

Policy and Corporate Resources Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Monday, 23rd September 2019

Report of the Director HR, Legal and Corporate Resources.

Sickness Absence, Mental Health and Barriers to Employee Health and Wellbeing.

1. Background

Members will be aware that in March of this year they looked at the issue of Sickness Absence and Wellbeing.

The Committee reviewed its work on the topic and the information that they had received to date on the Council's sickness and absence policies and the implementation of these. They discussed the use of agency staff within services that required continuity and support. Members also looked at the support the Council gave to the wellbeing of employees and the progress on training of mental health champions within the organisation.

The Committee were also updated on the trends of absenteeism and were informed that long term absences were coming down whilst short term absences were more challenging. The Committee put forward a number of recommendations as follows-

1. That the Director of HR Legal and Corporate Services be requested to provide information to the Committee on the comparisons with other authorities similar in composition to BWD on access to Health and Wellbeing services offered by the Council to improve attendance.
2. That the Committee receive information on work of Mental Health Champions and how the Council supports them in their work and furthering support for employees with Mental Health issues.
3. That the comparison figures for sickness absence be forwarded to Members of the Committee to enable comparisons to be made on the effectiveness of remedial measures.
- 4 That the Executive Member be requested to consider the implications for the workforce and the Council on the introduction of new technology and smarter/agile working and report to a future meeting of the Committee.

Attached is a report that sets out information to address the recommendations of the Committee and examines what the Council does to support attendance and address barriers to health and wellbeing.

Recommendations

The Committee is recommended

- To note the report and the information presented to members
- Consider how they wish to work with the Executive Member to ensure that the Council continues to support employees in work and getting back to work.
- Note that information on the introduction of new technology and smarter/agile working and report to a future meeting of the Committee would be reported to the next meeting of the Committee.
- Consider what further information they wish to see before the Committee and how they can add value to the process.

David Fairclough

Director of HR, Legal and Corporate Resources.

September 2019