



Haverling

LONDON BOROUGH

VALUE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE AGENDA

7.30 pm

Thursday
13 February 2014

Town Hall, Main Road,
Romford

Members 9: Quorum 4

COUNCILLORS:

**Conservative
(5)**

Robby Misir
(Chairman)
Rebecca Bennett
Jeffrey Brace
Billy Taylor
Damian White

**Residents'
(2)**

Ray Morgon
(Vice-Chair)
Clarence Barrett

**Labour
(1)**

Keith Darvill

**UKIP
(1)**

Sandra Binion

**For information about the meeting please contact:
Richard Cursons 01708 432430
richard.cursons@haverling.gov.uk**

What is Overview & Scrutiny?

Each local authority is required by law to establish an overview and scrutiny function to support and scrutinise the Council's executive arrangements. Each overview and scrutiny committee has its own remit as set out in the terms of reference but they each meet to consider issues of local importance.

They have a number of key roles:

1. Providing a critical friend challenge to policy and decision makers.
2. Driving improvement in public services.
3. Holding key local partners to account.
4. Enabling the voice and concerns of the public.

The committees consider issues by receiving information from, and questioning, Cabinet Members, officers and external partners to develop an understanding of proposals, policy and practices. They can then develop recommendations that they believe will improve performance, or as a response to public consultations.

Committees will often establish Topic Groups to examine specific areas in much greater detail. These groups consist of a number of Members and the review period can last for anything from a few weeks to a year or more to allow the Members to comprehensively examine an issue through interviewing expert witnesses, conducting research and site visits. Once the topic group has finished its work it will send a report to the Committee that created it and it will often suggest recommendations to the executive.

Terms of Reference

The areas scrutinised by the Committee are:

- Customer access
- E-government and ICT
- Finance (although each committee is responsible for budget processes that affect its area of oversight)
- Human resources
- Asset Management
- Property resources
- Facilities Management
- Communications
- Democratic Services
- Social inclusion
- Councillor Call for Action

AGENDA ITEMS

1 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman will announce details of the arrangements in case of fire or other events that might require the meeting room or building's evacuation.

2 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS

(if any) - receive.

3 DISCLOSURE OF PECUNIARY INTERESTS

Members are invited to disclose any pecuniary interest in any of the items on the agenda at this point of the meeting.

Members may still disclose any pecuniary interest in an item at any time prior to the consideration of the matter.

4 MINUTES (Pages 1 - 14)

To approve as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2013 and the minutes of the Joint Overview & Scrutiny meeting held on 23 January 2014 and authorise the Chairman to sign them.

5 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INDICATORS (Pages 15 - 18)

Report attached.

6 MANAGING SICKNESS ABSENCE (Pages 19 - 32)

Report attached.

7 PLANNING PERFORMANCE

Members are asked to receive a presentation.

8 URGENT BUSINESS

To consider any other item in respect of which the Chairman is of the opinion, by reason of special circumstances which shall be specific in the minutes that the item should be considered at the meeting as a matter of urgency.

**Andrew Beesley
Committee Administration
Manager**

**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
VALUE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Town Hall, Main Road, Romford
28 November 2013 (7.30 - 8.30 pm)**

Present:

Councillors Robby Misir (Chairman), Ray Morgon (Vice-Chair), Jeffrey Brace, Damian White, Clarence Barrett, Keith Darvill and Frederick Thompson

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Rebecca Bennett, Councillor Billy Taylor and Councillor Sandra Binion.

+Substitute member Councillor Frederick Thompson (for Rebecca Bennett)

9 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 July and 3 September 2013 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the following amendment;

11 July minutes should read in the preamble that Councillor Linda Hawthorn substituted for Councillor Clarence Barrett.

10 CORPORATE PERFORMANCE INFORMATION

The report before members detailed the Annual Corporate Performance Report which had been before Cabinet in July 2013.

Members were also given a copy of the Quarter 2 performance information that been before Cabinet on 20 November 2013.

Members studied both reports and a number of issues were raised during the debate.

It was highlighted that the statistical information provided did not have any "actual" numbers in the reports showing caseloads that officers were working with. Members felt that a more graphical illustration showing trends and trend data showing a direction of travel would be more useful.

Officers replied that provision of additional data would prove difficult to collate against all of the performance indicators but could be looked at regarding specific pre-identified indicators.

In reply to a question regarding the low level of Council Tax collection in the borough, members were advised that the figure shown was only for a six month period and therefore was quite high and showed that Havering was in the top half of all London boroughs in Council Tax collection rates. Members were given an update paper that showed the current position regarding Council Tax arrears collection rates in the borough

Members noted that the indicator relating to MP/Councillor enquiries had previously dropped, in reply officers confirmed that a couple of the Council's service areas had undergone re-structures and the introduction of new IT and had struggled to keep to the agreed deadlines for replies to MP/Councillor enquiries, a matter that had now been addressed.

In reply to a question regarding the increase in the employee sickness absence rate officers confirmed that staff still carried out return to work interviews and received continual training to manage sickness absence.

The Committee felt that it would be beneficial for the Head of Human Resources to provide a written update to the next meeting to give members an update on the current situation regarding sickness management.

Members also suggested that it would be prudent for other Overview and Scrutiny Committees (OSCs) to look at performance indicators with "actual" figures in mind and asked that the other OSCs be advised of this. Examples of this were the number of refuse collections that were missed and the actual number of fly tipping incidents that took place within the borough and what action was taken against perpetrators.

11 COUNCIL CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT MODEL

Members agreed that they wished to see written updates on the following subjects at the next meeting of the Committee.

1. The corporate contract for the supply of agency workers (including which services were using temporary workers and the current spend).
2. The Council's financial strategy.

12 WORK PROGRAMME

Following discussions (some contained earlier in these minutes) members agreed that written reports on the following subjects be brought before the Committee at the next meeting.

- An update on sickness absence monitoring
- Update on MP/Councillors enquiries (each member agreed to forward on two examples of enquiries that had not been dealt with within the specified time allowed)

- A full breakdown of the Council's partnership with the London Borough of Newham in providing shared back office services and how savings would be achieved
- Planning performance and a breakdown of Section 106/Mayoral CIL monies (how the contributions were raised and how the monies were spent)

Chairman

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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE
JOINT (ALL) OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Town Hall
23 January 2014 (7.30 - 9.05 pm)**

Present:

COUNCILLORS

Conservative Group Jeffrey Brace, Wendy Brice-Thompson, Pam Light, Robby Misir, Barry Oddy, Frederick Thompson, Melvin Wallace and Keith Wells

Residents' Group June Alexander, Clarence Barrett, Gillian Ford, Linda Hawthorn, Ray Morgon, John Mylod, Linda Van den Hende and John Wood

Labour Group Keith Darvill+, Pat Murray and Denis O'Flynn

Independent Residents Group Michael Deon Burton

UK Independence Party Group Lawrence Webb+, Ted Eden and Fred Osborne

+Substituting for Councillor Paul McGeary.

+Sunstituting for Councillor Sandra Binion.

Cabinet Members in attendance: Councillors Michael White (Leader of the Council) Steven Kelly (Deputy Leader) Roger Ramsey and Paul Rochford.

All decisions were taken with no votes against.

The Chairman reminded Members of the action to be taken in an emergency.

1 MEMBERSHIP AND CHAIRMAN OF MEETING

With the agreement of all Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members present, the Chair was taken at this special meeting by Councillor Pam Light.

2 CHAIRMAN'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chairman advised all present of action to be taken in the event of emergency evacuation of the town hall becoming necessary.

3 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF SUBSTITUTE MEMBERS (IF ANY)

Apologies for absence were received from the following Members:

Children and Learning Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Sandra Binion (substituted by Councillor Lawrence Webb)

Councillor Nic Dodin (Substituted by Councillor John Mylod)

Margaret Cameron (co-opted Member – non-voting)

Ian Rusha (co-opted Member – non-voting)

Crime & Disorder Committee:

Councillor Osman Dervish (substituted by Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson)

Councillor Roger Evans (substituted by Councillor Frederick Thompson)

Councillor Georgina Galpin (substituted by Councillor Barry Oddy)

Councillor David Durant

Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Lynden Thorpe (substituted by Councillor Barry Oddy)

Councillor Barbara Matthews

Councillor David Durant

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Nic Dodin (substituted by Councillor John Mylod)

Councillor Peter Gardner (substituted by Councillor Frederick Thompson)

Towns & Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Osman Dervish (substituted by Councillor Frederick Thompson)

Councillor Garry Pain (substituted by Councillor Melvin Wallace)

Councillor Linda Trew (substituted by Councillor Jeffrey Brace)

Value Overview and Scrutiny Committee:

Councillor Rebecca Bennett (substituted by Councillor Barry Oddy)

Councillor Billy Taylor

Councillor Damian White (substituted by Councillor Jeffrey Brace)

Councillor Sandra Binion (substituted by Councillor Lawrence Webb)

4 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no disclosures of interest.

5 **THE COUNCIL'S FINANCIAL STRATEGY**

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Michael White, explained that the Council had been required to find approximately £40 million of savings over the last four years. The Leader thanked officers for their hard work in delivering these savings. Front line services, for example weekly refuse collection, had been protected while the back office had been transformed through initiatives such as Shared Services. There had also been more than 80 restructures across the Council.

The latest financial settlement meant that further cuts would be required in the coming years although this was in line with projections for this period. Specifically, £6.5 million of funding would be lost in 2014/15 with a further £9.8 million lost in 2015/16. This would of course be challenging but the Council had been very robust in meeting savings targets. The Council should also be proud of there not having been a rise in Council Tax over the last five years.

It was felt that the funding cuts in 2014/15 could be covered in Havering without major service cuts or tax increases. Work was currently underway on the next financial strategy from 2015/16. This was estimating a potential budget gap of around £60 million which would be a challenge for the new Council.

The Government austerity programme would continue until at least 2017/18 and a further Comprehensive Spending Review was expected. Government policy to ensure an average 1% annual increase in public sector pay also impacted on the Council.

The introduction of local level business rates had not generated any additional income for the Council as the Council was only allowed to keep 30% of this revenue. A proposal to pool business rates with some neighbouring Councils would however allow the minimisation of risk. The leader also felt the use of the Council pension fund to invest in the local infrastructure could be explored further.

There was a 10% shortfall from the Government on Council Tax benefits although it was thought that a revision of the Council Tax base in Havering should deliver more money. A new homes bonus of £2.4 million for 2014/15 would allow some one-off investments such as that in Harrow Lodge Park.

There had been a rise in NHS funding to support social care but this was pooled with the Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs). New legislation affecting education and care for people under 25 years and the care of elderly people would also have a financial impact. This was also the case with the rise in numbers of properties and pupils in Havering and the rising numbers of very elderly people would lead to a heavy demand on social care services.

In conclusion, the Leader emphasised that the Council wished to protect front line services and this was in line with the Living Ambition strategy. Efficiencies had been made in all areas of the Council, for example the partnership with London Borough of Newham. Further savings would however be needed and it would be necessary to ask which Council services did not need to continue in their current form and which could be delivered in a better way in order to keep the budget under control.

Having received the presentation from the Leader of the Council, the Overview and Scrutiny Committees noted:

1. The financial position of the Council.
2. That the report was formally consulting them on the proposed Corporate budget adjustments and that this was the opportunity to scrutinise the budget proposals.

Answers to questions raised by Members on specific items of the budget are shown in the appendix to the minutes.

Chairman

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APPENDIX: JOINT MEETING OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES, 23
JANUARY 2014, ANSWERS TO MEMBER QUESTIONS ON THE COUNCIL'S
FINANCIAL STRATEGY

Questions were asked by Members on the areas shown below and answers were given by officers or Cabinet Members as follows:

1. Amount of business rates levy able to be retained – The forecast for business rates did expect a growth in the pool from the Thurrock area although this did assume that the proposed port in Thurrock went ahead.
2. Details of the Council's response to the Business Rates appeal process – This could be made available to Group Leaders.
3. Robustness of estimate for rise in Council Tax base – For the first time a material rise in the Havering Council Tax base had been seen and officers were looking at the impact of this. This would lead to a rise in demand for Council services but it was difficult at this stage to forecast the precise impact.
4. Pooled Business Rates – This system allowed each Council in the pool to reduce what they paid into Central Government. Officers would produce a briefing note on this for Members.
5. Number of grant announcements still awaited – Most grant announcements had now been received and a full table would be included within the February Cabinet report. There were now fewer grants received than in previous years.
6. Increase in overall level of risk – There was a risk from changes to the means of funding e.g. the local collection of Business Rates. It was also difficult to manage in-year issues. Efforts were however ongoing to manage and mitigate risk within the budget. All Councils were struggling with the risk of grants potentially being replaced by funding that would have to be bid for. This was a challenge for Councils throughout the country. It was also noted that the risk referred to in paragraph 3.7 of the Cabinet report related only to the current programme of savings.
7. Overspend on the Special Educational Needs (SEN) budget – This was due to an overspend on transport costs but had been offset by other savings being delivered early. This would be a pressure again next year and the transport costs were currently undergoing a full review in order to ascertain if efficiency can be improved.

8. Customer Services budget variance – The on-line portal that would allow staff savings to be made had only gone live in December rather than August 2013 due to IT problems. Restructures had now started that would lead to savings in the longer term. It was recommended that Members should use the portal to report issues such as flytips in their ward.
9. Emergency Assistance Scheme – A proposal had been put to the Corporate Management Team to carry forward any underspend to the overall emergency funding budget for next year.
10. Proposed investment in the borough by the Council pension fund – It was intended to put a sum of additional money into the pension fund in order to avoid having to increase future annual contributions by the Council. This investment would allow the pension fund to invest in Havering by e.g. buying property. This was common practice in many other pension schemes and safeguards would be in place and professional advice taken. It was important to maximise the return from the pension fund and a similar model involving a number of local Councils had funded the successful Salford Quays development near Manchester.
11. Distribution of anticipated funding gap – It was expected that the majority of the funding pressures would take place in the first two years of the next four-year cycle. This included expected reductions in Government funding and local pressures.
12. Expected value of reserves – The Council's general reserve currently stood at £11.5 million. The figure for all earmarked reserves was £48 million.
13. Details of revised arrangements for social care funding – This was the first year of Better Care funding under the current arrangements. Governance arrangements were similar for 2014/15 but funding now had to be agreed by the Health and Wellbeing Board and by NHS England. Overall funding had risen as this now included the CCG budget but more services also now had to be provided. Arrangements would become more complicated in year two as issues such as delayed discharges and seven-day working in health and social care would have to be addressed. Negotiations would be needed with the CCG on these areas and a two-year plan had to be finalised by April 2013.
14. Impact of Children and Families Bill – Officers were continuing to work through the Bill and its implications. Financial modelling was in progress and it was wished for people to stay local although would be able to receive a personal budget that they could spend anywhere. An overview and scrutiny

topic group was currently looking at this area. It was not yet possible to say however what the demand for these services would be. The cost of potentially proving education for children with special educational needs up to the age of 25 was also being worked on.

15. Member allowances – A saving of two Cabinet posts had already been agreed in the budget although this depended on Members' views after the Council election.
16. Parking income – There was in the current year a projected shortfall of approximately £400,000 across all parking budgets. Central Government was currently consulting on Council parking policies and this and this could introduce measures such as the removal of CCTV cars and a grace period on tickets. Economic factors had meant there was now less use made of car parks and seasonal factors such as wintry weather also negatively affected income.
17. Building control – Officers felt there was not enough external work to bid for to meet the quite high income targets for building control. Some staff would however still be required to discharge the Council's statutory building control functions.
18. Remand framework – The costs of children on remand had now been passed from the criminal justice system to Councils with only a small grant to cover this. The Council had spent some £557,000 on this so far this year and the Council had no control over how quickly cases reached court.
19. Housing Benefit and Council Tax support grant – This grant had been reduced across London and this funding needed to be replaced by the Council.
20. Electoral Registration – More resources were needed to cover the required Individual Electoral Registration process that was due to start in June 2014.
21. Utilities price increase – This was mainly due to inflation in electricity prices.
22. Phase 2 primary expansion – The grant allocation covered both 2014/15 and 2015/16. Although there may be a need to spend some in advance of the grant receipt this would be managed as part of the Council's cash flow and would not impact on the wider Capital programme or delay delivery.
23. Estimated school maintenance grant – Details of schools grants had been compiled for the February Cabinet report but officers would confirm the exact grant figure by e-mail.

24. Transfer of public health – It was confirmed that this was now a function of the Council led by the Director of Public Health.
25. Production of budget - The Chairman and several other Members thanked Councillor Ramsey, the Chief Executive and Council officers for their hard work in producing the budget.

DRAFT



VALUE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Subject Heading:

Corporate Performance Indicators (Value)

CMT Lead:

Cynthia Griffin, Group Director - Culture, Community and Economic Development

Report Author and contact details:

Charlene Adutwim, Corporate Performance and Projects Officer
charlene.adutwim@havering.gov.uk
01708 434269

Policy context:

The report sets out the Council's corporate performance indicators that relate to the Value Goal in the Corporate Plan for 2012/13 and 2013/14

SUMMARY

This report provides a graphical illustration of trends over 2012/13 and 2013/14 for the Council's corporate performance indicators that relate to the Value Goal in the Corporate Plan, as requested by Members of Value Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 28 November 2013.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to review the report and note its content.

REPORT DETAIL

At Value Overview & Scrutiny Committee on 28 November 2013, Members received the Quarter 1 and Quarter 2 Corporate Performance Reports, which had been to Cabinet in September and November 2013. These reports provide a snapshot of performance in time. Members asked if more detail could be provided for the Value corporate performance indicators, in the form of actual numbers, trend and benchmarking data. This data is provided in Appendix 1.

Benchmarking data

All benchmarking data has been sourced from London Authority Performance Solution (LAPS) data. Facilitated by London Councils, the LAPS project aims to share, compare and analyse local performance data collected by London Boroughs on a quarterly basis. This data is provided on a voluntarily basis, with a proviso that the data is made available for INTERNAL USE ONLY and is not published. To ensure the benchmarking data is as meaningful as possible, our statistical nearest neighbour according to ONS (Bexley) and our geographical nearest neighbours (Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham and Newham) have been highlighted.

The latest benchmarking data for Quarter 2 2013/14 has been used, except for the Council Tax and NNDR collection rates where Q4 2012/13 provides a more meaningful end-of-year comparison; and Speed of processing new Housing Benefit only claimants and Speed of processing changes in circumstances of Housing Benefit only claimants where Q1 2013/14 is the latest comparative data (as it is always a quarter behind).

It is important to note that since the abolition of the National Indicator Set in 2010, most performance indicators are collected on a local basis and therefore methodologies may differ slightly.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Adverse performance for some Corporate Performance Indicators may have financial implications for the Council. Whilst it is expected that targets will be delivered within existing resources, officers regularly review the level and prioritisation of resources required to achieve the targets agreed by Cabinet at the start of the year.

Legal implications and risks:

Whilst reporting on performance is not a statutory requirement, it is considered best practice to regularly review the Council's progress against the Corporate Plan.

Human Resources implications and risks:

There are no specific Human Resources implications.

Equalities implications and risks:

The following Corporate Performance Indicators could potentially have equality and social inclusion implications if performance is not at an acceptable level:

- CS3 Speed of processing new HB/CTB claimants
- CS4 Speed of processing changes in circumstances of HB/CTB claimants
- CS7 % of Corporate complaints completed within 10 days
- CS10 % of Member/MP enquiries completed within 10 days
- CI1 Sickness absence rate per employee (days)
- CS21 % customer satisfaction with the Contact Centre

The commentary for each indicator provides further detail on steps that will be taken to improve performance.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

The Corporate Plan 2011-14 and 'Plan on a Page' 2013-14 are available on the Living Ambition page on the Havering Council website at:

<http://www.havering.gov.uk/Pages/Campaigns/living-ambition-our-20-year-vision.aspx>

The appendix to this report is exempt from publication, in accordance with our Memorandum of Understanding with London Councils that other London Boroughs performance data will not be published.



VALUE OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

REPORT

13 February 2014

Subject Heading:

Managing Sickness Absence

CMT Lead:

Andrew Blake-Herbert

Report Author and contact details:

Caroline Nugent

Head of Strategic HR & OD

Policy context:

SUMMARY

This report provides members with an update on sickness levels following the previous Overview and Scrutiny data provided on levels of absence and reiterates the work being undertaken to reduce the number of days off work. It also highlights the wellbeing measures we are putting in place to help prevent ill health and encourage a healthier workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Members are asked to review the report and note its content.

REPORT DETAIL

Background

Our current position within Havering Council and managing absence is above target, however, is on the way to improving.

Sickness absence is calculated using the following formula i.e. *Total number of working days lost (FTE) / total number of employees (FTE)*. The methodology changed in 2013/14 to include former Homes in Havering staff and this has had an adverse impact on performance.

The three most common causes of absence for all staff are stress, other and musculoskeletal problems. This is in line with the Absence Management Annual Survey Report 2013 by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). Members will be pleased to note that although average figures are quoted, there are over 40% of staff who have had no absence in the last year. The figures are often skewed by long term cases, with those off with potential life threatening illnesses, including cancer and Parkinson's disease.

We are showing average figures comparative to the CIPD 2013 Survey Report with the average absence levels within the public sector being 8.7 days per employee per annum. The HR Benchmarker Performance Indicators 2012 Local Government Report, show an average of 9.8 days. There has been a national upward trend in sickness across the sectors, following the previous two years which showed a downward trend.

The two graphs at appendix 5 and 6 show that significant numbers of councils across London have shown an increase in sickness since last year. This is highly likely to be due to the restructures which have been carried out both in Havering and across other councils and the amount of redundancies, including compulsory redundancies, which have resulted. It must be acknowledged that employees are under significant pressure to deliver the same services (or more) with less capacity, whilst also going through periods of uncertainty themselves of not knowing if they will have a job.

Whilst acknowledging that sickness, both nationally and within comparative London Councils, has gone up, a concerted effort has started to ensure that sickness is managed.

Another significant impact on our figures has been the return of the ALMO which had higher average sickness and this has resulted in the overall figures increasing.

Sickness policy

A new corporate sickness absence procedure was implemented in 2012 and as a consequence all line managers were expected to attend mandatory training to ensure the changes and expectations were known. Each manager has access to a dashboard of information on their employees to ensure they have the data to manage their own areas.

Absence and Wellbeing Strategy

However, as absence levels have increased from the previous year, we are currently in the process of implementing improvements looking at how we can further reduce our absence levels. There is obviously an adverse impact on service delivery should sickness levels not continue to fall to a satisfactory level.

We will be implementing an overarching absence and wellbeing strategy which will also link into public health to coordinate a corporate approach to managing absence. Part of this will include line manager's actions being reviewed by senior management to ensure a consistent and fair approach is being taken. A communication campaign targeted across the council will highlight sickness to all staff and health initiatives which will be introduced should promote wellbeing. It is important to note that 'presenteeism', where people attend work when they are unwell, has been shown to be as costly to organisations both through lack of productivity and passing on their illness to a wider group of staff who are also impacted. A sustained approach to wellbeing is therefore important to reduce and sustain lower levels of sickness.

Management responsibilities

A management development programme has commenced this month which will outline expectations and support to managers. Return to work interviews are expected for each absence to ensure that the reasons for absence are known and that correct action under the procedure is taken. This has been well researched as one of the most effective ways of managing absence from work. Managers need to ensure that they are aware of why their staff are absent in order to look at preventative measures and individuals need to know the impact of them being off as well.

Of the 39 staff who have been absent over 100 days, 27 of those have now left the Authority; this will start to impact on the rolling year figures.

Improvement Initiatives

- Introduction of a streamlined managing sickness absence policy and the creation of a supporting toolkit which includes guides for managers and template letters. This allows managers to manage both short and long term sickness flexibly and more readily consider if return to work is likely and if not gives a clear indication of how the cases need to be managed.
- Improvements to the online management information (dashboards) – managers have been provided with more flexibility in how they can utilise absence data reports in the Managers' Dashboard with opportunities for drilling down into absence data.
- Creation of 'i-Bots', automatically generated information for managers responding to certain types of absence in the Oracle system. For example if an entry is made into the system regarding an absence due to stress, it gives the manager all the information in one easy place about how to support and return the employee to work as soon as possible.
- New Employee Assistance Provider (WSM) recently procured with a promotional awareness campaign to staff covering areas impacting on personal and workplace issues.
- Flu inoculations have been offered to all staff, not only those usually within GP targeted groups. Further work will be undertaken to look at the impact of this initiative to ensure value for money on the anticipated direct impact of a reduction in absence due to flu

Future improvement Initiatives

- Absence and wellbeing strategy design and implementation
- On-going delivery of sickness policy training to all managers, including new managers.
- As part of the change to One Oracle, revised guidance will be provided to Managers in the practical management of sickness recording and monitoring.
- Joined up Wellbeing initiatives with Public Health colleagues. Operational HR will work with Public Health and our Occupational Health provider Medigold and our Employee Assistance Programme provider to produce proactive wellbeing initiatives to prevent absences.

- Quarterly joint working with other local authorities such as Redbridge, Barking & Dagenham, Waltham Forest and Newham to share good practice and drive down costs through shared initiatives.
- Consideration of a Health Panel of senior managers to review initiatives to further support managers in managing sickness absence in their teams.
- Application for award of the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, similar to Investors in People. This is an opportunity for employers to demonstrate their commitment to the health and well-being of their workforce and further reduce absence levels. It is important to not only reduce sickness but to prevent it happening in the first place through health campaigns
- Proactive targeting of 'hot spots' of absence to provide further support to managers. This approach will be used to look at and reduce the sickness in the ex ALMO areas.
- Further work on resilience of staff through individual awareness campaigns and utilising free toolkits and linking to Management Development Programme.
- A broken down "League Table " of sickness levels will be sent to Heads of Service to provide an opportunity for CMT to maintain a strategic overview and challenge the corporate position.

These improvement initiatives will enable Havering Council to expand and support employees and managers on a more advanced level and decrease absence.

Sickness data

The following appendices highlight the instances of short and long term and comparative data for the current and previous rolling year. It is important to note that some figures will change each month as data is inputted and long term absences close off. The data shown on the pie chart for long and short term split is also data from April 2012 to March 2013, as this breakdown is not available in the current dashboard reporting.

Changes in departmental breakdown of data provided to senior managers has also been influenced by the corporate restructure last year where staff have moved departments and directorates and return of the ALMO, as those staff have now been incorporated into other service areas.

IMPLICATIONS AND RISKS

Financial implications and risks:

Any member of staff off sick has a direct impact on service delivery and may require on occasion an additional resource to cover the absence. The total annual cost to the Council of sickness absence has been calculated at £2,009,585 and falls in the second quartile of London Boroughs.

Legal implications and risks:

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

Human Resources implications and risks:

Managers work with Occupational Health to ensure staff are managed and supported in accordance with their individual medical issues. A toolkit is provided to managers to ensure a consistent approach is taken. A future well-being strategy which is being implemented should help prevent ill health incidences.

Equalities implications and risks:

It is important that staff are managed in line with procedures to ensure fairness and equity. Any person who has a disability is covered by the Equality Act 2010 and the Council must ensure it gives consideration to any reasonable adaptation.

BACKGROUND PAPERS

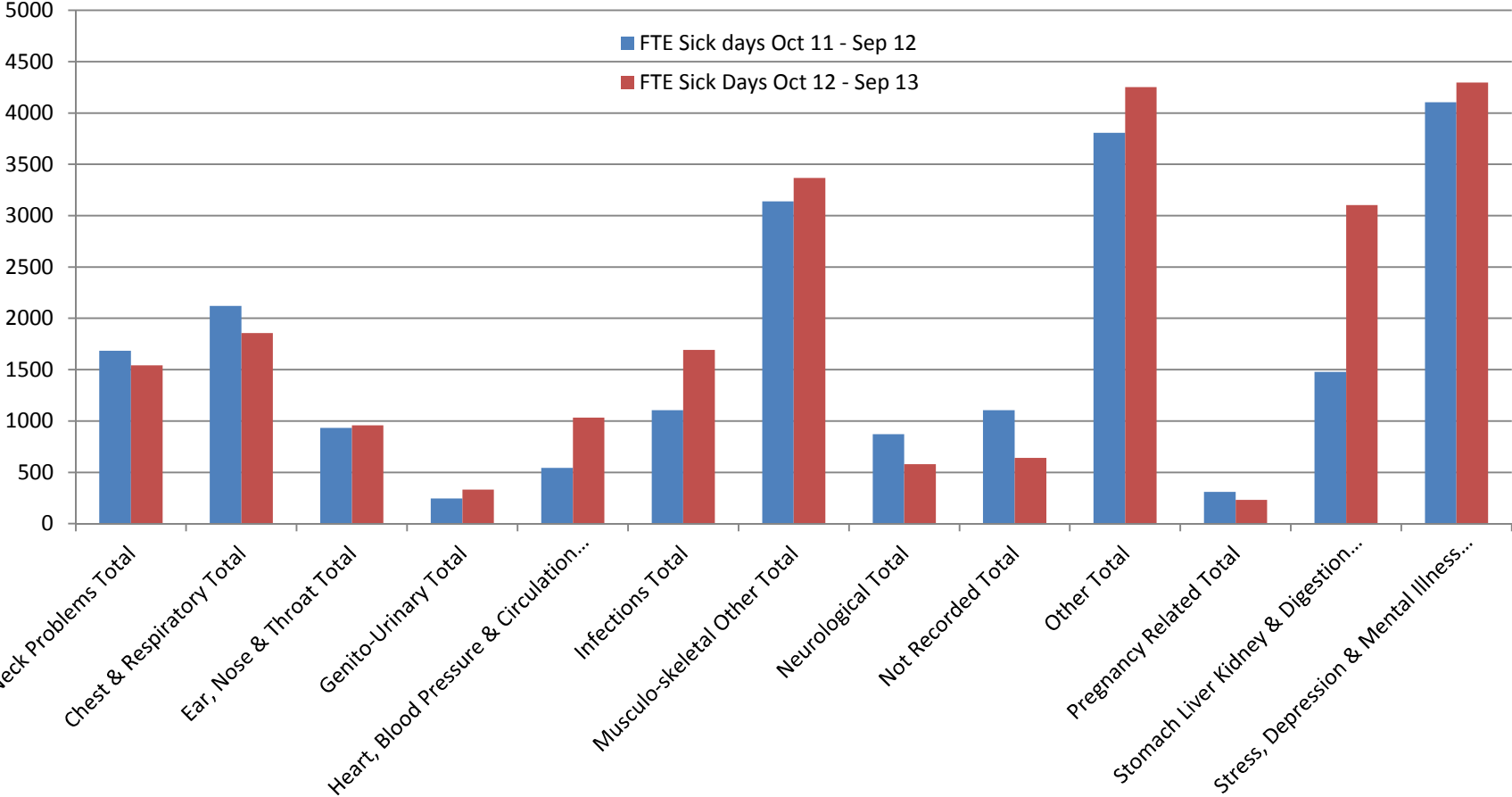
Appendices

1. FTE Sick Days Oct 11 – Sep 12 compared to FTE Sick Days Oct 12 – Sep 13
2. Long and short term by category April 2012 – March 2013
3. Total percentage long/short term split April 2012 – March 2013
4. Percentage of long and short term sickness absence by sickness category April 12 to March 2013 (exc staff over 100 days who have left)

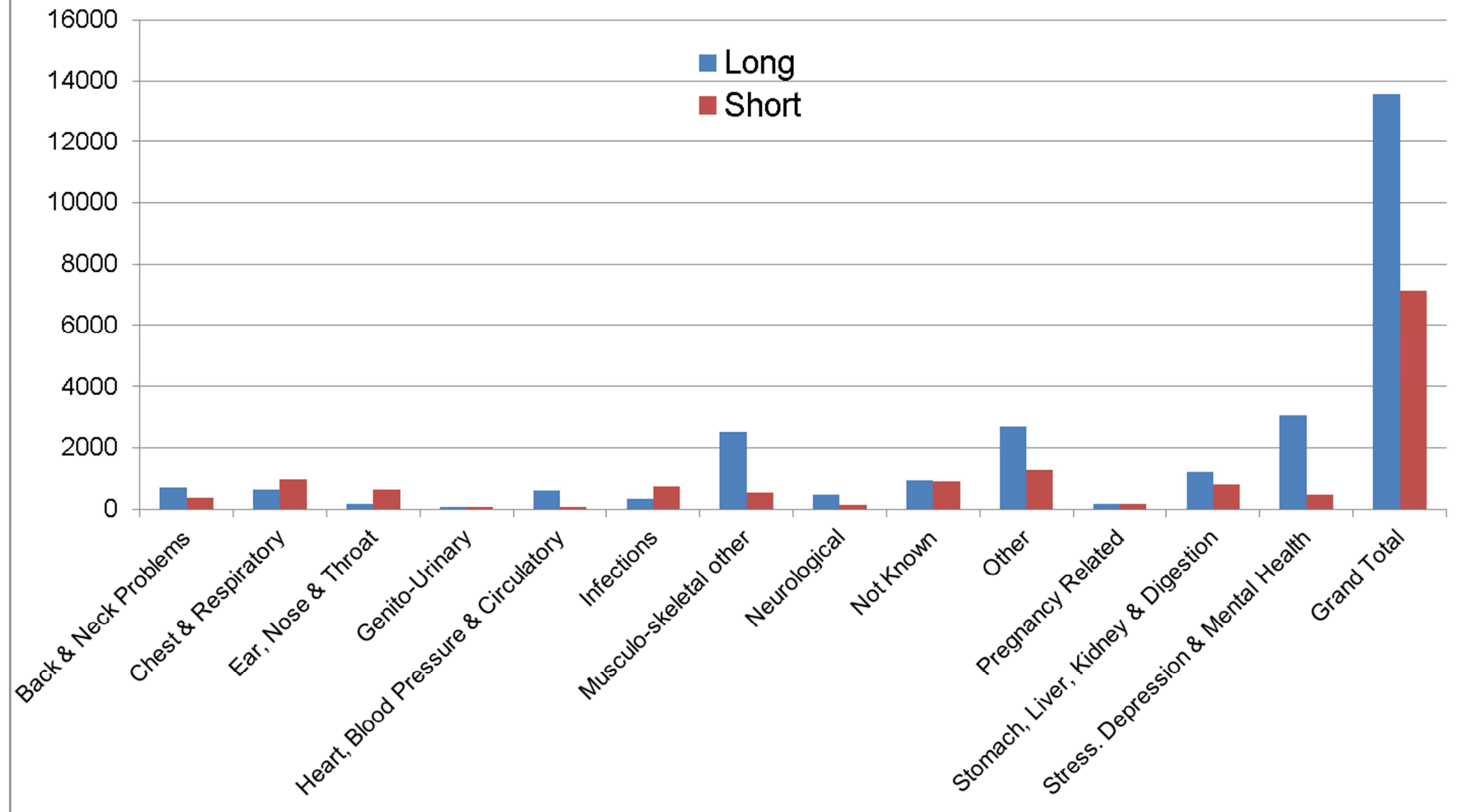
5. Sickness Absence London Councils - Average number of days lost per employee
April 2012 – March 2013
6. Sickness Absence London Councils - Average number of days lost per employee
April 2011 – March 2012

Appendix 1 - FTE Sick Days Oct 11 - Sep 12 compared to FTE Sick Days Oct 12 – Nov 13

FTE Sick Days Oct 11 - Sep 12 compared to FTE Sick Days Oct 12 - Sep 13

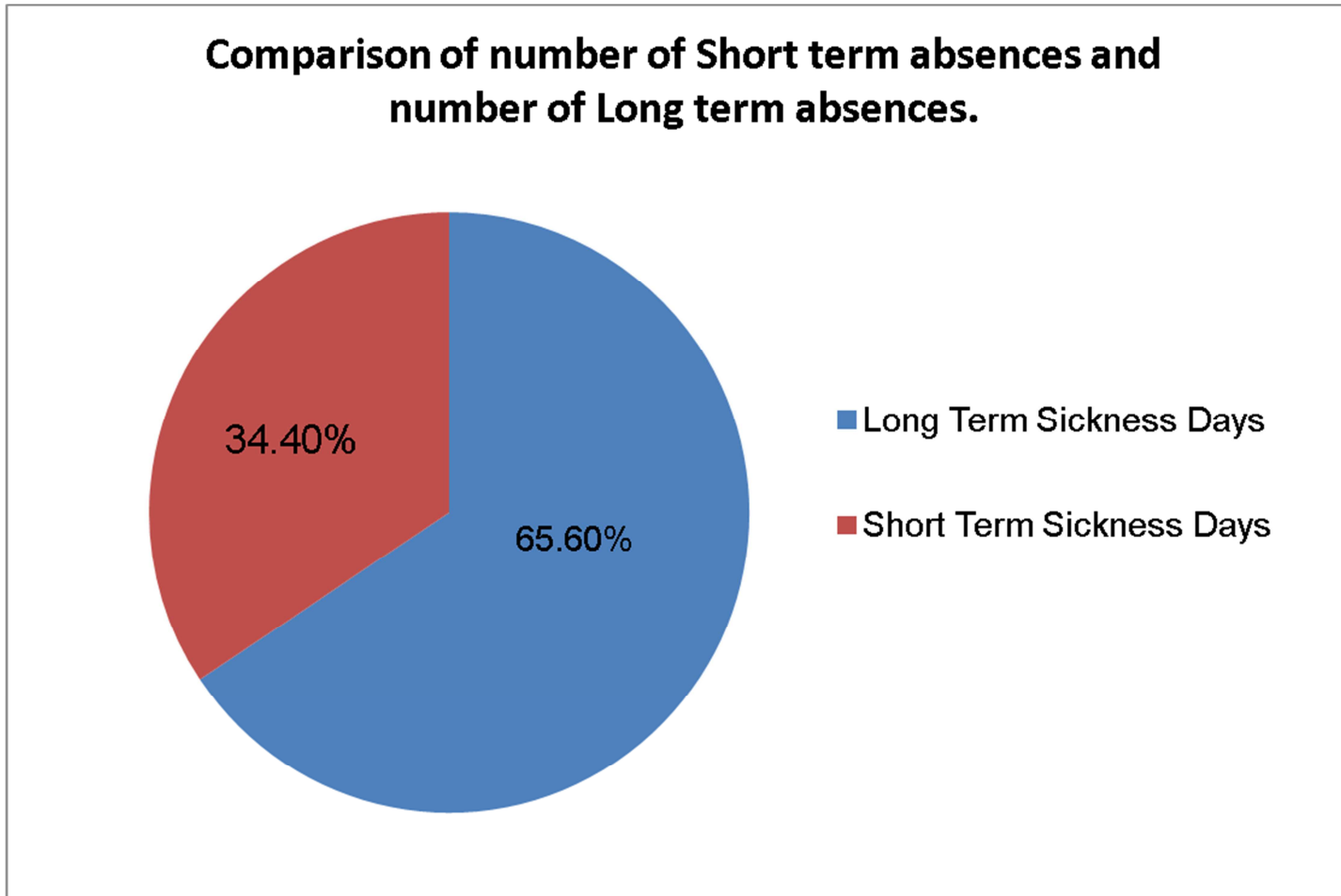


Comparison of number of short term absences and number of Long term absences.



Appendix 3 - Comparison of number of Short term absences and number of Long term absences

April 2012 – March 2013



Appendix 4 - Percentage of long and short term sickness absence by sickness category

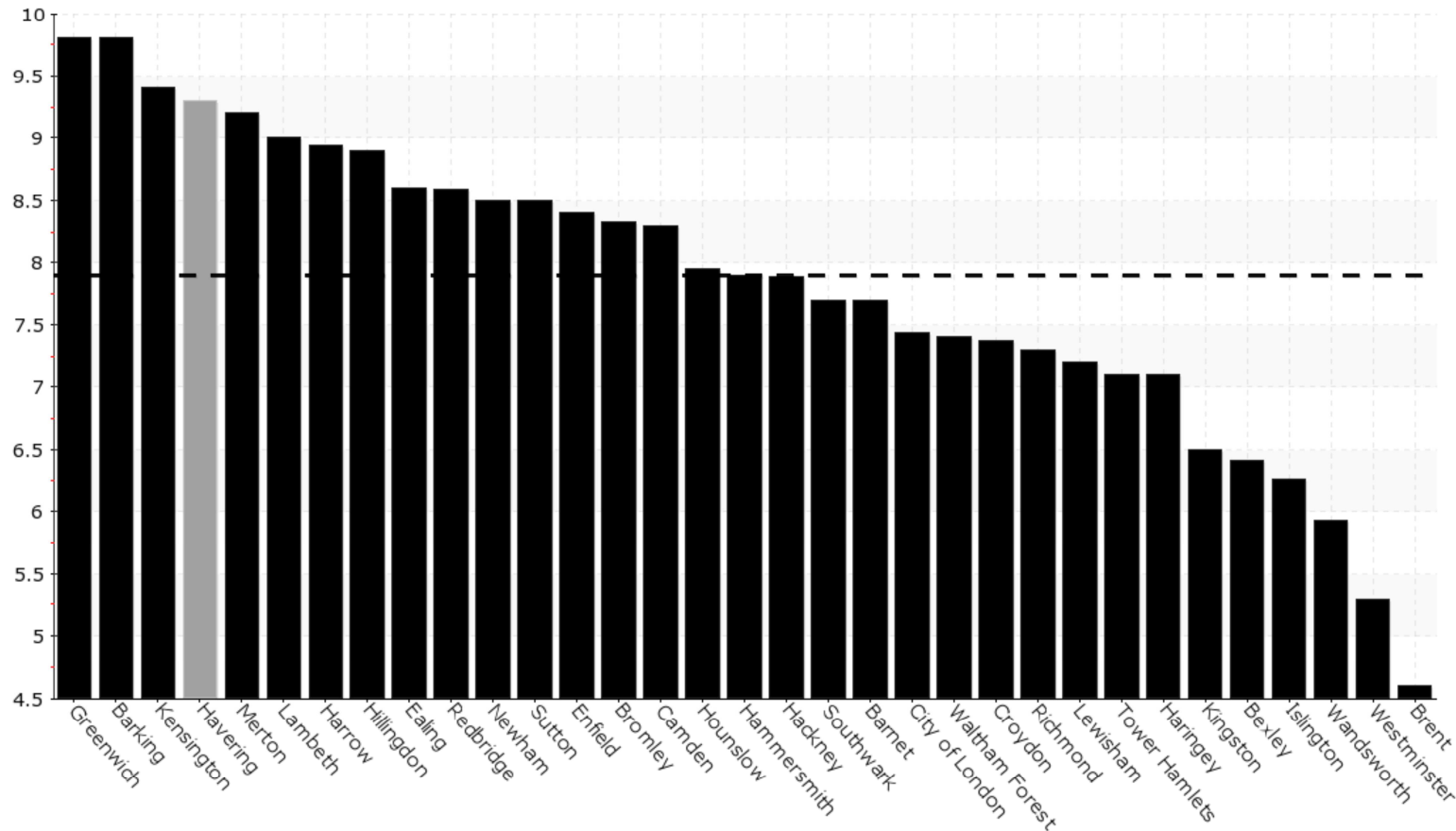
April 12 to March 2013

Percentage of sickness absence per reason Absence Category	Long or Short		
	Long	Short	Total
Back & Neck Problems	58%	42%	100%
Chest & Respiratory	29%	71%	100%
Ear, Nose & Throat	22%	78%	100%
Genito-Urinary	47%	53%	100%
Heart, Blood Pressure & Circulation	77%	23%	100%
Infections	23%	77%	100%
Musculo-skeletal Other	76%	24%	100%
Neurological	39%	61%	100%
Pregnancy Related	50%	50%	100%
Stomach Liver Kidney & Digestion	50%	50%	100%
Stress, Depression & Mental health	83%	17%	100%
Not Known	48%	52%	100%
Other	61%	39%	100%
Grand Total	57%	43%	100%

STAFF OVER 100 FTE DAYS ABSENCE AND NO LONGER EMPLOYED HAVE BEEN REMOVED, THEREFORE PERCENTAGE BREAKDOWN OF LONG AND SHORT DIFFERS FROM PIE CHART ABOVE WHICH SHOWS 12 MONTH ROLLING FIGURE

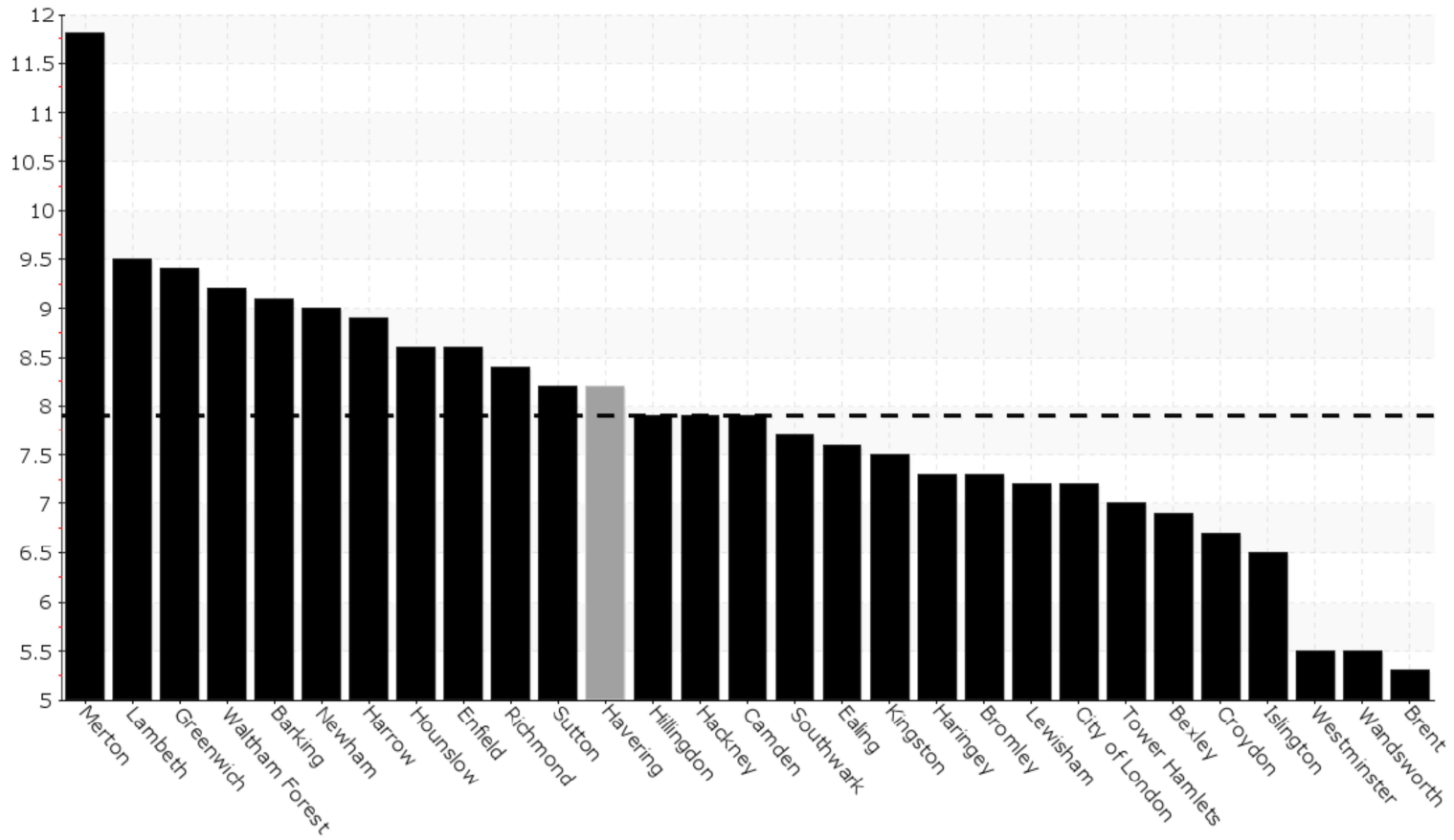
Appendix 5 Sickness Absence - Average number of days lost per employee April 2012 – March 2013

The following analysis includes data from all London Borough Councils.



Havering Council's average number of days lost per employee of 9.3 falls in the fourth quartile of all the London boroughs, and the fourth quartile for outer London. Havering's average number of days lost per employee has risen since the last survey in 31st March 2012, when it was 8.2, a rise of 13.4%. *excludes Councils that did not submit data by the deadline for this metric, ie: Barnet, Hammersmith and Fulham, Kensington and Chelsea, Redbridge*

Appendix 6 Sickness Absence - Average number of days lost per employee April 2011 – March 2012



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