

Report of	Meeting	Date
Corporate Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	15 January 2009

## ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT INQUIRY MONITORING REPORT

### PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the actions taken following their recommendations made to Executive Cabinet on the 29<sup>th</sup> May 2008.

### RECOMMENDATION(S)

2. To note the progress on the various actions.

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF REPORT

3. To report the progress of the recommendations made by the Scrutiny Committee.

### CORPORATE PRIORITIES

4. This report relates to the following Strategic Objectives:

Put Chorley at the heart of regional economic development in the central Lancashire sub region		Improved access to public services	
Improving equality of opportunity and life chance		Develop the character and feel of Chorley as a good place to live	
Involving People in their Communities		Ensure Chorley is a performing Organisation	√

### BACKGROUND

5. At the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee the Sub-Group undertook a scrutiny inquiry into absence management. This was selected as a topic linked to the Corporate Strategy and the Councils priority of ensuring that Chorley Council is a performing organisation.

### OBJECTIVES

6.
  - A. To assess whether the current attendance policy is sufficiently robust.
  - B. To determine whether the attendance policy is being applied consistently.
  - C. To identify actions that could improve attendance.

<p>Employees should speak to their manager specifically when phoning in sick rather than a colleague. In addition to the Manager being aware immediately of the absence and reasons it also gives the opportunity to discuss any diary appointments or outstanding workload that the Manager can redistribute.</p>	<p>Employees are now required to speak to their manager when phoning in sick, this has also been included in the revised attendance policy that is currently being consulted on.</p>
<p>A solution should be found to enable managers to put an automatic "out of office" message on the absent employees e-mails, informing senders that the person is unavailable and who to contact if the message is urgent or divert all e-mails to a nominated person. This will ensure that all e-mails are responded to. Although technically this is possible legal advice is needed to access individuals in boxes as this contravenes the privacy policy.</p>	<p>The out of office facility has so far not been implemented due to complications around access to individual e mails accounts being made available to their managers.</p> <p>It is recommended that managers seek permission from employees on long term sickness absence to gain access to their email account and to enable an out of office reply message.</p>
<p>Return to work interviews will be carried out by managers on the first day back in work.</p> <p>They should be held in private and handled sensitively ensuring the employee is fully fit to return to work. It also gives the Manager the opportunity to discuss any issues that may have contributed to the absence and welcome the employee back into work as a valued member of the team.</p>	<p>Return to work interviews are now carried out by managers on the first day back in work.</p> <p>Return to work interviews are closely monitored by the HR team and reported to strategy group with sickness statistics on a monthly basis.</p>
<p>To report long-term and short-term sickness as well as the overall figure. This will highlight trends.</p>	<p>Long term and short term sickness statistics are now reported monthly.</p>
<p>To support the implementation of a workplace listeners scheme.</p>	<p>The workplace listeners scheme has now been introduced and will be evaluated at the end of March 2009.</p>

<p>Feedback on the new Occupational Health contract as part of the monitoring of inquiry recommendations. It is important to continually monitor the Occupational Health contract to ensure that staff receive the best possible service.</p>	<p>The Occupational health contract has been in place since April 2008. The quality of advice and support to employees and managers has vastly improved on the previous contract.</p> <p>The Occupational Health Physician has facilitated a number of managing stress seminars which have been well received.</p> <p>In contrast to the previous contract which had been invoiced annually in advance we now only pay for the services we receive and have seen a reduction in the overall cost of the occupational health service despite taking advantage of the additional services they are able to provide.</p>
<p>Encourage staff to take up the Active at Work and new initiatives offered.</p>	<p>An ongoing health and wellbeing programme has been introduced and was recognised as good practice nationally with the achievement of the Personnel Today Health at Work award. The Council has also achieved the gold Health Works award.</p> <p>Further initiatives have included the Council wide pedometer challenge, mens health week, fresh fruit on desks available at discounted rates, osteoporosis screening and healthy recipes available on the loop.</p>

## IMPLICATIONS OF REPORT

7. This report has implications in the following areas and the relevant Directors' comments are included:

Finance		Customer Services	
Human Resources	√	Equality and Diversity	
Legal			

## COMMENTS OF THE CORPORATE DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

8. Are contained within the report.

LORRAINE CHARLESWORTH  
CORPORATE DIRECTOR HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

There are no background papers to this report.

Report Author	Ext	Date	Doc ID
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