

WEST DUNBARTONSHIRE COUNCIL

Report by Head of Personnel Services

Joint Consultative Forum – 25th May 2006

Subject: Sickness Absence Statistics – Quarter 4 and Annual Return

1. Purpose:

- 1.1 To update the Joint Consultative Forum on the levels of employee absence during the 3 month period 1st January to 31st March 2006 and Annual Absence Statistics.

2. Background

- 2.1 The Council has to report on absence to Audit Scotland on an annual basis as it is a Statutory Performance Indicator.
- 2.2 Absence has a significant ability to impact upon front line service delivery and as a result is also monitored on a quarterly basis via the Corporate Management Team, Joint Consultative Forum and Audit and Performance Review Committee.
- 2.3 In addition, departments monitor absence on a regular basis via Quarterly Performance Review Meetings and monthly management meetings.

3. Main Issues

Quarter 4 Report

- 3.1 Departmental absence statistics for Quarter 4 are outlined in Appendix 1.
- 3.2 It should be noted that unauthorised absence is reported for management information only. It is not included in the statutory performance indicator return to Audit Scotland.
- 3.3 There is a positive trend overall, however, craft and teaching absence levels have increased. Table 1 provides an overall summary that can be used to note comparisons with the same quarter last year.

Table 1: Quarter 4 Summary

Group	2005/2006	2004/2005
Local Government Employees	6.4%	6.8
Craft	6.2%	4.8
Teachers	4.9%	4.4
OVERALL	6.1%	6.3

Annual Report

- 3.4** The Statutory Performance Indicator for the Council for the full year April to March 2005/06 shows a decrease of 0.5% compared to that reported for the previous year. More detailed information can be found in Appendix 2. Table 2 provides an overall summary that can be used to note comparisons with the same return for last year.

Table 2: Full Year Summary

Group	2005/2006	2004/2005
Local Government Employees	6.0	6.5
Craft & Manual	5.2	6.6
Teachers	3.9	3.9
OVERALL	5.6	6.1

- 3.5** Table 3 outlines the underlying reasons for absence during Quarter 4 (2005/2006) and also shows a comparison with the previous 3 quarters in 2005/06.

Table 3: Illness Codes

	Previous Quarters				Total Days Lost (Q4)
	Q1 %	Q2 %	Q3 %	Q4 %	
C1 Stomach/Bowel/Blood/Metabolic	11.4	13.9	13.3	15.5	3199.5
C2 Cardiovascular	4.2	5.1	2.8	2.4	491
C3 Psychological	25.1	28.3	25.6	24.8	5105.5
C4 Musculoskeletal/ Joint Disorders	25.5	26.8	23.0	19.6	4046
C5 Respiratory	5.7	3.1	4.8	7.3	1497.5
C6 Cancer	2.6	2.6	2.2	2.9	607
C7 Neurological & Endocrine	4.0	4.7	4.9	3.5	711
C8 Gynaelological/Urological	5.2	4.7	6.6	5.0	1032
C9 Skin	1.1	0.6	0.7	0.5	100
C10 Ear/Nose/Throat/Mouth/Eye	7.2	5.0	7.0	8.2	1696.5
C11 Infectious Diseases	8.0	5.2	9.2	10.3	2116
TOTAL =	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	20,602

- 3.6 Table 4 records the number of absences which are long and short term during the 6 monthly period and shows that short-term absences (0-3 days) are the most frequently occurring.

Table 4: Number of Occasions in Each Category

DEPARTMENT	0-3 days	4 to 7 days	8 days up to 1 month	Over 1 up to 6 mths	over 6 up to 12 months	over 12 up to 18 months	over 18 months	TOTAL
C.E. - POLICY UNIT	10	1		1	0	0	0	12
CORPORATE SERVICES	82	23	26	5	0	0	0	136
D.E.S.	56	18	8	2	2	1	0	87
EDUCATION (NON-TEACHING)	429	127	46	25	3	0	0	630
EDUCATION (TEACHING)	338	80	37	17	6	2	0	480
SOCIAL WORK & HOUSING	375	127	170	71	27	11	4	785
HOUSING & TECHNICAL	1277.5	1222	2206.5	1796	102	0	0	6604
TOTAL OCCASIONS	2567.5	1598	2493.5	1917	140	14	4	8734

- 3.7 The overall absence figures demonstrate medically certificated absence remain the most significant contributor to the Council's absence statistics with 68% of days lost being medically certificated.

Industrial Injury

- 3.8 The council normally only collects the days lost from industrial injury, however, at the request of the JCF on 9th March, the number of people absent from work due to an industrial injury during this period is recorded in Table 5.

Housing, Regeneration & Environmental Services	1 employee
Education & Cultural Services	1 employee
Social Work Services	2 employees
Legal & Admin Services	1 employee

4. Personnel Issues

- 4.1 The effective management of absence is critical as those still at work often find themselves absorbing workloads for their absent colleagues.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1** Absence has a significant impact upon the cost of service delivery, particularly where overtime and/or replacement costs are incurred to deliver essential services.
- 5.2** Table 4 shows an improvement in Musculoskeletal/Joint Disorders and this may have a direct relationship to Occupational Health/Physiotherapy Services now being available. This is a trend that will be kept under review to ensure effective targeting of Occupation Health Services.

6. Conclusions

- 6.1** Significant intervention has been put in place for long term sickness e.g. Occupational Health Service. The Head of Personnel will work in partnership with services to develop strategies for improving short term sickness statistics.

7. Recommendations

- 7.1** The Forum is asked to note the contents of this report.

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Background Papers: Nil

Wards Affected: All wards are indirectly affected as employee absence does have a direct impact upon all service delivery.