

NORTH LINCOLNSHIRE COUNCIL

AUDIT COMMITTEE

SICKNESS ABSENCE

1. OBJECT AND KEY POINTS IN THIS REPORT

- 1.1 Inform the committee of the impact of the improvement plan for sickness absence in the council.

2. BACKGROUND INFORMATION

- 2.1 Sickness absence was highlighted by the Audit Commission in the council's Annual Audit and Inspection letter 2007/8 as a risk to capacity - "capacity is hampered at an operational level by increasing levels of staff sickness absence"
- 2.2 The Audit Committee sought assurances that the action taken was having an impact in reducing the risk and requested regular reports from the Head of Strategy Development on the improvements made.
- 2.3 There has been an improvement in sickness absence however the council is slightly off track to achieve its annual target of 9.25 days. For the reporting period April to December the council has achieved an average of 7.05 days which is now slightly more than the target of 6.79 days per person. This is also an increase from the November position where the council was on track. It is however a reduction from the 7.57 days reported during the same period last year.
- 2.4 There is also significant variation in performance of services (see appendix). There have been some significant reductions in some services where sickness was previously above average. Reductions include Adult Services at 22 % and Highways and Planning at 24 %, on the same period last year. There have however also been some increases in Neighbourhood Services which was above average showing a 12% increase and Children's Services

increasing by 11% and making it now above average. These increases are predominately due to increases in longer term sickness absence.

2.5 Sickness targets for each service have been set and are being monitored through Quarterly Performance Reviews. These show six on track, two slightly off track (up to 5%) and five off track(above 5%). It should be noted however that three areas that are off track do have absence levels still significantly below the council's average.

2.6 Further improvement action has been instigated with Neighbourhood Services and Children' Services. Neighbourhood have given assurances that management action is being taken. A meeting will take place later this month with Children's Services Management, Performance and Human Resources. The impact of these will continue to be monitored over the next three months and reported in the next update to this Committee.

3 OPTIONS FOR CONSIDERATION

3.1 The Committee are asked to consider the action being taken and determine whether this gives sufficient assurance that the risk will be reduced.

4. RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS (FINANCIAL, STAFFING, PROPERTY, IT)

4.1 Sickness absence is costly to the council in terms of lost productivity and in some cases providing cover.

5. OTHER IMPLICATIONS (STATUTORY, ENVIRONMENTAL, DIVERSITY, SECTION 17 - CRIME AND DISORDER, RISK AND OTHER)

5.1 The council needs to ensure that it complies with the Disability Discrimination Act when dealing with sickness absence.

6. OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION

6.1 Staff, Managers and Trade Unions were consulted as part of the reviews and their views were incorporated into the council's action plan..

7. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1 That the Audit Committee determines whether the impact of improvement action provides sufficient assurance that the risk to capacity due to sickness absence is being reduced.

Head of Strategy Development

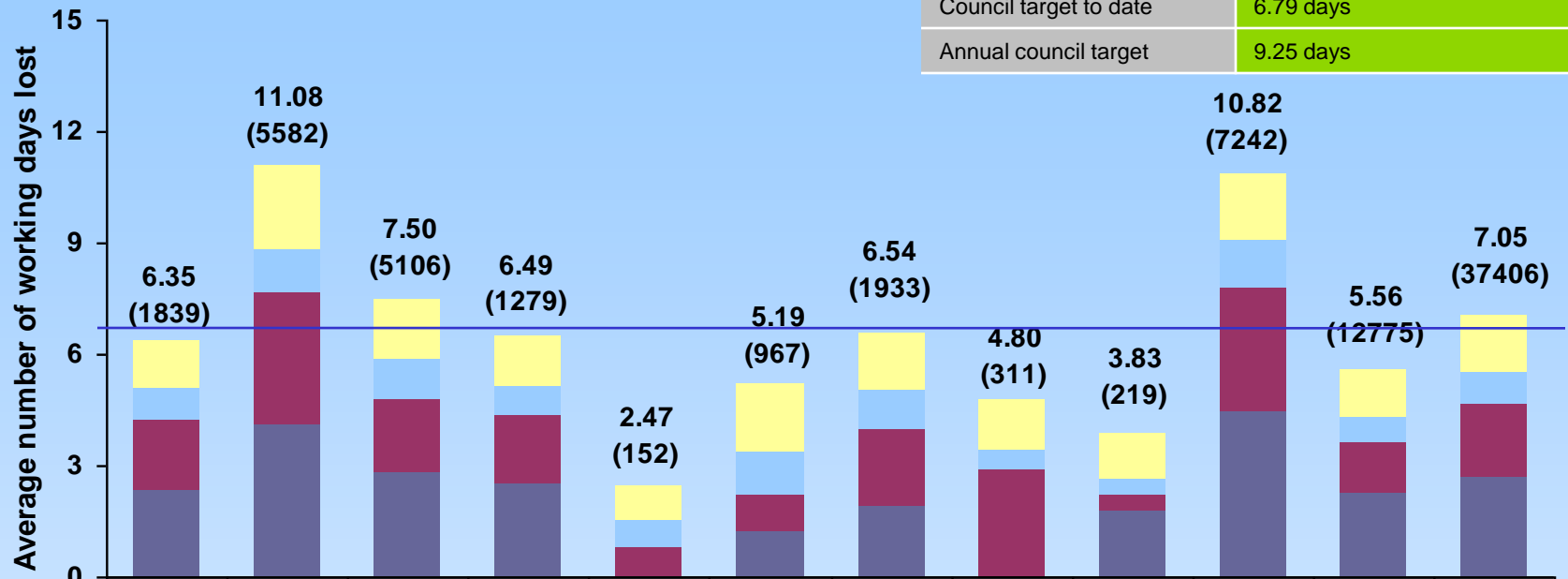
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Background Papers used in the preparation of this report

Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter 2007/8 produced March 2009
Cabinet Report 11th June entitled "Sickness Absence – Action Plan"

Average number of days lost due to sickness absence April to December 2010

Reporting period	April to December 2010
Council actual to date	7.05 days
Council target to date	6.79 days
Annual council target	9.25 days



	AM	AS	CH	CP	EM	FI	HP	HR	LD	NE	Schools	NLC
■ Up to 7 days	1.27	2.29	1.63	1.37	0.92	1.85	1.51	1.39	1.21	1.74	1.27	1.51
■ 8 to 20 days	0.88	1.15	1.09	0.78	0.74	1.11	1.05	0.56	0.43	1.29	0.69	0.9
■ 21 to 60 days	1.86	3.56	1.98	1.83	0.81	1.03	2.11	2.85	0.39	3.32	1.31	1.95
■ Over 60 days	2.34	4.08	2.8	2.51	0	1.2	1.87	0	1.8	4.47	2.29	2.69

() – figures in brackets show the total number of FTE days lost

Key & 2010/11 service targets

AM	Asset Management & Culture	8.25
AS	Adult Social Services	14.60
CH	Children & Young People's Services	8.48
CP	Community Planning & Resources	9.27

EM	Executive Management	1.25
SD	Strategy Development	2.56
HP	Strategic Regeneration	3.73
FI	Finance	8.26

HP	Highways & Planning	9.25
HR	Human Resources	6.03
LD	Legal & Democratic	4.34
NE	Neighbourhood & Environment	10.91

Actual and projected sickness absence summary 2010/11

Service	Up to 7 days	8-20 days	21-60 days	Over 60 days	Actual April to Dec	Target April to Dec	Target year end	Projected year end based on April to Dec actual	Comparison with Same Period Last Year
Asset Management & Culture	1.27	0.88	1.86	2.34	6.35	6.28	8.25	8.50	-5.8%
Adult Social Services	2.29	1.15	3.56	4.08	11.08	11.59	14.60	14.80	-22.4%
Children & Young People's Services	1.63	1.09	1.98	2.80	7.50	6.90	8.88	10.00	+11.3%
Schools	1.27	0.69	1.31	2.29	5.56	6.12	8.34	7.42	-10.8%
Community Planning & Resources	1.37	0.78	1.83	2.51	6.49	6.95	9.27	8.66	-18%
Executive Management Team	1.19	0.90	0.00	0.00	2.09	0.62	1.25	2.79	NR
Finance	1.85	1.11	1.03	1.20	5.19	6.26	8.26	6.92	-13%
Highways & Planning	1.51	1.05	2.11	1.87	6.54	7.31	9.25	8.72	-24.3%
Human Resources	1.39	0.56	2.85	0.00	4.80	4.15	6.03	6.40	+29%
Legal & Democratic	1.21	0.43	0.39	1.80	3.83	3.52	4.34	5.11	+5%
Neighbourhood & Environment	1.74	1.29	3.32	4.47	10.82	8.43	10.91	14.43	+12.7%
Strategy Development	0.58	1.32	0.00	0.00	1.90	2.48	3.73	2.54	NR
Strategic Regeneration, Housing & Dev't	0.96	0.47	1.35	0.00	2.78	2.14	2.56	3.71	NR
North Lincolnshire Council	1.51	0.90	1.95	2.69	7.05	6.79	9.25	9.40	-6.9%

NR – not representative due to small number of employees