

To: Members of the Special Sub-Group

Councillors Hayfield, Phillips, Smith, M Stanley and Sweet

For the information of the other Members of the Council

SPECIAL SUB-GROUP

15 JULY 2013

The Special Sub-Group will meet in the Committee Room, The Council House, South Street, Atherstone, Warwickshire on Monday 15 July 2013 at 2.30pm.

AGENDA

PART I - PUBLIC BUSINESS

- 1 **Evacuation Procedure.**
- 2 **Apologies for Absence / Members away on official Council business.**
- 3 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**
- 4 **Public Participation**

Up to twenty minutes will be set aside for members of the public to ask questions or to put their views to elected Members. Participants are restricted to five minutes each. If you wish to speak at the meeting please contact David Harris on 01827 719222 or email democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk.

PART A – ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION AND DECISION (WHITE PAPERS)

- 5 **Progress Report on Human Resources Issues** – Report of the Assistant Director (Finance and Human Resources)

Summary

This report advises Members of progress against the Human Resources Strategy Action Plan, work being done by the Human Resources team, the sickness levels for the period of April 2012 to March 2013 and provides some further information on action taken in managing absence.

The Contact Officer for this report is Kerry Drakeley (719300)

PART C – EXEMPT INFORMATION (GOLD PAPERS)

- 6 **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

Recommendation:

That under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public and press be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business, on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined by Schedule 12A to the Act.

- 7 **Accommodation Project** – Report of the Assistant Director (Streetscape) – TO FOLLOW

The Contact Officer for this report is Richard Dobbs (719440).

JERRY HUTCHINSON
Chief Executive

For general enquiries please contact David Harris, Democratic Services Manager, on 01827 719222 or via e-mail – davidharris@northwarks.gov.uk. For enquiries about specific reports please contact the officer named in the report.

Agenda Item No 5

Special Sub Group

15 July 2013

**Report of the Assistant Director
(Finance and Human Resources)**

**Progress Report on Human
Resources Issues**

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report advises Members of progress against the Human Resources Strategy Action Plan, work being done by the Human Resources team, the sickness levels for the period of April 2012 to March 2013 and provides some further information on action taken in managing absence.

Recommendation to the Board

That the report be noted.

2 Report

- 2.1 This report provides an update on the Human Resources (HR) Strategy Action Plan and under Health and Absence Management gives the position on sickness for 2012/13.

3 Recruitment, Retention and Selection

- 3.1 On the 17 June 2013 the Disclosure & Barring Service (DBS) took over from CRB. The new service has different requirements, which will require the CRB policy and processes to be updated. The HR team have started to implement the new DBS guidelines, and are formalising the new processes, so that managers can be trained in their use, where appropriate.
- 3.2 There were a number of starters and leavers between April 2012 and March 2013. There were 45 leavers, including 1 end of contract, 1 redundancy, 3 dismissals and 10 employees who retired. Out of the remaining 30 leavers, there was a high proportion of Leavers from Leisure Centres, which is an industry with higher than average turnover. There were 24 starters. This equates to a labour turnover of 13.11%.
- 3.3 The Council has continued with the strategy of reviewing all posts that become vacant. Those posts that need to be filled are recruited to internally where possible.

4 Pay and Benefits

- 4.1 Under section 38 of the Localism Act 2011 a Pay Policy Statement was prepared and was adopted at Executive Board on 6 February 2012. This is required to be reviewed annually and the updated statement went to full Council on 26 June 2013. The Pay Policy Statement is published on the Council's website.
- 4.2 The Employers offered a 1% pay increase, which Unison have agreed to accept. In addition, SCP 4 will be removed, which in effect will equate to that group getting a 1.4% pay increase for the year 2013/2014. It cannot be implemented yet as the other unions have yet to agree. As soon as the circular is received from the LGA this will be implemented. The HR Manager attends annual Local Government Employer (LGE) briefings and will also attend any LGE pay briefing sessions held in the forthcoming year.
- 4.3 The implementation of the salary sacrifice scheme for employees to access car leasing has been launched successfully and is now available to permanent employees within the limits of the minimum wage. The scheme still needs to be agreed with HMRC.

5 Learning, Training and Development

- 5.1 In the 2012/13 training year, Extended Management Team and Supervisors received a 360-degree appraisal with the HR section managing the process and producing the analysis in house.
- 5.2 The learning and development arm of the Staffordshire Plus Project has continued to meet to share information, learning and training. The HR Manager is part of this group. Working in collaboration with the other Local Authorities in the group, the Council has continued to benefit from cost effective or free training. The Council has joined the partnership for E learning with this group, which is a cost effective way of delivering some areas of training. Our E learning programme is currently covering Health & Safety, Fraud Awareness, Equality & Diversity, Customer Service, Data Protection, Freedom of Information and Safeguarding Adults. The HR Manager is part of the project group that prioritises which modules are developed first and will ensure wherever it is practicable that NWBC's needs are met from the partnership.
- 5.3 During the 2012/13 training year, the Council planned and ran in house courses, including Health and Safety courses (e.g. Fire Awareness and First Aid), Managing Difficult Conversations, Child Protection and a Corporate Induction Programme.
- 5.4 The Council has up skilled the workforce which means that there are fewer employees that meet the criteria to qualify for funded training. However, where appropriate the Council will continue to take advantage of this funding.

6 Safety Management

- 6.1 The basic Occupational Health and Safety Level 2 course was being run as a rolling programme with the aim of having all employees qualified to this standard. However, the government funding available for the Health and Safety Level 2 course has been removed. An alternative Health and Safety course is now being delivered through E learning.
- 6.2 The HR Team has 3 officers with the NEBOSH qualification. This enables the team to provide support for managers in completing risk assessments and providing health and safety advice, where needed.
- 6.3 The section has customised the HARRIET Health and Safety Assessment system. The system has been rolled out across the Authority with the HR Officer running 'mop up' and revision sessions when required.
- 6.4 The Council continues to run Healthy Workforce days and a Health and Safety week is held every year. Examples of activities undertaken include healthy eating and hazard awareness information sessions for employees. The next Health and Safety week will be held in autumn 2013.

7 Health and Absence Management

7.1 Summary of Sickness Absence 2012/13 (April 2012 – March 2013)

- 7.1.1 The number of recorded days sick for the period April 2012 to March 2013 was 3,141.64, equating to 9.18 days per full time employee (FTE). For the same period last year the number of recorded days sickness was 2,554.33 days with a FTE of 7.44 days per employee. Appendix A shows these figures by Division for both years, and also shows the split between long and short-term sickness.
- 7.1.2 The variations between the two years show that there has been an overall increase of 587.31 days in sickness in 2012/13. This has produced an increase of 1.74 days, from 7.44 to 9.18 days per FTE.
- 7.1.3 Short-term sickness in April 2012 – March 2013 has increased by 0.70 days per FTE, compared with the short-term sickness in April 2011 – March 2012. Short-term sickness absence reports are sent to Assistant Directors on a monthly basis. HR also meet with the Assistant Directors on a bi-monthly basis to provide advice and to discuss what action they have taken within their Divisions. The aim of these reports and meetings is to increase managers' awareness of sickness absence within their Divisions, which should aid proactive and consistent management of absence issues and will contribute to a reduction in the short-term absence figures. Managers are now looking to take employees with habitual short-term absences to case management sooner.

7.1.4 Long-term sickness in April 2012– March 2013 has increased by 1.04 days per FTE, compared with the long term sickness in April 2011 – March 2012. The long-term sickness absence is being managed either by getting staff back to work or them exiting the organisation either on ill-health retirement or by resignation. Those with significant long-term absence equates to 6 employees having lost a total of 436.60 days. One of these employees have now left the Authority and 5 have successfully returned to work.

7.1.5 The Government's new fit note, a statement of fitness for work, was implemented on the 1 April 2010. Replacing the sick note with a fit note focuses on what people can do and has the aim of improving communication between employers, employees and doctors. The implementation within the Council has run smoothly and has had a positive effect on attendance management.

... 7.1.6 Appendix B shows the reasons for the number of days lost per FTE. The main reasons for absence relate to: Operation/Post Op, Stomach, Chest, and Stress.

7.2III Health Monitored Under the Attendance Management Policy

7.2.1 Under the Attendance Management Policy where ill health is having a detrimental effect on an individual's ability to perform their job, or where the trigger points have been exceeded under the policy, then managers will seek to manage these cases in a pro-active way. The Attendance Management Policy sets out the procedures to be used, starting with management reviews to Case Management stages 1, 2 and working through, if necessary, to the end of the process at stage 3.

7.2.2 There are a number of cases currently being dealt with under the Attendance Management Policy, and the current status of these cases are as follows:

- 7 employees are having management/formal reviews
- 2 employee are due to go onto Stage 1
- 6 employees are at Stage 1
- 2 employees are at Stage 2

7.2.3 The reviewed Attendance Management policy was agreed at Resources Board in September 2011 and the managers and supervisors were fully briefed on the changes in November 2011.

8 Human Resource Management Systems

8.1 A new HR Clerical Assistant was appointed in August 2012 and is now fully trained. The whole team are working on putting all records into TRIM. This is a huge task, as it requires data cleansing, culling of personal files and scanning personal files onto the system. A number of days are planned to complete the task. The objective being that employee files eventually become paperless. It is expected that this will be completed before the end of this year.

8.2 The HR Manager and the HR Officer are involved in providing advice to Managers on policies, procedures, employment law and best practice.

- 8.3 A number of policies, both new and reviewed have been implemented and managers and supervisors have been fully briefed on these.

9 **Organisational Development**

- 9.1 The Council's Workforce Plan (WFP) for 2013-2016 has been approved by this group. The action plan is monitored and updated to support the WFP. This will be reviewed and updated in January 2014.

10 **Employee Relations**

- 10.1 The HR team provides advice and support to managers on all HR issues. The HR Manager and the HR Officer provide support to managers and lead, where appropriate, on investigations, disciplinary, grievance, and capability relating to performance or attendance. There were 3 investigations undertaken from April 2012 – March 2013.
- 10.2 The HR Manager and HR Officer also provide considerable support in the preparation for Hearings, Appeals and Employment Tribunals. Of the investigations – 1 resulted in dismissal, 1 resulted in an action short of dismissal and 1 resulted in a resignation on the day of the scheduled disciplinary hearing.
- 10.3 The results of the 2012 staff survey have been published, and Assistant Directors are taking action where appropriate. A total of 127 employees completed the survey. This is a response rate of approximately 28%, which is down from the previous survey's response rate of 46%. There were 60 questions in total. In comparison to last year's staff survey –
- 8 questions received best ever results or have improved to some degree
 - 17 questions remained the same (10 which were positive results including 5 best ever, 6 which were negative results including 1 worse ever, and 1 which the result has been identical year on year)
 - 35 questions received worse ever results or have worsened to some degree
- 10.4 The HR team are co-ordinating the Staff Survey 2013, which will be sent to all employees in October 2013. It is planned that these results will be available by the end of December 2013.

11 **Equality and Diversity**

- 11.1 The HR team are now co-ordinating all staff training in awareness and understanding of their individual responsibility and ensuring that all HR policies are equality impact assessed.

12 **Report Implications**

12.1 **Finance and Value for Money Implications**

12.1.1 These will depend on whether additional resources are used to cover periods of absence. Most short-term absence is absorbed within sections. However, if sickness is long term, and the service could potentially fail as a result of staff shortages, then there would be additional costs to maintain services, either through buying in extra resources or acting up arrangements.

12.2 Human Resources Implications

12.2.1 As detailed in the report.

12.3 Environment and Sustainability Implications

12.3.1 The work on numeracy, literacy and NVQ's is bringing the employee skills up to a minimum standard and will directly contribute towards the priorities of the North Warwickshire Sustainable Communities Strategy 2009 – 2026 of raising aspirations, education, attainment and skills.

12.4 Equality Implications

12.4.1 Under the Equality Act there are specific responsibilities specified under the public sector equality duty to ensure that local authorities meet the general equality duty. In terms of Human Resources there are specific codes of practice for employment and for equal pay.

12.4 Links to Council's Priorities

12.4.1 Improvement in sickness absence is one of the objectives within the Human Resources Strategy.

The Contact Officer for this report is Kerry Drakeley (719300).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date

ALL SICKNESS

	2011/12	2012/13	2011/12	2012/13	2011/12	2012/13
Division	FTE per Division	FTE per Division	Days Lost by FTE	Days Lost by FTE	Sickness per FTE	Sickness per FTE
Assistant Chief Exec	33.54	30.73	131.09	266.52	3.91	8.67
Corporate Services	28.24	31.54	244.95	181.34	8.67	5.75
Streetscape	62.92	63.04	487.09	687.29	7.74	10.90
Leisure & Comm Dev	57.62	59.25	265.60	264.97	4.61	4.47
Community Services	41.70	41.33	201.43	382.27	4.83	9.25
Finance & HR	18.85	16.90	93.01	137.70	4.93	8.15
Housing	92.78	92.97	1,090.73	1,199.57	11.76	12.90
Internal Audit	2.48	2.49	33.43	9.00	13.48	3.61
Chief Exec	5.00	4.00	7.00	13.00	1.40	3.25
Total	343.13	342.25	2,554.33	3,141.64	7.44	9.18

SHORT TERM SICKNESS

	2011/12	2012/13	2011/12	2012/13	2011/12	2012/13
Division	FTE per Division	FTE per Division	Days Lost by FTE	Days Lost by FTE	Sickness per FTE	Sickness per FTE
Assistant Chief Exec	33.54	30.73	104.09	171.12	3.10	5.57
Corporate Services	28.24	31.54	145.45	160.34	5.15	5.08
Streetscape	62.92	63.04	414.09	544.29	6.58	8.63
Leisure & Comm Dev	57.62	59.25	265.60	234.97	4.61	3.97
Community Services	41.70	41.33	201.43	190.88	4.83	4.62
Finance & HR	18.85	16.90	33.01	24.70	1.75	1.46
Housing	92.78	92.97	468.70	531.86	5.05	5.72
Internal Audit	2.48	2.49	4.43	9.00	1.79	3.61
Chief Exec	5.00	4.00	7.00	13.00	1.40	3.25
Total	343.13	342.25	1,643.80	1,880.16	4.79	5.49

LONG TERM SICKNESS

	2011/12	2012/13	2011/12	2012/13	2011/12	2012/13
Division	FTE per Division	FTE per Division	Days Lost by FTE	Days Lost by FTE	Sickness per FTE	Sickness per FTE
Assistant Chief Exec	33.54	30.73	27.00	95.40	0.81	3.10
Corporate Services	28.24	31.54	99.50	21.00	3.52	0.67
Streetscape	62.92	63.04	73.00	143.00	1.16	2.27
Leisure & Comm Dev	57.62	59.25	0.00	30.00	0.00	0.51
Community Services	41.70	41.33	0.00	191.39	0.00	4.63
Finance & HR	18.85	16.90	60.00	113.00	3.18	6.69
Housing	92.78	92.97	622.03	667.71	6.70	7.18
Internal Audit	2.48	2.49	29.00	0.00	11.69	0.00
Chief Exec	5.00	4.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
Total	343.13	342.25	910.53	1,261.51	2.65	3.69

Reasons for Sickness**APPENDIX B**

	Accident	Anxiety / Dep	Back	Cancer	Chest	Cold	ENT / Eye	Flu	Geni-Urin	Heart	Hyperten	Musc	Neuro	Op & Post Op	Preg	Stom	Stress	Not known	Total
NWBC	70.00	233.67	250.47	47.87	321.53	124.25	117.28	274.68	22.77	120.09	15.00	226.76	74.05	564.28	37.00	345.36	287.60	9.00	3,141.64

<u>Sickness Code</u>	<u>Description</u>
Accident	Accident At Work
Anxiety/ Depression	Anxiety, Depression
Back	Back & Neck problems
Cancer	Cancer related
Chest	Chest & Respiratory: to include Chest infections
Cold	Cold symptoms
ENT/Eye	Eye, Ear, Nose & Mouth/Dental : to include sinusitis
Flu	Flu symptoms
Genito-Urinary	Genito Urinary: to include menstrual problems
Heart	Heart Blood pressure& circulation
Hypertension	High Blood Pressure
Muscular	Other musculoskeletal problems
Neurological	Neurological; to include headaches and migraine
Operation & Post Op	Operation, Post Op
Pregnancy	Pregnancy related
Stomach	Stomach, Liver, Kidney & Digestion; to include gastro-enteritis
Stress	Stress, Mental health & fatigue
Unknown	No reason known for absence