

**Agenda Item No:5**

**Report To: Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 25 June 2014**

**Report Title: Sickness absence**

**Report Author: Ian Smith, Personnel Officer.**



<b>Summary:</b> This report provides information on sickness absenteeism for 2013/14.
---

**Key Decision:** No

**Affected Wards:** None

**Recommendations:** That the Committee consider the information provided in this report and advise Officers:

- If any further information is required
- If the Committee would wish to receive a further update in a year's time

**Contacts:** [ian.smith@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:ian.smith@ashford.gov.uk) – Tel: (01233) 330411

## Report Title: Sickness Absence –Annual Report 2013/14

### Purpose of the Report

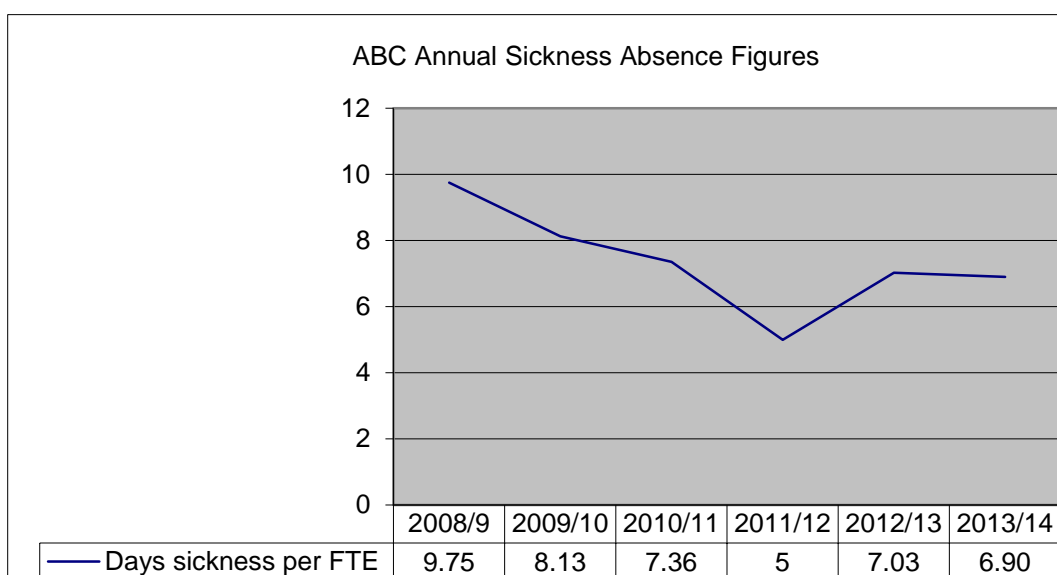
1. This report presents the level of sickness absence incurred by employees of Ashford Borough Council for the financial year 2013/14.

### Background

2. The Council's sickness absence figures have been obtained from all sickness absences recorded on the Council's iTrent Payroll and HR system.
3. The figures are presented as the average number of working days lost per FTE (full time working equivalent) employee during the period.
4. The content of this report reflects Members' preference to receive less detail than provided in previous years; there has been no significant change in the sickness absence level reported from the previous year.

### Sickness Absence 2013/14

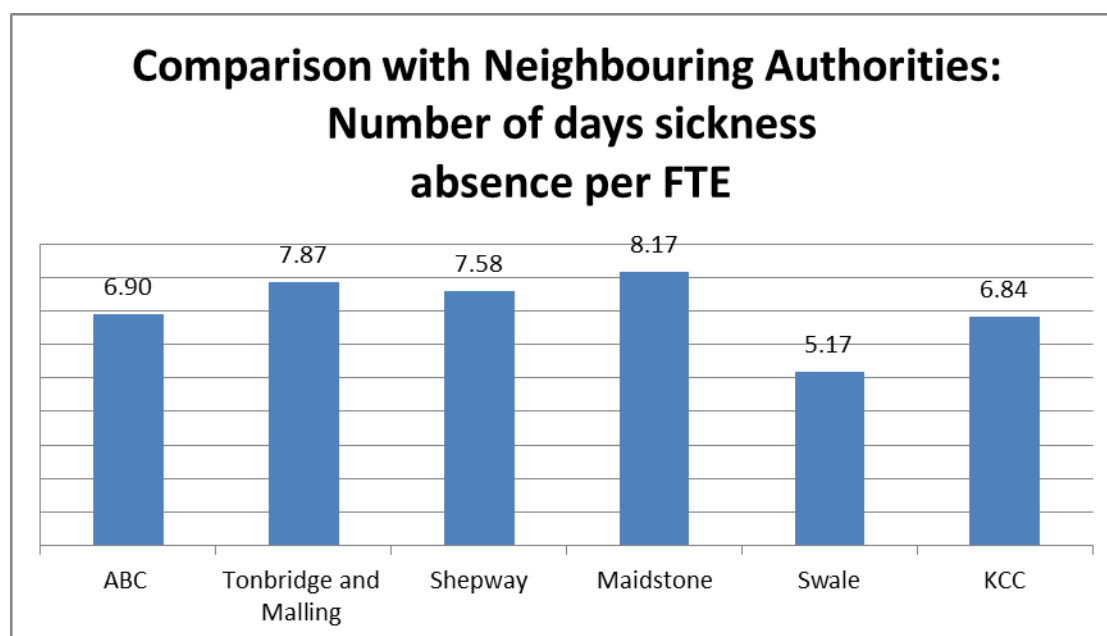
5. Based on the average number of 378.34 FTE employees, the total amount of working days (2590.24) lost due to sickness equates to 6.90 days per FTE. This figure represents a decrease of 0.13 days reported for 2012/13.
6. **Chart 1** shows the average number of days sickness absence for each financial year over the past six years. Excluding the exceptional reported figure for 2011/12, there has been a year on year reduction with a fall of 2.85% from the highest recorded figure in 2008/9.



7. **Long term cases (20 continuous days or more).** There were 24 cases which represents 46% (1194.5 days) of the total number of sickness absence days. The average period of absence per employee within this category was 48.66 days; the longest individual period being 126 days.

## Comparison data

8. The latest available Local Government Workforce Survey (2012/13) highlighted that the average sickness absence level in English local authorities was 8.8 days per employee.
9. The 2013 survey report produced by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development showed that there was a sickness absence rate of 8.7 days per employee in whole of the UK Public sector with 7.2 days in the private sector.
10. **Chart 2** shows how the Council compares with five neighbouring authorities who provided their average sickness absence figures for 2013/14.



## Conclusion

11. It is encouraging to report that the Council has seen a continuing reduction in its level of sickness absence. The reported figure for 2013/14 is well below that of the latest reported national averages for the public sector and is largely comparable to some of our neighbouring authorities for the same period. To maintain this position it is essential that the management of sickness absence is effective, fair and consistent. To ensure that the Council meets this objective, we will continue to support and train our line managers in dealing with absence issues and review the policy and its procedures to determine where improvements can be made.

**Contact:** Ian Smith Personnel Officer  
**Email:** [ian.smith@ashford.gov.uk](mailto:ian.smith@ashford.gov.uk)  
**Tel:** 01233 330411