

Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee

20 April 2015



Sickness Absence Management Policy – Proposed Corporate Issues OSC Review

Report of Lorraine O'Donnell, Assistant Chief Executive

Purpose of the Report

1. To consider the establishment of a Corporate Issues Scrutiny Task and Finish Group to review the current sickness absence management policy and agree that proposed Terms of Reference for the Review will be taken to the Task and Finish Group.

Background

2. At the Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 27th March 2014, during consideration of the Quarter 3 Performance Management report, reference was made to performance in respect to of sickness absence targets not being met within Durham County Council. At this time questions were raised regarding the sickness absence management policy, the process or recording and managing sickness absence, the role of line managers in reducing sickness levels and the training available to staff. There was also interest in the link between appraisal completion and absence levels.
3. The Committee resolved that once the Committee's work on the Medium Term Financial Plan and budget was concluded a working group be developed to examine the sickness absence policy and recommendations be brought back to a future meeting of the committee.

Task and Finish Group

4. The review proposes to comment on the current policies and management processes and seek ways to improve sickness absence management performance and reduce absence levels.
5. To achieve this, the Working Group will:-
 - receive an overview of the current policies and procedures including the role of occupational health;
 - Examine statistics relating to attendance management across the Council to gain an insight into trends and opportunities for improvement;
 - consider examples of best practice and research in respect of sickness absence management, and
 - receive information on staff, manager and Trade Union opinions and experiences of the sickness policy and management.

6. Following the review, a report and recommendations will be considered by Corporate Issues OSC on 28 September 2015.
7. Draft terms of reference for the review will be submitted to the Task and Finish Group for consideration and agreement.

Recommendations and reasons

8. The Corporate Issues Overview and Scrutiny Committee is recommended to:-
 - (i) consider the proposed Sickness Absence Review and, subject to comment from members agree to the proposed review:
 - (ii) appoint up to ten representatives to serve on the working group.

Background papers:

Corporate Issues OSC – Minutes of the meeting held on 23 January and 27 March 2015.

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Appendix 1: Implications

Finance - None

Staffing - None

Risk - None

Equality and Diversity / Public Sector Equality Duty - None

Accommodation - None

Crime and Disorder - None

Human Rights - None

Consultation – None

Procurement - None

Disability Issues - None

Legal Implications - None