

REPORT TO: CABINET MEMBER - CORPORATE SERVICES
DATE: 3 March 2010
SUBJECT: SICKNESS ABSENCE POSITION – QUARTERS 2&3, 2009/10
WARDS AFFECTED: None
REPORT OF: M.H. FOGG, Personnel Director
CONTACT OFFICER: B.R HILTON, Health and Safety Manager
**EXEMPT/
CONFIDENTIAL:** No

PURPOSE/SUMMARY:

To provide the Cabinet Member with information on sickness absence levels for all staff (including school based) during the second and third quarters of 2009/2010, together with any proposed improvements in sickness absence management as well as any current initiatives.

REASON WHY DECISION REQUIRED:

To promote reduction in sickness levels, and better targeting on priority areas and departments

RECOMMENDATION(S):

It is recommended that:

- (i) the report is noted, particularly in respect of current management action and initiatives relating to sickness absence

KEY DECISION: No

FORWARD PLAN: Not appropriate

IMPLEMENTATION DATE: Following the expiry of the “call-in” period for the Minutes of this meeting

ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS:

N/A

IMPLICATIONS: None

Budget/Policy Framework:

Financial:

<u>CAPITAL EXPENDITURE</u>	2006/ 2007 £	2007/ 2008 £	2008/ 2009 £	2009/ 2010 £
Gross Increase in Capital Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton Capital Resources				
Specific Capital Resources				
<u>REVENUE IMPLICATIONS</u>				
Gross Increase in Revenue Expenditure				
Funded by:				
Sefton funded Resources				
Funded from External Resources				
Does the External Funding have an expiry date? Y/N	When?			
How will the service be funded post expiry?				

Legal: None

Risk Assessment: N/A

Asset Management: None

CONSULTATION UNDERTAKEN/VIEWS

There are no financial consequences and therefore the Finance Director has not been consulted

CORPORATE OBJECTIVE MONITORING:

<u>Corporate Objective</u>		<u>Positive Impact</u>	<u>Neutral Impact</u>	<u>Negative Impact</u>
1	Creating a Learning Community		√	
2	Creating Safe Communities		√	
3	Jobs and Prosperity		√	
4	Improving Health and Well-Being	√		
5	Environmental Sustainability		√	
6	Creating Inclusive Communities		√	
7	Improving the Quality of Council Services and Strengthening local Democracy	√		
8	Children and Young People		√	
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS RELIED UPON IN THE PREPARATION OF THIS REPORT				
ResourceLink has supplied all numerical data for this report.				

BACKGROUND

For reference:

- i) corporate targets are 2.20% short term, 1.80% long term (4.0% overall)
- ii) mean metropolitan overall 5.50% (5.80%)
- iii) lower quartile metropolitan 5.20% (5.30%)
- iv) upper quartile metropolitan 6.20% (6.40%)

NB. The figures given for comparison are 2004/2005 local authority figures; those in brackets are for 2003/2004.

Overall performance

1. Based on records currently entered on the system, the total number of 'available days' from 1st July 2009 to 30 September 2009 (Quarter 2), including school-based staff, was 470,477 Full Time Equivalent (FTE) days and for 1 October 2009 to 31 December 2009 (Quarter 3) was 472,104. Total absence, both long and short term, over Quarter 2 was 14,578 FTE days and 20,660 for Quarter 3. Overall absence rate was 3.10% - comprising of 1.57% short term and 1.53% long term for Quarter 2 and 4.39% - comprising 2.43% short term and 1.96% long term for Quarter 3. This equates to approximately 7.13 days and 10.10 days respectively per employee.
2. If the data for school-based staff are extracted there were 189,028 FTE days available for Quarter 2 and 188,065 FTE days for Quarter 3. Corresponding total absence, both short and long term, was 9,014 FTE days equating to an overall rate of 4.77% (10.97 days per employee) - comprising 2.24% short term and 2.53% long term for Quarter 2. For Quarter 3 9,852 FTE days were lost equating to an overall rate of 5.23% (12.10 days per employee) – comprising 2.59% short term and 2.64%.
3. Overall performance for Quarter 2 continues to compare favourably against previous quarters however Quarter 3 shows that the corporate targets have not been achieved for the first time in twelve months. There is no apparent reason for this other than increases within the smaller departments, such as Legal, Personnel and Tourism, which obviously have more impact on overall rates.
4. Some slippage certainly within Quarter 3 should be anticipated particularly for short term rates as these tend to be affected by endemic patterns such as those associated winter illnesses. This is confirmed by the significant increase to the number of days lost for infection related absence and this is likely to continue through to the next quarter. (Refer to paragraph 11).

Departmental performance

5. Table 1 (shown at ANNEX 1) illustrates departmental performance for the second and third quarters of 2009/2010. Figures exceeding the short and long terms targets are shaded.
6. Most departments have demonstrated absence rates in line with corporate targets. However Environmental Protection, Health and Social Care and Tourism still need to reduce their levels for both short and long term rates.
7. It is also important to note that the overall figure still consistently remains not only considerably below the 5.5% for the mean Metropolitan figure but also below that for the lower quartile.

Reasons for absence

8. Tables 2 and 3 (shown at ANNEX 2) illustrate the number of FTE days against the reasons for absence, both short and long term, for all quarters. The data have been split by gender, and left as FTE days, to give a sense of scale of absence.

9. Tables 4 and 5 (shown at ANNEX 3) illustrate the same data as Tables 2 and 3 but excluding school-based staff.
10. It should be noted that the highest reason for absence for both quarters is for Infection, which accounts for 24.0% and 34.65% respectively of overall sickness absence (inclusive of schools). General Medical Illness, Musculoskeletal conditions and Mental Health type absences feature as second, third and fourth places of overall absence, albeit in differing orders across the two quarters.
11. Infection related absence for Quarter 3 has increased 204% in comparison to Quarter 2. This is in line with previous years' figures and is to be expected. There is little that managers can do to prevent this type of absence other than ensure that they manage cases appropriately and in accordance with best practice within the Sickness Absence Policy.

Recent 'absence management' initiatives

12. The Health Unit has recently commenced an audit of sickness absence reporting focussing mainly on schools and their systems. The results of the audit will be used to develop an action plan for any areas identified as requiring improvement.

Recommendations

13. It is recommended that:
 - (i) the report is noted, particularly in respect of current management action and initiatives relating to sickness absence.

Table 1 – Departmental analysis - inclusive of school based staff, April 2009 to December 2009

Departments	FIRST QUARTER		SECOND QUARTER		THIRD QUARTER		FOURTH QUARTER	
	Short Term Days	Long Term Days	Short Term Days	Long Term Days	Short Term Days	Long Term Days	Short Term Days	Long Term Days
Chief Executive	158	284	219	263	147	289		
CSF	5181	5173	4397	4171	8259	6140		
Environmental Protection	585	991	904	1085	967	1267		
Finance	185	335	205	212	215	212		
Housing MR	0	0	4	0	25	0		
Legal	85	0	118	13	157	64		
Leisure Services	248	410	336	264	330	209		
Personnel	24	71	76	88	66	0		
Planning and Ec	241	321	371	279	426	255		
Regeneration Regeneration and Tech Servs	14	0	42	0	33	0		
Health and Social Care	478	688	682	742	792	691		
Tourism	16	94	46	63	61	66		
Total	7215	8367	7400	7180	11478	9242		

Table 2: Short term - April 2009 to December 2009 (inclusive of school based staff)

Reason for absence	1 st Quarter			2 nd Quarter			3 rd Quarter			4 th Quarter		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Accidents*	183	39	144	215	81	134	285	116	169			
Medical illness/disease	1359	384	975	1257	369	888	1762	387	1375			
Operation/post recovery	642	147	495	646	149	497	303	74	229			
Musculoskeletal	994	398	596	883	417	466	905	333	572			
Mental Health (inc stress)	387	79	308	370	106	264	699	144	555			
Infection	2281	565	1716	2875	754	2121	5961	1378	4583			
Total	5846	1612	4234	6246	1876	4370	9915	2432	7483			

Table 3: Long term - April 2009 to December 2009 (inclusive of school based staff)

Reason for absence	1 st Quarter			2 nd Quarter			3 rd Quarter			4 th Quarter		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Accidents*	694	71	623	467	78	389	767	305	462			
Medical illness/disease	1179	588	591	1667	905	762	1759	918	841			
Operation/post recovery	2033	655	1378	1488	575	913	1797	364	1433			
Musculoskeletal	2087	585	1502	1886	767	1119	1671	674	997			
Mental Health (inc stress)	2304	309	1995	1916	461	1455	2951	775	2176			
Infection	785	220	565	624	137	487	1198	197	1001			
Total	9082	2428	6654	8048	2923	5125	10143	3233	6910			

* Further details attached at Annex 4

Table 4: Short term - April 2009 to December 2009 (exclusive of school based staff)

Reason for absence	1 st Quarter			2 nd Quarter			3 rd Quarter			4th Quarter		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Accidents	106	32	74	169	70	99	145	91	54			
Medical illness/disease	546	201	345	770	262	508	712	204	508			
Operation/post recovery	296	119	177	361	139	222	207	74	133			
Musculoskeletal	637	276	361	652	289	363	513	235	278			
Mental Health (inc stress)	197	50	147	224	98	126	242	70	172			
Infection	1076	369	707	1907	716	1291	2423	804	1619			
Total	2858	1047	1811	4083	1474	2609	4242	1478	2764			

Table 5: Long term - April 2009 to December 2009 (exclusive of school based staff)

Reason for absence	1 st Quarter			2 nd Quarter			3 rd Quarter			4th Quarter		
	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F	Total	M	F
Accidents	431	72	359	350	70	280	473	218	255			
Medical illness/disease	823	501	322	1058	311	747	939	426	513			
Operation/post recovery	837	356	481	766	392	374	769	256	513			
Musculoskeletal	1398	428	970	1140	653	487	1111	557	554			
Mental Health (including stress)	1355	306	1049	1079	428	651	1397	372	1025			
Infection	409	147	262	366	112	254	727	110	617			
Total	5253	1810	3443	4759	1966	2793	5416	1939	3477			

Accident Statistics for Quarters 2 and 3 (July to December 2009) 2009/2010

Dept	No of accidents at work		Reasons	No of FTE days lost	
	Male	Female		Male and Female (work related)	Male and Female (not work related)
Chief Exec	0	1	1 x fainted	1	57
Children's Services	1	11	7 x sprain 4 x bruising 1 x burn	312	769
Env Protection	10	0	5x strain 2 x other 2 x physical impact 1 x harmful substance	257	40
Finance	5	0	1 x laceration 1 x burn	3	1
H & Social Care	0	0			51
Legal	0	1	1 x sprain	2	0
Leisure Servs	0	0		0	103
Personnel	0	0		0	59
Planning & E Regen	0			0	17
Regen & Tech Servs	0	0		0	0
Tourism	0	0		0	0
Total	15	2		575	1097