

# SICKNESS ABSENCE AS AT DECEMBER 2015 FOR SCRUTINY BOARD



**Subject:** Sickness Absence Report (Council Wide)  
**Committee:** Scrutiny  
**Date:** 17 February 2016  
**Cabinet Member:** Councillor Peter Smith  
**CMT Member:** Lesa Annear (Strategic Director for Transformation & Change)  
**Author:** Toni Grimshaw (Human Resources Adviser)  
**Contact:** Toni Grimshaw (Human Resource Adviser)  
 Tel: 01752 306111  
 Email: Toni.grimshaw@plymouth.gov.uk

**Ref:**  
**Key Decision:** No  
**Part:** N/A

## 1. Purpose

The Co-operative Scrutiny Board has requested a quarterly update on sickness absence across Plymouth City Council. This report will review rolling year to date sickness absence, reasons for absence and a summary of approaches to managing sickness absence levels across Plymouth City Council. In this report data has been further broken down to review sickness absence by directorate (see appendix one) as requested by the Scrutiny Board in October 2015.

## 2. Update since January 2015 (Rolling Year)

The tables below provide information on sickness absence days lost council wide. See appendix one for directorate sickness absence data.

**Table one: Council wide sickness absence against target as of December 2015.**

**Council Wide Sickness Dashboard (Excludes Schools)**  
December 2015

Directorate	Total Number of Days Lost (Rolling Year)				Comparison of Average Days Lost to Directorate Target (Rolling Year)			
	Number of FTE Employees	Total Work Days Available (FTE) (Based on calculation, not an exact figure)	Total FTE Days Lost to Sickness	Percentage of Days Lost	Average Days Lost Per FTE (Rolling Year)	Average Days Lost per FTE (Month)	Directorate Target	Comparison of Average to Directorate Target (Rolling Year)
Executive Office	60.11	14,186.79	369.48	2.60%	6.05	0.75	7	-0.95 ●
Office of the Director of Public Health	85.79	20,246.83	492.20	2.43%	5.74	0.93	7	-1.26 ●
People	925.21	218,349.82	6,922.18	3.17%	7.48	0.68	9.45	-1.97 ●
Place	611.00	144,196.64	4,469.96	3.10%	7.32	0.62	8.5	-1.18 ●
Transformation & Change	662.93	156,451.35	4,616.85	2.95%	6.96	0.67	7	-0.04 ●
<b>Council Wide</b>	<b>2,345.05</b>	<b>553,431.43</b>	<b>16,870.67</b>	<b>3.05%</b>	<b>7.19</b>	<b>0.67</b>	<b>8.49</b>	<b>-1.30 ●</b>

## Performance Update

### Corporate

Corporate sickness continues to trend downwards and remains under the target as a result of positive interventions taken to manage and reduce sickness absence. The average FTE days lost was **7.19** in December, the lowest in the 12 month (RYTD) period.

**Table two: RYTD Council wide days lost**

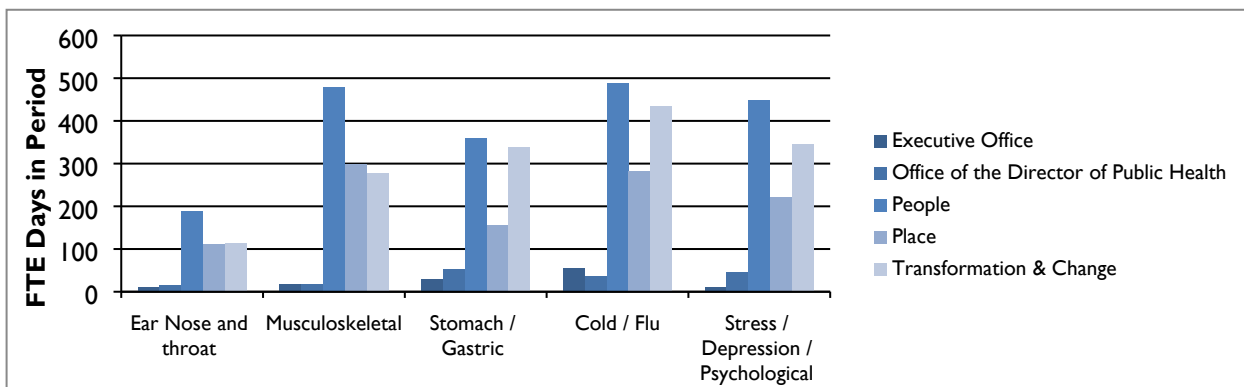
Average Number of Sick Days per FTE												
Directorate	Jan 15	Feb 15	Mar 15	Apr 15	May 15	Jun 15	Jul 15	Aug 15	Sep 15	Oct 15	Nov 15	Dec 15
Council Wide	7.82	7.97	8.56	8.01	8.02	8.21	8.05	7.94	7.55	7.51	7.33	7.19

### 3. Reasons for Absence

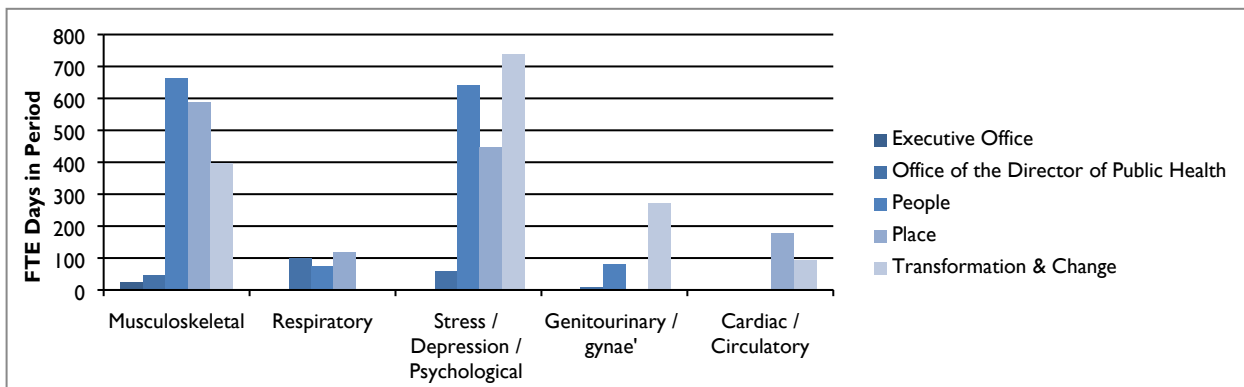
The reasons for absence remain consistent across public and private sectors.

- Minor illnesses contribute to the most common reasons for short term sickness. See table three and four below.
- Musculoskeletal and stress related illness also contributes to short term sickness absence.

**Table three: Most common reasons for short term absences – Council Wide**



**Table four: Most common reasons for long term absences – Council Wide**



#### **4. The cost of sickness absence**

The Scrutiny Board has requested data on the cost of sickness absence; currently the Pertemps costs to cover the absence of permanent employees equate to 4% of the total agency spend.

The cost of sickness absence is calculated by taking the direct costs such as sick pay, acting up allowances or Pertemps costs to cover the absence. It is also important to take into account the time taken to manage sickness absences and other indirect costs which are more difficult to quantify including (but not limited to); loss of productivity, impact on service delivery, interrupted workflow and reduced staff morale.

Further work is being done to incorporate the cost of absence into workforce reports.

#### **5. Recent approaches to managing sickness absence**

- The HSW team coordinated the annual flu vaccination programme; last November 446 employees had flu vaccinations.
- Departments with higher levels of sickness absence such as Street Services are actively managing sickness absence by: holding fortnightly sickness meetings with line management and HR Advisory support and by making adjustments to working hours and duties to facilitate a speedier return to work.
- Plymouth City Council encourages the use of Occupational Health Services wherever possible, in December there were 31 referrals for musculoskeletal and stress relating illness.
- A separate scrutiny report is to be presented by the HSW team advising the outcome of the recent tendering exercise for a provider of Occupational Health and Employee Assistance with a target implementation date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2016.
- The Health Safety and Wellbeing team held 'winning ways to mental health' workshops for staff in October to raise awareness of mental health, discuss ways of recognising stress and discuss sources of support and information available for staff. Mindfulness sessions were also held at Plymouth City Library throughout November and offered to staff, at no charge.

**APPENDIX ONE: Sickness Absence Data by Directorate**

Place	Average FTE Days Lost (RYTD)	% Days Lost (RYTD)	Directorate Target	Comparison to Target (RYTD)
Business Team	0.99	0.38%	7.00	7.51
Economic development	4.92	1.89%	7.00	3.58
Strategic Planning & Infrastructure	3.76	1.44%	7.00	4.74
Street Services	9.41	3.60%	9.00	-0.41
<b>Directorate Totals</b>	<b>7.32</b>	<b>2.80%</b>	<b>8.50</b>	<b>1.18</b>

People (exl Schools)	Average FTE Days Lost (RYTD)	% Days Lost (RYTD)	Directorate Target	Comparison to Target (RYTD)
Children, Young people & Families	6.94	2.66%	9.00	2.06
House Services	11.91	4.56%	7.00	-4.91
Learning & Communities	7.08	2.71%	7.00	-0.08
Strategic Coop Commissioning	9.19	3.52%	7.00	-2.19
<b>Directorate Totals</b>	<b>7.48</b>	<b>3.17%</b>	<b>9.45</b>	<b>1.97</b>

Office of Director of Public Health	Average FTE Days Lost (RYTD)	% Days Lost (RYTD)	Directorate Target	Comparison to Target (RYTD)
Civil Protection unit	3.25	1.25%	7.00	3.75
Office of Director of Public Health	3.5	1.34%	7.00	3.50
Public Protection Service	6.58	2.52%	7.00	0.42
<b>Directorate Totals</b>	<b>5.74</b>	<b>2.20%</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>1.26</b>

Executive office	Average FTE Days Lost (RYTD)	% Days Lost (RYTD)	Directorate Target	Comparison to Target (RYTD)
Business Support unit	2.02	0.77%	7.00	4.98
Client Capability Team	0		7.00	7.00
Corporate Communication	1.55	0.59%	7.00	5.45
Democratic & Member Support	18	6.90%	7.00	-11.00
Management & Support (Chief Exec)	0		7.00	7.00
Policy, performance & partnerships	7.68	2.94%	7.00	-0.68
<b>Directorate Totals</b>	<b>6.05</b>	<b>2.32%</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>0.95</b>

Transformation & Change	Average FTE Days Lost (RYTD)	% Days Lost (RYTD)	Directorate Target	Comparison to Target (RYTD)
Customer Services	7.41	2.84%	7.00	-0.41
Finance	6.28	2.41%	7.00	0.72
HROD	10.86	4.16%	7.00	-3.36
Legal Services	3.06	1.17%	7.00	3.94
Portfolio Transformation	8.28	3.17%	7.00	-1.28
Transformation Programmes Managers	0	0.00%	7.00	7.00
<b>Directorate Totals</b>	<b>6.96</b>	<b>2.67%</b>	<b>7.00</b>	<b>0.04</b>