

4. SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2018 - 30 SEPTEMBER 2018)

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services providing details of the management of sickness absence in the council for the period 1 April to 30 September 2018, together with a brief commentary on the early application of the new Policy and Procedure in Supporting Attendance at Work.

The Head of Corporate Services explained that the Council Executive had on 26 June 2018 approved a Policy and Procedure for Supporting Attendance at Work which had replaced the former Policy and Procedure on Managing Sickness Absence with effect from 1 September 2018. Therefore the report covered the 5 month period from 1 April to 31 August 2018 when the former policy was in operation and the month of September when the new policy became effective.

The report then provided an overview of the sickness absence rates for the council overall and for each of the services noting that of the seven services four services reported sickness absence rates above the council target of 3.6%. The report also provided an overview of long-term continuous absence rates, disregarded absences and the reasons for absence for the five month period 1 April to 31 August 2018.

The Head of Corporate Services continued by providing details of sickness absence case management and explaining the support initiatives that the council had in place to support those absent from work and which included the employee assistance programme and the healthy working lives programme.

The Head of Corporate Services concluded the report by providing a brief overview of the introduction of the new policy for Supporting Attendance at Work noting the training provided to managers and meetings with the trade unions on the implementation of the policy. The application of the policy would continue to be monitored over the coming months with progress being reported back to the Panel on a monthly basis in accordance with the usual reporting pattern.

It was recommended that the Panel note the content of the report.

Decision

1. To note the content of the report; and
2. To request that the Head of Corporate Services provide all Panel Members with further information on the usage by staff of the telephone support line since its launch on 1 November 2018.