Scotland Excel

To: **Executive Sub-Committee**

On: **28 January 2022**

Report by:
Chief Executive of Scotland Excel

Employee Absence Management Report

1. Introduction and purpose of the report

In response to the Renfrewshire Council Internal Audit team recommendation, this report on organisational sickness absence is submitted on a quarterly basis highlighting the absence rate in the organisation.

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 December 2021.The rate of absence across the organisation has generally been maintained at or below the 4% target, with the exception of March where the absence rate rose to 5.1% due to a number of long-term absences. The rolling 6 and12 month average absence rates have however maintained at or below 2.9%.

The absence rates for the reporting periods as shown in appendix 1 are:

- previous 1 month to 2.3% (29.5 days)
- previous 6 months to 2.2% (204 days)
- previous 12 months to 2.9% (530.5 days)

While Scotland Excel has been successful in reducing the average number of sickness absence days per employee over recent years, in the first quarter of the year the COVID-19 pandemic had an adverse impact on the average sickness days

per employee figure compared to the same period in 2020 (6.6 days in 2021 compared to 4.1 days in 2020). However, the average sickness days per employee has now reduced to 5.4 days per employee overall for 2021 compared to 6.0 days per employee in 2020.

The Covid-19 pandemic appears to have had an adverse impact on the mental wellbeing of staff with the predominant cause of long-term sickness absence being reported as mental ill health. While the pandemic has not been the primary cause of absence, it has been identified as a contributory factor in a number of cases. Long term sickness absence is recorded when an employee reaches 20 working days consecutive sickness absence. A number of staff have also tested positive for Covid-19 during the reported period.

Short-term sickness absence days recorded by Scotland Excel staff show an increase from 64 days in 2020 to 110.5 days. However, over the same period, long-term sickness absence days recorded have decreased from 530 days to 420 days.

March 2021 shows a particular spike in long-term absences. All long-term absences were supported through a range of interventions including Occupational Health referral, Counselling Services, and Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) sessions. Following effective support by the organisation, all members of staff on long-term absence have made a successful return to work.

In addition to supporting members of staff absent through ill health, Scotland Excel continues 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.

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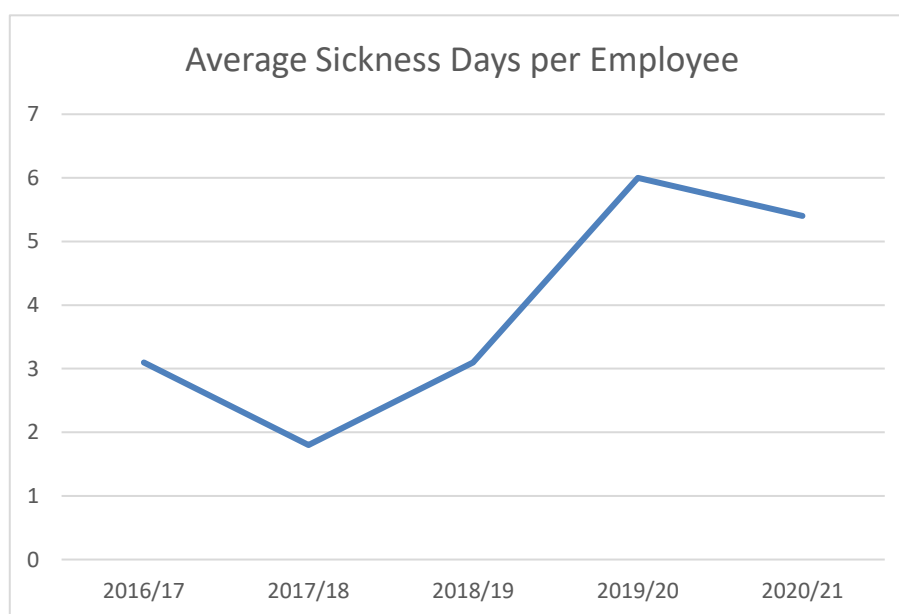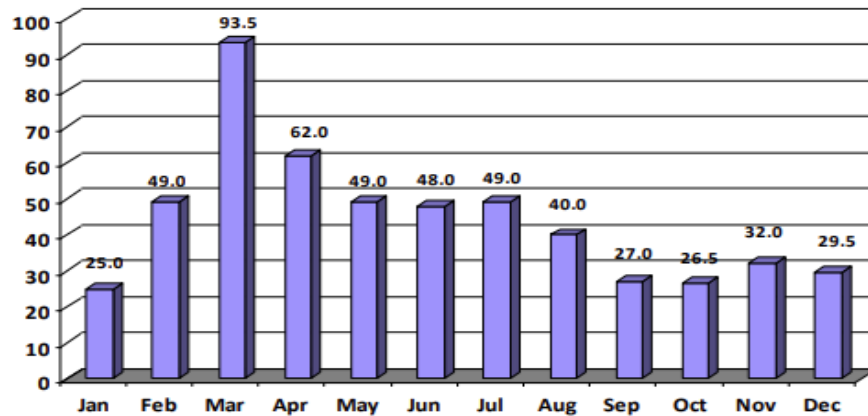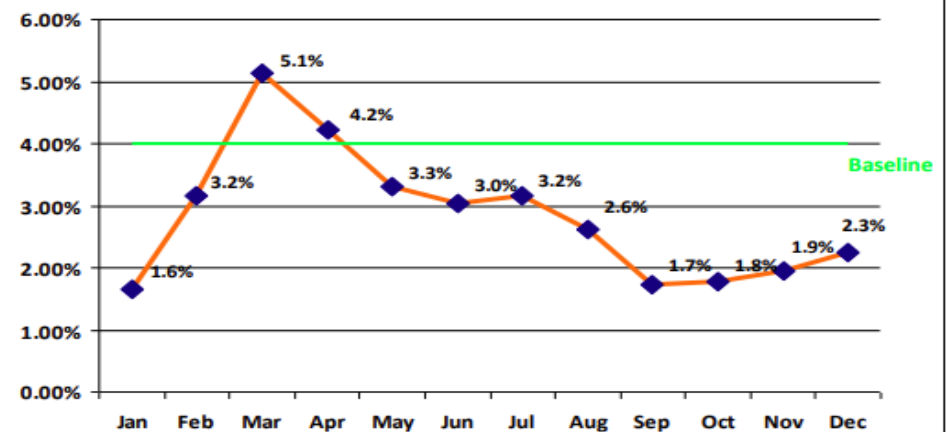
Absence Report
Organisation Level

Month Ending: 31 December 2021

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	Current Month					Last 6 Months					Last 12 Months				
	Self Certified Sick	Doctor Certified Sick	Total Sick Leave	Sickness Absence Rate	Sickness Absence Instances	Self Certified Sick	Doctor Certified Sick	Total Sick Leave	Sickness Absence Rate	Sickness Absence Instances	Self Certified Sick	Doctor Certified Sick	Total Sick Leave	Sickness Absence Rate	Sickness Absence Instances
Total:	8.5	21	29.5	2.3%	4	55	149	204	2.2%	17	110.5	420	530.5	2.9%	41

No of Employees (Permanent and Temporary): **98**   Average no of Sickness Absence Days per Employee: **5.4**

No of Leavers included: **13**
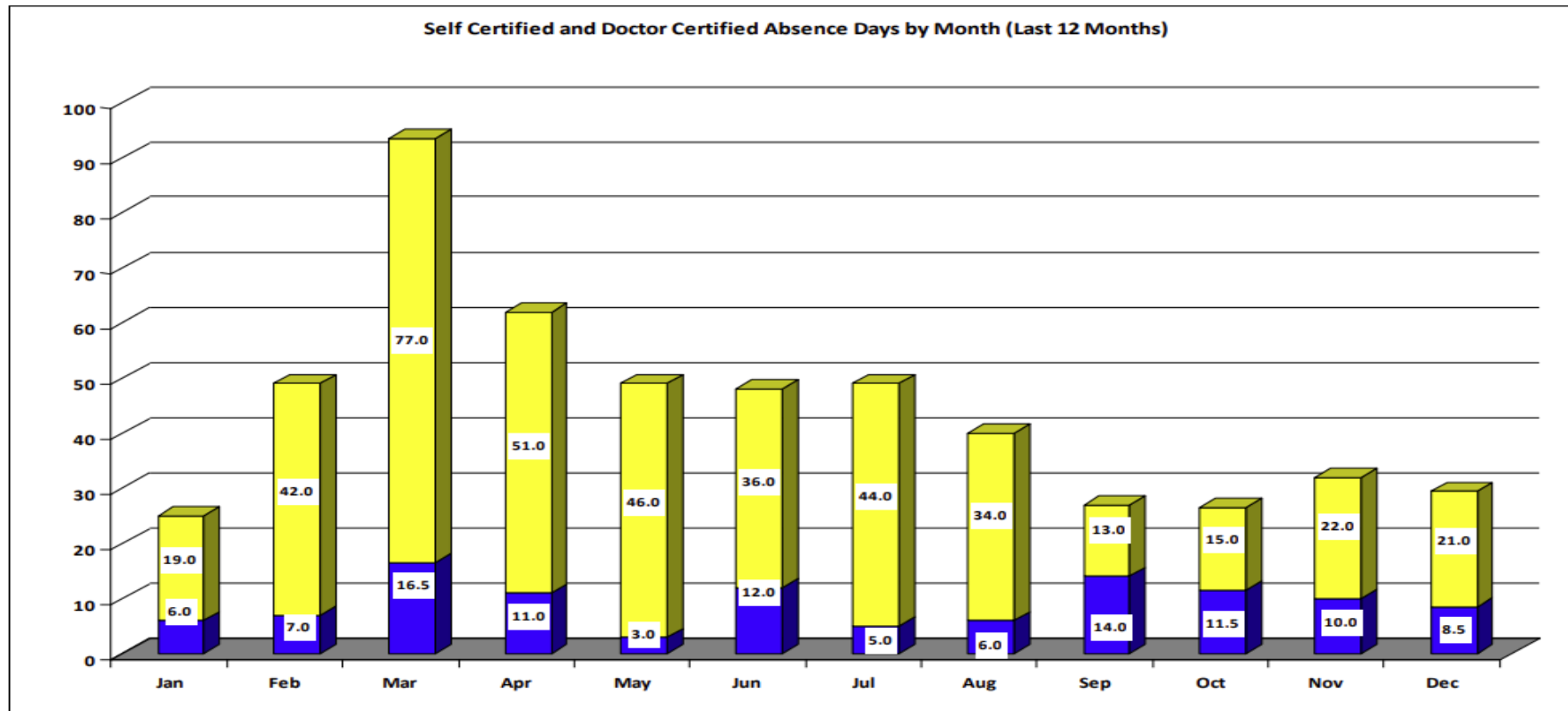
Total Sickness Absence Days by Month for Last 12 Months

Month	Value
Jan	25.0
Feb	49.0
Mar	93.5
Apr	62.0
May	49.0
Jun	48.0
Jul	49.0
Aug	40.0
Sep	27.0
Oct	26.5
Nov	32.0
Dec	29.5

Monthly YTD Absence Rate

Month	Rate
Jan	1.6%
Feb	3.2%
Mar	5.1%
Apr	4.2%
May	3.3%
Jun	3.0%
Jul	3.2%
Aug	2.6%
Sep	1.7%
Oct	1.8%
Nov	1.9%
Dec	2.3%

Baseline

Sickness Absence Report
Breakdown of Sickness Absence Days by Month
Month Ending: 31 December 2021

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Self Certified and Doctor Certified Absence Days by Month (Last 12 Months)

4. Recommendation

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