

Audit & Governance Committee

7th December 2016

Case Study of Work Being Undertaken in Adult Services to Manage Sickness Absence

Background

Based on data available on the corporate KPI Health Check scorecards for the period 2015/2016, the absence rate for the council stood at 8.4 days per FTE. However, when this data was broken down to directorate level the rate of absence in Adult Services stood at 13.8 days per FTE. It was agreed at Directorate Management Team (DMT) that a concerted effort needed to be made to ensure absences were being managed effectively and staff were being supported appropriately.

Following a presentation to DMT in May 2016 on absence management a number of actions were agreed to enable absence to be managed more effectively and to support managers in applying the council policy more robustly. This would enable support to be offered to staff as appropriate; and in the case of long term absences work with staff with the primary aim of facilitating their return to work.

Work to Date

It was identified in 2015/2016 that provider services had the highest rate of absence in the directorate and a concerted effort was made by senior managers of the services to improve attendance levels across the Older People's Homes (OPHs) and Personal Support Services (PSS) in particular.

A more robust reporting mechanism was put in place and managers in the OPHs and PSS received bespoke training from officers in the HR team regarding the application of the attendance management policy;

the significance of trigger points and the requirement to apply the policy consistently and objectively.

It is generally acknowledged that due to the nature of frequent short term absences these have a more adverse impact on the delivery of service. In directorate services which operate 24/7 there is always the need to maintain staffing levels for the safety of customers. There is a cost associated with this through additional hours, overtime or use of agency staff. By reporting and managing attendance more effectively, the costs are now reducing.

Below is a graph detailing the level of reduction in number of days lost per FTE achieved within OPHs and PSS as a result of the more robust way in which managers are managing sickness absence.

