

Scotland Excel

To: Executive Sub-Committee

On: 9 December 2022

**Report by:
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel**

Employee Supporting Attendance Report

1. Introduction and purpose of the report

In response to the Renfrewshire Council Internal Audit team recommendation, this report on supporting attendance is submitted on a quarterly basis highlighting the absence rate in the organisation. The report also highlights some of the support mechanisms that Scotland Excel has implemented to support staff members.

2. Scotland Excel Absence Management Target

The Joint Committee has previously agreed that Scotland Excel should work to an absence rate of below 4%. This target aligns Scotland Excel with partner organisations, supports good practice in this area and demonstrates the ongoing commitment to absence management as a key efficiency target.

3. Overview of Attendance

In line with audit recommendations, the attached report has been prepared for the Executive Sub Committee. The report details:

- Breakdown of current month, last six months and last 12 months absence figures
- Illustration of 12 months in days
- Illustration of last 12 months in percentages

The report includes the latest absence details for the 12 month period to 31 October 2022 in which the rate of absence across the organisation has been maintained below the 4% target.

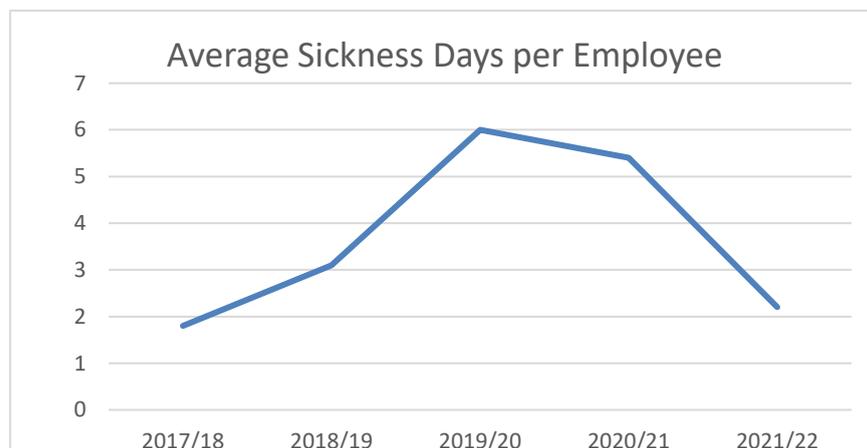
While Scotland Excel has been successful in reducing the absence rate during 2021/22, from March 2022 through to July 2022 the rise in COVID-19 infections throughout the general population was reflected in our own organisation with a number of employees reporting Covid-related illnesses. Those, together with some longer-term absences, resulted in a spike in the % rate to 3.5% in March.

Overall, the rolling 6 and 12 month average absence rates have been maintained at or below 2.4%. The absence rates for the reporting periods as shown in appendix 1 are:

- previous 1 month to 2.4% (45.5 days)
- previous 6 months to 1.2% (113.5 days)
- previous 12 months to 1.3% (250 days)

The graph below shows average sickness days per employee within Scotland Excel over the past 5 years.

Average sickness days reached a peak of 6 days per employee in 2019/20 which coincided with the rise of the Covid-19 pandemic and a number of long-term absences related to mental ill health. The rate has been steadily decreasing since then and the initiatives described below will continue to be utilised to support staff in maintaining attendance at work.



4. Overview of supporting attendance initiatives

In addition to actively supporting members of staff absent through ill health, Scotland Excel continues to implement positive early intervention practices including working with Occupational Health and other support services to maintain employee attendance and to support members of staff who may be experiencing difficulties while remaining at work. Scotland Excel continues to support a range of interventions for staff including Occupational Health referral, confidential counselling services, Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) sessions and issuing wellbeing emails with further information on health initiatives that can be accessed independently by all staff.

Scotland Excel recognises that positive mental health amongst staff members is an area that should be actively supported and encouraged. In addition to actively promoting good mental health practices and initiatives, the organisation has 15 staff from across all operational areas and grades who have trained as accredited Mental Health First Aiders. In providing this confidential support opportunity to staff members it is hoped that any personal difficulties they may be experiencing can be addressed at an early stage with appropriate signposting to professional support.

Scotland Excel has also implemented a Mental Health at Work Commitment Action Plan which is recognised as a comprehensive tool for adopting best practice in promoting and maintaining positive mental health within the organisation.

In addition to the above initiatives Scotland Excel held a face-to-face staff event in September where we invited a number of guest speakers from external agencies to present on a number of topics all designed to support our staff wellbeing. The topics covered included physical and mental health awareness, financial planning and domestic energy efficiency, all particularly relevant in the current economic climate.

5. Recommendation

The Executive Sub Committee is requested to note the contents of this report.

Appendix 1.

HR Report - Absence as at: October 2022



No of Employees During Period

112

Avg Absence Days per Employee

2.2

Absence Rate Last 12 Months

1.3%

Absences Current Month

Self Certified	Covid	Doctor Certified	Total Absences	Average Absence Rate
15.5	3.0	27.0	45.5	2.4%

Absences Last 6 Months

Self Certified	Covid	Doctor Certified	Total Absences	Average Absence Rate
29.5	57.0	27.0	113.5	1.2%

Absences Last 12 Months

Self Certified	Covid	Doctor Certified	Total Absences	Average Absence Rate
77.0	79.0	94.0	250.0	1.3%

