



Report to Resources Committee

3 May 2016

Title: Sickness Absence and Human Resources Update

Report of: Support Services Manager

Purpose of Report

1. To provide the committee with an update on general HR initiatives and developments from 1 April 2015 to 31 March 2016, including sickness absence and learning and development activity.

Employee and HR Monitoring Digest

2. Attached at Appendix 1 to this report is an analysis of the key employee data and HR monitoring to provide the committee with an overview of the Company's performance and key priorities.

Sickness Absence

3. Attached at Appendix 2 is an analysis of the sickness absence levels for the period.
5. In comparing absence between 1 April 2015 and 31 March 2016 with the same period in the previous year, the following trends have occurred:
6. The total sickness absence for the period equates to 10.29 days per person, compared to 8.91 days for the same period last year, which is an increase of 13%.
7. Short term absence is defined as a period of less than 15 working days in duration and long term absence is greater than 15 days in duration.
8. Short term absence for the period was 3.89 days per person. This compares with 3.91 days for the same period last year. This represents an increase of 0.51%
9. Long term absence for the period was 6.42 days per person this compares with 5.00 days for the same period last year. This represents an increase of 22%
10. The biggest cause of absence for the period was post operation with 861 days lost compared to 461.20 for the same period last year. This represents an increase of 15%.

11. Stress related absence increased by increased by 15% compared to the same period last year.
12. Of the 812 days lost due to stress for the period, 602 days was reported as non-work related stress. This equated to 75% non-work related absence and 25% work-related absence.
13. Twenty Four employees reported non-work related stress and five employees reported work related stress.
14. We are working with Gateshead Council's Occupational Health team to review the management of stress related absence, particularly around early intervention.
15. A personal support package continues to be provided to employees who are absent due to stress to include occupational health, occupational therapy, home visits, counselling and cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT).

Managing Sickness Absence

16. The company has held twenty one sickness absence review meetings (short term) in the period. These meetings are triggered in response to four periods of absence or two periods of 15 days or more in a rolling 12 month period.
17. Twelve first written cautions were issued following absence review meetings during the period.
18. Under procedure two, an absence management review (long term absence) considers an employee's health and future employability with the company. Options discussed at the absence reviews include phased return to work, redeployment, work life balance, reduced hours, and reasonable adjustments to the working environment and ill health retirement.
19. Twenty Two absence review meetings were held in line with procedure two in the period.
20. In the period, eighteen occupational health physician appointments have been attended as a result of an absence review meeting.
21. In the period, seventeen employees were referred to occupational health to receive cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT) counselling support.
22. Of the seventeen employees referred to (CBT) counselling support fourteen reported non-work related issues and three reported work related issues.
23. Ten employees returned to work on phased hours and duties in the period.
24. Management information and guidance on managing sickness absence is provided to managers on a monthly basis.
25. Four weekly meetings are established with an Occupational Health Physician and an Occupational Health Nurse to review complex cases.

Sickness Absence Benchmarking

26. We share absence data with Gateshead Council. In the month of December 10.25 days were lost due to sickness absence in Gateshead Council compared to 9.17 in TGHC. It is to be noted that occupational work groups differ between our organisations.

ITrent

27. In March 2016, ITrent the HR and payroll software went live. This follows a period of dual processing for salary and other payments. The PSE system will close in March and employee information will be archived for reference.
28. TGHC have met with the ITrent team to discuss the level of modifications needed to maximise the functionality of the system. The differences in our policies for example holiday entitlement and absence management means that for the present we will continue to use our existing processes for data collection, monitoring and management information.

Health and Wellbeing

29. We continue to investigate initiatives that will help us to better understand the causes of depression, anxiety and stress. We aim to use the knowledge gained in this area to research new initiatives to assist employees to manage their condition and remain in work.
30. The Company continues to work towards the Better Health at Work Award – Gold level and will be assessed against the criteria in July 2016.

Other HR initiatives and Developments

31. The Company continues to offer a ‘pay day pamper’ and chiropody service from the Occupational Health suite at Gateshead Civic Centre. Employees are offered a wider range of appointment dates and times. We will continue to offer these initiatives off site, subject to demand, whenever possible.

Work Life Balance

32. In the period the following work life balance applications have been approved:

No of Applications	Type of Work Life Balance Request
9	Applications to reduce working hours
3	Applications to change working patterns
2	Applications to job share
1	Application for compressed hours

33. To date, 31 March 2016, we are pleased to report that 57 of 338 employees have a work life balance. This equates to 17% of the workforce. Approved work life balance requests are as follows:

- 9 employees work compressed hours

- 40 employees work reduced hours
- 1 employee works increased hours
- 10 employees have changed their working pattern
- 1 return to full time working from term time working

Bullying and Harassment

34. In the period there was one investigation into bullying and harassment associated to the protected characteristics. This investigation has concluded with appropriate and proportionate action taken.

Other HR Initiatives and Developments

Recruitment

35. In the period the company has advertised twenty seven jobs.

Child Care Scheme

36. The company continues to offer a salary sacrifice scheme. In December 2015, seventeen employees were in the scheme.

Cycle to Work Scheme

37. The company continues to offer a salary sacrifice scheme. In the period thirteen employees were in the scheme.
38. The current scheme ends in July 2016. Options will be explored to continue to offer this benefit to employees beyond this.

Learning and Development Activity

39. We are aware that many of our employees face increasing emotional challenges in their role to support tenants to manage the impact of Housing reforms, Universal Credit and to sustain their tenancies.
40. The OD Advisor shadowed the Advice and Support Advisors in the Rent and Income team to better understand the challenges facing employees in their roles. This has led to the development of a bespoke training session with tips and techniques that help build employee resilience and the ability to bounce back.
41. As part of the review of the Housing Management Assistant role which is now Neighbourhood Services Advisor, Housing Advice training has been delivered to support employees in providing first point of contact advice to customers, specifically in relation to lettings.
42. In the period 1 October to 31 March 2016 the following courses have been delivered:-
- Unlocking Construction
 - Management of health and safety
 - Conflict Resolution and Personal Safety
 - Asbestos Awareness

- Ipad Training
- First Aid
- Stress Awareness
- Managers managing stress positively
- Water Hygiene
- Fire Safety
- Legionella Awareness

Qualifications

43. Four employees have been supported to study for a professional qualification.

Investors in People (IiP)

44. As part of the three year supported accreditation we met with our assessor in November to discuss the changes in the standard which was launched in September 2015. TGHC three year assessment will take place in June 2017.

Link to values

45. This report links to the following company values:

- Fair
- Customer focused
- Open and honest
- Accountable
- Inclusive, valuing diversity
- Innovative
- Passionate about what we do

Impact on Customers

46. Sickness absence impacts on the level of service provided to customers. Every effort is taken to keep this to a minimum. Managing absence and delivering in our commitment to have a well trained and responsive workforce will lead directly to improved services to customers.

Risk Management Implications

47. Manager's not managing sickness in accordance with the policy has been identified as an operational risk and controls and future actions are in place to mitigate the risk.
48. Absence due to an epidemic has also been identified as an operational risk and if there was an epidemic which significantly reduced the workforce, this would be addressed through the Business Continuity Plan once it has been launched and gone live.

Financial Implications

49. The financial cost of sickness absence to the Company for the period April to March 2016 was £362.110 compared to £302.693 for the same period last year which equates to a 16% increase.

Equality and Diversity Implications

50. The Company's commitment to being an equal opportunities employer is an integral part of every aspect of the company's activities. All training is designed to meet the diverse needs of the community and employees.

Value for Money implications

51. We continue to manage sickness absence in order to maximise service delivery to tenants and customers. Through an increased use of internal delivery and development value for money is being achieved. We aim to use the most beneficial methods of delivery to maximise the return on our investments for the benefit of the company and customers. Value for money principles are followed in all aspects of the service to include work life balance requests, recruitment and selection.

Health Implications

52. The initiatives and prevention work that has been introduced has had a positive impact on the health of our employees. The clearest measure of this is the achievement of Investors in People (IiP) and Health and Wellbeing Award and the North East Better Health at Work Silver Award.
53. The Company's commitment to learning and development is embedded in the Investors in People award (IiP) and is applied consistently across the company.
54. Our approach to provide tailored learning will have a positive impact on employee's health and overall wellbeing and will minimise stress.

Environmental Implications

55. There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

Consultation carried out

56. The Company's HR consultants EEF Northern and Trade Unions have been consulted on aspects of the report.

Recommendation

57. The views of the committee are sought as to whether it is satisfied with the Human Resources update.



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2015/16

Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Male	140	143	141	140
Female	192	187	187	184
Permanent Employees	313	307	303	304
Temporary Employees	19	23	25	20
Full Time	258	255	254	253
Part Time	74	75	74	71
Number of starters	3	9	4	0
Number of leavers	6	11	6	19
Ill health retirements	0	0	0	0
Number of employees seeking redeployment	0	0	0	0
Diversity Monitoring				
Gender				
Male	140	143	141	140
Female	192	187	187	184
Age				
Under 18	0	0	0	1
18 – 25	17	15	13	10
26 – 35	94	95	93	93
36 – 45	87	89	88	86
46 – 55	84	83	86	86
56 – 65	47	44	44	44
66 +	3	4	4	4
Disability				
Perceived themselves as disabled	34	34	33	33
Do not perceive themselves as disabled	298	296	295	91



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2015/16

Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Ethnicity				
White British	321	319	317	312
White Irish	1	1	1	1
White Other	1	1	1	1
White and Black Caribbean	1	1	1	1
White and Black African	1	0	0	1
White and Asian	1	1	1	1
Asian or Asian British Indian	1	1	1	1
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	0	0	0	0
Asian or Asian British Bangladeshi	1	1	1	1
Asian or Asian British Other	1	1	1	1
Black or Black British Caribbean	0	0	0	0
Black or Black British African	2	2	2	2
Black or Black British Other	1	1	1	1
Chinese	1	1	1	1
Other	0	0	0	0
Recruitment Monitoring				
Number of BME applicants for posts				
Application for employment	23	15	10	6
Short listed for interview	2	1	2	0
Offered post	0	0	0	0
Number of disabled applicants for posts				
Application for Employment	23	3	4	7
Short listed for interview	1	1	2	0
Offered post	0	0	0	0
HR advisory issues				
Investigations	0	1	0	2
Disciplinary	0	0	1	0
Suspensions	0	1	0	0
No Further Action	0	0	0	0
Oral Warning	0	0	0	0
First Written Warning	0	0	0	0
Final Written Warning	0	0	1	0
Dismissals	0	0	0	0
Appeals Submitted	0	0	0	0
Stage 1 Grievance	0	0	0	0
Stage 2 Grievance	0	0	0	1



Employee and HR Monitoring Digest 2015/16

Performance Measure	Qtr 1	Qtr 2	Qtr 3	Qtr 4
Capability	0	0	0	0
Bullying and Harassment	1	0	0	0
Whistleblowing	0	0	0	0
Employment Tribunals	0	0	0	0
Health and Wellbeing				
Total number of working days lost per employee (target 7.50 April 2015 to March 2016)	1.62	2.24	2.76	3.67
Total number of working days lost to sickness	472.7	650.79	801.90	1098.50
Number of Occupational Health appointments	4	4	5	5
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New referrals • Review appointments 	4 0	4 0	5 0	4 1
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Surgery appointments • Home appointments 	4 0	4 0	5 0	8 1
Number of employee counselling/CBT sessions	1	2	10	4
Number of Absence Management Reviews	11	9	12	11
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Short Term • Long Term 	5 6	5 4	5 7	6 5
Number of employees who have had a phased return	1	1	6	2
Learning and Development				
Number of new staff receiving induction	3	9	4	0
Number of staff undertaking professional Qualifications	4	5	4	4

Actual Days lost per employee per month to date

Appendix 2

2014/2015	Customers & Communities - Customer Services	Customers & Communities Neighbourhood Services	Customers & Communities Property Services	Corporate Services France	Corporate Services Support Services	All employees TGHC	TGHC cumulative	2013/14 TGHC Cumulative	Days Lost per month	Days Lost Short Term Absence	No of Occurences Short Term	Days Lost Long Term Absence	No of Occurences Long Term
April	0.44	1.61	0.13	0.00	0.00	0.91	0.91	0.54	270.20	0.25	24.00	0.66	10.00
May	0.65	1.05	0.22	0.29	0.00	0.74	1.65	1.02	220.20	0.29	19.00	0.45	7.00
June	0.49	0.30	0.26	0.36	0.00	0.35	2.00	1.63	101.60	0.22	25.00	0.13	2.00
July	1.04	0.59	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.62	2.62	2.32	184.10	0.29	19.00	0.33	5.00
August	1.00	0.57	0.94	0.23	0.12	0.68	3.30	2.94	200.00	0.27	22.00	0.41	6.00
September	1.06	0.78	1.40	0.00	0.00	0.83	4.13	3.52	242.40	0.42	29.00	0.41	6.00
October	0.77	0.36	1.40	0.15	0.18	0.55	4.68	4.23	160.80	0.33	29.00	0.22	3.00
November	1.10	0.53	1.31	1.07	0.06	0.78	5.45	4.88	227.30	0.44	38.00	0.34	5.00
December	1.29	0.51	0.91	0.87	0.27	0.80	6.25	5.52	235.00	0.16	15.00	0.64	10.00
January	0.95	0.70	0.96	0.49	0.00	0.74	6.99	6.46	216.90	0.35	33.00	0.39	6.00
February	1.48	0.91	1.09	0.52	0.00	1.02	8.01	7.59	300.20	0.50	37.00	0.52	8.00
March	1.10	0.97	1.00	0.00	0.18	0.89	8.91	8.58	262.70	0.39	43.00	0.50	7.00
Cumulative by service area	11.37	8.88	9.62	3.98	0.81	8.91			2621.40	3.91	333.00	5.00	75.00

* Days Lost = No of days absence / FTE in the service

2015/2016	Customers & Communities - Customer Services	Customers & Communities Neighbourhood Services	Customers & Communities Property Services	Corporate Services France	Corporate Services Support Services	All employees TGHC	TGHC cumulative	2014/15 TGHC Cumulative	Days Lost per month	Days Lost Short Term Absence	No of Occurences Short Term	Days Lost Long Term Absence	No of Occurences Long Term
April	0.82	0.47	1.87	0.00	0.06	0.64	0.64	0.91	187.40	0.39	33.00	0.25	4.00
May	0.71	0.24	1.78	0.00	0.13	0.50	1.14	1.65	144.70	0.25	24.00	0.25	4.00
June	0.45	0.40	1.83	0.00	0.00	0.48	1.62	2.00	140.60	0.18	18.00	0.30	4.00
July	0.87	0.69	1.58	0.06	0.00	0.74	2.36	2.62	214.50	0.30	16.00	0.44	7.00
August	0.91	0.85	0.96	0	0	0.84	3.20	3.30	245.19	0.23	22.00	0.61	12.00
September	1.06	0.44	1.27	0.15	0.00	0.66	3.86	4.13	191.10	0.29	23.00	0.37	8.00
October	1.72	0.87	0.89	0.77	0.12	1.08	4.94	4.68	316.00	0.38	24.00	0.70	11.00
November	1.10	1.10	1.21	1.31	0.00	1.02	5.96	5.45	295.95	0.27	30.00	0.75	14.00
December	0.76	0.78	0.74	0.00	0.18	0.66	6.62	6.25	189.95	0.40	27.00	0.27	4.00
January	1.38	0.92	1.04	0.00	0.03	0.83	7.45	6.99	245.00	0.35	33.00	0.49	7.00
February	1.56	1.12	1.44	0.41	0.00	1.35	8.80	8.01	405.50	0.51	31.00	0.84	14.00
March	1.48	0.98	1.40	0.00	0	1.49	10.29	8.91	448.00	0.34	21.00	1.15	18.00
Cumulative by service area	12.82	8.86	16.01	2.70	0.52	10.29			3023.89	3.89	302.00	6.42	107.00

* Days Lost = No of days absence / FTE in the service