

Employment Committee

3 December 2018



Time and venue:

10.00 am in the Ditchling Room – Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes

Membership:

Councillor Elayne Merry (Chair); Councillors Mike Chartier, Paul Franklin, Stephen Gauntlett and Robbie Robertson

Quorum: 3

Published: Wednesday, 21 November 2018

Agenda

1 Minutes (Pages 1 - 6)

To confirm and sign the minutes of the previous meeting held on 10 September 2018 (attached herewith).

2 Apologies for absence/declaration of substitute members

3 Declarations of interest

Disclosure by councillors of personal interests in matters on the agenda, the nature of any interest and whether the councillor regards the interest as prejudicial under the terms of the Code of Conduct.

4 Urgent items

Items not on the agenda which the Chair of the meeting is of the opinion should be considered as a matter of urgency by reason of special circumstances as defined in Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

5 Written questions from councillors

To deal with written questions from councillors pursuant to Council Procedure Rule 12.3 (page D8 of the Constitution).

6 Update on Health and Safety matters

Verbal update by Functional Lead for Quality Environment.

7 Update on the Joint Transformation Programme

Verbal update by Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation.

8 Sickness report (Pages 7 - 20)

Report of Head of Human Resources.

9 Exclusion of the public and press

To consider, under Section 100(A) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), excluding the public and press from the meeting during the discussion of Items 11 and 12 on this agenda as there are likely to be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

10 Consideration of matters raised by the employees' side

To consider any matters raised by the employees' side in respect of the items on this agenda.

11 Consideration of health and safety matters raised by the employees' side

To consider any matters raised by the employees' side in respect of health and safety.

12 Date of next meeting

To note that the next meeting of the Employment Committee is scheduled to be held on Monday, 25 March 2019 in the Telscombe Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes, BN7 1AB, commencing at 10:00am.

Information for the public

Accessibility: Please note that the venue for this meeting is wheelchair accessible and has an induction loop to help people who are hearing impaired. This agenda and accompanying reports are published on the Council's website in PDF format which means you can use the "read out loud" facility of Adobe Acrobat Reader.

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Information for councillors

Disclosure of interests: Members should declare their interest in a matter at the beginning of the meeting.

In the case of a disclosable pecuniary interest (DPI), if the interest is not registered (nor the subject of a pending notification) details of the nature of the interest must be reported to the meeting by the member and subsequently notified in writing to the Monitoring Officer within 28 days.

If a member has a DPI or other prejudicial interest he/she must leave the room when the matter is being considered (unless he/she has obtained a dispensation).

Councillor right of address: A member of the Council may ask the Leader, a Cabinet Member or the Chair of a committee or sub-committee any question without notice upon an item of the report of the Cabinet or a committee or subcommittee when that item is being received or under consideration by the Council.

A member of the Council may ask the Chair of a committee or sub-committee a question on any matter in relation to which the Council has powers or duties or which affect the District and which falls within the terms of reference of that committee or subcommittee.

A member must give notice of the question to the Head of Democratic Services in writing or by electronic mail no later than close of business on the fourth working day before the meeting at which the question is to be asked.

Democratic Services

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Employment Committee

Minutes of meeting held in the Telscombe Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes on 10 September 2018 at 10.00 am

Present:

Councillor Elayne Merry (Chair)

Councillors Mike Chartier and Paul Franklin

Officers in attendance:

Becky Cooke (Assistant Director for Human Resources and Transformation), Helen Knight (Head of Human Resources), Jennifer Norman (Committee Officer) and Jazmin Victory (Committee Officer)

Employees' Side Representatives:

Robert Haigh and Graham Purdye

11 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 June 2018 were submitted and approved, and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

12 Apologies for absence/declaration of substitute members

Apologies for absence had been received from Councillors Robbie Robertson and Stephen Gauntlett.

13 Declarations of interest

There were none.

14 Written questions from councillors

There were none.

15 Urgent items

The Chair reported that she had agreed, in accordance with section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972, that a verbal update given by

the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation regarding health and safety matters across the Council be considered as a matter of urgency in order that the Committee could take its decisions based on the most recent information which was available.

The Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation informed the Committee that after the departure of the previous Health and Safety Officer, a Health and Safety Consultant from an external safety company had been recruited to deal with health and safety matters across both Lewes District and Eastbourne Borough Councils.

The Committee queried whether the new Health and Safety Consultant would be present at future meetings of the Committee and whether the consultant would be working full-time across both councils.

The Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation replied that she would request that the new Health and Safety Consultant be present at future meetings of the Committee, and that the consultant would be working part-time – one week on and one week off – although the consultant would be accessible by phone at any time.

Resolved:

That the verbal update on health and safety matters provided by the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation be noted.

16 Update on the Joint Transformation Programme

The Assistant Director for Human Resources and Transformation provided a verbal update on the progress of the Joint Transformation Programme (JTP); a restructuring programme (currently between phases two and three) which aimed to deliver the majority of Lewes District Council (LDC) and Eastbourne Borough Council's (EBC) services via shared teams and by adopting new ways of working.

Members were informed that despite earlier difficulties with the Licensing transition, the transition was back on track. The revenues and benefits transition had been successful and was still going well. The Planning transition was on track for 26 September 2018 and the Housing transition was on track for 3 December 2018.

The Assistant Director of Human Resources explained that phase 3 was the next significant transition. Once phase 3 began, more updates on staffing and other related issues would be relayed to Members. She further explained that the business case for phase 3 would be going to the October 2018 meeting of the Cabinet. Staff consultation would then begin once the business case had been considered and decided by Cabinet.

The issues surrounding the Customer Contact Centre were highlighted by the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation. Website queries had gone up by 93% in the last year, despite staff in the Customer Contact Centre dealing with a consistent vacancy level, partly due to staff moving to other posts within the Authority.

The Committee wished to express its appreciation for all of the hard work by the staff in the Customer Contact Centre despite the current level of vacancies.

Resolved:

That the verbal update on the Joint Transformation Programme be noted.

17 Sickness Report

The Committee received the report which provided an update regarding the Council's sickness figures for the period quarter 1 2018/19 (1 April to 30 June 2018), together with the reasons for staff absences as set out in the appendices to the report.

The Head of Human Resources explained that from 1 April 2018 Human Resources (HR) had been reflecting combined sickness figures for both LDC and EBC, and that the current report was the first report to reflect these figures, which were broken down by service area.

The Head of Human Resources brought the Committee's attention to paragraph 2.1 on page 7 of the report. She clarified that the average number of absence days for each employee for quarter 1 2018 should read as 1.62 days instead of 1.54 days as stated in the report.

In addition, following discussions with the Corporate Management Team and Members of EBC's Scrutiny Committee, it was agreed to reduce the combined 2018/19 target of 9 sickness days per full-time employee to 8 sickness days per full-time employee for both LDC and EBC.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

18 Dignity at Work Policy

The Committee received the report which provided a review of the Dignity at Work Policy.

The Head of Human Resources explained that HR had been working on aligning the Dignity at Work Policy at both LDC and EBC. She further

explained that the report had been considered by the Equalities and Fairness Steering Group and that comments made by the group had been considered and applied to the policy where necessary.

Two significant changes to the policy had been made, which included the addition of a section which dealt with cyberbullying and what to do if a member of staff was accused of cyberbullying.

The employees' side representatives welcomed the new additions to the policy.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

19 Agile Working Policy

The Committee received the report which provided an update regarding the review of the Agile Working Policy.

The Head of Human Resources explained that the review of the Agile Working Policy was similar to that of the Dignity at Work Policy, in that the two previously separate policies had now each been aligned. She further explained that there was an additional need to remind and refresh staff regarding agile ways of working, in particular the areas of the Agile Working Policy which dealt with hot desks and clear desks.

Resolved:

That the report be noted.

20 Exclusion of the public and press

Resolved:

That, in accordance with Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended), the public and press be excluded from the meeting during the discussion of items 10 and 11 on the agenda as there was likely to be disclosures of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act.

21 Consideration of matters raised by the employees' side

There were no additional matters raised by the employees' side over and above those which had been recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

22 Consideration of health and safety matters raised by the employees' side

The employees' side representatives commented that the Health and Safety Committee had not met for some time and that UNISON hoped to see the meetings resume with the appointment of the new Health and Safety Consultant.

The Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation acknowledged that the Health and Safety Committee had not met in some time and confirmed that meetings would resume with the appointment of the new Health and Safety Consultant.

The employees' side representatives commented that any additional concerns regarding the update on the health and safety matters had already been addressed during the verbal update provided by the Assistant Director of Human Resources and Transformation earlier in the meeting.

There were no additional health and safety matters raised by the employees' side over and above those which had been recorded in the minutes of the meeting.

23 Date of next meeting

Resolved:

That the next meeting of the Employment Committee that is scheduled to be held on Monday, 3 December 2018 in the Ditchling Room, Southover House, Southover Road, Lewes commencing at 10:00am, be noted.

The meeting ended at 10.34 am.

Councillor Elayne Merry (Chair)

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Report Title: **Sickness Report**

Report To: **Employment Committee** **Date:** **3 December 2018**

Ward(s) Affected: **All**

Report By: **Helen Knight**

Contact Officer(s)- **Helen Knight**

Name(s): **Helen Knight**
Post Title(s): **Head of HR**
E-mail(s): **Helen.knight@lewes-eastbourne.gov.uk**
Tel No(s): **07966 645102**

Purpose of Report:

To update the Employment Committee regarding the council's sickness figures for the period Quarter 2 2018/19 (1 July to 30 September 2018).

Officers Recommendation(s):

- 1 To note the Quarter 2 figures alongside the sickness absence target for 2018/19 and the way in which the figures are being presented for both Councils.

1 Reasons for Recommendations

The Committee has asked for a regular item to be presented regarding the absence statistics within the council.

2 Information

- 2.1 The average number of day's absence for each employee for Quarter 2 was 2.11 which is a decrease from the same period last year which was 2.85. An excel spreadsheet showing the council's sickness figures for Q2 (1 July to 30 September) is attached as Appendix 1.
- 2.2 During Quarter 2 a few long term cases were resolved. Only 3 employees were off for the entire quarter, a decrease from Q1, all of whom are being supported by their manager with support from HR and progressing through the attendance management process.
- 2.3 There is generally a higher level of sickness in the Waste Service and it is interesting to note that if we take Waste out of the calculation, the Q2 figure reduces to 1.81. Waste Services on its own is 3.86 days for Q2.
- 2.4 During Quarter 2 there were 8 separate absences due to stress which is a reduction from Quarter 1 and only 3 of these resulted in a long term absence (more than 4 weeks). All of these have been supported by HR,

management and, where appropriate, our Employee Assistance Programme. Whilst it would not be appropriate for us to disclose the personal detail of these absences we can advise the following:

Service Area	Absence due to stress	Detail
IT	1	Personal due to family bereavement, now returned to work
Neighbourhood Housing	2	Both work and personal, one has now returned to work
Specialist Advisors	2	One personal and work related stress and has returned to work. The other one is work related
Case Management	3	One resigned and left in July 2018 having concluded the role was not suited to them. Another stated "multiple stresses" and has now returned to work. The third has also now returned to work.

2.5 The total for Quarters 1 and 2 is 3.7 days lost, which means we are in line to remain within our target of 8 days. However, we are mindful that Q3 and 4 historically have an increased absence rate, due to the winter months. HR have been promoting the provision of a free influenza vaccination to staff try and mitigate this

3 Financial Appraisal

3.1 The financial implications of this report are the number of working days lost to sickness.

4 Legal Implications

4.1 There are no legal implications arising from this report.

5 Risk Management Implications

5.1 I have completed the Risk Management Implications questionnaire and this report is exempt from the requirement because it is a progress report/budget monitoring report/development control report.

6 Equality Screening

6.1 Equality analysis is not required as this is an information only report with no key decisions attached.

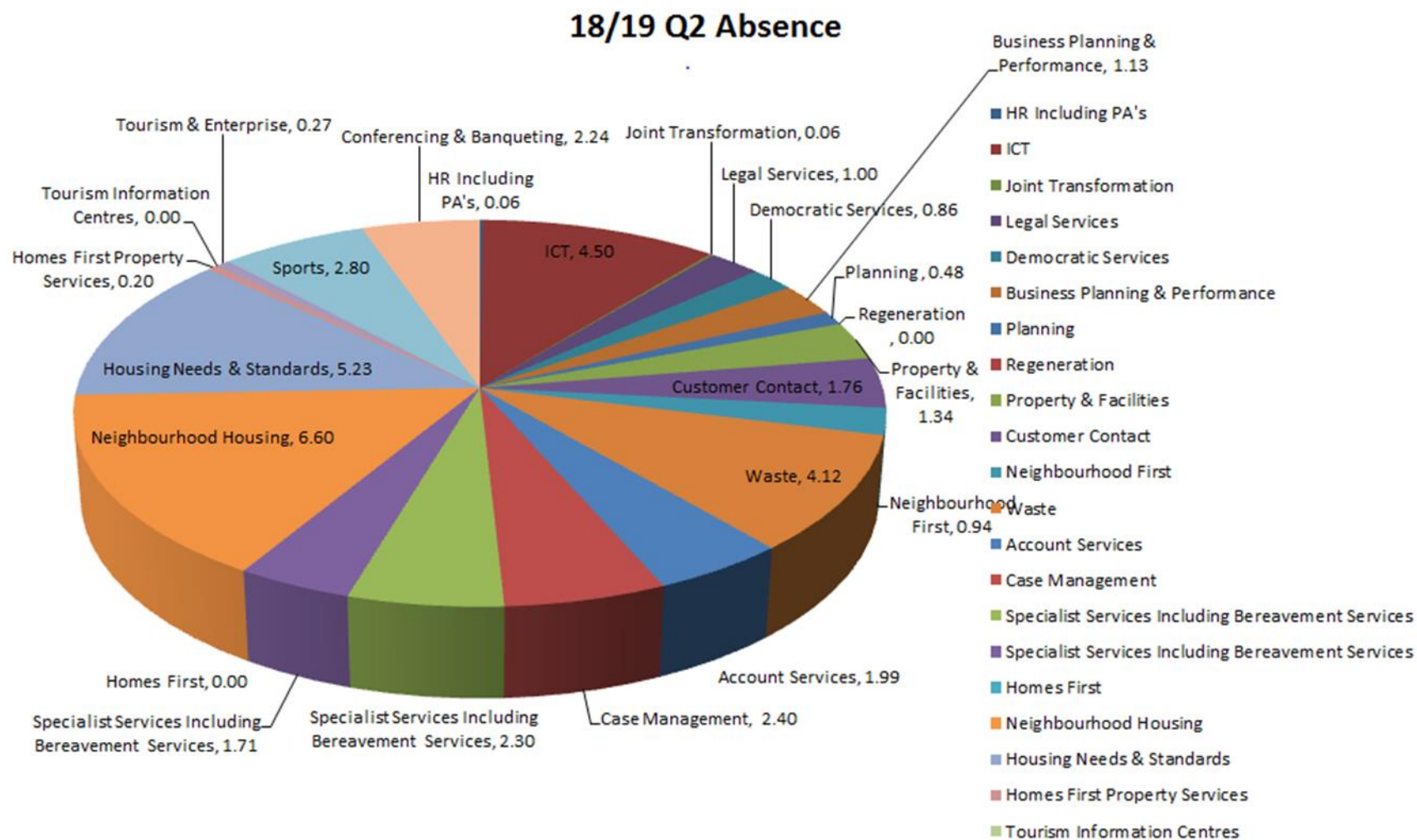
7 Background Papers

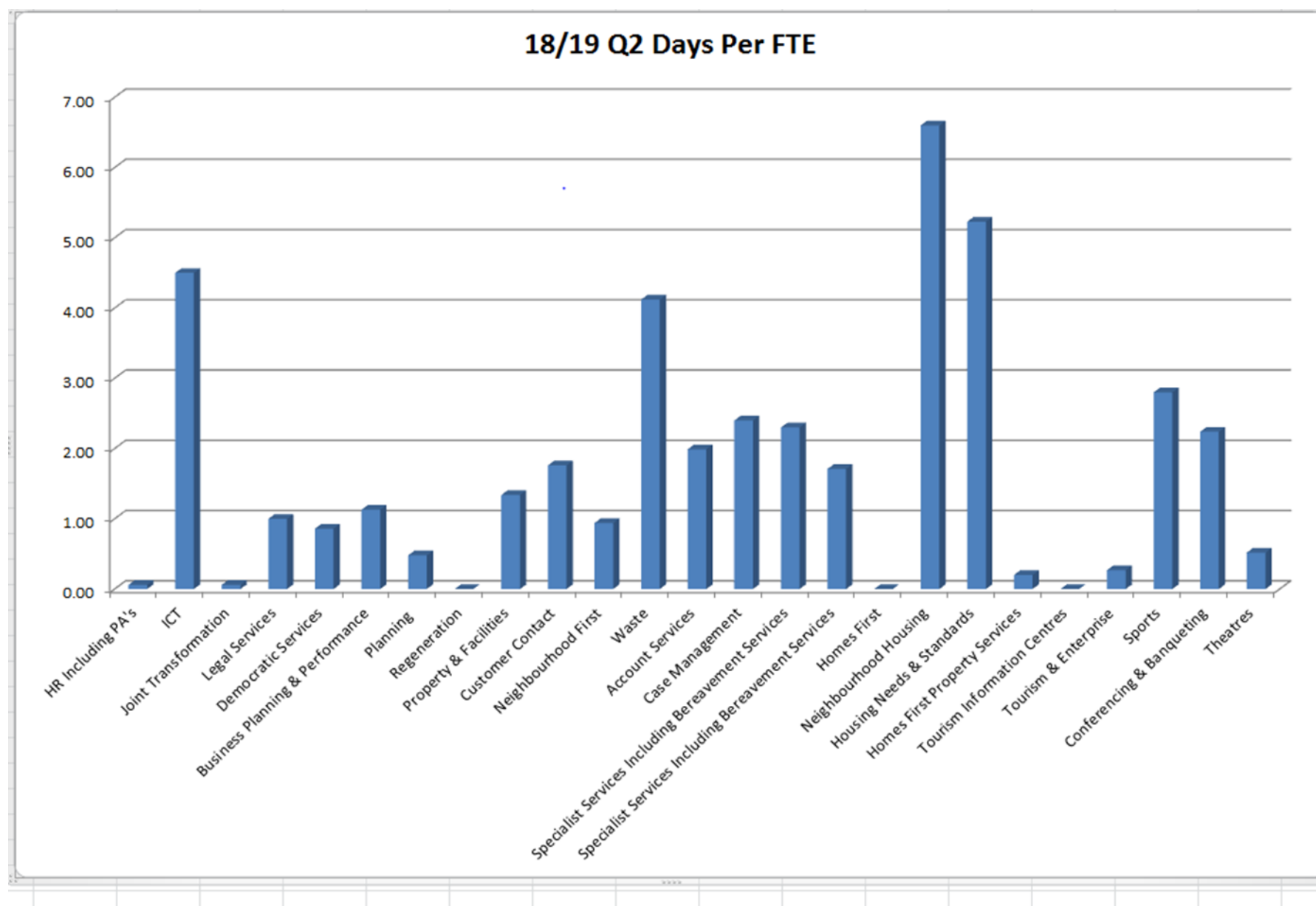
None

8 Appendices

- 8.1 Appendix 1 Excel spreadsheet showing the Council's sickness figures for Quarter 2 (1 July to 30 September)
- 8.2 Appendix 2 Excel Spreadsheet showing reasons for absence (by service area) during Quarter 2

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Q2Short Term Sickness Reasons By Service Area	Reason	Absences
Finance & Audit	Bronchitis	1
	Cold	4
	Depression	1
	Diarrhoea/Sickness	1
	Gout	1
	Hospital Appointment	1
	Migraine	1
	Sore Throat	1
	Viral Infection	2
	Vomiting and Tiredness	1
HR	Abdominal Pain	1
IT	Allergy	1
	Anxiety	1
	Anxiety/Depression	5
	Cold	1
	Migraine/Headache	4
	Nausea	1
	Reaction to drugs	1
	Shoulder Pain	2
	Stress	1
	Trapped Nerve	1
	Unwell	2
	Vomiting	1
Joint Transformation	Sore Throat	1
Legal Service	Bereavment	1
	Cold	1
	RTA	1
Democratic Services	Back Pain	1
	Chronic Mental Health	1
	Dental	1
	Ear infection	1
	Urinary Tract Infection	1

Business Planning and Performance	Bereavement	1
	Cold	1
	Dental	1
	Influenza	1
	Reaction to medication	1
Planning Policy	Cold	1
	Head Injury	1
	Migraine/Headache	1
	Sickness/Stomach bug	1
Property & Facilities	Bad back	1
	Chest Infection	1
	Cold	1
	Ear infection	1
	Folliculitis	1
	Influenza	1
	Joint Pains	1
	Knee Pain	1
	Operation	1
	Stomach Cramps	1
	Suspected Chicken Pox	1
	Vomiting	1
Customer Contact	Allergy	1
	Asthma	1
	Bronchitis	1
	Cellulitis	1
	Chicken Pox	1
	Cold	2
	Diabetes	1
	Diarrhoea/Sickness	2
	Dizzy/Faint	2
	Food Poisoning	1
	Gastroenteritis	1
	HIP Pain/PID	1
	Infection	1
	Influenza	2
	Migraine	2

	MS	1
	Panic Attack	1
	Polycystic Ovary	1
	Sickness	5
	Upset Stomach	2
	UTI	3
	Viral Gastritis	1
	Viral Infection	1
Neighbourhood First	Chest Infection	1
	Influenza	1
	Pregnancy Related	1
	Shoulder Pain	1
	Upset Stomach	2
Waste	Acute Coronary Syndrome	1
	Ankle Injury	2
	Anxiety/Depression	1
	Arm Injury	1
	Back Pain	1
	Can't read fit note	1
	COPD/Depression	1
	Depression	2
	Ear infection	1
	Foot Injury	1
	Gastroenteritis	1
	Hand Injury	4
	Headache and Nausea	2
	HIP Pain/PID	1
	Influenza	1
	Low mood	1
	Mental Health Problem	1
	Pace Maker	1
	Problem with shoulder	1
	Sickness Bug	5
	Tooth Infection	1
	Twisted knee	1
	Wasp Sting	2
Account Management	Anxiety/Depression	2
	Depression	2
	Diarrhoea/Sickness	1

	Dizzy/Sickness	1
	Migraine/Headache	1
	Operation	1
	Tonsillitis	1
Case Management	Adpminal Pain	1
	Anxiety/Depression	1
	Arm Injury	1
	Cold	5
	Diarrhoea/Sickness	2
	Dizziness & Nausea	1
	Food Poisoning	1
	Haemorrhoids	1
	Headache	1
	IBS	1
	Operation	1
	Sickness	1
	Stress	3
Specialist Advisors	Cold	1
	Head Injury	1
	Hernia	1
	Hospital Appointment	1
	Sickness	1
	Stress	2
	Upset Stomach	1
Bereavement Services	Bereavement	1
	Cold	1
Housing Needs	Dizzy/Faint	2
	Gyneacological	1
	Investigations	1
	Operation	1
	Pregnancy Related	
	Viral Infection	1
Neighbourhood Housing	Eye Infection	1
	Influenza	1
	Low Mood	1
	Pancreatitis	1

	Stress	1
	Viral Infection	1
Property Services	Bladder Infection	1
	Diarrhoea/Sickness	1
Tourism Development (Inc Conference & Banqueting, Information	Acute Coronary Syndrome	1
	Post Operative	1
Sport	Unknown	2
	Fractured Limb	1
Theatres	Cystitis	1
	Hand Injury	1
	Migraine/Headache	3
	Vomitting	2

Q2 Long Term Sickness Reasons by Service Area		
HR & Transformation		
Stress		1
Anxiety/Depression		1
Homes First		
Operation		1
Dizzy/Faint		1
Stress		1
Pancreatitis		1
Eye Infection		1
Waste		
COPD		1
Hand Injury		1
Pace Maker		1
Hip Pain		1
Acute Coronary Syndrome		1
Case & Specialist Services		
Head injury		1
Depression		2
Stress		1
Customer Contact		
Cellulitis		1
Tourism & Enterprise		
Fractured Limb		1
Post Operative		1

Q2 Sickness Reasons	
Abdominal Pain	2
Acute Coronary Syndrome	2
Allergy	2
Ankle Injury	2
Anxiety/Depression	10
Arm Injury	2
Asthma	1
Back Pain	3
Bereavement	3
Bladder Infection	1
Bronchitis	2
Cellulitis	1
Chest Infection	2
Chest Pain	1
Chicken Pox	2
Chronic Mental Health	1
Cold	18
COPD	1
Cystitis	1
Dental	2
Diarrhoea/sickness	7
Diabetes	1
Depression	5
Dizziness & Nausea	3
Dizzy/Faint	4
Ear infection	4
Folliculitis	1
Food Poisoning	2
Eye infection	1
Foot Injury	1
Fractured Limb	1
Gastroenteritis	2
Gout	1
Gyneacological	1
Haemorrhoids	1
Hand injury	3
Head Injury	4
Headache	1

Headache and Nausea	2
Hernia	1
HIP Pain/PID	2
Hospital Appointment	2
IBS	1
Infection	1
Influenza	7
Investigations	1
Joint Pains	1
Knee Pain	1
Low Mood	2
Mental Health Problem	1
Migraine	3
Migraine/Headache	9
MS	1
Nausea	1
Operation	4
Pace Maker	1
Pancreatitis	1
Panic Attack	1
Polycystic Ovary	1
Post Operative	1
Pregnancy Related	3
Problem with shoulder	1
Reaction to medication	2
RTA	1
Shoulder Pain	3
Sickness	10
Sore Throat	2
Stomach Cramps	1
Stress	8
Suspected Chicken Pox	1
Tonsilitis	1
Tooth Infection	1
Trapped Nerve	1
Twisted knee	1
Upset Stomach	6
Urinary Tract Infection	1
UTI	3
Viral Gastritis	1
Viral Infection	5
Vomiting	7

Wasp Sting	2
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