

Meeting: Corporate Governance
Date: 13th September 2017
Subject: Sickness Absence
Report by: Chief Fire and Rescue Officer
Author: Mark Andrew (Area Manager)
For: Information Only

1. Purpose

To provide information to Elected Members as requested at the CGC meeting on 15th March 2017 on sickness absence within LFRS.

2. Recommendations

The Corporate Governance Committee is asked to note the content of the report and the presentation made at the meeting.

3. Executive Summary

At the last Corporate Governance Committee performance data was presented on sickness absence for 2016/17. The data highlighted a higher than expected level of absence for both support and operational personnel. As a consequence members requested further information on sickness absence in order to better understand the reasons for last year's performance. The key messages from the data are:

- There was an increase in absence across the board
- But, when compared to other Fire and Rescue Services operational absence is lower than average
- Support staff absence is higher than average

Members will receive a presentation on historic and current sickness absence as outlined in paragraph 4 below.

4. Report Detail

4.1. Sickness absence data and type of absence

Absence data will be provided for the last 3 financial years for both support and operational personnel. In addition members will be provided with an up to date picture of absence when compared to previous years and other Fire and Rescue Services. There has been a rise in absence due to mental health conditions and muscular-skeletal injuries and surgery.

4.2. Reasons for absence and Occupational Health Data (OHU)

Information on the most common reasons for absence and the work undertaken by OHU in this area will be provided. This will include detail on types of absence, patterns and trends and the interventions that are adopted for each type.

4.3. Service policy and procedure

An outline of the service policy and practice will be provided at the meeting. This will include an assessment of areas for improvement, in order to reduce sickness absence.

4.4. Analysis and areas for improvement

An outline of work already underway to improve service performance will be provided along with an improvement plan. This will include what we see as good performance and what we need to do to achieve target improvements. Areas identified for improvement includes better target setting; compliance with the absence procedure and improved advice and support.

5. Report Implications / Impact

5.1. ***Legal (including crime and disorder)***

None

5.2. ***Financial (including value for money, benefits and efficiencies)***

There is a cost to the organisation of sickness absence and modified duties both in terms of lost productivity and the cost of cover or overtime to rectify any crewing shortfalls

5.3. ***Risk (including corporate and operational, health and safety and any impact on the continuity of service delivery)***

Sickness absence and the main causes of absence present an organisational risk with regards to service provision and the well-being of a whole team.

5.4. ***Staff, Service Users and Stakeholders (including the Equality Impact Assessment)***

A proportionate and consistent sickness absence policy and procedure should support individuals affected and allow for managers to effectively manage absence. The presentation will identify how the current policy and procedure can be improved.

5.5. ***Environmental***

None

5.6. ***Impact upon Our Plan Objectives***

Staff with the right skills behaviours and attitude to provide an excellent service

6. Background Papers

- a) Performance Report Corporate Governance Committee, March 2017.
- b) Service sickness data.

7. Appendices

None