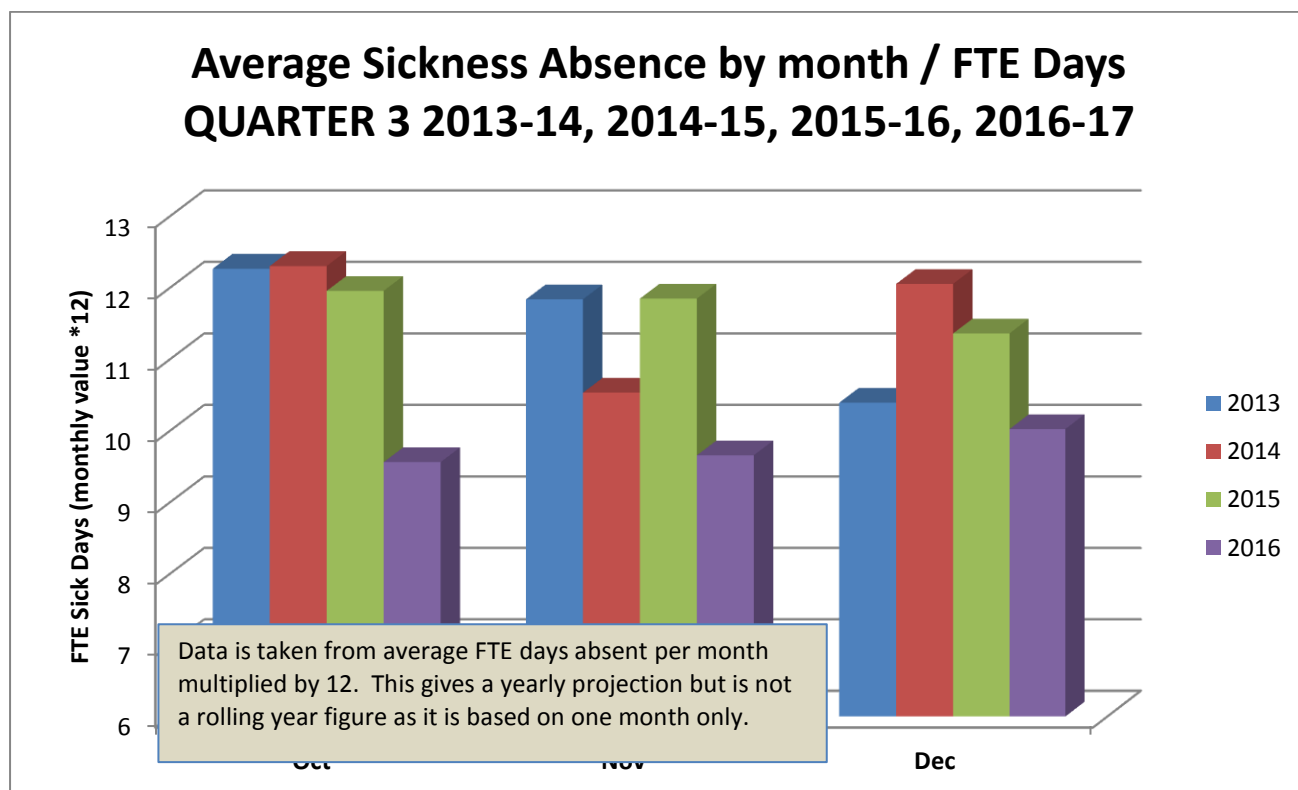


BRIEFING NOTE

Workplace Wellbeing update - April 2017

This briefing note outlines progress made to manage absence in Havering and the achievements made following the individual meetings that Councillor White has had with Directors and the Chief Executive.

The graph below shows that the impact, a great deal of which is due to the additional HR support to managers, funded by SLT for a temporary period:



Direct additional HR support to managers began in 2016 and the consequent impact can clearly be seen.

The current number of fte sick days per employee is 9.8 days, the lowest it has been for two years.

Sickness continues to be managed robustly. In 2016, 28 people left the council in 2016 due to their sickness absence levels. In 2017 so far we have had 8 dismissals (3 in January, 3 in February and 1 each in March and April)

The Day One Absence Pilot implemented in October 2016 in Streetcare and Catering (both areas with high absence levels) appears to have been a success.

Absence levels have dropped in both areas:

For the Streetcare pilot teams:

- In the period October to January 2015/16 the average number of days absence per employee was **14.2**. For October to January 2016/17 it is **9.6 (a 32% decrease)**

For the catering pilot teams:

- In the period October to January 2015/16 the average number of days absence per employee was **13.1**. For October to January 2016/17 it is **10.8 (a 17% decrease)**

Next Steps:

Although significant work has been undertaken, focus needs to be maintained by managers to ensure absence levels continue to decrease which will include:

- **Workplace Wellbeing Forum** - a strategic focus will be maintained through the group chaired by Councillor Wendy Brice-Thompson with input from key partners including HR, Public Health, Health and Safety and trade union colleagues;
- **Extending the Day One absence Pilot** - the pilot will be extended across additional areas that have high sickness areas;
- **Workshops/Sickness Cases** – HR continue to hold workshops for managers to discuss difficult cases e.g. staff that have been on long term sickness for stress or cancer, identifying short term sickness absence patterns, so that this increased knowledge can help them support and manage other sickness cases.
- **Implementation of MedigoldOne** – The council's occupational health provider has developed a new online referral process for managers to speed up OH referrals and improve access to services. This will be launched in May 2017.
- **Workplace Wellbeing Days** – There have been targeted Work place Wellbeing days on 22 and 23 March for the street Cleansing team in the Neighbourhood Directorate. There will also be a Workplace Well Being Day for the whole of Havering on 23 May 2017. These days promote the importance of good health and wellbeing to staff across the Council.
- **Review of the sickness procedure**

a review of the policy is being undertaken to ensure it is as streamlined as possible. The Trade Unions have been informed this is being undertaken and will be consulted with them in line with normal consultation processes.

Conclusion

Havering still has some way to go to reach the target of 8.5 days absence per employee however whilst national data is showing other organisations absence

levels have increased, Havering has achieved a reduction in absence levels through both improved management and HR intervention.

The two additional resources in the HR team will continue to work with managers to ensure timely management action is taken and that innovative projects such as extending the Day One Absence pilot are taken forward, cases are managed in a proactive manner and monthly wellbeing initiatives are promoted across the council.