

Agenda Item No: 5
Report To: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date: 23 June 2015
Report Title: Sickness absence 2014/15
Report Author: Ian Smith, Personnel Officer.



Summary:	This report provides information on sickness absenteeism for 2014/15.
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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

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Report Title: Sickness Absence –Annual Report 2014/15

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides the level of sickness absence incurred by employees of Ashford Borough Council for the financial year 2014/15.

Background

2. The reported figures for the council have been obtained from all sickness absences recorded on the 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 reported period.
4. The council's level of annual sickness absence is compared with previously reported figures, nationally reported figures and with some of our neighbouring authorities.
5. Members have requested not to receive detailed analysis on the level of reported sickness absences; where there has been no significant change in the level reported from the previous year.

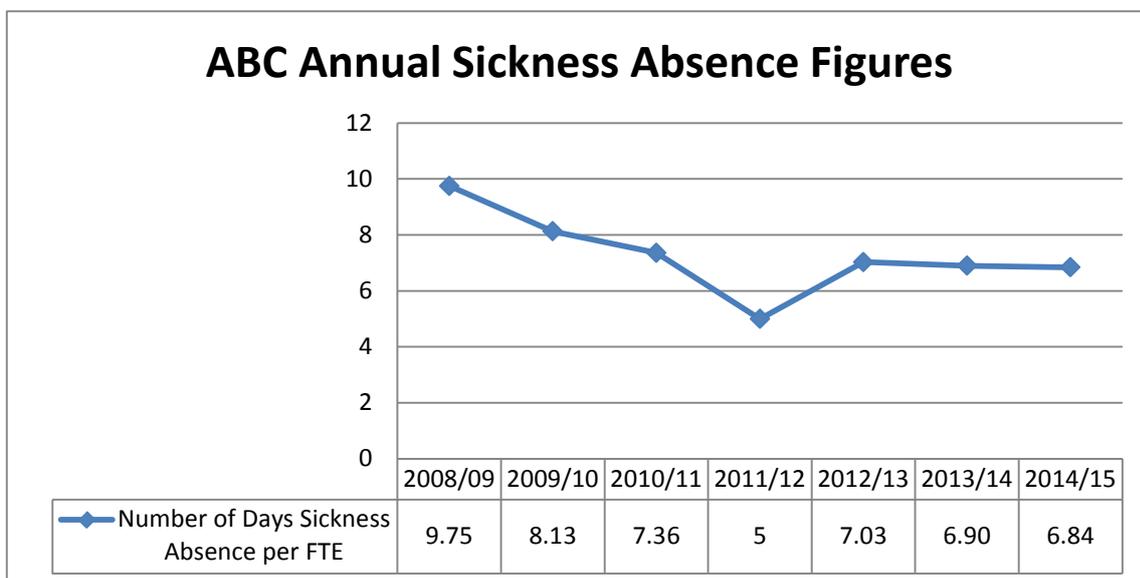
Sickness Absence 2014/15

6. Based on the average number of 384.18 FTE employees, the total amount of working days (2,628.90) lost due to sickness equates to 6.84 days per FTE. This figure represents a marginal decrease of 0.06 days reported for 2013/14.
7. Long term cases (20 continuous days or more) - There were 32 cases which represents 56% (1449 days) of the total number of sickness absence days. The average period of absence per employee within this category was 45.30 days; the longest individual period being 158 days.

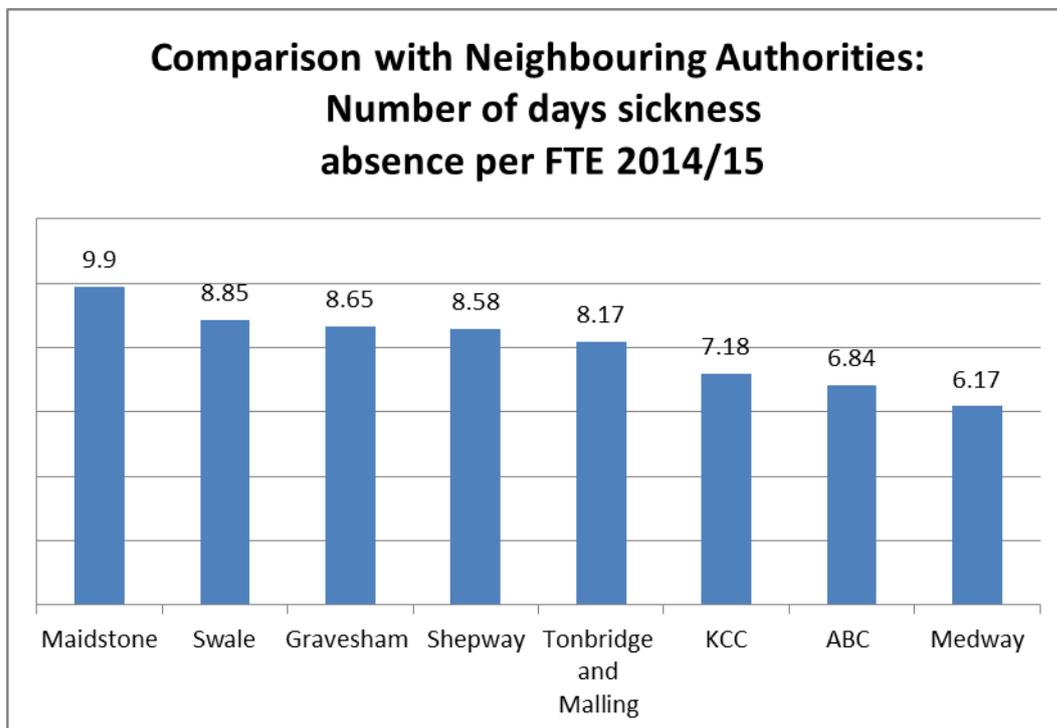
Comparisons

8. The last 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 2014 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 1** - shows the number of day's sickness absence per employee (FTE) for each financial year since 2008/9.



11. **Chart 2**- shows how the council compares with some of our neighbouring authorities.



Summary

12. It is encouraging to report that the council continues to see a reduction in its level of sickness absence. The reported figure for 2014/15 is well below that of the last reported national figures for the public sector and compares very favourably with those reported by some of our neighbouring authorities.
13. The emphasis given to our managers on the importance of conducting and completing combined return to work interviews and sickness notification forms, has proved to be an effective tool in the management of sickness absence. These provide the framework for discussions between the manager and employee to consider reasons for the absence, explore any underlying issues or trends and moreover to identify any adaptations or supportive interventions where appropriate to promote and sustain the employees' return to work.

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