

Agenda Item	9
Report No	AS/6/15

Scrutiny Review – Managing Sickness Absence

Report by Head of Audit & Risk Management

Summary

This report seeks formal approval of the scope of the Scrutiny Working Group's review of managing sickness absence and also provides a summary of the work undertaken to date.

1. Background

- 1.1 At the meeting in June 2014, it was agreed that the next topic for consideration by the Scrutiny Working Group would be around the Council's performance in managing sickness absence. Subsequently, at the previous meeting on 20th November 2014 it was confirmed that the membership of the group had been determined and that a meeting had been arranged later that day in order to scope the objectives of the review; identify the expected outcomes and the resources required in terms of Members and officers. In addition the meeting would also agree future meeting dates, dates to review findings and reporting dates.

2. Scope of review

- 2.1 At the Scrutiny Working Group meeting on 20th November, Members agreed that the scope of the exercise should be as follows:
- Reviewing the Council's Attendance Management Policy in order to ensure that this met best practice;
 - Ensuring that the Attendance Management Policy was consistently applied by Managers, including the use of appropriate preventative measures; and
 - Considering the arrangements for the reporting of sickness absence.
- 2.2 In undertaking the above exercise, Members agreed that it would be appropriate to focus on two Services, namely the Care & Learning Service and Community Services, and that they would wish to meet with appropriate Heads of Service in order to establish the arrangements for managing sickness absence for their respective functions/activities. In this regard, Members also confirmed that they would wish to consider whether there was benchmarking information available from similar organisations and for similar types of work. In addition, with regard to the areas of good performance, it would be appropriate to consider whether good practices could be shared more widely across the Council.

3. Progress to date

- 3.1 Following the above meeting, the Director of Community Services and the Director of Care & Learning were asked to nominate an officer or officers from their Services to discuss how the Attendance Management Policy is applied

and to provide explanations regarding the performance data within their respective Services. Nominations were received as follows:

- Community Services: Head of Environmental & Regulatory Services
- Care & Learning: Head of Education and Head of Children's Services

3.2 To date meetings have been held as follows:

Date	Meeting Purpose
13/02/15	To scrutinise the Attendance Management Policy and Guidance with the Human Resources Manager in attendance.
26/02/15	To scrutinise the application of the Attendance Management Policy within Community Services and to scrutinise Service performance with the Head of Environmental & Regulatory Services in attendance.
10/03/15	To scrutinise the application of the AM Policy within Care & Learning and to scrutinise Service performance with the Head of Education and the Head of Children's Services in attendance.

3.3 Future meetings have been arranged as follows:

Date	Meeting Purpose
05/05/15	To scrutinise the Council's preventative approach to managing sickness absence with the Occupational Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager in attendance. To ascertain a Union's view of the Council's approach to managing sickness absence with a Union Representative being in attendance.
18/06/15	To discuss and agree the key findings arising from the review and agree reporting timescales.

4. Implications

4.1 There are no Resource; Legal; Equalities; Climate Change/Carbon Clever; Risk, Gaelic and Rural implications as a direct result of this report.

Recommendation

Members are asked to formally approve the scope of the Scrutiny Working Group's review of managing sickness absence, note the work undertaken to date and the remaining work proposed.

Designation: Head of Audit & Risk Management

Date: 13th March 2015

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Background Papers: