

THE VALE OF GLAMORGAN COUNCIL

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE:  
27<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019

REFERENCE FROM CABINET: 18<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER, 2019

**“C142 Q2 SICKNESS ABSENCE REPORT 2019/2020 (L /PR) (SCRUTINY – CORPORATE PERFORMANCE AND RESOURCES) –**

The report set out the sickness absence figures for the six month period 1<sup>st</sup> April, 2019 to 30<sup>th</sup> September, 2019 as part of the agreed performance management arrangements.

There had been a significant increase in absence levels during the first half of 2019/2020 compared with the same period for the previous financial year. The absence rates were set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report and showed an increase from 3.71 days lost per FTE (April to September 2018) to 4.74 days lost per FTE (April to September 2019). The target for Quarter 2 (April to September 2019) was set as 3.71 days lost per FTE.

An analysis of the figures in each Directorate was set out in paragraph 2.7 of the report and an analysis of the reasons for absence was set out in paragraphs 2.13 to 2.25.

The increase in absence levels was largely due to the increase in long term absence rates together with an increase in absences within Schools. With Schools having almost 50% of the workforce, any increase in this area was likely to cause an increase Council wide.

There continued to be scrutiny of absence cases which took place on a monthly basis between the HR Business Partnership and Occupational Health teams, particularly reviewing staff with absences over four weeks and those who had regular absences to provide early intervention and support. Absence was discussed at Directorate Management Teams as part of their service-based action plans.

Figures for the comparison for the rest of the Welsh Authorities would not be available until later in the year, but these would be shared when available. The Vale of Glamorgan Council's current annual forecast for 2019/2020 was 11.66 days lost per FTE. This was a significant increase on absence levels for the Council over the past few years. For 2018/2019 the Council's absence figure was 9.12 days lost per FTE as a comparison.

The Council continued to support its staff through a number of initiatives listed in paragraphs 2.27 to 2.29 of the report.

The performance management approach to absence management would continue throughout 2019/20 with further updates provided to Cabinet and Scrutiny as required.

The Executive Leader and Cabinet Member for Corporate Performance and Resources commented that it was important to note that there had been a lot of Stress Related absence which was now recorded as non-work and work related. The other main reason for absence was Musculoskeletal. The Executive Leader stated that long term absence would have to be looked into further.

This was a matter for Executive decision.

Cabinet, having considered the report and all the issues and implications contained therein

RESOLVED –

- (1) T H A T the report and the yearly sickness absence figures provided in Appendix A be noted.
- (2) T H A T progress in relation to the Care First Employee Assistance Programme as attached in Appendix B to the report be noted.
- (3) T H A T the report be referred to Corporate Performance and Resources Scrutiny Committee for consideration, with any comments referred back to Cabinet for further consideration.

#### Reasons for decisions

- (1) To bring matters to the attention of Members of the Cabinet in line with corporate objectives.
- (2) To inform Members of the Cabinet of the progress in relation to the Employee Assistance Programme.
- (3) To enable the Scrutiny Committee to maintain a continued focus on the management of sickness absence throughout all services of the Council and to make recommendations to Cabinet, as appropriate.”

Attached at Appendix A: Report to Cabinet – 18<sup>th</sup> November, 2019