

4. SICKNESS ABSENCE (1 APRIL 2018 - 31 DECEMBER 2018)

The Panel considered a report (copies of which had been circulated) by the Head of Corporate Services providing sickness rates for the 9 month period from 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 together with a brief commentary on the application of the new Policy and Procedure on Supporting Attendance at Work which came into effect from 1 September 2018.

The sickness absence Standard Performance Indicator (SPI) for the full council for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 was set out at Appendix 1 to the report, together with the SPI performance indicators for the full years (2015/16, and 2016/17 and 2017/18).

The sickness absence SPI for each service area (teachers and non-teachers were shown separately) for the period 1 April 2018 to 31 December 2018 was set out in Appendix 2. Of the seven council service areas, four reported sickness absence rates above the council target of 3.6% these being; Housing, Customer & Building Services, Operational Services, Planning & Economic Development and Social Policy.

The report went on to provide details of Long-Term Absence/Continuous Absence and Disregarded Absences. It also provided an analysis of categories of Absence, highlighting that the most common reason for long term absence across the council fell within the category of Mental and Behavioural.

The Head of Corporate Services advised that the absence management team within HR Services had continued to work closely with managers across the council, providing advice and guidance on the monitoring and management of sickness. Table 1 in the report showed the number of employees at each stage of the Policy and Procedure as at 31 December 2018 compared to the previously reported positions and Table 2 in the report showed a breakdown of live cases as at 30 September 2018.

The report also provided commentary on other support initiatives that the council had in place including the Occupational Health Contract, which was currently out to tender, the HR Adviser input to Management meetings, the Employee Assistance Programme and Employee Wellbeing.

The Head of Corporate Services also provided the Panel with an update on the Supporting Attendance at Work Policy which had come into effect on 1 September 2018. It was noted that since its introduction, 53 requests for management discretion had been discussed with HR, 42 (79%) of which had resulted in discretion being applied to suspend application of the trigger level for a limited period taking into account the circumstances of the individual case.

The Panel was asked to note the content of the report

The Panel requested that for future sickness reports further detail be included on those absences that fell within the category "Mental and

Behavioural”.

Decision

1. To note the contents of the report; and
2. To request that future sickness absence monitoring reports include further details on those absences that fell within the category “Mental and Wellbeing”.