

Notice of Meeting and Agenda Joint Consultative Board (Non-Teaching)

Date	Time	Venue
Wednesday, 31 March 2021	15:00	Microsoft TEAMS Platform,

KENNETH GRAHAM
Head of Corporate Governance

Time of Meeting

Please note this meeting will start at 3pm or at the conclusion of the Finance, Resources & Customer Services Policy Board whichever is the later.

Membership

Councillor Tom Begg: Councillor Jim Harte: Councillor Jim Paterson:
Councillor Andy Steel (Convener): Councillor John McNaughtan (Depute Convener):

Representing APT&C staff

M Ferguson (and 5 APT&C Staff).

Representing Manual Workers

Manual Spokesperson (and 4 Representatives of Manual Trade Unions).

Recording of Meeting

The link below is to the recording of the meeting for subsequent broadcast via the Council's internet site. If you have any queries regarding this please contact Committee Services on 07534 058160.

[JCB Recording of Meeting](#)

Items of business

Appointment of Chairperson

Apologies

Apologies from members.

Declarations of Interest

Members are asked to declare an interest in any item(s) on the agenda and to provide a brief explanation of the nature of the interest.

- | | | |
|----------|---|----------------|
| 1 | Developments in Health, Safety and Wellbeing | 1 - 6 |
| | Report by Director of Finance & Resources. | |
| 2 | Absence Statistics | 7 - 26 |
| | Reports by Director of Finance & Resources. | |
| 3 | Details of Grievances | 27 - 28 |
| | Report by Director of Finance & Resources. | |
| 4 | Agency Workers | 29 - 30 |
| | Report by Director of Finance & Resources. | |
| 5 | Date of Next Meeting | |
| | The next meeting of the JCB Non-Teaching is scheduled to be held at 3pm on 2 June 2021. | |



To: Joint Consultative Board: Non-Teaching

On: 31st March 2021

Report by Alan Russell, Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Developments in Health, Safety and Wellbeing

1. Summary

This report outlines the developments which have taken place since the last meeting of the Joint Consultative Board: Non-Teaching.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 This report is for information only and to note that this is a retrospective record of health, safety and well being activities undertaken by Finance and Resources, HR, health and safety section and other council services.
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3. Background

This section of the report details the activities undertaken since the last JCB.

The report below focusses on the actions and activities to continue to support the council's response and recovery plans. The Health and Safety team have been an integral part of the council's emergency management team, providing clear guidance as documents have been released from the UK and Scottish Governments, The NHS, and Health Protection Scotland. The team links with fellow colleagues in other local authorities to share knowledge and introduce any new learning to our guidance and procedures.

The Health and Safety team, as part of the wider HR and OD team, have been working collaboratively with all key stakeholders, including the Trades Unions, across the council to ensure that any activities (especially key workers) being undertaken, were risk assessed and more importantly the controls were being reviewed dynamically in line with any changes to the guidance or legislation as it emerged.

Working closely with the comms team, regular key messages to managers and employees were issued timely to reminded them of the requirements to keep them safe

3.1 Policies and Guidance

The following have been issued or under review in part due to COVID impact:

- DSE guidance updated
- Homeworking guidance (under review)
- Guidance for First Aiders updated
- Working in Vehicles updated
- HAZID and workplace specific risk assessments
- Schools checklists (reviewed and updated (latest 9 March 2021)
- Legionella
- RIDDOR reporting

3.2 The Health and Safety team has continued to support front line services in the delivery of emergency and prioritised work across the council area, other business as usual tasks such as accident investigation and fire safety continue albeit, in some cases, using electronic computer applications, such as Microsoft teams, rather than face to face.

3.3 The development of new guidance supplemented by risk assessments, standing operating procedures which relate to the specific service activity continues to be an important aspect of the teams' work. The specialised knowledge required has covered care at home, residential care homes, schools.

3.4 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) visited 2 of our establishments as part of their spot check compliance. No adverse comments were made. In addition the Council received 3 specific enquiries from the HSE (2 COVID related) and no further issues are anticipated at this stage.

3.5 The Health and Safety team have worked with services in ensuring the safe working operation of the Johnstone Testing Centre for COVID-19. The Officers remained on site to provide advice and guidance as well as

supporting colleagues and volunteers at the test centre during its operation. This included cover prior to opening, after closing time and weekend working.

- 3.6 The introduction of the Vaccination Centres (Renfrew/Johnstone/ Paisley) involved the Health and Safety team providing not only advice and guidance but on-site support during their continued operation.
- 3.7 The forthcoming Scottish Parliamentary Election in May has resulted in additional work for the Health and Safety team. Since December Site visits and COVID compliance checks has been undertaken across Renfrewshire. The development of a COVID compliance checklist was developed considering the experience gained with school visits as well as other related work. This also included visits to private venues such as RL premises, church halls and such like.
- 3.8 The Health and Safety team have worked closely with Occupational Health and Timefortalking (the employee counselling service) to ensure the council are supporting employees throughout the different phases of the pandemic.
- 3.9 The Health and Safety team have worked with services to review the arrangements within Renfrewshire House. Recent COVID spot checks regarding compliance has taken place.
- 3.10 The formal Corporate Health and Safety Committee meetings planned for the year were suspended to the pandemic although virtual informal meetings did occur regularly. However, The Corporate Health and Safety Committee meetings have now been reinstated and meet quarterly. Dates are planned for the whole of 2021 with local informal meetings also to take place.
- 3.11 Since November 2020, Health and Safety team have undertaken 68 High risk and 8 Low risk evaluations of contractor's and suppliers health and safety documentation when they apply for contracts with Renfrewshire Council. Priority was given to Covid related activity. All applicants are required to provide evidence of COVID-19 Risk assessment and mitigation measures. This activity was markedly higher than normal due to the review of child care premises such as nurseries
- 3.12 The Health and Safety team respond on a regular basis to requests for Freedom of Information as well as to insurance claims. Since November 2020, 21 have been processed. A proportion of the requests are COVID-19 oriented and can be complex.

- 3.13 Online training has been undertaken on a case by case basis as well as toolbox talks on-site, especially where additional controls have been introduced in relation to Covid. Review of fire risk assessment training for Head Teachers is well advanced.
- 3.14 The Corporate Personal Protective Equipment Group continues to support services to ensure that stocks are maintained at a reasonable level and monitors forthcoming guidance to ascertain the impact.
- 3.15 The Health and Safety team continue to produce health and wellbeing guidance and campaigns to support the workforce. Further discussions are ongoing as how best to provide information, guidance, and support to staff.
- 3.16 Since November 2020 to February 2021 work has continued with the services to encourage home workers in particular to undertake Display Screen Equipment (DSE) I-learn training and to complete DSE Risk assessment online.
- 3.17 The Health and Safety Team continue to review all injury accidents occurring within the Council activity. If required (for more serious type incidents) we report the incident to the HSE as required under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrence Regulations. (Nov-Feb 531 Incidents including near misses, 6 RIDDOR's). COVID-19 RIDDOR reports are currently under review but are currently at 66.

Implications of the Report

1. **Financial** - Continuing to improve health and safety performance will reduce accidents/occupational ill health, claims and the costs associated with this.

2. **HR & Organisational Development** - This report supports the Councils commitment to the health, safety and well being of Renfrewshire Council employees.

3. **Community Planning –**

Community Care, Health & Well-being - We will improve the physical and emotional wellbeing of staff across services through the Healthy Working Lives programme.

Empowering our Communities - We will promote learning and encourage employees to fulfil their individual potential and ensure that the council delivers high-quality services in the most effective and efficient way to meet the needs of local people.

Greener - The E-management system will reduce the amount of paper used for risk assessment and accident forms.

Safer and Stronger - Facilitating the health, safety, and wellbeing of our employees by ensuring that appropriate policies and procedures are developed and adhered to, and that all legal requirements for health and safety are fulfilled.

4. **Legal** - This report will support the Council's continued compliance with current health and safety legislation.
5. **Property/Assets** – None
6. **Information Technology** - The E-management systems require to be facilitated through the Council's email server system.
7. **Equality & Human Rights** - The Recommendations contained within this report have been assessed in relation to their impact on equalities and human rights. No negative impacts on equality groups or potential for infringement of individuals' human rights have been identified arising from the recommendations contained in the report because for example it is for noting only. If required following implementation, the actual impact of the recommendations and the mitigating actions will be reviewed and monitored, and the results of the assessment will be published on the Council's website. (Report author will arrange this).
8. **Health & Safety** - This document supports and demonstrates the council's commitment to ensuring effective health, safety and well being management.
9. **Procurement** – low impact as still at post tender negotiations.
10. **Risk** – low impact as legal and statutory requirements are being maintained.
11. **Privacy Impact** – not applicable to this report.
12. **Climate Risk** - none

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To: Joint Consultative Board (Non-Teaching)

On: 31st March 2021

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Absence Statistics – Q1 and Q2 2020/21

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with absence monitoring information. Due to disruption linked to the COVID19 response the Quarter 1 figures were not presented to the August board cycle of the audit risk and scrutiny board as anticipated and therefore this report provides the absence information for both the quarter 1 ending 30 June 2020 and for quarter 2 ending 30th September 2020. The report also highlights the continued support in place for employees in response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic.
- 1.2 Under challenging working arrangements and the rapid response required from the council to respond to lockdown and the continued restrictions, short term absences have reduced. This may be due to 'working from home arrangements' allowing people to more easily continue to work when they may have been feeling slightly unwell.
- 1.3 Covid-19 restrictions is likely to have further contributed to the reduction in short term absence because less people have been circulating and interacting due to non-essential workplace activities being closed down. This has significantly reduced the opportunity for transmission of short-term ailments when working or commuting.
- 1.4 Additionally, there has been a strong sense of community and commitment reflected in the workforce ethos to continue to deliver essential services

during such an unprecedented time, which undoubtedly has reduced short term absence to some degree.

- 1.5 Longer term absences have risen slightly compared to the same time last year, but this may be due to a range of wider factors including increased anxieties around the impact of the Covid-19 virus.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the content of this report.
-

3. Background

- 3.1 The Board agreed that absence levels will be reported on a quarterly basis. It was agreed that the report will include the following information relating to supporting attendance: -

- Absence statistics broken down by service and category of staff.
- Reasons for absence broken down by service and category of staff.
- Progress made by services in relation to their supporting attendance action plans.

4. Sickness absence statistics Quarter 1 ending June 2020

- 4.1 A comparison of service and council overall absence performance for quarters ending June 2019 and June 2020 is detailed in the table 1 below. In line with the reporting requirements for Scottish Councils, absence is expressed as a number of workdays lost per full time equivalent (FTE) employee.

Table 1: Q1 year on year service and council absence performance:

Service	Quarter Ending June 2019	Quarter Ending June 2020	Variance-/+ Year on Year
Chief Executive's Services	2.60	1.45	▼ -1.15
Children's Services	2.56	1.45	▼ -1.11
Environment & Infrastructure	3.22	5.39	▲ +2.17
Finance and Resources	2.49	1.42	▼ -1.07
Communities, Housing and Planning	2.55	1.88	▼ -0.67
Health and Social Care Partnership	4.64	3.50	▼ -1.14
Council Overall	2.97	2.52	▼ -0.45
Council Overall Targets	2.40	2.40	n/a

5. Sickness absence analysis and trends – Quarter 1

- 5.1 The following table details the workdays lost due to absence by employee group for the quarter: including local government employees, teachers and council overall

Table 2: Q1 Year on year employee group and council absence performance

Employee group	Quarter Ending June 2019	Quarter Ending June 2020	Variance-/+ Year on Year
Local Government Employees	3.28	3.03	▼ -0.25
Teachers	1.95	0.84	▼ -1.11
Council Overall	2.97	2.52	▼ -0.45

6. Sickness absence targets analysis – Quarter 1

- 6.1 The Council has recorded an overall absence rate of 2.52 days lost per FTE employee, which is **0.12 days above** the target figure of 2.40 days.
- 6.2 In addition, the Teacher absence level of 0.84 days lost per FTE employee is **0.70 days below** the target of 1.54 days.

- 6.3 Local Government employee absence level of 3.03 days lost per FTE employee is **0.63 days above** the target of 2.40 days.

7 Sickness absence statistics Quarter 2 ending September 2020

- 7.1 A comparison of service and council overall absence performance for quarters ending September 2019 and September 2020 is detailed in the table 3 below. In line with the reporting requirements for Scottish Councils, absence is expressed as a number of workdays lost per FTE.

Table 3: Q2 Year on year service and council absence performance

Service/Area	Quarter Ending September 2019	Quarter Ending September 2020	Variance +/- Year on Year
Chief Executive's Services	1.41	1.43	▲ +0.02
Children's Services	1.64	1.52	▼ -0.12
Environment & Infrastructure	3.29	3.99	▲ +0.70
Finance and Resources	2.10	2.15	▲ +0.05
Communities, Housing and Planning	2.88	2.09	▼ -0.79
Health and Social Care Partnership	4.61	3.05	▼ -1.56
Council Overall	2.50	2.31	▼ -0.19
Council Overall Targets	2.10	2.10	n/a

8. Sickness absence analysis and trends – Quarter 2

- 8.1 The following table details the workdays lost due to absence by employee group for the quarter: including local government employees, teachers and council overall:

Table 4: Q2 Year on year employee group and council absence performance

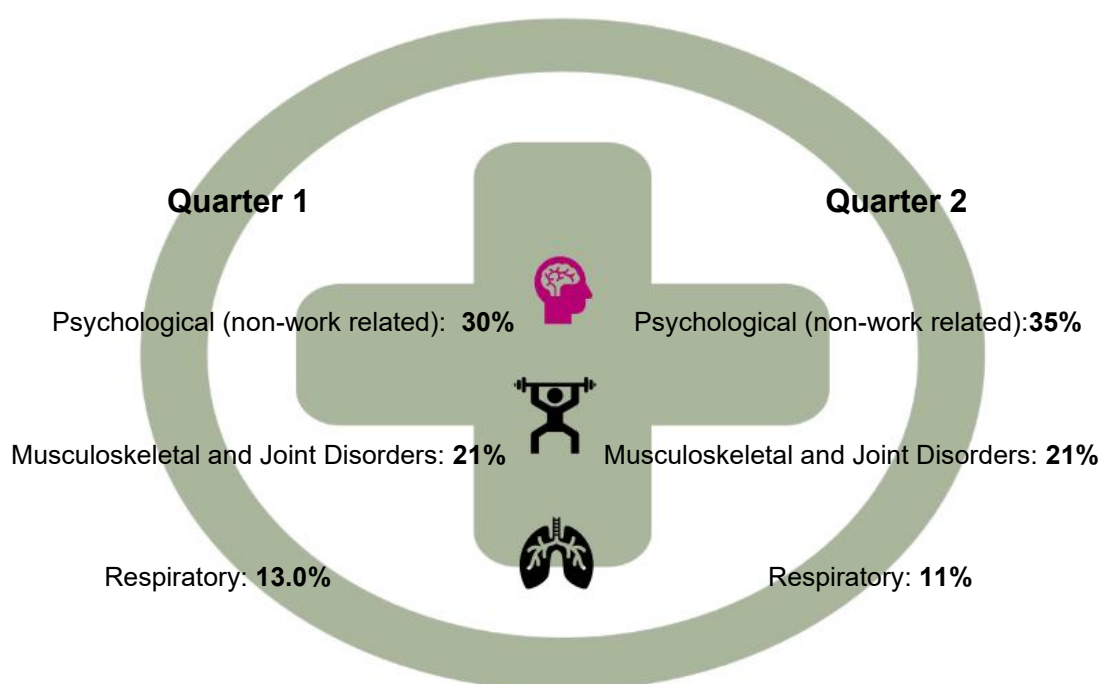
Employee Group	Quarter Ending September 2019	Quarter Ending September 2020	Variance +/- Year on Year
Local Government employees	3.03	2.79	▼ -0.02
Teachers	1.64	1.52	▼ -0.12
Council Overall	2.50	2.31	▼ -0.70

9. Sickness absence targets analysis – Quarter 2

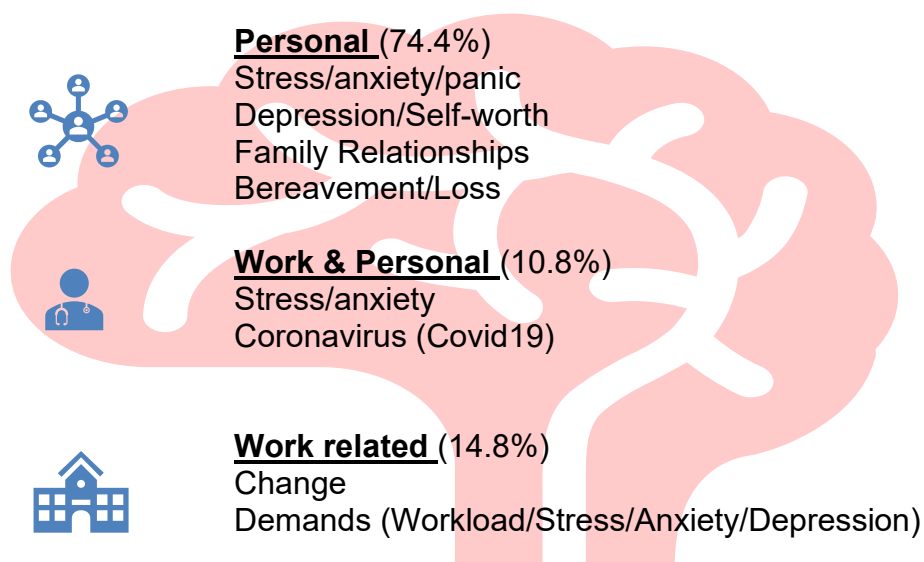
- 9.1 The Council has recorded an overall absence rate of 2.31 days lost per FTE employee, which is **0.21 days above** the target figure of 2.10 days.
- 9.2 In addition, the Teacher absence level of 0.92 days lost per FTE employee is **0.61 days below** the target of 1.54 days.
- 9.3 Local Government employee absence level of 2.79 days lost per FTE employee is **0.69 days above** the target of 2.10 days

10. Sickness absence reasons and related support measures during quarters 1 and 2.

- 10.1 The main sickness absence reasons presented and their percentage contribution by quarter are:



- 10.2 Psychological (non-work related), Musculoskeletal and Joint Disorders remain the top two reasons, Respiratory replaced Stomach / Bowel /Blood and Metabolic Disorders as the third top presenting issue compared to the previous year.
- 10.3 To support employees with psychological absences, the council provides a range of support services that employees can be referred to at an early stage for assistance, such as the council's Occupational Health Service and the Time for Talking employee counselling service.
- 10.4 Through the Occupational Health Service, employees can access Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for more complex psychological issues.
- 10.5 The Time for Talking counselling service provides confidential support to employees with a range of personal health and well-being issues. It operates a flexible approach to appointments offering telephone consultations in the early mornings or evenings as well as throughout the day. As part of the Covid-19 control measures, the face to face service was temporarily suspended in line with UK Government's guidance and is currently operated through secure video conferencing and telephone consultations.
- 10.6 For quarters 1 and 2 there were **a total of 74** appointments supported by the Time for Talking counselling service. The 3 main presenting reasons are; **personal, work and personal and work**. (which are expressed below as a % of all overall referrals):



- 10.7 Stress risk assessments are undertaken to support employees who have identified stress as having an impact on their wellbeing. An action plan is agreed and undertaken at a local level with the specialist support from HR and OD.

- 10.8 HR and OD work in collaboration with the NHS Choose Life Team, who offer safeTalk and ASIST on suicide awareness and prevention. Additionally, work continues with NHS colleagues to promote the “Doing Well” service which supports employees with depression and low moods.
- 10.9 The Physiotherapy service supports employees with Musculoskeletal and joint disorder conditions through the Council’s Occupational Health Service. As part of the coronavirus (Covid-19) control measures, the face to face service was temporarily suspended until September in line with UK Government’s coronavirus (Covid-19) guidance. However, the service has continued to be provided throughout the period using secure video conferencing and telephone consultations.
- 10.10 For quarters 1 and 2 there were **a total of 1367** appointments arranged through the Occupational Health Service, this includes management referrals and wellbeing referrals. The graphics below detail the referrals per quarter:



The significant increase in the number of referrals in quarter 2 reflects the support given for those employees who were deemed “clinically at risk” (formerly shielding) to get them safely back in to the workplace, using our recently developed Covid age risk assessment document in conjunction with the occupational health service to provide professional medical guidance on the safety measures to be applied.

11. Coronavirus (Covid 19)

- 11.1 For quarter 1, ending June 2020, **131** employees were recorded sick due to Covid 19.

For quarter 2, ending 30th September **45** employees were recorded sick due to Covid 19. The table below breaks the cases down by service:

Service	Quarter 1	Quarter 2
Chief Executive's	4	1
Children's Services	19	22
Communities Housing & Planning Services	4	1
Environment & Infrastructure	60	8
Finance & Resources	12	5

Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership	32	8
Grand Total	131	45

- 11.2 Covid19 sickness absence is monitored through HR and reported to the Corporate Management Team regularly.
- 11.3 The HR and OD team have been working collaboratively with all key stakeholders, including the Trades Unions, across the council to ensure that any activities (especially key workers) being undertaken,1 in line with any changes to the guidance or legislation as it emerged.
- 11.4 Protecting mental health and wellbeing has been a key priority for the HR and OD team. The team, working closely with the communications and marketing service, regularly engage with the workforce to provide access to a wide range of mental health and wellbeing support and services. This has included; development of a wellbeing hub on the council website for all employees to access; enhancements to the staff counselling service to include specialist Post Traumatic Incident support for employees affected by COVID-19; mental health awareness training for managers and supervisors updated and promoted widely through the wellbeing hub.
- 11.5 A key priority has been to support the safe return to the workplace of all employees in line with Government guidance. This has required careful risk assessments to be carried out with all employees previously considered to be at a higher risk of illness due to COVID-19 and a detailed programme of support for those previously identified under the National Shielding List. To support employees to return to the workplace safely, the health and safety team developed a COVID age risk assessment, underpinned by Occupational Health support. The process includes careful consideration of individual circumstances and identification of specific health conditions and concerns to provide an indication of susceptibility of complications resulting from COVID-19 infection. This has been used to support Occupational Health referrals and control measures within the workplace to ensure employees can return to work when guidance allows, and to a safe working environment. The health and safety team continue to reflect updated guidance in this approach and ensure individual risk assessments are updated.
- 11.6 A dedicated helpline was set up by the Occupational Health provider so that employees could call to discuss any Covid 19 health-related concerns they had.
- 11.7 HR and OD have driven specific campaigns and focussed communications on a number of key themes including: Financial Wellbeing, Healthy Eating, Domestic abuse, Alcohol and substance abuse, Loss and Bereavement and Support for Carers.
- 11.8 At the start of the pandemic, a corporate personal protective equipment group was established with key services across the council and this group continues

to ensure that stocks of PPE are maintained at a reasonable level and available for those who require it. The group monitors new and emerging guidance to manage impact and ensure resilience

- 11.9 The team continue to implement updated Government guidance, reflecting changes to local policy where necessary. This includes the ways in which the homeworkers can apply practical solutions to ensure they are working safely, including the type of office equipment they need. The health and safety team are offering video style assessments and advice to support anyone with their set up. Where an employee has an existing medical condition, there has been support from Occupational Health.

12. Measures to support attendance at work

- 12.1 A number of measures being progressed to support attendance at work, include the following: -

- HR and OD, working closely with Occupational Health, have embarked upon the employee seasonal flu vaccination programme. To date, there have been over 1700 vaccines allocated to school-based employees and 4000 vouchers offered up to all the other employees across the council;
- HR and OD are working closely with services reviewing their winter preparations and plans. This includes the reintroduction of the face to face physiotherapy service at the Underwood depot to support employees during the winter maintenance programme.
- The review of the current supporting attendance policies covering all employees, including teachers is underway and progressing well. Meetings have taken place with the respective Trade Unions to ensure this is a fully collaborative process.
- A new approach to supporting attendance refresher training for managers is being developed with a view to it being rolled out early 2021.
- We are in the process of renewing the Occupational Health and Employee Counselling contracts with a view to developing a robust employee assistance programme. This involves collaboration with the key stakeholders across the council and trades unions.
- HR and OD and the Business World Team are working to improve the absence information available to managers, and to streamline supporting attendance related processes to facilitate prompt absence reporting, recording and updating of relevant systems.
- Increased frequency of reporting sickness absence information to the Corporate Management Team.

- Absence champions have been identified for each service to help develop supportive strategies and interventions that will enable employees to be supported back to work.
- In collaboration with the communications and marketing service, regular information and guidance continues to be issued, particularly around well-being issues as we move through the stages of the Scottish Government's recovery route map.

Implications of this Report

- 1 **Financial Implications** - Improvement in attendance impacts on the financial costs of absence.
- 2 **HR and Organisational Development Implications** - HR and Organisational Development Practitioners will continue to work with service managers and consult with the Trade Unions, on the implementation of the Supporting Attendance at Work Policy and Guidance and initiatives detailed in this report.
- 3 **Community Planning**

Children and Young People - none.

Jobs and the Economy - none.

Community care, health and wellbeing - provides for continuous improvement in health and attendance.

Safer and Stronger - provides for improved service performance across the Council.

Greener - none.

Empowering our Communities - none.
- 4 **Legal Implications** - none.
- 5 **Property/Asset Implications** - none.
- 6 **Information Technology Implications** - none.
- 7 **Equality and Human Rights Implications** - none.
- 8 **Health and Safety Implications** - it is integral to the Council's aim of securing the health and well-being of employees.
- 9 **Procurement Implications** - none.
- 10 **Risk Implications** - Without continued effective supporting attendance focus, there is a risk that sickness absence levels will adversely impact on the Council both financially and in terms of service delivery. Consequently, supporting attendance activities are monitored via the Corporate Risk Register.

- 11 **Privacy Impact Implications** - none.
- 12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none
- 13. **Climate Risk** - none

List of Background Papers - none.

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To: Joint Consultative Board (Non-Teaching)

On: 31st March 2021

Report by: Director of Finance and Resources

Heading: Absence Statistics – Q3 2020/21

1. Summary

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide the Board with absence monitoring information. This report provides the absence information for the quarter 3 ending 31st December 2020. The report also highlights the continued support in place for employees in response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic and highlights the steady improvements in performance by all services in this quarter.
- 1.2 The Council has continued to follow Government guidance throughout the pandemic, and this has contributed to a reduction in short term absence with fewer people circulating socially and within workplaces. A significant increase of those working from home has reduced the opportunity for transmission, particularly as a result of not having to commute.
- 1.3 The strong sense of community and commitment reflected in the workforce ethos to continue to deliver essential services during such an unprecedented time, has undoubtedly reduced short term absence to some degree.

2. Recommendations

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Board notes the content of this report.
-

3. Background

3.1 The Board agreed that absence levels will be reported on a quarterly basis. It was agreed that the report will include the following information relating to supporting attendance: -

- Absence statistics broken down by service and category of staff.
- Reasons for absence broken down by service and category of staff.
- Progress made by services in relation to their supporting attendance action plans.

4. Sickness absence statistics Quarter 3 ending December 2020.

4.1 A comparison of service and council overall absence performance for quarters ending December 2019 and December 2020 is detailed in the table 1 below. In line with the reporting requirements for Scottish Councils, absence is expressed as a number of workdays lost per full time equivalent (FTE) employee. The table clearly demonstrates the improved performance by all services compared to the corresponding quarter in the previous year.

4.2 **Table 1: Q3 Year on year service and council absence performance:**











Service	Quarter Ending December 2019	Quarter Ending December 2020	Variance +/- year on year
Chief Executives	2.50	1.55	-0.95 
Childrens Services	3.32	3.09	-0.23 
Communities, Housing and Planning Services	3.69	3.23	-0.46 
Environment and Infrastructure	4.86	3.93	-0.93 
Finance & Resource Services	2.56	2.47	-0.09 
Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership	4.39	3.84	-0.55 
Council Overall	3.65	3.25	-0.40 
Council Overall Target	2.80	2.80	n/a

Table 2 details the workdays lost due to absence by employee

group for the quarter and again highlights the councils improved performance within the employee reporting groups as defined by the Improvement Service.

Table 2: Q3 Year on year employee group and council absence performance

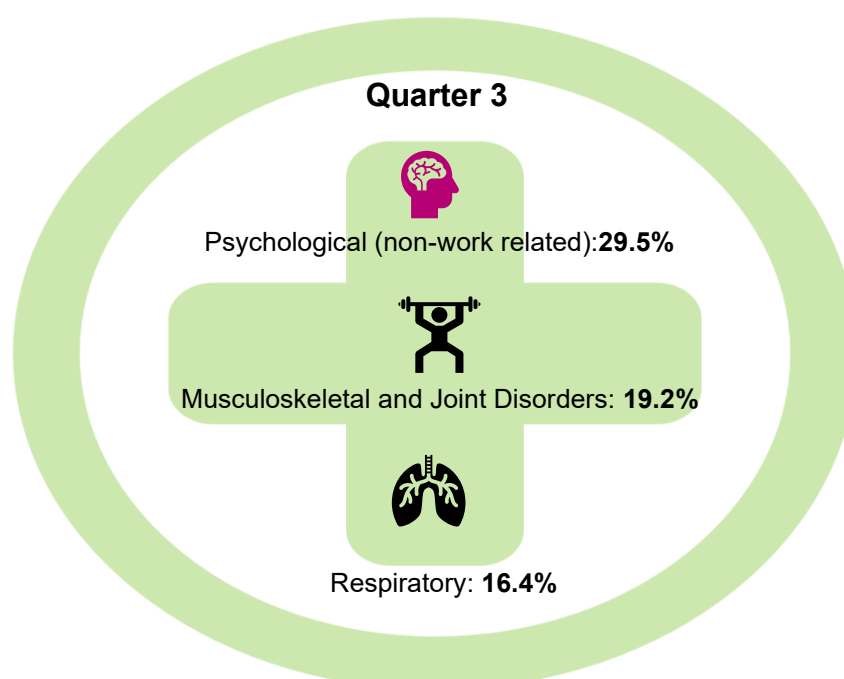
Employee Group	Quarter Ending December 2019	Quarter Ending December 2020	Variance +/- year on year
Local Government	3.94	3.46	-0.48 
Teachers	2.68	2.62	-0.06 
Council Overall	3.65	3.25	-0.40 

5. Sickness absence targets analysis – Quarter 3

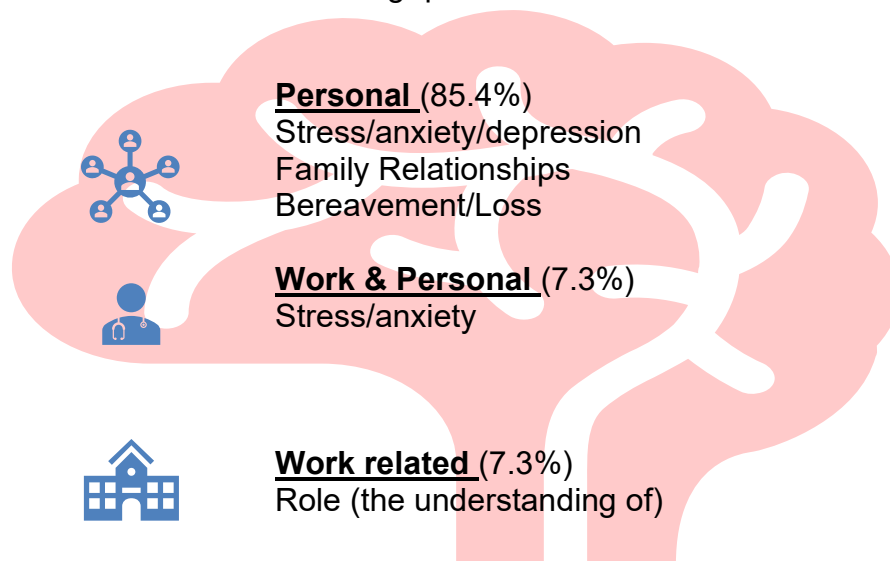
- 5.1 The Council has recorded an overall absence rate of 3.25 days lost per FTE employee, which is **0.45 days above** the target figure of 2.80 days.
- 5.2 In addition, the Teacher absence level of 2.62 days lost per FTE employee is **1.08 days above** the target of 1.54 days.
- 5.3 Local Government employee absence level of 3.46 days lost per FTE employee is **0.63 days above** the target of 2.80 days.

6. Sickness absence reasons and related support measures during quarter 3.

- 6.1 The main sickness absence reasons across the council presented and their percentage contribution in this quarter are:



- 6.2 Psychological (non-work related), Musculoskeletal and Joint Disorders remain the top two reasons, Respiratory replaced Stomach / Bowel /Blood and Metabolic Disorders as the third top presenting issue compared to the previous year.
- 6.3 To support employees with psychological absences, the council provides a range of support services that employees can be referred to at an early stage for assistance, such as the council's Occupational Health Service and the Time for Talking employee counselling service.
- 6.4 Through the Occupational Health Service, employees can access Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT) for more complex psychological issues.
- 6.5 The Time for Talking (TFT) counselling service provides confidential support to employees with a range of personal health and well-being issues. It operates a flexible approach to appointments offering telephone consultations in the early mornings or evenings as well as throughout the day. As part of the Covid-19 control measures, the face to face service was temporarily suspended in line with UK Government's guidance and is currently operated through secure video conferencing and telephone consultations.
- 6.6 Referrals made to TFT during quarter 3 are detailed below:



- 6.7 Stress risk assessments are undertaken to support employees who have identified stress as having an impact on their wellbeing. An action plan is agreed and undertaken at a local level with the specialist support from HR and OD.
- 6.8 HR and OD work in collaboration with the NHS Choose Life Team, who offer safeTalk and ASIST on suicide awareness and prevention. Additionally, work continues with NHS colleagues to promote the "Doing Well" service which supports employees with depression and low moods.

- 6.9 The Physiotherapy service supports employees with Musculoskeletal and joint disorder conditions through the Council's Occupational Health Service. As part of the coronavirus (Covid-19) control measures, the face to face service was temporarily suspended in line with UK Government's coronavirus (Covid-19) guidance. However, the service has continued to be provided throughout the period using secure video conferencing and telephone consultations.
- 6.10 The Council's usage of the Occupational Health Service is detailed below:



The types of presenting issues to the OH team over the quarter were: Musculoskeletal and back problems, stress and anxiety, asthma, and heart/cardio.

We continue to provide support for those employees who were deemed “clinically at risk” (formerly shielding) and those with an underlying health condition to get them safely back in to the workplace or support them from working from home, using our Covid age risk assessment document in conjunction with the occupational health service to provide professional medical guidance on the safety measures to be applied.

7. Coronavirus (Covid 19)

- 7.1 Covid19 sickness absence is monitored through a dedicated team within HR and OD and reported to the Corporate Management Team daily. The team work closely with our colleagues in public health and monitor the impact of test and protect within our schools and workplaces.
- 7.2 The HR and OD team have been working collaboratively with all key stakeholders, including the Trades Unions, across the council to ensure that any activities being undertaken, especially by key workers, are in line with any changes to the guidance or legislation as it has emerged.
- 7.3 A key priority for the council is protecting the mental health and wellbeing of the workforce. The HR and OD team, working closely with the communications and marketing service, regularly engage with the workforce to provide access to a wide range of mental health and wellbeing support and

services. This has included; development of a wellbeing hub on the council website for all employees to access; enhancements to the staff counselling service to include specialist Post Traumatic Incident support for employees affected by COVID-19; mental health awareness training for managers and supervisors updated and promoted widely through the wellbeing hub.

- 7.4 The dedicated helpline has been set up by the Occupational Health provider so that employees can call to discuss any Covid 19 health-related and continues to be operational.
- 7.5 The corporate personal protective equipment group continues to ensure that stocks of PPE are maintained at a reasonable level and are available for all those who require it. The group monitors new and emerging guidance to manage impact and ensure resilience. Brexit has not adversely affected supplies and the group will continue to monitor this position closely.
- 7.6 The team continue to implement updated Government guidance, reflecting changes to local policy where necessary. This includes the ways in which those who are currently working from home can apply practical solutions to ensure they are working safely, including display screen equipment or the type of office equipment they require. The health and safety team continue to offer virtual assessments and advice to support everyone with their set up. Employees with existing medical conditions are offered additional support from Occupational Health.

8. Measures to support attendance at work

- 8.1 A number of measures being progressed to support attendance at work, include the following: -
- HR and OD, working closely with Occupational Health, delivered a successful employee seasonal flu vaccination programme. To date, there have been over 1700 vaccines allocated to school-based employees and 4000 vouchers offered to all employees across the council.
 - The review of the current supporting attendance policies covering all employees, including teachers continues. Meetings have taken place with the respective Trade Unions to ensure this is a fully collaborative process.
 - HR and OD and the Business World Team are working to improve the absence information available to managers, and to streamline supporting attendance related processes to facilitate prompt absence reporting, recording, and updating of relevant systems.
 - Increased frequency of reporting sickness absence information to the Corporate Management Team.
 - In collaboration with the communications and marketing service, regular information and guidance continues to be issued, particularly around well-

being issues as we move through the stages of the Scottish Government's revised recovery route map.

Implications of this Report

- 1 **Financial Implications** - Improvement in attendance impacts on the financial costs of absence.
- 2 **HR and Organisational Development Implications** - HR and Organisational Development Practitioners will continue to work with service managers and consult with the Trade Unions, on the implementation of the Supporting Attendance at Work Policy and Guidance and initiatives detailed in this report.
- 3 **Community Planning**

Children and Young People - none.

Jobs and the Economy - none.

Community care, health and wellbeing - provides for continuous improvement in health and attendance.

Safer and Stronger - provides for improved service performance across the Council.

Greener - none.

Empowering our Communities - none.
- 4 **Legal Implications** - none.
- 5 **Property/Asset Implications** - none.
- 6 **Information Technology Implications** - none.
- 7 **Equality and Human Rights Implications** - none.
- 8 **Health and Safety Implications** - it is integral to the Council's aim of securing the health and well-being of employees.
- 9 **Procurement Implications** - none.
- 10 **Risk Implications** - Without continued effective supporting attendance focus, there is a risk that sickness absence levels will adversely impact on the Council both financially and in terms of service delivery. Consequently, supporting attendance activities are monitored via the Corporate Risk Register.
- 11 **Privacy Impact Implications** - none.
12. **Cosla Policy Position** – none
13. **Climate Risk** - none

List of Background Papers - none.

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**RENFREWSHIRE COUNCIL
JOINT CONSULTATIVE BOARD (Non-teaching) March 2021**

DETAILS OF GRIEVANCES (Informal stages onwards)

SERVICE	INFORMAL STAGE	FORMAL STAGE 1	FORMAL STAGE 2	TOTAL 03/21	TOTAL 11/20
Chief Executives Service	0	0	0	0	0
Environment & Infrastructure Services	0	3	0	3	2
Communities & Housing Services	0	0	0	0	0
Children's Services	0	4	0	4	3
Health & Social Care Partnership	1	3	0	4	3
Finance & Resources	0	4	0	4	3
TOTAL	1	14	0	15	11

(Information as at March 2021)

Operation of the Grievance Procedures -

The time limits below may be modified by mutual consent. It is also noted that, depending on the complexity of the issue, reasonable time should be allowed to ensure the issue is investigated as fully as possible.

If a supervisor has been unable to provide a remedy or the employee is dissatisfied with the response to the informal stage the employee can pursue the grievance to formal stage 1. On receipt of the paperwork a meeting will be arranged (but not necessarily take place) within 5 working days. Following the meeting, a written reply will be made to the employee as soon as possible, but in any event, within 5 working days of the meeting taking place.

AGENCY WORKERS -MARCH 2021					
Service	Job Title	Current Number of Renfrewshire Council Employees in this Role	Number of Agency Workers in this Role in December 2020	Number of Agency Workers in this Role in January 2021	Number of Agency Workers in this Role in February 2021
Environment &Infrastructure	Cleaner	348	40	18	11
	Housekeeper	58	14	14	14
	Catering Assistant	173	16	18	16
	Street Lighting	0	2	2	2
	Labourer	1	2	2	2
	Joiner	44	0	0	1
Transport	Bus Driver	36	10	10	10
Total for Environment & Infrastructure		660	84	64	56
Finance & Resources	Senior Accountant	7	1	1	1
	Senior QS	0	1	1	1
	Interim Payroll Manager	0	1	1	1
	Finance Manager	4	1	1	1
	Clerical Assistant	227	0	1	0
	Senior Clerical Officer	128	0	1	1
Total for Finance & Resources		366	4	6	5
Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership	Home Care Worker	373	25	22	17
	Social Care Worker	114	37	44	42
	Home Care Manager	2	2	2	2
Total for Renfrewshire Health & Social Care Partnership		489	64	68	61
Total Workers		1515	152	138	122

