

Agenda Item No: 4
Report To: OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
Date: 28 June 2016
Report Title: Sickness absence 2015/16
Report Author: Ian Smith, Personnel Officer
Portfolio Holder: Callum Knowles, Information, Technology and Communications



Summary: This report provides annual information on sickness absenteeism for 2015/16.
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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 the committee would wish to receive a further update in a year's time**
- **If any further information is required**

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Sickness Absence 2015/16

Purpose of the Report

1. This report provides members with sickness absence figures for the financial year 2015/16

Background

2. The reported figures for council employees 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; except where there has been a significant change in the level reported from the previous year.

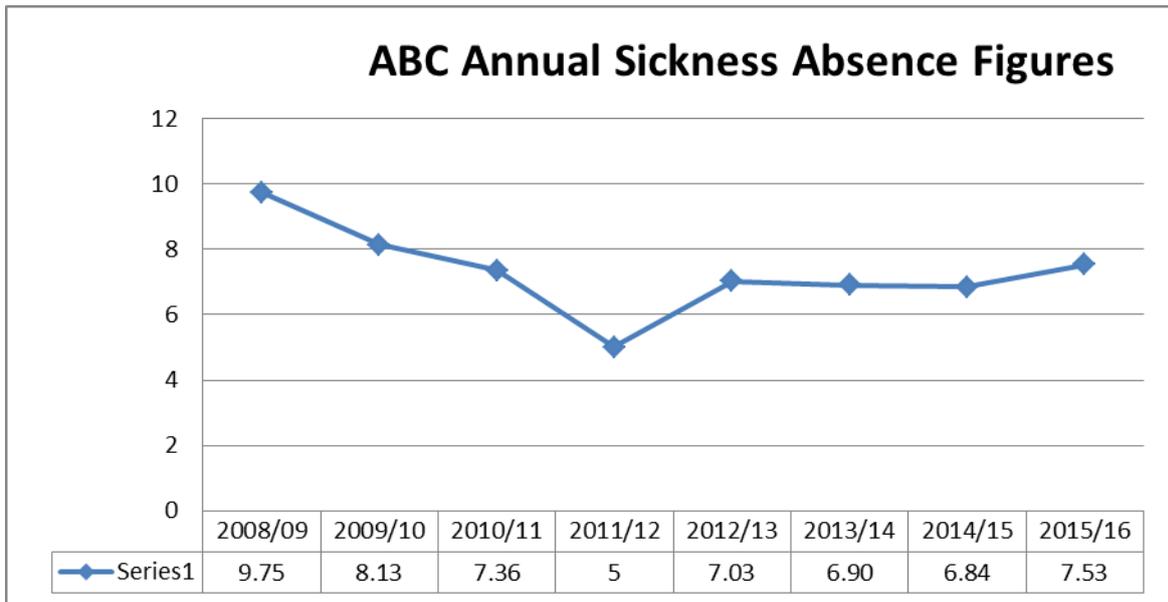
Sickness Absence 2015/16

6. Based on the average number of 382.7 FTE employees, the total amount of working days (2875) lost due to sickness equates to 7.53 days per FTE. This figure represents an increase of 0.69 days per FTE reported for 2014/15.
7. 33 long term cases (20 continuous days or more) were reported. The total number of days in this category represents 49.65 % (1427.5 days) of the total number of working days lost. The average period of absence per employee within this category was 43.26 days; the longest individual period being 133 days.
8. By excluding long term sickness absences, the average number of working days lost per FTE equates to 3.79 days.
9. A total of 139 (30 %) of staff did not incur any periods of sickness absence.

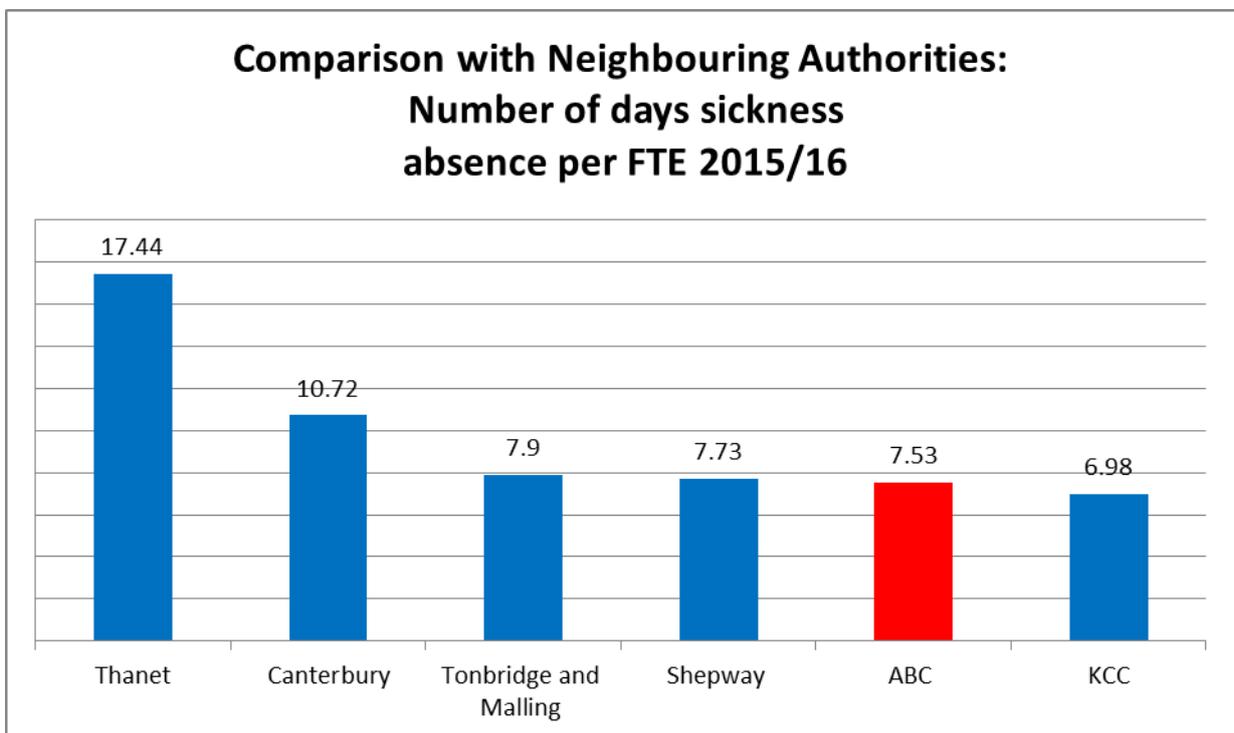
Comparisons

10. The 2015 Absence Management survey report produced by the *Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development* showed that there was a sickness absence rate of 9.3 per employee in the UK Public Sector; this is an increase from the 8.7 days reported for 2014. The rate for the private sector was 8.2 days; this is an increase from the 7.2 days reported for 2014.

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



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



Summary

13. ABC's progress in bringing down the level of sickness absence since 2008/9 has been significant. Our absence level compares very well with the latest national figures and those provided by some of our neighbouring local authorities.
14. For 2015/16 there has been a slight increase in the overall level of sickness absence. While this is believed to represent a 'blip' and not a long term trend, it does highlight the continuing need for effective interventions and initiatives to be taken in order to achieve low sickness absence levels; in turn these will improve productivity, service quality and reduce the costs in those areas where cover for absence needs to be provided.
15. Personnel and Development will play a key role by continuing with case by case active management, promoting well-being initiatives and by maintaining and enhancing the partnership working with line managers and the trade union.

Portfolio Holder Comments

16. "It is positive to see that ABC continues to have comparatively low sickness levels. This is especially pleasing when the pressures on ABC officers to deliver are high; this is a positive indication of good staff morale. It will be important for managers to continue to manage sickness effectively to ensure the very small increase on last year's level is in fact a blip and not the start of a trend of increasing sickness absence."

Ian Smith, Personnel Officer

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