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4 April 2013

SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

Monday 15 April 2013
3.30 pm
Council House, Plymouth (Next to the Civic Centre)

Members:

Councillor Murphy, Chair
Councillor Bowyer, Vice Chair
Councillors Casey, Churchill, Gordon, James, Martin Leaves, Parker, Rennie, Stark and Stevens.

Members are invited to attend the above meeting to consider the items of business overleaf.

Tracey Lee
Chief Executive

SUPPORT SERVICES OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PANEL

AGENDA

PART I – PUBLIC MEETING

1. APOLOGIES AND SUBSTITUTIONS

To receive apologies for non-attendance by panel members and to note the attendance of substitutes in accordance with the Constitution.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Members will be asked to make declarations of interest in respect of items on this agenda.

3. MINUTES (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm the minutes of the Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel held on 4 March 2013.

4. CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS

To receive reports on business which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be brought forward for urgent consideration.

5. TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD (Pages 7 - 8)

To receive a copy of the panel's tracking resolutions and any feedback from the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board on issues which concern this panel.

6. WORK PROGRAMME (Pages 9 - 10)

To receive the panel's work programme for 2012/2013.

7. BUDGET AND PERFORMANCE MONITORING (Pages 11 - 18)

To receive information within the terms of reference of this panel with regard to –

- Budget
- Performance
- Delivery plans
- Value for money

8. STAFF SICKNESS (Pages 19 - 34)

To receive information on staff sickness levels, targets and action plans.

9. GOVERNMENT POLICY CHANGES

Information on Government policy changes can be found on the new Plymouth City Council 'Policy Hub'.

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/policyhub>

10. REVENUES AND BENEFITS PERFORMANCE UPDATE (Pages 35 - 40)

To receive for information a copy of the Revenues and Benefits monthly position statement.

11. EXEMPT BUSINESS

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph(s) ... of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

PART II - PRIVATE MEETING

AGENDA

MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO NOTE

that under the law, the panel is entitled to consider certain items in private. Members of the public will be asked to leave the meeting when such items are discussed.

NIL.

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Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel**Monday 4 March 2013****PRESENT:**

Councillor Murphy, in the Chair.

Councillor Bowyer, Vice Chair.

Councillors Churchill, James, Michael Leaves, Rennie, Singh, John Smith and Stark.

Apologies for absence: Councillors Casey, Martin Leaves and Parker.

Also in attendance: Dave Saunders – Lead Officer, Mark Grimley – Assistant Director for HR and Organisational Development, Eve Skuse – Head of Organisational Development, Richard Longford – Head of Communications, Neville Canon – Programme Director for ICT Shared Services, Martine Collins – Revenues and Benefits Manager and Amelia Boulter – Democratic Support Officer.

The meeting started at 3.30 pm and finished at 5.40 pm.

Note: At a future meeting, the committee will consider the accuracy of these draft minutes, so they may be subject to change. Please check the minutes of that meeting to confirm whether these minutes have been amended.

49. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were made in accordance with the code of conduct -

| Name | Minute Number and Issue | Reason | Interest |
|-----------------------|--|-----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Councillor John Smith | Minute 56 and 57 – Revenues and Benefits Performance Update and Revenues and Benefits Customer Service at the Civic Centre | Tenants claiming housing benefit. | Personal |

50. **MINUTES**

Agreed that the minutes of the meeting held on 19 November 2012.

51. **CHAIR'S URGENT BUSINESS**

There were no items of Chair's urgent business.

52. **WORK PROGRAMME**

The panel noted the work programme and agreed to include the following items –

- Staff Sickness;
- Community Engagement and Value for Communities;
- Budget Monitoring;
- Monitoring performance and delivery plans.

53. **'THE VIEW FROM YOU' EMPLOYEE SURVEY RESULTS**

Mark Grimley, Assistant Director for HR and Organisational Development and Eve Skuse, Head of Organisational Development briefed the panel on the results of the 'The View from You' Employee Survey Results. It was reported that -

- (a) the organisation had gone through several restructures and this was reflected in the number of surveys completed, however, staff felt engaged and results were showing a positive trend. It was also reported that frontline staff were less inclined to participate and this was an area of focus to engage frontline services to complete future surveys;
- (b) the survey ran in November. The results were analysed and the information was shared with Cabinet and then Team Plymouth. Communication of the results then followed on staff room, team briefs and were included in the January pay packet;
- (c) managers were provided with templates to produce action plans and HR were providing support to managers with the aim of action plans being completed by the end of March.

In response to questions raised it was reported that –

- (d) the majority of the workforce had moved to hot-desking. The perception of hot-desking and the reality was very different, it had been difficult for employees to adapt and change management was in place to address this;
- (e) enrichment of work for the older workforce was important. The older employees do have a lot of knowledge but also have reached the top of their grade and we need to ensure they feel valued;
- (f) there had been significant change in leadership with the recent senior management restructure and it was pushed through very quickly which resulted in disengagement with staff;
- (g) these findings do reflect half of PCC staff and PCC currently employ 4,008 members of staff. The take up rate of benchmark comparators is 37 per cent return rate and PCC achieved take up of 53 per cent;

- (h) this was the third year the staff survey had been undertaken in-house. The survey was previously run by a private company at a cost of £25k.

Agreed to request the officers to provide the panel with an update on the employee survey results action plan every six months.

54. **SOCIAL MEDIA UPDATE**

Richard Longford, Head of Communications gave a presentation and update on social media. It was reported that –

- (a) the Council has made good progress in extending its use of social media over the last nine months and this has been reflected by the large increases in Twitter followers and Facebook fans;
- (b) use of social media is being extended in a controlled way, with teams and services being supported in setting up official channels when they have a good business case;
- (c) the LGA highlighted Plymouth as an example of good practice for keeping people updated by social media during the flooding incidents at the end of last year. The council was also cited as an example of good practice for its social media guidelines in the 2013 Socitm 'Better Connected' report;
- (d) social media is now one of the main drivers of traffic to our website and a new email marketing tool will promote our social media channels.
- (e) despite recent growth in use, the numbers using the Council's social media channels is still relatively low compared to other communications channels. However, it is enabling the Council to reach new audiences – particularly younger people – and to communicate news and information more quickly than previously possible.

The Panel raised concerns that BlackBerrys were not user friendly for use with social media and that training would be required for members on how to get the best use out of social media.

Agreed that the officer explores social media training for members.

55. **ICT SHARED SERVICES**

Neville Cannon, Programme Director for ICT Shared Services provided the Panel with a report on ICT Shared Services. It was reported that -

- (a) three councils had signed up to shared working. A meeting had taken place with the NEW Devon CCG with a view to the whole service coming on board their governing body to decide on 20 March 2013;

- (b) PCC currently have 4,000 users and including the other three organisations would take the number of users up to over 6,000;
- (c) in terms of governance scrutiny should consider how the Panel could work alongside other committee structures and how it might wish to proactively input to the establishment of the new company;
- (d) they were on track to deliver the business case for the June 2013.

Agreed to request the officer provides the panel with the business plan in June.

56. **REVENUES AND BENEFITS PERFORMANCE UPDATE**

The Panel received the Revenues and Benefits Performance Update for information. The Panel welcomed and noted the report.

Agreed that the panel noted the report and to receive a revenues and benefits performance update at every meeting.

57. **REVENUES AND BENEFITS CUSTOMER SERVICE AT THE CIVIC CENTRE**

Martine Collins, Revenues and Benefits Manager provided the Panel with the results of the customer survey carried out in relation to Revenues and Benefits Customer Services. It was reported that -

- (a) a restructure took place 12 months ago with the view to providing better services for customers. During the last 12 months staff undertook training to be more generic and to provide a wider service to customers;
- (b) processing times were reduced to less than 15 days;
- (c) they were aware that customers had to wait a long time before being seen and as a result more staff were placed on the frontline. They were investigating why customers were making contacting in the first instance;
- (d) the significant changes with Welfare Reform had led to further staff training to help understand what support and could be provided to customers and looking at alternatives for customers to access services more readily.

In response to questions raised, it was reported that -

- (e) they do not know the number of abandoned calls and why the calls were abandoned e.g. a customer could have started to come through the process and then decide to take an alternative route. They were also unsure whether it was the same customer or different customers;

- (f) they balance the resources to cover the counter service, telephones and post. There was a resource plan in place to deal with the queries relating to Welfare Reforms;
- (g) question 7 - table detailing waiting times could be presented in a better format;
- (h) they were currently working alongside social landlords and making proactive telephone calls to those affected by under occupancy. Social landlords were making visits to tenants and looking at what help could be provided. Plymouth City Council were looking at individual circumstances and looking at how additional support could be provided;
- (i) there would be additional funding but would not be enough to cover the shortfall and difficult decisions would be made on how we help people. An event is being on 8 March 2013 and PCC are joining up with partners to give more rounded advice and support;

Agreed to request the officer to return to the panel in May with a further update on the results from the revenues and benefits customer survey.

58. **TRACKING RESOLUTIONS AND FEEDBACK FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The Panel noted the tracking resolutions.

59. **EXEMPT BUSINESS**

To consider passing a resolution under Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 to exclude the press and public from the meeting for the following item(s) of business on the grounds that it (they) involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 3 of Part I of Schedule 12A of the Act, as amended by the Freedom of Information Act 2000.

60. **DISCRETIONARY RATE RELIEF (E3)**

Martine Collins, Revenues and Benefits Manager briefed the panel on Discretionary Rate Relief. It was reported that Discretionary Rate Relief is for businesses that require extra financial help and was not long term. Any business applying for rate relief would complete an application form and a strict process would be followed. A panel would look at each application and apply the same criteria when determining whether a business was eligible.

Agreed to request the officer returns to the next panel meeting with a report on the decision making process for hardship relief.

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TRACKING RESOLUTIONS

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny Panel

| Date/Minute Number | Resolution | Explanation/Minute | Officer | Progress | Target Date |
|--------------------|---|---|----------------------------------|--|-------------|
| 19.11.13 40 (1) | Agreed to request an update on the effects of the Localism Act on Planning Service | This request followed a presentation on the Localism Act by The Assistant Director for Democracy and Governance | Paul Barnard | This will be circulated to members via email. | |
| 19.11.13 43 | Agreed to request information on which services are being offered to schools from outside the City. Reassurance that a proactive approach is being taken to ensure that business is not lost. | This request relates to traded services | Jayne Gorton | This will be circulated to members via email. | |
| 19.11.13 45 | Agreed to request that the officers return to the panel in around six months time with a progress report on the ongoing work to improve response times. | This request followed a presentation on the failure to meet the required response times for Freedom of Information Requests | Richard Woodfield / Mike Hocking | To be added to the 2013/14 Work Programme. | |
| 04/03/13 53 | <u>Agreed</u> to request the officers to provide the panel with an update on the employee survey results action plan every six months. | 'The View From You' Employee Survey Results | Eve Skuse | This request has been sent. To be added to the 2013/14 Work Programme. | |
| 04/03/12 54 | <u>Agreed</u> that the officer explores social media training for members. | Social Media Update The panel raised concerns on the lack of training provided for members on social media. | Richard Longford | This request has been sent to the officer. | |

| | | | | | |
|--------------------|---|--|----------------------------|--|------------|
| 04/03/13 55 | <u>Agreed</u> to request the officer provides the panel with the business plan in June. | ICT Shared Services The panel were unsure whether it was more appropriate item for the Overview and Scrutiny Management Board to explore. | Neville Cannon | This has been requested. To be added to the 2013/14 Work Programme. | |
| 04/03/13 Min 56 | <u>Agreed</u> that the panel noted the report and to receive a revenues and benefits performance update at every meeting. | Revenues and Benefits Performance Update | Democratic Support Officer | This update will continue to appear on the support services agenda for each meeting. | 8 April 13 |
| 04/03/13 Min 57 | <u>Agreed</u> to request the officer to return to the panel in May with a further update on the results from the revenues and benefits customer survey. | Revenues and Benefits at the Civic Centre | Martine Collins | There will not be a meeting in May and so this item will be scheduled at the first available meeting. | |
| 04/03/12 Min 60 | <u>Agreed</u> to request the officer returns to the next panel meeting with a report on the decision making process for hardship relief. | Discretionary Rate Relief The panel want to have a better understanding of the decision making process for hardship relief applications. | Martine Collins | This item will be referred on to a future meeting with the agreement of the Chair as the timings meant that no new information would be available. | |

Grey = Completed (once completed resolutions have been noted by the panel they will be removed from this document)

Red = Urgent – item not considered at last meeting or requires an urgent response

| Proposed work programme | J | J | A | S | O | N | D | J | F | M | A |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|---|---|---|---|----|
| Policy, Performance and Partnerships | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Community Engagement update | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Budget Monitoring* | | | | | | | | | | | 15 |
| Monitoring Performance and Delivery Plans* | | | | | | | | | | | 15 |
| Other Issues | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Government Policy Changes | | | | | 1 | 19 | | | | 4 | 15 |

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|----|
| City and Council Priorities | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Value for Communities | | | | | | | | | | | 15 |
| Task and Finish Groups | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Council Tax Scheme review (Welfare Reform) | | | | | | | | | | | |

Key* **New item**

N.B – items will be automatically deleted from the work programme once they have been considered by the Panel.

Corporate Services

Support Services Overview and Scrutiny; Panel Performance, Finance and Delivery Plane Update.

I.1 Finance and Performance Overview 2012/13

This report sets out the Finance and Performance position for the Corporate Services Directorate, forecasting the year end position. Information has been extracted from Performance and Finance monitoring reports for February 2013 (Full year budget monitoring not available at time of writing), relevant Budget and Delivery Plans.

A full list of performance indicators (Corporate) can be found in appendix A.

I.2 Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Assets - £0.673m Favourable

Various departmental staff savings have been realised across the department. There has been an improvement in year, on income from CFS Deputyship Fees. Premise related costs remain favourable for the department and include backdated NNDR refund for Windsor House, R&M underspend as a result of suspending or deferring planned maintenance programme. Corporate Landlord NNDR savings have supported shortfalls in Delivery Plan targets. Savings relating to HB overpayments have been offset by reduced costs in council tax court fees. There is a net pressure in ICT that refers to a combination of outstanding delivery plans that have been partly offset by an increase in the capitalised salaries projection. Finally there has been a 40% reduction in annual external audit fee that has gone towards offsetting efficiency targets.

I.3 Democracy & Governance - £0.009m Adverse

The department is forecasting a nearly breakeven position; the only significant change refers to a payment of an external legal bill relating to the waste planning decision for which there was no budget. There has been a small pressures relating to the cost of City Elections, and a payment to Foot Anstey re: Energy for Waste Project offset by various staff and other expenditure budget savings.

“Through the introduction of web casting, more people are now able to view important council forums/meetings. To date this new level of accessibility has meant that nearly 15,000 people have viewed council debates via the web, 3312 of those viewing in real time and 11,092 viewing recorded sessions.”
(Extract from CMT Performance Report 19th February)

I.4 Human Resources and Organisational Development - £0.068m Favourable

There is no change to the forecasted underspend as at February 21013. Overall savings have been identified from spend identified from corporate training budgets.

I.5 Customer Services - £0.099m Favourable

Savings from libraries on purchase of materials and vacancy savings along with staff savings in customer services are being used to offset the 200k delivery plan for customer contact centre and other pressures resulting in a forecast underspend of c£0.100m.

2. Corporate Services budgeted and actual spend

The revenue position as at February 2013 is shown in the table below

The current year end forecast is a £0.307m underspend (1.0% of net budget).

Corporate services budgeted and actual spend by service forecast to year end.

| Service | Latest Approved Budget £m | Forecast Year End Position £m | Variation at February 2013 £m |
|--|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Assets | 18.387 | 17.714 | (0.673) |
| Democracy & Governance | 5.116 | 5.125 | 0.009 |
| Customer Services | 5.429 | 5.331 | (0.099) |
| Human Resources & Organisational Development | 3.219 | 3.151 | (0.068) |
| Departmental Management | 0.290 | 0.288 | (0.002) |
| Corporate Services Budget Savings | (1.787) | (1.260) | 0.527 |
| Total | 30.655 | 30.348 | (0.307) |

2.1 Budget 2013/14

Budget breakdown for 2013/14 agreed by CMT and shown on Council Website:

<http://www.plymouth.gov.uk/homepage/housing/counciltax/counciltaxspending/budget2013-2014.htm>




| Corporate Services | | Customer Services | Democracy & Governance | Departmental Management | FETA | Human Resources & OD | Total Corporate Services |
|----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|
| Income | Income | -917,408.000 | -1,493,401.000 | 0.000 | -113,820,440.000 | -1,150,699.000 | -117,381,948.000 |
| External Expenditure | Supplies & Services | 928,540 | 1,323,735 | 4,132 | 5,401,062 | 169,389 | 7,826,858 |
| | Third Party Payments | 24,950 | 93,090 | 0 | 491,050 | 154,707 | 763,797 |
| | Transfer Payments | 0 | 0 | 0 | 102,475,638 | 0 | 102,475,638 |
| | Total External Expenditure | 953,490.000 | 1,416,825.000 | 4,132.000 | 108,367,750.000 | 324,096.000 | 111,066,293.000 |
| Management & Support | Employees | 4,092,281 | 4,722,645 | 262,371 | 14,317,297 | 3,662,638 | 27,057,232 |
| | Premises | 514,984 | 319,256 | 0 | 6,269,946 | 18,070 | 7,122,256 |
| | Transport | 23,606 | 23,815 | 0 | 206,394 | 36,859 | 290,674 |
| | Support Services | 75,270 | 20,000 | 0 | 280,108 | 50,961 | 426,339 |
| | Depreciation & Impairment Losses | 0 | 0 | 0 | 432,808 | 0 | 432,808 |
| | Capital Financing outside NCS | 79,905 | 20,948 | 0 | 768,332 | 0 | 869,185 |
| | Total Management & Support | 4,786,046.000 | 5,106,664.000 | 262,371.000 | 22,274,885.000 | 3,768,528.000 | 36,198,494.000 |
| | Total Net Expenditure | 4,822,128.000 | 5,030,088.000 | 266,503.000 | 16,822,195.000 | 2,941,925.000 | 29,882,839.000 |

3. Delivery Plans 2012/13

3.1 The Corporate Services Delivery Plans are **£3.257m** for 2012/13. The following table shows the summary position by Red Amber and Green rating (RAG).

Corporate Services Delivery Plans 2012 13

| | £ 000's | £ 000's | £ 000's | £ 000's |
|--|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------|
| Service £ 000 | | | | |
| | RED | AMBER | GREEN | Grand Total |
| Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Assets | - | - | 1450 | 1,450 |
| Customer Services | - | - | 480 | 480 |
| HR & OD | - | - | 400 | 400 |
| Change Office / Cross Cutting | 527 | 100 | 300 | 927 |
| Grand Total | 527 | 100 | 2,630 | 3,257 |

-  Red: no clear project plan in place to achieve required savings
-  Amber: plans in place to deliver savings and shows evidence of progress against target
-  Green: clear plans in place to achieve savings and more than 50% have already been made

The following significant risks are assumed within the Delivery plan.

- The £0.527m red rated delivery plan against 3rd and 4th Tier Management Restructure has not been achieved in the current year and needs a clear plan for 2013/14.
- The over achievement in senior management target is offsetting the non-achievement of £0.1m related to business support review – needs clarity for 2013/14
- The £0.1m amber delivery plan relating to workforce management has not been achieved to date, however other compensatory savings are under review, which could offset this.

3.2 Delivery Plans 2013 – 2016

Service level delivery plans for 2013-2016. Figures are accurate as at 28/03/2013.

| Service | 2013/14 | 2014/15 | 2015/16 |
|--|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| | £000's | £000's | £000's |
| Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Assets | 990 | 1,000 | 980 |
| HR | 165 | 199 | 222 |
| Democracy and Governance | 150 | 160 | 160 |
| Customer Services | 250 | 250 | 250 |
| Corporate Services Totals | 1,555 | 1,609 | 1,612 |

Appendix A – February 2013

Customer Services

| Indicator Definition | Responsible Officer | 09/10 Actual | 10/11 Actual | 11/12 Actual | December | January | February | 2012/13 Target |
|--|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------|---------|----------------|----------------|
| Information Requests (Fol / EIR) | Richard Woodfield | N/A | N/A | 71% | 79% | 80% | Due 25th March | 85% |
| Subject Access Request (DPA) | Richard Woodfield | N/A | N/A | 40.0% | 42% | 55.20% | Due 25th March | 85% |
| % of complaints answered on time - non Social Care | Lev Marsland | N/A | N/A | 82.00% | 87.00% | 80.00% | Due 25th March | 98.00% |

Finance, Efficiencies, Technology and Assets.

| Indicator Definition | Responsible Officer | 09/10 Actual | 10/11 Actual | 11/12 Actual | December | January | February | 2012/13 Target |
|---|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|----------|------------|------------|----------------|
| Percentage of Council Tax collected | Martine Collins | 95.20% | 96.10% | 96.30% | 81.80% | 90.85% | 94.86 | 97.50% |
| Percentage of NNDR collected | Martine Collins | 96.00% | 97.30% | 96.20% | 85.02% | 93.15% | 95.06% | 96.60% |
| Time processing new claims | Martine Collins | N/A | 30 days | 28 days | 19 days | 18.59 days | 14.04 days | 15 Days |
| Time for processing notifications of changes of circumstances | Martine Collins | 19 days | 19 days | 17 days | 26 days | 33.47 days | 30.41 days | 10 Days |
| % of spend with SME's | Jane Keeley | - | - | - | - | Annual | | 10% |
| % of spend with contractors from the PL postcode area | Jane Keeley | - | - | - | - | Annual | | 20% |

HR and Organisation Development

| Indicator Definition | Responsible Officer | 09/10 Actual | 10/11 Actual | 11/12 Actual | December | January | February | 2012/13 Target |
|---|---------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Average sickness days per employee | Alison Mills | N/A | 12.92 days | 9.78 days | 9.96 days | 10.01 days | 9.52days | 6 days |
| Number of Apprenticeships provided by the Council | Eve Skuse | N/A | N/A | 33 | 56 | Quarterly data | Quarterly data | 70 |

Democracy and Governance

| Indicator Definition | Responsible Officer | 2010 Actual | 2011 Actual | 2012 Actual | December | January | February | 2012/13 Target |
|---|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|---------|----------|----------------|
| % of households responding to annual canvass form | Nigel Spilsbury | 90.00% | 90.30% | 86.00% | Annual Data | | | 92.00% |
| Overall electorate | Nigel Spilsbury | 185,044 | 180,946 | 183,210 | Annual Data | | | 189,000 |

Cross Cutting Measures

| Indicator Definition | Responsible Officer | 2010 Actual | 2011 Actual | 2012 Actual | December | January | February | 2012/13 Target |
|---|---------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|----------|---------|---------------|----------------|
| Corporate Services - Subject Access Request (DPA) | Adam Broome | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 100% | awaiting data | 85% |
| Corporate Services - Information Requests (Fol / EIR) | Adam Broome | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A | 81% | awaiting data | 85% |

PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Sickness absence update
Committee: Support Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel
Date: Tuesday 16 April 2013
Cabinet Member: Councillor Peter Smith
CMT Member: Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Services)
Author: Emma Rose, Head of Health, Safety and Wellbeing
Contact: Tel: 01752 312571
e-mail: emma.rose@plymouth.gov.uk

Ref:
Key Decision: No
Part: I

Purpose of the report:

Support Services OSP requested a review of Plymouth City Council's occupational health (OH) services and link to sickness absence levels on 2 July 2012. An update report was provided on 6 August 2012. This is a further update providing:

1. background
2. current sickness absence targets and thresholds;
3. current levels of sickness absence;
4. progress to date;
5. plans in place for future development;

Corporate Plan 2012-2015:

Occupational health services support our employees to be fit, healthy and productive and as such, contribute to the delivery of the Council's priorities.

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land**

The cost of sickness absence impacts on our staffing budgets and the ability for departments to deliver outcomes for the city. It also impacts on staff motivation and morale.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety, Risk Management and Equality, Diversity and Community Cohesion:

Recommendations & Reasons for recommended action:

That the panel note the contents of this report

Alternative options considered and reasons for recommended action:

Not applicable

Background papers:

Sign off:

| | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|-----|--|----|----|--------------|--|----|--|---------------|--|
| Fin | | Leg | | HR | MG | Corp Prop | | IT | | Strat Proc | |
| Originating SMT Member: Mark Grimley | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Have you consulted the Cabinet Member(s) named on the report? Yes | | | | | | | | | | | |

1. Background

The initial report presented to this panel on 2 July 2012 reviewed the Council's occupational health provision and the link to sickness absence. It was agreed at the meeting that a quarterly update would be provided on the progress of improving attendance. In addition to this regular update, five specific questions were asked, which were answered as part of the update report reviewed on 6 August 2012.

The purpose of this update report focuses primarily on a three month project, based around improving the Council's (non-schools) sickness absence levels.

This project has focussed on:

- Enhanced case management of current sickness absence cases
- Making wider recommendations/observations that will deliver further improvements to sickness absence levels
- Pave the way for strategic project planning for the future
- To co-ordinate, deliver and promote a proactive attendance management service

The project goal is to reduce sickness absence across the Council.

2. Current sickness indicators and thresholds

In previous years the Council has had a corporate sickness absence target which is the same for all departments. This target was based on the total days lost per FTE employee over a rolling 12 month period. In 2012 / 13 this target was 6 days per FTE. Nearly every department has levels of sickness absence exceeding this target.

Feedback from managers at all levels of the organisation showed a lack of understanding and awareness of these targets. Many felt that the target was unfair and unattainable. Others felt that their team or department were disadvantaged due to their working environment or the type of work done, which they believed resulted in higher levels of sickness absence.

When reviewing the performance measures for the coming year (2013 / 14), it was decided to change our approach. Managers and Assistant Directors still remain accountable for the levels of sickness absence in their department, but the sickness reporting will focus on tolerance levels and indicators to show when sickness levels are too high. This is a similar approach to how we monitor our finances and other key performance data.

The revised indicators range from 5 days per FTE for senior management / support up to 11 days per FTE for departments with staff working in more physically demanding environments or duties. If sickness absence for a department exceeds the threshold then the Assistant Director should be looking at urgent interventions to reduce sickness levels.

Targets & Thresholds

| Directorate | Department | March 2013 Average no. of days sick per FTE | Target | Threshold | Variance on target |
|--|--|---|--------|-----------|--------------------------|
| Corporate Services | Democracy and Governance | 9.04 | 9.00 | 10.50 | 0.04 |
| | Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Asst | 9.26 | 9.00 | 10.50 | 0.26 |
| | Human Resources and Organisational Dev | 9.11 | 7.00 | 9.00 | 2.11 |
| | Customer Services | 6.40 | 7.00 | 9.00 | 0.60 |
| | Management & Support (Corp Services) | 0.00 | 5.00 | 7.00 | 5.00 |
| DIRECTORATE TOTAL | | 8.63 | | | |
| Executive Office | Policy, Performance and Partnerships | 8.11 | 7.00 | 8.00 | 1.11 |
| | Corporate Communications | 5.58 | 7.00 | 8.00 | 1.42 |
| | Management & Support (Chief Executives) | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| EXECUTIVE OFFICE TOTAL | | 7.01 | | | |
| People | Joint Commissioning & Adult Social Care | 13.23 | 11.00 | 12.00 | 2.23 |
| | Homes & Communities | 8.42 | 7.00 | 8.00 | 1.42 |
| | Childrens Social Care | 10.23 | 9.00 | 10.50 | 1.23 |
| | Education, Learning & Families | 8.68 | 7.00 | 9.00 | 1.62 |
| | Programmes Director | 3.33 | 5.00 | 7.00 | 1.67 |
| DIRECTORATE TOTAL (excluding Schools) | | 10.18 | | | |
| Place | Planning Services | 3.45 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 3.55 |
| | Business Team (Dev & Reg) | 13.54 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 6.54 |
| | Environmental Services | 9.58 | 9.00 | 10.00 | 0.58 |
| | Economic Development | 5.78 | 7.00 | 8.00 | 1.22 |
| | Strategic Housing | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | Transport & Infrastructure | 7.15 | 9.00 | 10.50 | 1.85 |
| DIRECTORATE TOTAL | | 8.18 | | | |

3. Current levels of sickness absence

Total Council sickness absence slowly increased between July 2012 and January 2013 from 9.4 days sickness per FTE to 10.01 days sickness per FTE (+0.7 days).

Since January 2013, when the project started, to the end of March there has been a reduction from 10.01 days per FTE to 9.23 days per FTE (-0.78 days).

Appendix 1 shows the council wide sickness levels (excl schools).

Appendix 2 shows the council total average days sick per FTE at departmental level.

The top 5 departments (by AD) are as follows;

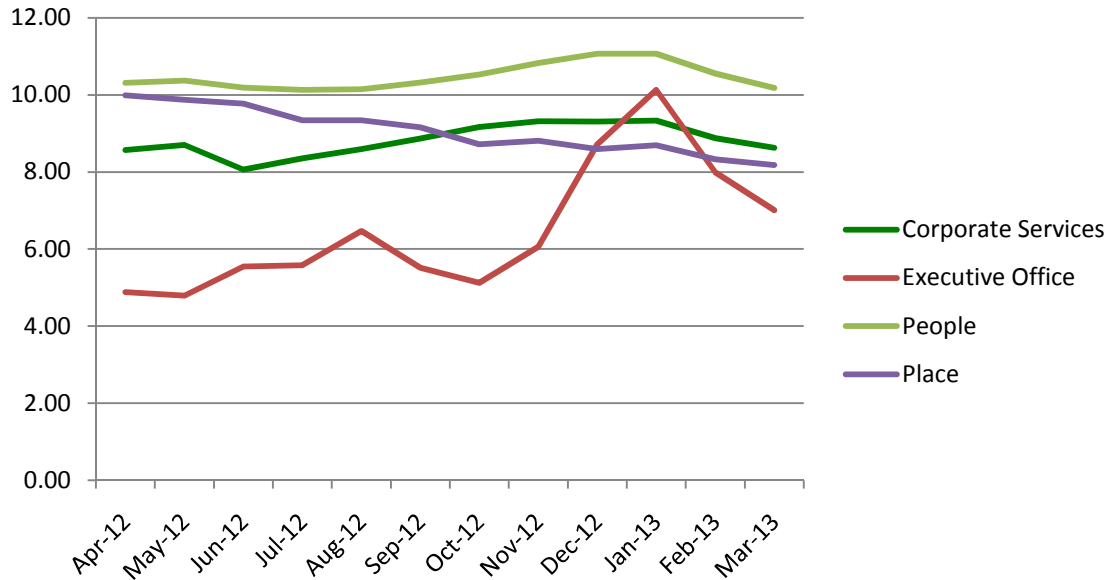
| Directorate | Department | March 2013 Average no. of days sick per FTE | Target | Threshold | |
|-------------|--------------------|---|--------|-----------|------|
| 1 | People | Joint Commissioning & Adult Social Care | 13.23 | 11 | 12 |
| 2 | People | Children’s Social Care | 10.23 | 9 | 10.5 |
| 3 | Place | Environmental Services | 9.58 | 9 | 10 |
| 4 | Corporate Services | Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Asst | 9.26 | 9 | 10.5 |
| 5 | Corporate Services | Human Resources and Organisational Dev | 9.11 | 7 | 9 |

The People directorate reports the highest sickness rate during March 2013 with an average of 10.18 days. Joint Commissioning & Adult Social Care reports the highest average number of 13.23 days.

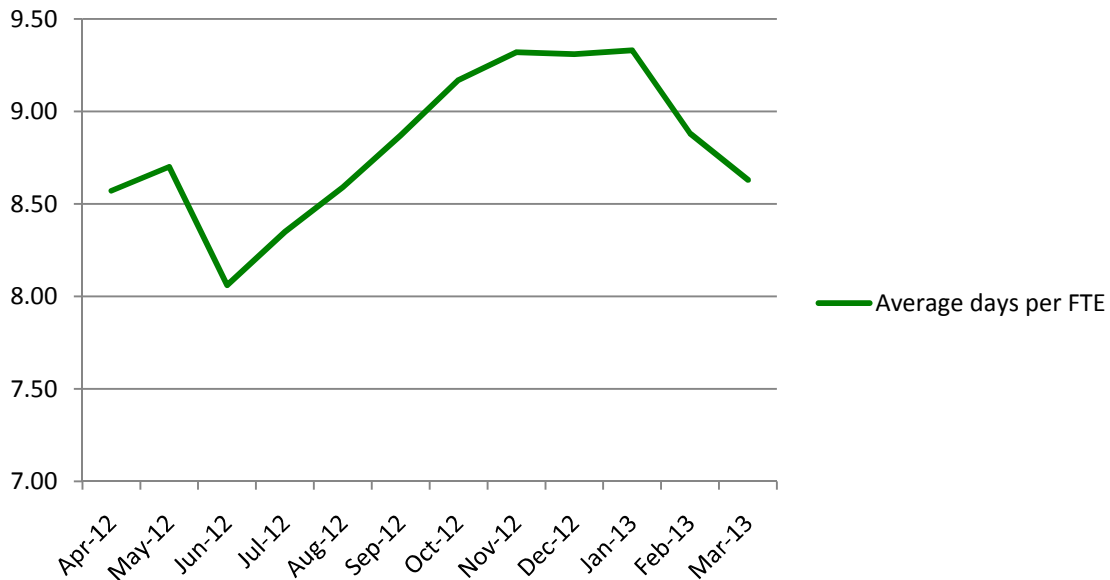
Democracy & Governance report a decrease in the last 12 months with a peak of 12.62 days in July compared to the current 9.04 days in March.

Environmental Services and Transport & Infrastructure both report positive trends of decreasing over the last 12 month rolling period.

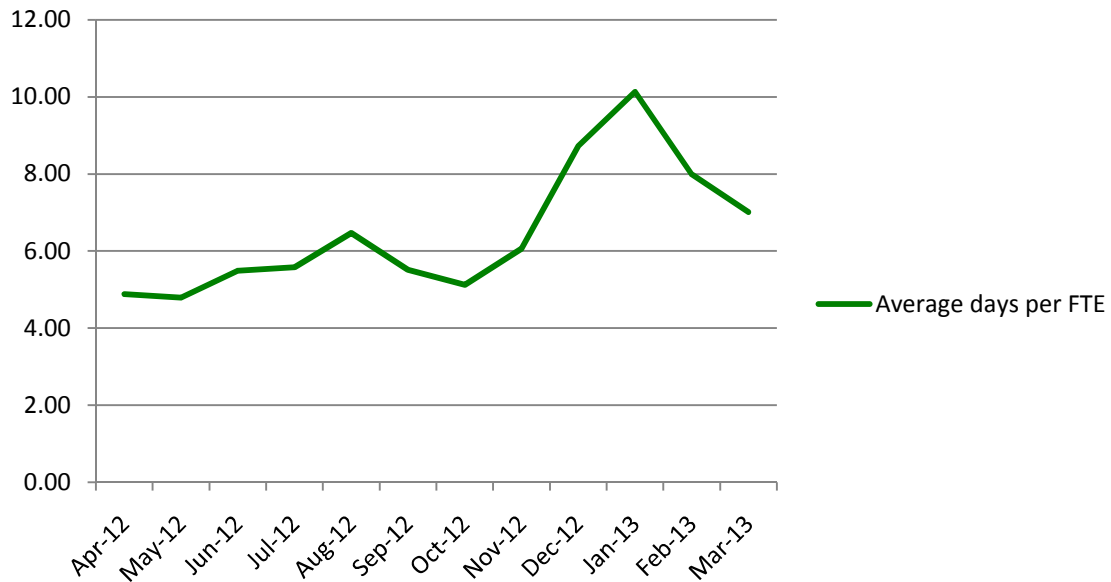
Council sickness (excl schools) average days per FTE



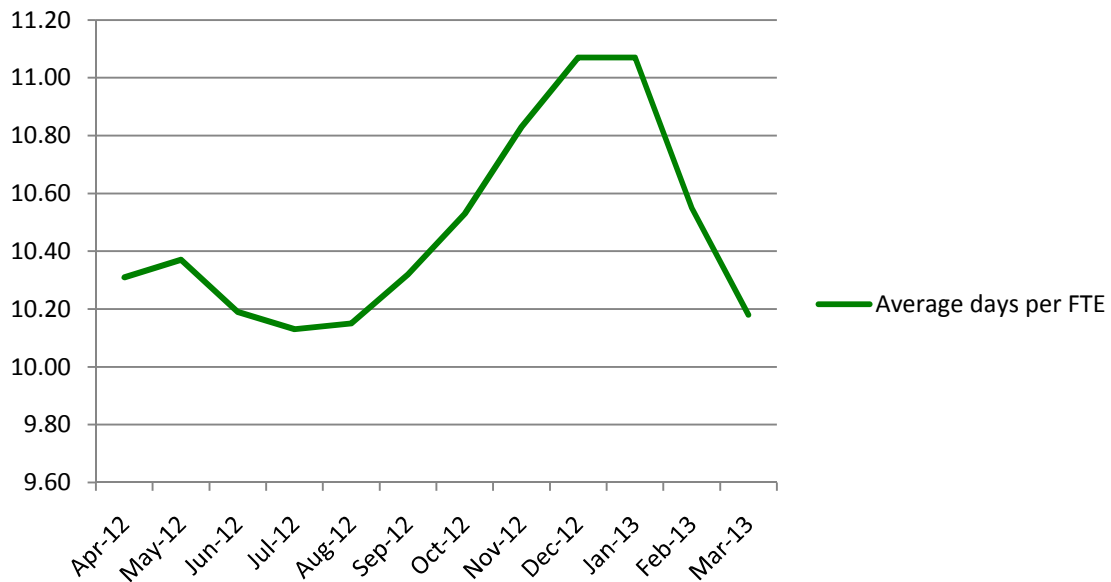
Corporate Services sickness - average days per FTE

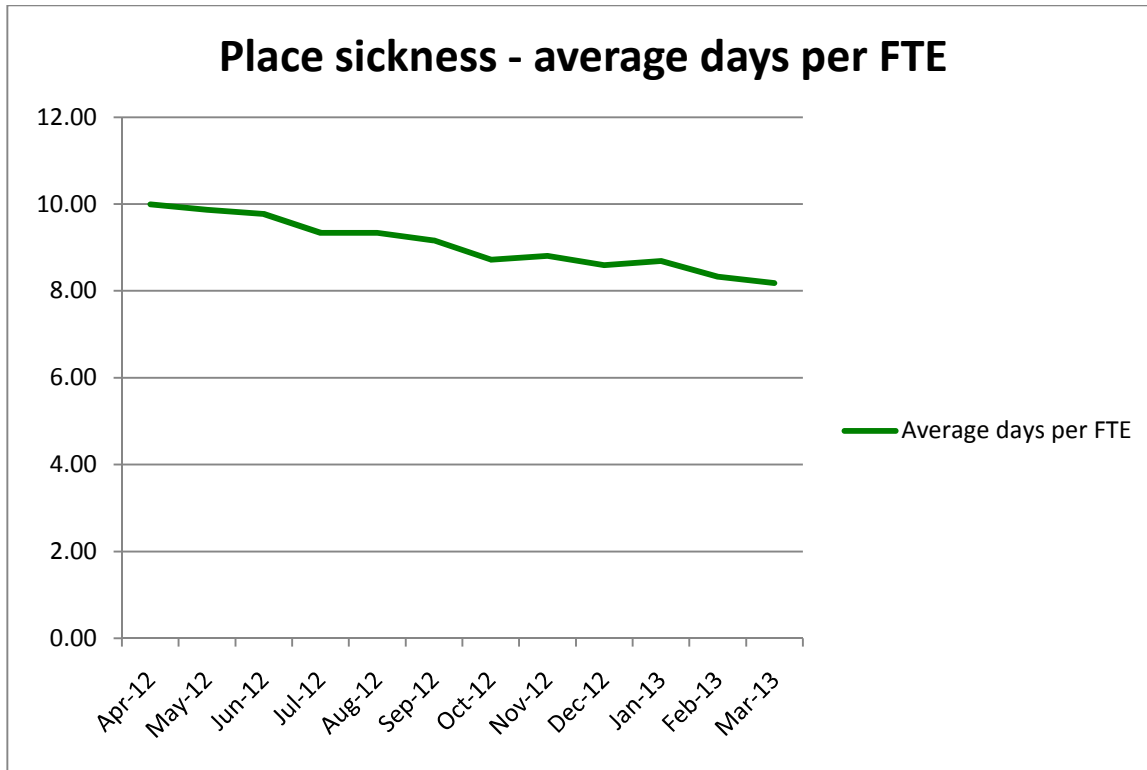


Executive Office sickness - average days per FTE



People sickness (excl schools) - average days per FTE





4. Progress to date

Whilst the overall 12 month sickness absence rate is reducing, the Council is committed to further reducing sickness levels due to the impact of sickness on operational services, staff morale, productivity, and cost.

4.1 Top 100 cases

In August 2012, an action plan was developed to address the top 100 sickness absence cases. These actions were:

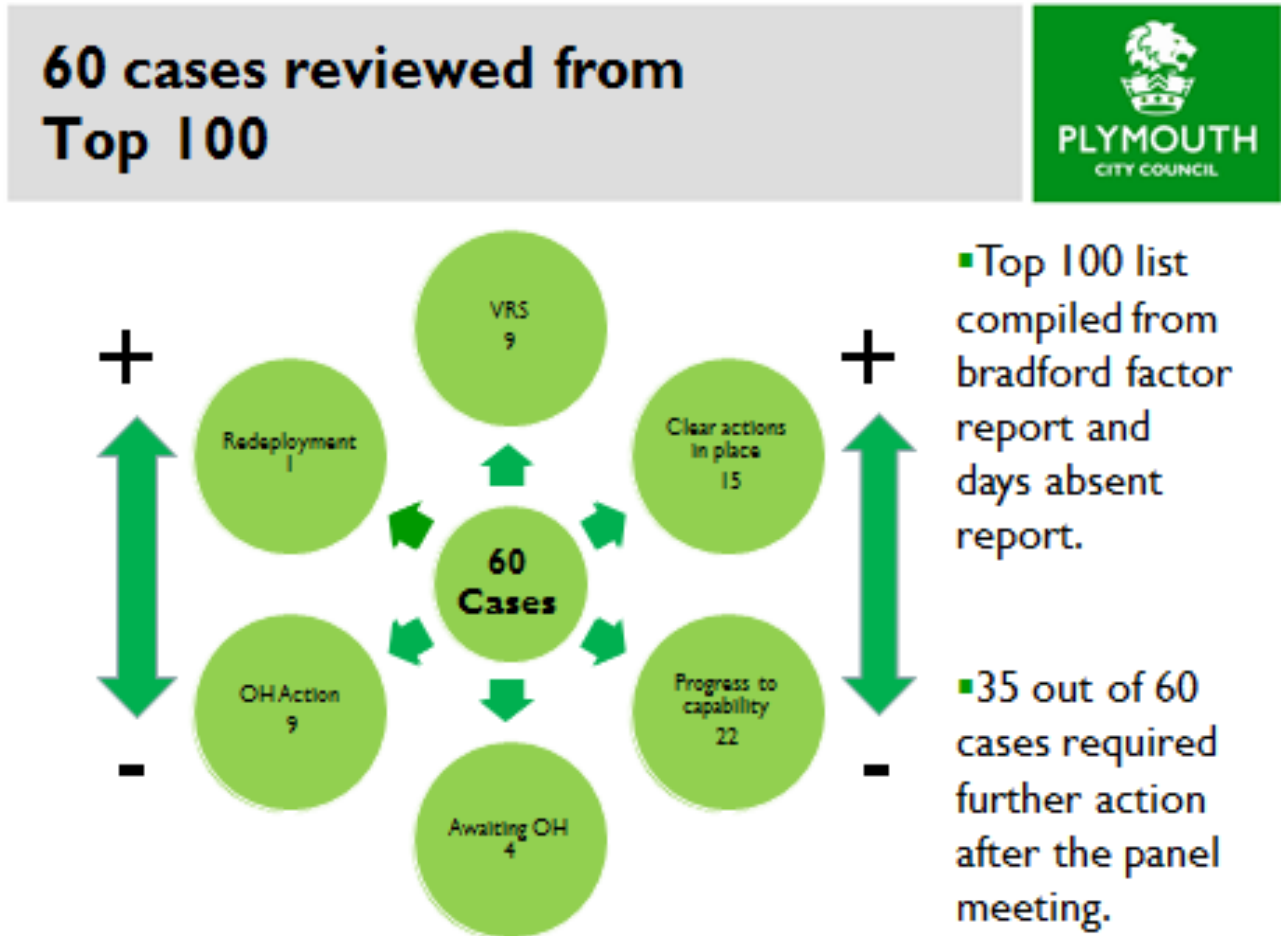
- a) HR Advisers meet with departmental management teams on a regular basis to discuss the approach in their service areas for colleagues appearing on the overall top 100 list, both for total number of days off in the last 12 months and Bradford score.
- b) HR Advisers meet with line managers for those cases in the top 100 to support individual wellbeing plans to resolve cases. The content of those plans cannot be discussed in this paper as they involve confidential personal information.
- c) Cases in the top 100 that are not showing a clear improvement or path to resolution are nominated for an independent panel meeting led by the HR Management team.

4.1.1

In January 2013, an HR consultant was appointed on a temporary three month basis to lead the improving attendance project. Their primary focus is to be the Council lead in co-ordinating attendance/enhanced case management for sickness cases and the reduction of the Top 100 current long term sick cases. Together with the HR Management team, independent case review meetings were conducted with the relevant line managers. 80 cases were identified and 60 cases reviewed at these meetings which were conducted in February 2013.

4.1.2

The diagram below displays the core action from each of the 60 cases heard;



25 cases needed no further interventions. Nine cases had already had applications accepted through the voluntary release scheme. 15 cases had clear actions already in place and one case was awaiting an outcome from the redeployment pool.

35 cases required further action after the panel meeting. Nine cases needed Occupational Health referrals to be made, four cases were awaiting the Occupational Health feedback and 22 cases needed to progress to a capability investigation meeting.

4.1.3

Individual reports have been generated from each meeting and sent to each line manager with clear actions moving forward. Enhanced case management by the HR Consultant to ensure these actions are completed has resulted in the current statistic (wef: 3.4.2013);

- ✓ 11 open active cases
- ✓ 48 closed cases

(out of 60 cases)

Closed cases resulted in various outcomes such as: a return to work, resignation, dismissal due to capability, dismissal due to ill health retirement, redeployment, variations in contracts of employment etc.

Out of the 11 open active cases, there is a proposed decrease of a further 5 cases, leaving the target expected at the end of the project (April 2013) to 6 open active cases.

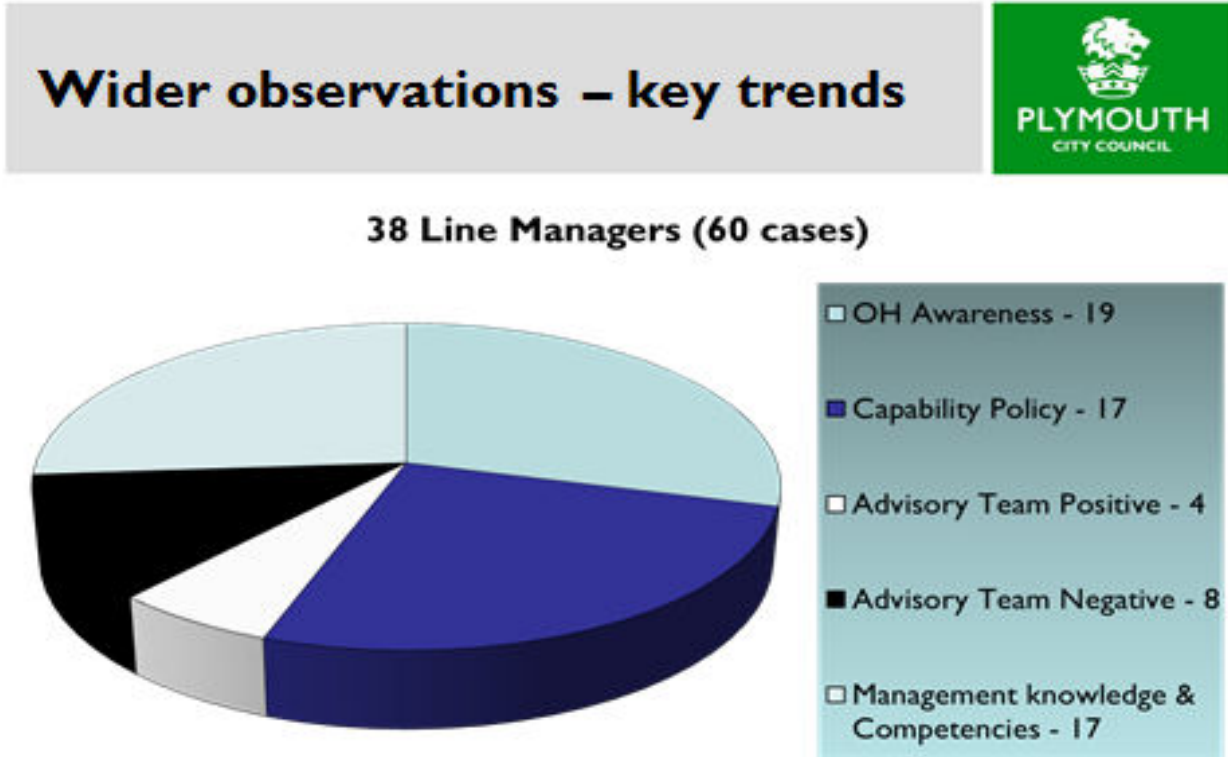
4.2

Wider observations – key trends

Managers are provided with management information each month to help them manage sickness absence. The HR Advisory and the Health, Safety and Wellbeing teams provide support to line managers to help them manage staff absence. In addition to having robust absence management policies and practices in place, this three month project aims to more clearly understand the underlying reasons for sickness absence, (which are not necessarily always the reasons reported), and tackle the underlying causes of absence, particularly in areas regularly reporting higher than average sickness levels.

4.2.1

Out of the 60 sickness panel cases conducted, a total of 38 Line Managers (some line managers had multiple cases) were evaluated and the following wider observations and key trends were displayed;



The 4 key trends being;

- Occupational Health
- Capability Policy
- Advisory team
- Management knowledge & competencies

Occupational Health

There was a distinct lack of knowledge, awareness and understanding by managers of the occupational health process and policy.

Capability Policy

There was evidence of line managers using and referring to the capability policy, without a distinct understanding and awareness of the content within it.

Advisory team

A perception that HR/OD advice is not consistent and a lack of understanding from managers of the role HR/OD has to play when managing sickness absence.

Management knowledge & competencies

There was clear evidence of the inability to focus on people issues due to operational pressures. A general lack of skill in dealing with and tackling sickness absence and very little accountability and responsibility to do so.

Another observation during the sickness panel meetings was the lack of clear and defined management reporting and information on sickness absence.

4.2.2

Presentations of the findings and contents of the project work so far have been presented to the HR management team and the HR Advisory teams.

Practical work group sessions within HR/OD have been conducted to review the content of the wider observations and recommendations in more detail.

5. Plans in place for future development

Structured discussion groups are currently being set up with priorities in each of the 4 key areas as defined in 4.2.1. The objective being to further explore the feedback and results and to identify actions and different ways to tackle sickness absence.

The HR management team are developing an action plan to strategically, formulate, maintain and deliver a structured project management approach to achieving the required sickness absence targets.

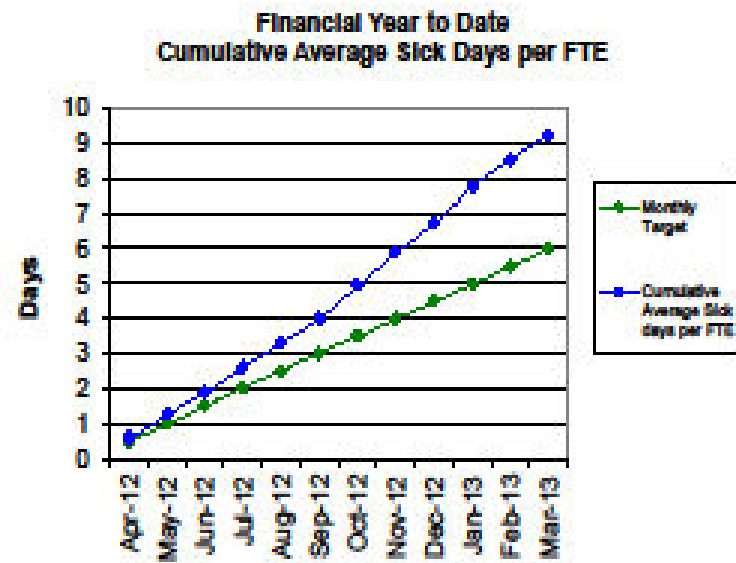
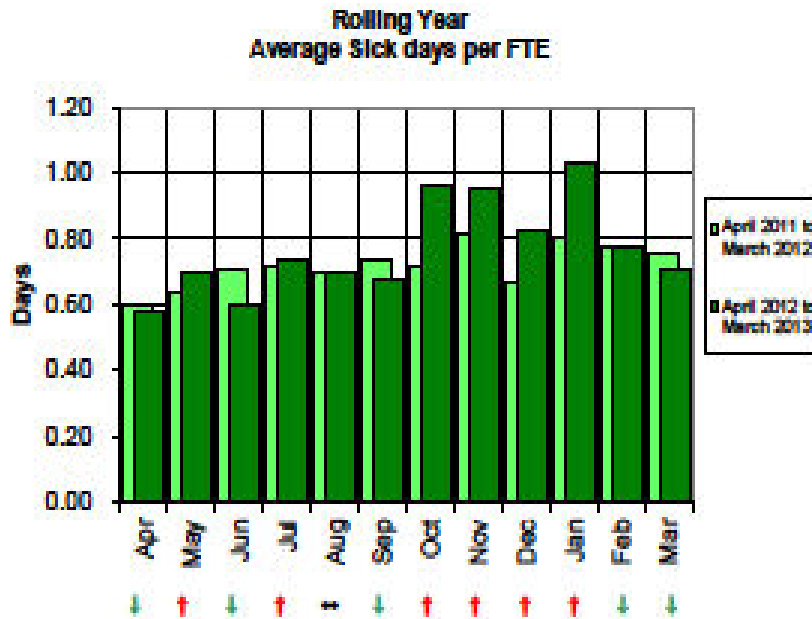
Operationally, interventions will continue to be developed and the expediting of the individual enhanced case management will continue until 26th April 2013.

Council Wide Sickness (Excl Schools)

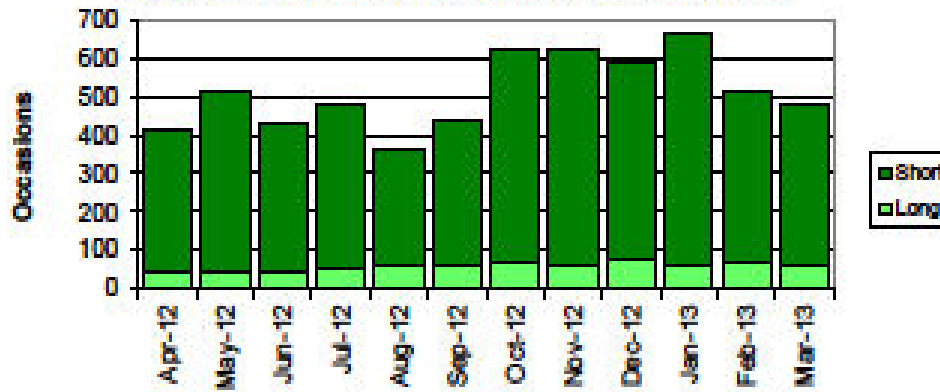
March 2013

Working Days Lost

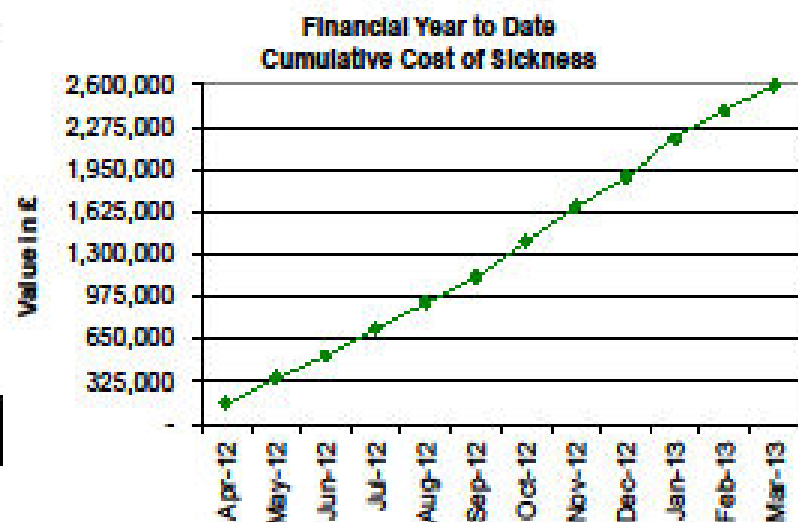
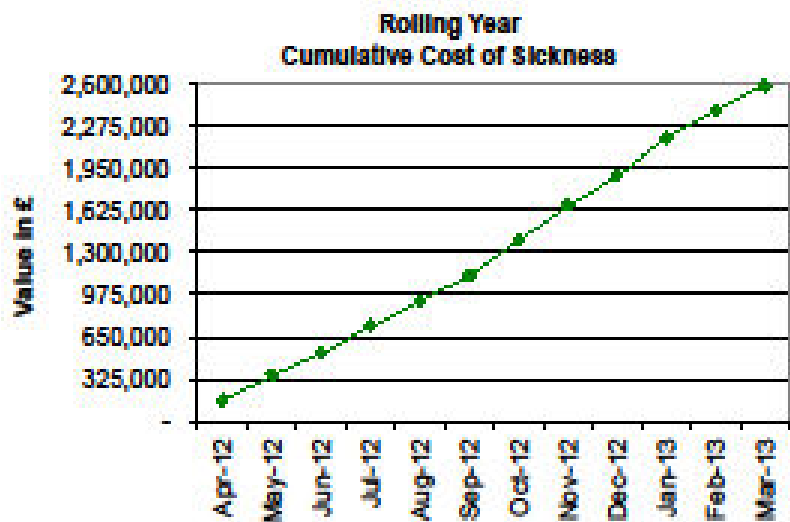
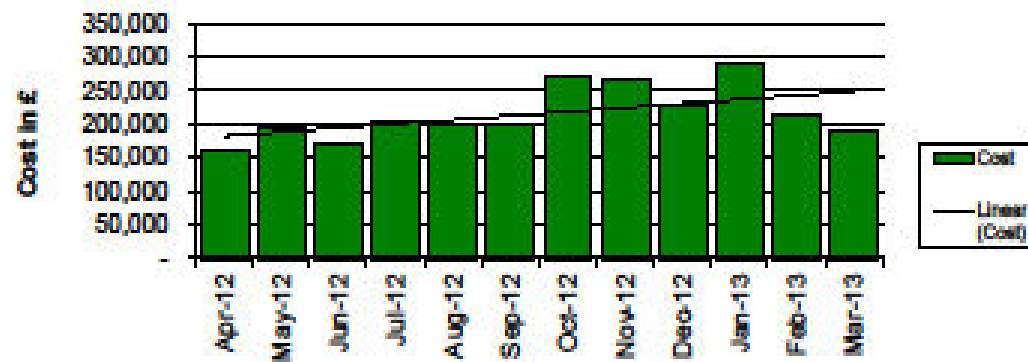
| Directorate | Total Number of Days | | Average FTE | | Percentage | | Direction of Travel |
|---------------------------|----------------------|------------------|--------------|-------------|--------------|-------------|---------------------|
| | Rolling Year | FYTD | Rolling Year | FYTD | Rolling Year | FYTD | |
| Executive Office | 245.00 | 245.00 | 7.01 | 7.01 | 2.79 | 2.79 | ↔ |
| Corporate Services | 6,849.58 | 6,849.58 | 8.63 | 8.63 | 3.44 | 3.44 | ↔ |
| People | 14,544.89 | 14,544.89 | 10.18 | 10.18 | 4.06 | 4.06 | ↔ |
| Place | 6,331.36 | 6,331.36 | 8.18 | 8.18 | 3.26 | 3.26 | ↔ |
| Council Wide Total | 27,970.83 | 27,970.83 | 9.23 | 9.23 | 3.68 | 3.68 | ↑ |



Comparison of Long and Short Term Sickness Occasions



Cost of Absence



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| AVERAGE NUMBER OF DAYS SICK PER FULL TIME EQUIVALENT (FTE) | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|
| Directorate | Department | Apr-12 | May-12 | Jun-12 | Jul-12 | Aug-12 | Sep-12 | Oct-12 | Nov-12 | Dec-12 | Jan-13 | Feb-13 | Mar-13 |
| Corporate Services | Democracy and Governance | 11.43 | 11.67 | 12.44 | 12.62 | 12.25 | 12.36 | 11.82 | 10.95 | 10.81 | 8.93 | 9.35 | 9.04 |
| | Finance, Efficiencies, Technology & Asst | 8.65 | 8.86 | 8.52 | 8.86 | 9.13 | 9.43 | 9.87 | 9.99 | 9.92 | 10.23 | 9.63 | 9.26 |
| | Human Resources and Organisational Dev | 7.43 | 7.59 | 5.41 | 5.34 | 5.54 | 5.99 | 6.56 | 7.77 | 8.76 | 9.59 | 9.09 | 9.11 |
| | Customer Services | 7.42 | 7.34 | 5.89 | 6.16 | 6.69 | 6.82 | 6.97 | 6.99 | 7.11 | 6.90 | 6.47 | 6.40 |
| | Management & Support (Corp Services) | 10.00 | 10.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | DIRECTORATE TOTAL | 8.57 | 8.70 | 8.06 | 8.35 | 8.59 | 8.87 | 9.17 | 9.32 | 9.31 | 9.33 | 8.88 | 8.63 |
| Executive Office | Policy, Performance and Partnerships | 5.96 | 5.78 | 5.59 | 4.89 | 5.51 | 5.60 | 5.22 | 6.73 | 10.82 | 12.95 | 9.98 | 8.11 |
| | Corporate Communications | 3.83 | 3.79 | 6.04 | 7.71 | 8.38 | 5.33 | 5.33 | 5.25 | 5.25 | 5.33 | 5.17 | 5.58 |
| | Management & Support (Chief Executives) | 1.17 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 1.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | EXECUTIVE OFFICE TOTAL | 4.88 | 4.79 | 5.49 | 5.58 | 6.47 | 5.51 | 5.12 | 6.06 | 8.72 | 10.13 | 7.99 | 7.01 |
| People | Joint Commissioning & Adult Social Care | 13.96 | 14.10 | 14.17 | 13.76 | 14.04 | 14.23 | 14.44 | 15.11 | 15.11 | 14.74 | 13.69 | 13.23 |
| | Homes & Communities | 9.76 | 9.51 | 9.05 | 8.90 | 8.44 | 8.35 | 8.03 | 7.63 | 7.85 | 8.02 | 8.16 | 8.42 |
| | Childrens Social Care | 10.32 | 10.27 | 10.45 | 10.85 | 10.93 | 11.33 | 11.54 | 11.89 | 11.67 | 11.70 | 10.86 | 10.23 |
| | Education, Learning & Families | 8.54 | 7.58 | 7.22 | 7.38 | 7.40 | 7.50 | 7.91 | 8.21 | 8.86 | 9.15 | 9.06 | 8.68 |
| | Programmes Director | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.29 | 1.33 | 3.67 | 3.67 | 3.67 | 3.67 | 2.33 | 2.33 | 3.33 | 3.33 |
| | DIRECTORATE TOTAL (excluding Schools) | 10.31 | 10.37 | 10.19 | 10.13 | 10.15 | 10.32 | 10.53 | 10.83 | 11.07 | 11.07 | 10.55 | 10.18 |
| Place | Planning Services | 3.23 | 3.38 | 3.44 | 3.01 | 3.29 | 3.50 | 4.18 | 3.35 | 4.96 | 3.86 | 4.79 | 3.45 |
| | Business Team (Dev & Reg) | 1.11 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.16 | 1.42 | 1.03 | 3.49 | 6.33 | 8.91 | 13.54 |
| | Environmental Services | 11.77 | 11.51 | 11.39 | 11.26 | 11.31 | 10.97 | 10.31 | 10.32 | 10.15 | 10.24 | 9.84 | 9.58 |
| | Economic Development | 7.09 | 7.46 | 7.65 | 7.15 | 7.38 | 6.97 | 4.41 | 4.45 | 4.80 | 5.10 | 5.45 | 5.78 |
| | Strategic Housing | 11.68 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 | 0.00 |
| | Transport & Infrastructure | 9.61 | 10.29 | 9.78 | 8.08 | 7.58 | 7.77 | 9.45 | 10.47 | 9.46 | 9.12 | 7.84 | 7.15 |
| | DIRECTORATE TOTAL | 9.99 | 9.87 | 9.77 | 9.34 | 9.34 | 9.16 | 8.72 | 8.81 | 8.59 | 8.69 | 8.33 | 8.18 |
| | COUNCIL TOTAL (excluding Schools) | 9.7 | 9.73 | 9.46 | 9.4 | 9.49 | 9.59 | 9.65 | 9.88 | 9.96 | 10.01 | 9.52 | 9.23 |

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PLYMOUTH CITY COUNCIL

Subject: Revenues and Benefits Performance Update
Committee: Cabinet Planning
Date: March 2013
Cabinet Member: Councillor Lowry
CMT Member: Adam Broome (Director for Corporate Services)
Author: Martine Collins, Strategic Manager Revs and Benefits
Contact details: Tel: 01752 304118
Email: martine.collins@plymouth.gov.uk

Ref:

Key Decision: No

Part: I

Purpose of the report:

To provide Cabinet with an update on the performance of the Revenues and Benefits Service.

Corporate Plan 2012 – 2015:

The Revenues and Benefits Service significantly contributes to the inequalities agenda ensuring that the most vulnerable residents of Plymouth receive the appropriate benefit entitlement. Also strong links into value for communities.

**Implications for Medium Term Financial Plan and Resource Implications:
Including finance, human, IT and land:**

The council administers housing benefit subsidy of c.£100m per annum.

Other Implications: e.g. Child Poverty, Community Safety, Health and Safety and Risk Management:

- An effective Revenues and Benefits Service helps address inequalities through ensuring that vulnerable residents receive appropriate benefit entitlement.
- The service undertakes annual benefit take up campaigns which are targeted to areas of greatest need.

Equality and Diversity:

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been undertaken? No

Recommendations and Reasons for recommended action:

Cabinet planning are asked to note the progress made by the service since the implementation of a new structure in November 2011.

Due to the improvements in performance it is recommended that the report no longer go to Cabinet, but continues to be an item for cabinet planning.

Alternative options considered and rejected:

None

Published work / information:

None

Background papers:

None

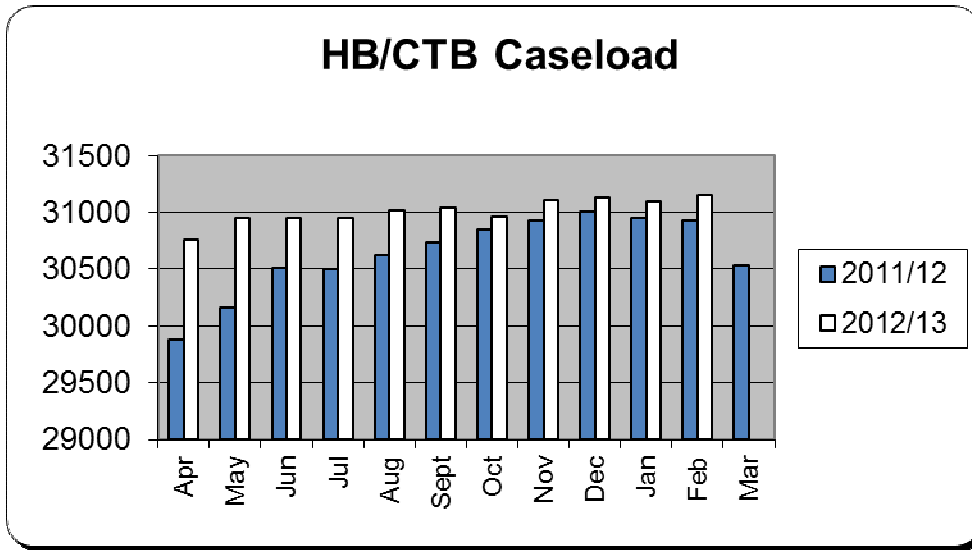
| Title | Part I | Part II | Exemption Paragraph Number | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|---------|----------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| | | | | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | | | | |

Sign off:

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--|-----|--|------------|--|----|--|--------|--|----|--|---------------|--|
| Fin | | Leg | | Mon Off | | HR | | Assets | | IT | | Strat Proc | |
| Originating SMT Member | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Has the Cabinet Member(s) agreed the content of the report? Yes / No | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

Housing Benefit

Number of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit claimants

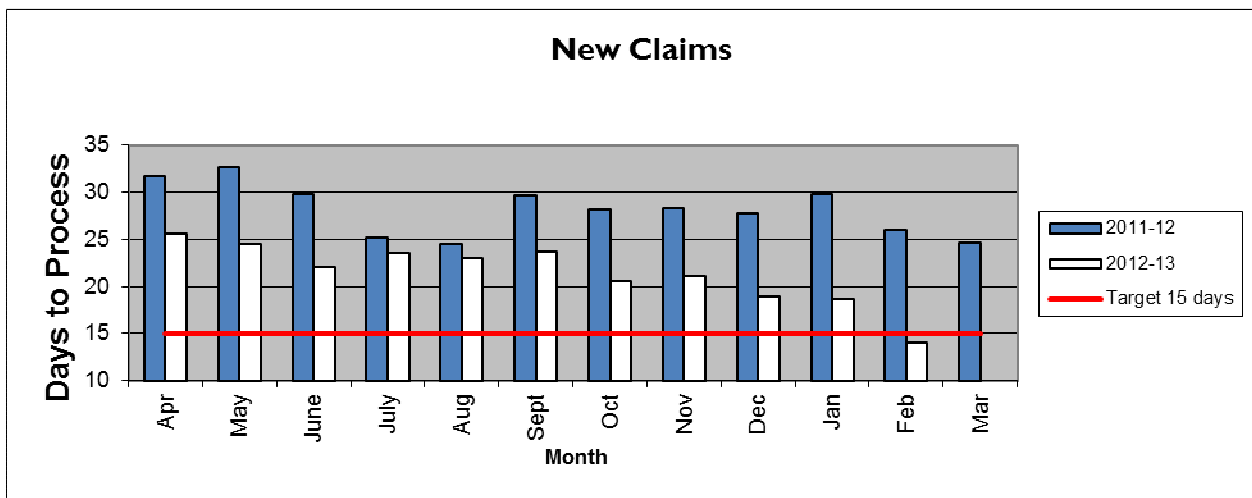


| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|----------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|
| 2012/13 | 30754 | 30945 | 30953 | 30952 | 31015 | 31040 | 30,982 | 31,108 | 31,130 | 31,091 | 31,155 | |
| 2011/12 | 29879 | 30165 | 30505 | 30504 | 30621 | 30737 | 30853 | 30929 | 31004 | 30952 | 30923 | 30528 |

The number of people in receipt of Housing and Council Tax Benefit increased during February by 64 (0.20%). The average caseload per Plymouth City Council FTE staff member is more than 1,000 which is above average compared with other Councils.

Processing of New Claims

■ **Target 15 days – February 14.04 days**



| | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| 2012 | 25.62 | 24.49 | 22.09 | 23.54 | 23.05 | 23.73 | 20.51 | 21.07 | 18.94 | 18.54 | 14.04 | 18 |
| 2011 | 31.74 | 32.70 | 29.74 | 25.19 | 24.47 | 29.70 | 28.13 | 27.71 | 27.71 | 29.77 | 26.05 | 24.68 |

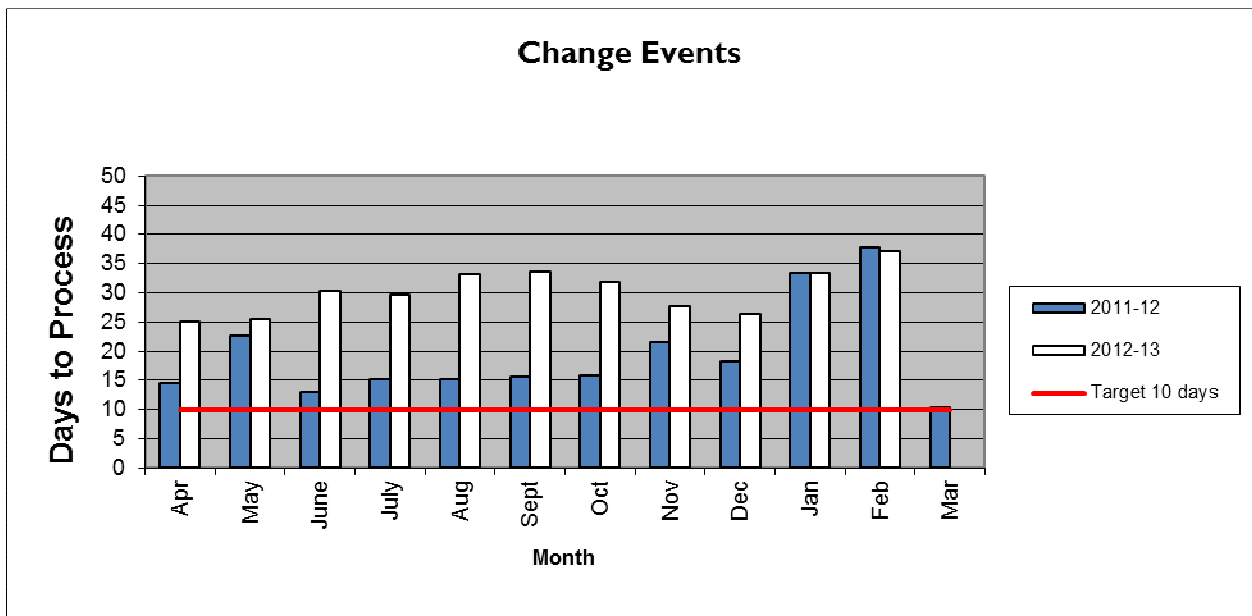
Forecast Processing Times

February saw a further reduction in the number of days to process new claims which has seen the department exceed what was a very challenging target for this year. The department is now well ahead of the all Council average of 24 days and is achieving the best processing times it has ever seen.

During March we may see a slight increase in processing times due to the introduction of Welfare Reforms, but we have plans in place and are working hard to avoid this. Increases are more likely to be on change of circumstances as welfare reform begins to impact.

Processing of Change Events

Target 10 days – February 37.02 days



| | <u>Apr</u> | <u>May</u> | <u>Jun</u> | <u>Jul</u> | <u>Aug</u> | <u>Sept</u> | <u>Oct</u> | <u>Nov</u> | <u>Dec</u> | <u>Jan</u> | <u>Feb</u> | <u>Mar</u> |
|-------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------|
| 2012 | 25.05 | 25.41 | 30.23 | 29.73 | 33.08 | 33.86 | 31.89 | 27.69 | 26.36 | 33.47 | 37.02 | 20 |
| 2011 | 14.58 | 22.57 | 12.94 | 12.12 | 15.15 | 15.62 | 15.73 | 18.34 | 18.34 | 33.36 | 37.82 | 10.28 |

Forecast Processing Times

As expected February saw a drop in the number of days to process changes as the impact of the final ATLAS backlog was cleared. This situation will now improve and our processing times for the last week of February and beginning of March are indicating a reduction to around 20 days, which will be significant progress. However we are expecting the impact of welfare reform to affect changes processing times during March as customer demand increases and therefore will not realise the full benefits associated with clearing ATLAS until later.

Welfare Reform Resource Planning

All customers who are going to be affected by the introduction of Council tax Support were issued with detailed letters and frequently asked questions to explain the changes. A team of staff have been proactively calling customers and by week beginning 4 March a total of 4763 customers had been contacted out of the 16,000 affected.

During our responses we had some customers who were refusing to pay, however the majority understood that they needed to pay and were willing to set up payment plans that fell in line with their benefits payments. The majority of customers were also aware of the changes which demonstrated that our efforts to raise awareness have been successful.

We are continuing to make contact with those affected and will be diverting resources to manage main billing during March. However all staff are briefed to discuss the changes with customers and we will continue to discuss payments plans.

We have also been running a number of drop-in sessions in the Civic Centre and will be running a joint open day on 8th March, where customer can get advice and support across a range of the welfare changes from the Council, Social Landlords and the Job Centre.

We are expecting a significant increase in calls during the latter part of March once Council Tax bills are received by customers as a result of the Council Tax Technical Reforms and Council Tax Support.

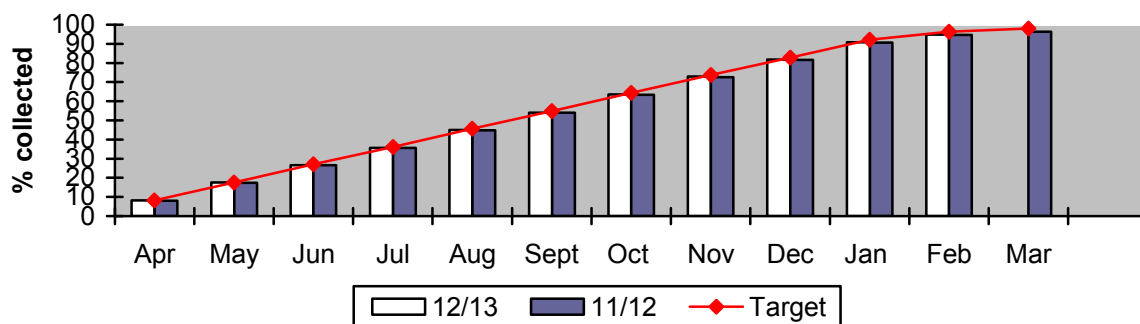
Collection Rates

Council Tax

- Net Collectable Debt 2012/13 £93,653m
 - Collection Target 2012/13 98 %
- Monthly Target = 96.24% £89,990m
 Collection Rate = 94.87% £88,686m

| | April | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 12/13 (%) | 8.25 | 17.53 | 26.53 | 35.70 | 44.95 | 54.07 | 63.60 | 72.87 | 81.80 | 90.85 | 94.87 | 96.6% |
| 11/12 (%) | 8.07 | 17.31 | 26.62 | 35.61 | 44.85 | 54.04 | 63.34 | 72.60 | 81.54 | 90.71 | 94.68 | 96.30 |
| Target (%) | 8.22 | 17.61 | 27.06 | 36.19 | 45.57 | 54.90 | 64.34 | 73.74 | 82.82 | 92.15 | 96.24 | 98.00 |

% of Council Tax collected



Council Tax collection has continued to improve during February, we are now 0.19% ahead of last year. This is lower than our forecast of 96.24%.

We continue to telephone customers falling into arrears to promote payment and avoid recovery action. This is reducing the number of summons being issued and securing payments which would otherwise go through the recovery cycle.

We are also actively contacting customers affected by the introduction of Council Tax Support to actively promote payments for 2013/14.

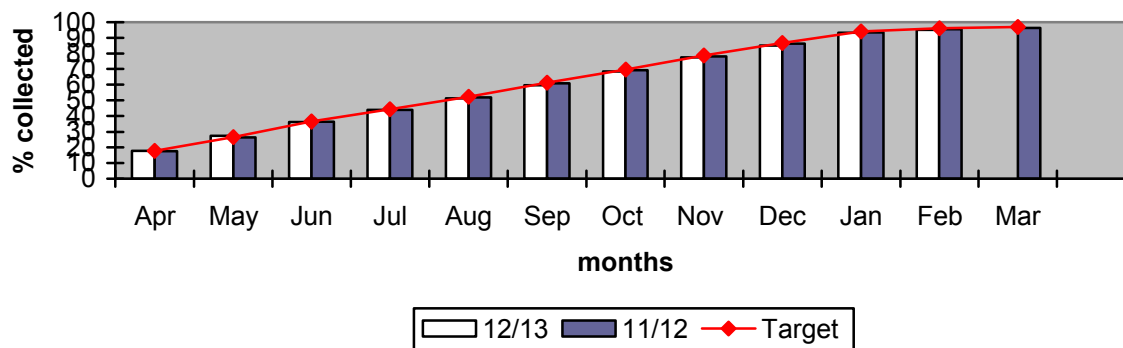
National Non Domestic Rates

- Net Collectable Debt 2012/13 £88,024m
 - Collection Target 2012/13 96.90%
- Monthly Target = 96.08% £83,515m
 Collection Rate = 95.07% £82,635m

| | April | May | June | July | Aug | Sept | Oct | Nov | Dec | Jan | Feb | Mar |
|------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 12/13 (%) | 17.82 | 27.46 | 36.11 | 43.95 | 51.20 | 59.66 | 68.48 | 77.41 | 85.20 | 93.15 | 95.07 | 96.63 |
| 11/12 (%) | 17.63 | 26.48 | 36.17 | 43.80 | 51.84 | 60.85 | 69.23 | 78.14 | 86.19 | 93.52 | 95.49 | 96.21 |
| Target (%) | 17.74 | 26.69 | 36.48 | 44.22 | 52.28 | 61.31 | 69.73 | 78.66 | 86.73 | 94.09 | 96.08 | 96.90 |

NOTE: Target of 96.90% is a revision from 97.50% after taking into account the business rates deferral scheme where businesses can defer payment of their rates for 2 years.

% Of NNDR Collected



Collection of business rates has dropped slightly during February and is now 1.01% below target. The drop is in part due to some large refunds due to appeals against rateable value. Proactive recovery work and a revised recovery timetable have tightened our recovery processes to help improve our overall position which we expect to show an improvement next month.

Many authorities are seeing a reduction in the collection of business rates as the economic climate continues to be a challenge, but we continue to focus on proactive recovery to improve the situation.