	3.47%	75%
Delivery Services	1691	129	7.63%	103	6.09%	80%
Health & Care	51	1	1.96%	1	1.96%	100%
Strategic Hub	406	21	5.17%	20	4.93%	95%
Total	3,243*	247	7.60%	204	6.3%	83%

Table 4: 2017/18 Number of staff absent due to mental health related conditions, and anxiety stress or depression – compared to headcount. **Source:** Wirral Council HR Selfserve System. *Employees may be included in more than one directorate; the total figure only includes each person once.

4.0 ORGANISATIONAL ACTION IN RELATION TO STAFF ABSENCE

Throughout 2017/18 a range of activity has been put in place across the organisation to ensure effective absence management can be demonstrated in all areas and that areas of concern are identified and appropriate actions put in place.

4.1 Managing absence

The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Absence Survey 2016 reports that the most common methods of managing short-term absence are as follows:

Method	Council
1. Return to Work Interviews	✓
2. Trigger mechanisms to review attendance	✓
3. Line Manager take primary responsibility for managing sickness	✓
4. Sickness absence information given to line managers	✓
5. Sickness absence information given to line managers	✓
6. Managers are trained in absence handling procedures for absence management	✓
7. Disciplinary procedure for unacceptable absence	✓
8. Occupational Health Involvement	✓
9. Restricting Pay*	✗
10. Flexible working Leave for family circumstances (such as emergency/carers/leave)	✓

Table 5: Most commonly used methods of addressing short term absence.

APPENDIX ONE

The CIPD Absence Survey 2016 reports that the most common methods of managing long-term absence are as follows:

Rank order of methods	Council
1. Return to Work Interviews	✓
2. Occupational Health Involvement	✓
3. Sickness absence information given to line managers	✓
4. Trigger Mechanisms to review attendance	✓
5. Flexible working	✓
6. Changes to working patterns or environment	✓
7. Risk Assessment to aid return to work after long-term absence	✓
8. Line Manager take primary responsibility for managing sickness	✓
9. Employee	✓
10. Disciplinary procedure for unacceptable absence	✓

Table 6: Most commonly used methods of addressing long term absence

Tables 5 and 6 show the Council's methods and approach to managing short-term and long-term absence is consistent with how over 800 organisation that responded to the survey are managing these issues.

The CIPD Absence Survey 2016 reports that the most common methods of managing stress are as follows:

Rank order of methods	Council
Staff surveys	✗
Flexible working options/work life balance	✓
Risk Assessments/Stress Audits	✓
Training for line managers to more effectively identify and manage stress in their team.	✓
Employee Assistance Programme	✓
Written Stress Policy/ Guidance	✓
Greater involvement of occupational health specialists	✓
Trained aimed at building personal resilience such as coping techniques, mindfulness, cognitive behavior therapy, positive psychology courses	✓
Changes in work organisation for example job role adaptations	✓
Focus Groups	✗

Table 7: Most commonly used methods of managing stress

Table 7 shows the Council's methods and approach to managing stress is consistent with 422 organisations who responded to the CIPD survey. We have not done an organisational wide staff survey for a number of years but there have been a number of smaller surveys around particular themes. This included a health and wellbeing survey in Children's Services which has helped inform the workplace wellbeing strategy.

4.2 Targeted Approaches

Analysis of absence across the organisation indicates that a targeted approach can have a significant impact on staff absence figures a range of work is in place:

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A new suite of absence reporting has been developed by HR to identify ‘hotspots’ in relation to absence management. This reporting suite consists of the below indicators:

- Highest number of days absence lost per individual.
- Highest service days lost (per FTE) in 12 month period.
- Areas with most spells of sickness absence in a 12 month period.
- Number of staff hitting triggers by service area in 12 months.

At present, it has been identified that:

- Targeted action on employees with 60 days or more absence based on calendar days absent, starting with those with longest absence (council wide).
- The highest service days lost has been in **Children’s Social Care and Commissioning Support**.
- **Leisure Services** (Europa Pools, West Kirby Concourse, and The Oval) have the most incidences of sickness absence in a 12 month period.
- **Customer Services** has the most staff hitting triggers in a 12 month period.

HR Staff have been redirected to form a dedicated resource to support managers in the management of attendance. The team is focused on working on a range of specific targeted actions including:

- Case conferences Chaired by AD: HR/OD to discuss individual long-term/complex sickness cases with service managers where concerns about progress of case and agree actions required and timescales.
- HR led meetings with Management Team in Leisure Services to review current absence levels, including spells of absence within the service and patterns of absence.
- HR led meetings with Head of Service and Managers in Customer Services to review actions taken so far with 18 staff who have hit trigger points where action is not recorded and to review consistency of sanctions put in place.

The early indications from this dedicated work is that longer terms case are reducing and cases are progressing through stages of the procedure more quickly:

- Three of the original top five long term absence cases recorded as of October 2017 left the Council’s employment by 1 December 2017
- A further 10 employees on the long term absence list will have left the authorities employment in the coming months (as at 20/12/2017).

Whilst it will take some time for the impact of work on long term cases to be evidenced within absence figures, it is anticipated that this work will see a decrease in the number of days absent over the next 12 months.

4.4 Identification of under reporting

An audit was carried out in 2017 which indicated evidence of under reporting of absence. As a result a range of activity has been carried out to support staff to ensure accurate recording.

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- Managers who have recorded absence as unknown have been identified and contacted – resulting in managers inputting long terms sickness not previously input. No overpayments of salary have occurred as a result of this.
- Policy, procedure and paperwork reviewed and updated including links to new E Forms replacing paper forms.
- Review and enhancement of management reports available on line to all managers for their area of responsibility.

4.5 Training

Staff training is in place to ensure managers receive the support they require to effectively manage their staff absence; this includes:

- Desk top refresher training for managers designed and was rolled out week commencing 22 January 2017. This is designed to ensure all managers are proficient in use of self-serve system, able to use the management information available and to cover the managing attendance policy and procedure.
- Identification of managers who have recorded the reason for staff absence as Mental Health with view to targeted training on Mental Health issues in the workplace.

4.6 Additional Work

A number of new initiatives are also in place or under development to support staff and managers across the organisation; these include:

- Attendance Management briefing session with all senior managers was held on 10 January 2018 to further raise awareness of their responsibilities and the support and tools available.
- Further development work with managers in hot spot areas to support managing attendance in their area, and to help them support staff. This will cover areas including:
 - Weekly meetings to discuss cases and underlying concerns/issues.
 - Stress Risk Assessments.
 - Identification of cultural issues which impact on attendance.
 - Exploring the suitability and viability of services available through PAM Assist (e.g. Group Counselling, Wellbeing Resilience Programme).
 - Launch of workplace wellbeing strategy and commitment to achieve the workplace wellbeing charter.
- Programme of Work Wellbeing Training for managers (mental health focus) to be commissioned and delivered March - June 2018.
- HR staff will carry out further analysis in relation to work and home issues and the reporting of mental health/stress related absence.
- HR staff will review the categorisation of mental health related absence to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation.
- HR to carry out analysis of reporting of absence as ‘unknown’ within the system and put in place appropriate support to reduce this.

4.7 Management Accountability

- The Council's most senior managers are issued with annual accountability statements which includes management of absence. Performance is managed and monitored through the appraisal and 1-2-1 process.
- There is a monthly Operational Health Report to SLT which sets out latest organisational performance in relation to days lost per FTE and a projection for the financial year.
- A new management report has been developed for Senior Managers to monitor compliance by their reports with the absence policy. This includes number of back to work interviews outstanding and highlights no action when absence triggers are met. This is used at DMT level and in individual meetings with ADs about their service area. When fully rolled out non-compliance will be escalated to SLT.
- All line managers are required to discuss absence levels as part of the performance management process.
- Internal Audit routinely audit compliance against policy and also non-reporting of absence.
- All managers have access to desk top information with detailed absence information for their teams and individuals.

5.0 CONCLUSION

Mental health related absence is the third highest known reason for staff absence, 18% of all workplace absence is related to mental health issues with approximately 10% of the workforce (2016/17 full year data) has been absent from work for a mental health related absence.

Sickness absence is a priority area for the Council and a range of initiatives including a focus on mental health support are in place. These activities include targeted approaches for specific areas and universal programmes for all staff with an ethos to support all employees across the organisation. Monitoring and oversight has been further developed to ensure accountability at all organisational levels is in place.

References

Chartered Institute of Professional Development Annual Survey, 2016:
www.cipd.co.uk/absencemanagementsurvey

Unison Survey, 2016:
<http://www.hse.gov.uk/statistics/causdis/stress/stress.pdf>

Office for National Statistics Employment and Labour Market, 2016:
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employmentandemploymenttypes/datasets/sicknessabsenceinthelabourmarket>

**WIRRAL COUNCIL
ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT ACTION PLAN**

November 2017

1. Introduction

There are long standing concerns about the level and cost of sickness absence in the Council and the impact of this absence on employees, services and the Council's ability to deliver its pledges.

This action plan provides a framework for the Council to improve attendance, wellbeing and engagement in the workforce.

1. Key Issues

2.1 Level of sickness

- The Council's sickness absence levels are currently around 10.73 days lost per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) per year. This varies across services. In Children's Services, Social Care this is nearly 18 days lost per FTE per year, compared to 6.99 days per FTE per year in Business Services.
- The Council's target is 10.75 days lost days per FTE per annum. The average days lost in the public sector is 8.0.
- 65 % of absence is long term (over 4 weeks) and 35% is short term.

1.2 Cost of absence

- The cost of sickness absence is high and has a direct impact on the quality and timeliness of services which are already stretched following reductions in budget.
- The approximate cost of absence in terms of lost time for 2016 / 17 was £4.4m (including on costs).
- The cash cost can be seen in the use of cover arrangements through agency staff and additional hours.
- There is a high level of agency use in Children's services. This is very expensive and, whilst not all attributable to covering for sickness, it has an impact on quality and continuity of service delivery. This was identified as one of the significant issues to be addressed within the Ofsted report in 2016.

1.3 Under-reporting of absence

- In 2016 Human Resources and Organisational Development (HR/OD) commissioned an internal audit report to investigate concerns of under-reporting

of sickness absence. The report (published in March 2017) identified evidence of under reporting. This means there is a potential that the Council's absence figures are underrepresented.

- There is also a governance issue as employees may be in receipt of normal salary because they haven't been recorded as sick and they should be paid occupational and/or statutory sick pay.
- This has also resulted in overpayments as employees have received their normal salary rather than sick pay. There have been some cases where this has resulted in the employee receiving more occupational sick pay than they are entitled to. In one case the overpayment was over £6,000. This not only causes issues for the employee but there is a time and financial cost to the Council to deal with the overpayment.

1.4 Reasons for absence

- The most common reason for absence is Mental Health related illness. This has accounted for an average of 35% of absence in the last three years and over a quarter of long term absence is related to mental health.

1.5 Management of absence

- An Internal Audit report March 2017 identified that managers were failing to comply with the Council's Attendance Management policy and procedure.
- This matter was discussed at Audit and Risk Management Committee June 2017 as part of the Annual Governance Statement and discussed by Cabinet in July 2017.
- The Council's most senior managers have accountability for management of attendance set out within their Accountability Statements.
- HR records show that relatively little formal action is being taken by line managers to address unacceptable levels of attendance in line with the policy. This is reinforced by the findings of the Internal Audit report.

2. Aim of the action plan

The aim of the action plan is to:

- Develop a culture where health and wellbeing is valued and supported

- Improve the management of attendance in line with the policy
- Target and respond to key issues in order to improve wellbeing and attendance

3. Key themes of the action plan

1. **Leadership and communication** – from Senior Leadership Team (SLT) and Senior Managers in order to ‘make this happen’ and demonstrate the commitment to the new approach to attendance management.
2. **Further training and support** - will be put in place to ensure all managers understand how, and have the skills and confidence to manage attendance and wellbeing.
3. **Performance Management and compliance** - we have developed a detailed performance management report framework which focuses on the management of absence rather than the absence itself. This will enable senior managers to hold managers to account who are not effectively managing the attendance of their staff.
4. **Targeted Action addressing the causes of absence** - HR/OD have previously delivered stress management training, we are now widening this training to focus on managing wellbeing at work including stress and mental health related absence.
5. **Workplace wellbeing** – a workplace wellbeing plan has been developed to be supportive and proactive in our approach to workplace wellbeing.

4. Measuring the effectiveness of the action plan

In order to measure the effectiveness of the interventions in the action plan the following need to be baselined and further indicators developed:

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Issue	Indicator	Current	Target
1. The level of absence	Reduction in the overall days lost due to absence	10.73 days per FTE	Published target 2017-18 10.75 days
2. Management of attendance	Internal audit	Internal audit report says it is a major risk	Outcome of internal audit report moves from major risk
	Increase in number of Return to Work Interviews being completed	Return to work interview benchmark target to be set by 1 December 2017	1 February 2018 – set new target
	Increase in number of formal hearings being completed	Formal hearing benchmark target to be set by 1 December 2017	1 February 2018 – set new target

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Appendix 1 – Attendance Action Plan

Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead officer	Resource	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
1. Leadership and Communication								
High profile communication of Absence levels and expected action as an organisational priority	Presentation and discussion at Corporate management (CMT) team before Senior manager briefing Chief Executive and All Directors to lead with AD HR/OD	CMT	Buy in and support from leadership to roll out attendance management action plan	w/c 18 September	Chief Executive /Assistant Director HR/OD	Assistant Director HR/OD	CMT endorse the approach	Complete
	Trade Union briefing	Trade Unions	Buy in and support from Trade Unions	19 September via Corporate JCC	Assistant Director HR/OD	Assistant Director HR/OD	Meeting taken place and buy in and support gained	Complete
	Meeting with Directors to agree hotspot areas	Directors	To agree hotspot areas for the Council	2 – 31 October	Assistant Director HR/OD	Assistant Director HR/OD	Hot spot areas agreed and shared with SLT	Complete
	Meeting with DMTs in hotspot areas	Directors / Assistant Directors	To outline sickness hot spots in department and outline	1 – 30 November	Assistant Director HR/OD	Dedicated Absence team	Meetings taken place	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead officer	Resource	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
			proposed performance management framework and support available					
	Meeting with extended DMTs in agreed hotspot areas and/or on request	Senior Managers	To ensure managers understand new performance management reports and reset expectations	November–December	Assistant Director HR/OD	Dedicated Absence team	All DMTs briefed and performance cycle commences	
	Senior Manager briefing	Senior Managers	Senior managers are briefed on new performance management framework, workplace wellbeing plan and expectations are reset for managing attendance	November	Assistant Director HR OD	Assistant Director HR OD	Briefing taken place	
	Communication to Managers	Managers / Team	Managers are aware of	Following Senior	Assistant Director HR	Assistant Director HR OD		

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead officer	Resource	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
	/Team Leaders	Leaders	new approach to attendance management , workplace wellbeing and reinforce policy requirements	Manager briefing	OD			
	Communication to employees via Managers brief and intranet	All employees	Employees are aware of new approach to attendance management , Workplace Wellbeing strategy and reinforce policy requirements	December	Communications Team / Assistant Director HR/OD	Communications and Engagement manager	Managers brief article and intranet communication published	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead officer	Resources	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
2. Further training and support								
Compliance with policy and reporting	<p>One hour desk based training for line managers covering:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recording absence on self-serve • Accessing absence reports • Keeping in touch • OH referrals • Return to work interviews • Absence triggers and warnings • Manager role in applying policy • Sign post to help available 	<p>Targeted managers in 'hotspot' areas and others by application / invitation</p>	<p>Clear understanding at line manager level of roles, responsibilities and use of self-serve system.</p> <p>Reduce under reporting</p> <p>Improved policy application</p>	December – February 2018	<p>Senior HR Manager (Employee Relations, Schools HR and OD)</p>	<p>Line manager time and commitment</p> <p>Human Resources Officers</p>	<p>100% attendance (exception for long term sick and maternity)</p> <p>Increase in policy compliance measured by Return to Work interviews completed and hearings taking place</p>	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead officer	Resources	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
	Managers will be required to sign that training has been undertaken							
Managers do not undertake the basic steps in relation to attendance management e.g. Calling an employee back who has rang in sick, undertaking a Return to Work Interview, visiting an employee who is off long term	<p>Short workshop 'Having the absence conversation'</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ..when they call ..when they RTW ..when they're off again ..when it begins to get serious 	<p>Targeted managers in 'hotspot' areas and others by application / invitation</p>	<p>Managers do not 'hold back' from having difficult conversations/ challenging absence / address concerns over an employee's health and wellbeing</p>	December – February 2018	Assistant Director HR/OD	<p>Line manager time and commitment</p> <p>OD to commission training</p>	<p>100% attendance (exception for long term sick and maternity)</p> <p>Increase in policy compliance measured by Return to Work interviews completed and hearings taking place</p>	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resources	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
3. Performance management and compliance								
Bespoke management information that can be used to monitor the management of absence	Performance management framework including reports and key questions to facilitate discussions with managers	SLT DMTs Senior managers Team leaders	To ensure the management of attendance is being monitored / challenged Discuss key issues and resolve issues /agree actions To hold managers accountable for noncompliance with policy Identify any workforce or employee issues	1 December 2017	SLT leadership and cascade Assistant Director HR/OD	HR/OD	Reports produced and framework in place	
	Escalation reports showing noncompliance will be part of reports that go	All line managers	Improve the management of attendance and policy application	1 December 2017	Assistant Director HR/OD	HR/OD	Increase in policy compliance to be monitored over 3 – 12	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resources	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
	to DMT		Identify trends and issues Manager held accountable for managing attendance and performance				month period	
The level of proactive monitoring of absence and casework support to managers	Redirect HR resource to work alongside managers to drive improvement including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One to ones with ADs • Support ADs with senior managers • Work with Director at DMTs • Report monthly to SLT 	Line managers	To ensure that HR have sufficient resource to proactively monitor and identify attendance issues, can support managers in dealing with them and can escalate	October 2017	Assistant Director of HR/OD	HR	Dedicated absence team in place	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resources	How will we know it's been achieved?	Progress/Comments
We do not record management actions in line with policy electronically	Development of e forms to record on self-serve key actions e.g. Return to Work interviews in line with policy	Line managers	To be better able to monitor management action	November 2017	Assistant Director HR/OD	HR/OD	E-forms are live	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead Officer	Resources	Measure of success	Progress/Comments
4. Targeted action addressing causes of absence								
Stress and mental health related issues are biggest reason for long term absence	Workplace wellbeing Training to delivered to all managers (externally commissioned)	All line managers	Increase line management awareness of their responsibility to promote, encourage and manage workplace wellbeing including stress and mental health related issues.	By 31 March 2018	Senior HR Manager (Employee Relations, Schools HR and OD)	OD Team to commission training £tbc	Training is commissioned Training is rolled out	

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Issue	Action	Target	Desired outcome	Timescale	Lead officer	Resources	Measure of success	Progress/Comments
5. Workplace Wellbeing								
Workplace Wellbeing Strategy	To develop a workplace wellbeing strategy for the organisation	All employees	Council has a workplace wellbeing plan in place with a commitment to deliver by Senior Leadership Team	November 2017	Assistant Director HR/OD	Assistant Director HR/OD	Workplace wellbeing plan launched	
Workplace Wellbeing charter	To commit and achieve workplace charter award	All employees	Council works towards Workplace wellbeing Charter which provides a framework of best practice for managing employee health and wellbeing	Initial assessment by March 2018	Assistant Director HR/OD	Assistant Director HR/OD	Initial assessment is positive	

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MINUTE EXTRACT
AUDIT AND RISK MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE
21 NOVEMBER 2017

41 HR ATTENDANCE UPDATE

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development introduced her report that updated Members on the work undertaken in response to the audit review of Attendance Management (Sickness Absence). The report informed of key items to note concerning the development of Council Attendance Management action plan, activity to date and planned approach, namely:

- Attendance Management action plan – to develop a culture where wellbeing was valued and supported, improve the management of attendance in line with the policy, to target and respond to key issues in order to improve wellbeing and attendance;
- Approach so far – identification of target areas for action and performance management; and
- Future activity – 2017-18 (Quarter 3 & 4) - leadership and communication, further training and support.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development updated the Audit and Risk Management Committee on the current position reiterating responses to key issues and actions to target the improvement of staff wellbeing and attendance. Members were further apprised on information being provided to managers via desktop and skills based training, to help understand the tools available, and to provide the requisite skills and confidence to deal with matters of attendance giving cause for concern.

Members questioned the Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development on key points in her verbal and written reports that included not only the cost to the council in financial terms, but as a direct impact on the quality and timeliness of services, already stretched following reductions in budget.

A Member highlighted that disturbingly the most common reason for absence was mental health related illness. He questioned the Assistant Director on what was being done to address this. The Assistant Director responded stating that this term covered absence as a result of stress, anxiety and/or depression. She informed that absences under this category tended to be the result of a specific trigger or response to pressure and management training aimed to help managers identify such issues at an early stage. She further informed that such reasons for absence would automatically generate a referral to occupational health for immediate assessment. The Assistant Director stated that demands placed upon staff within the workplace were changing and that uncertainty for the future both contributed to increased pressures that impacted on wellbeing and attendance.

A Member questioned the Assistant Director on performance management and why the targeted level of 100% completed staff appraisals had not been achieved. He also questioned whether the stress recognition training provided to managers was also provided to those officers ‘acting up’ into managerial posts, and how many such ‘acting up’ posts were currently recorded in the staffing structure. The Assistant Director responded, informing that the levels of completed appraisals had now exceeded 90% and training had been targeted at managers in services where the highest levels of stress were being reported.

A Member questioned the Assistant Director further on the subject of attendance management, and points raised in the report about how relatively little formal action was taking place by line managers to address unacceptable levels of attendance in line with the policy. The Assistant Director responded stating that there had been feedback from managers about the problems faced when dealing with ‘difficult conversations’ about absence i.e. ‘feeling intrusive’. She added that manager training had helped in this respect, and figures were reducing slowly, with performance levels improving.

The Assistant Director: Human Resources and Organisational Development went on to inform that the absence targets were also improving, but the cost of absence to the council (£4.4 million) was a serious issue and accountability statements existed for Senior Directors, who in turn would ensure that the objectives of the Attendance Management Action Plan would be cascaded to staff.

Following further questioning from Members the Assistant Director informed that the raising of awareness via the report, combined with better levels of detail regarding sickness reporting would help address issues of culture and leadership that had in the past contributed to the problem faced.

At the Chair’s suggestion, consideration was given to a supplementary report on matters arising from the issues raised, to be presented to the Employment and Appointments Committee for review. The Vice-Chair added that he felt the issues raised within the report were particularly alarming, and further suggested that a Task and Finish Workshop might also be appropriate.

Mr Robin Baker, Grant Thornton highlighted that the report had been requested based upon the concerns of Internal Audit and Members of the Audit and Risk Management Committee. He pointed out that the response to the request had informed of the cost and impact to the Council, and that the matter was still ‘work in progress’ with more to do.

A Member informed that it was important to maintain focus and that the matter be referred to the Employment and Appointments Committee, and that the need for strong support from senior management would suggest that there be merit in asking the Chief Executive (Head of Paid Service) to attend the Employment and Appointments Committee to provide further information on the subject of leadership culture and approach to stress and absence management.

It was:

Moved by Councillor Jeff Green
Seconded by Councillor Christina Muspratt

“That the matter of Attendance Management be referred to the Employment and Appointments Committee for consideration; and that the Chief Executive be requested to provide an update on progress in respect of the Leadership approach to stress and absence management for staff.”

A vote was put and carried (5:2) One abstention.

Resolved - That

- (1) the report be noted;**
- (2) the Attendance Management Action Plan be noted and referred to the Employment and Appointments Committee for further consideration; and**
- (3) the Head of Paid Service be requested to attend the next meeting of the Employment and Appointments Committee to provide a further update on matters regarding council’s approach to stress and absence management for its staff.**

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Agenda Item 6

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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