Agenda No

AGENDA MANAGEMENT SHEET

Name of Committee	**Resources Performance and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee**
Date of Committee	**24th April 2007**
Report Title	**Employee absence management**
Summary	This report is the latest in a series of quarterly reports which describes the latest performance information on employee absence levels.
For further information please contact:	Reuben Bergman Deputy Head of Human Resources (Employee Relations) Tel: 01926 41 2314
Would the recommended decision be contrary to the Budget and Policy Framework?	No
Background papers	None

CONSULTATION ALREADY UNDERTAKEN:-   Details to be specified

Other Committees	☐	
Local Member(s)	☐	
Other Elected Members	☐	Councillor Hicks Councillor Booth Councillor Atkinson
Cabinet Member	☐	Councillor Fowler
Chief Executive	☐	
Legal	☐	
Finance	☐	
Other Chief Officers	☐	
District Councils	☐	
Health Authority	☐	
Police	☐	

Warwickshire County Council

Other Bodies/Individuals ☐

FINAL DECISION

SUGGESTED NEXT STEPS: Details to be specified

Further consideration by
this Committee ☒ Recommendation that this Committee continues
to receive quarterly progress reports

To Council ☐

To Cabinet ☐

To an O & S Committee ☐

To an Area Committee ☐

Further Consultation ☐

Warwickshire
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Agenda No

Resources Performance and Development Overview & Scrutiny Committee

24th April 2007

Employee Absence Management

Report of the Strategic Director of Performance & Development

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Recommendation

That the Committee notes the latest available performance information on absence levels and continued progress in relation to absence management.

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1.   Background

1.1   This report provides information on absence figures for year ending December 2006. It forms part of a regularly quarterly update for Members on this key issue. A more detailed review of current absence levels will be provided in September and on the basis of full review of the current absence management practices.

2.   Comparative Absence Figures

2.1   A summary of comparative absence figures over the last three years is as set out below: -

Year Ending	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	Sept 06	Dec 06
Days Lost per Employee*	12.47	10.12	10.57	9.35	9.86

* based on full time equivalent

2.2   The following specific issues are brought to the attention of Members: -

▪ On the basis of the above information sickness absence levels have increased by 0.51 days per employee since the last reporting period.

▪ Despite a disappointing increase, the overall trend remains downwards. Absence levels have decreased by 0.71 days since the end of financial year 2005/2006.

- Current absence levels remain lower than the latest national local government figures (11.5 days absence per FTE employee) but higher than the CBI National average for public sector employers (9.1 days).

- Over the last financial year approximately 38% of employees had no sickness absence.

- Long-term sickness (i.e. absence of more than 4 weeks duration) continues to account for approximately half of all working days lost through sickness.

- The current cost of absence is estimated to be £1.9 million. This is based on the fact that only a third of absence is covered through overtime or agency employment and therefore results in a direct cost. A targeted 1% reduction in absence would save £200,000

2.3   An analysis of absence by service area is attached at Appendix A. The figures now reflect the six new Directorates rather than the nine former departments.

4.   Improving Absence Management

4.1   Members will be aware that a greater focus has been placed on absence management over the last year and through the launch of a revised absence management procedure. Significant efforts have also been made to improve the recording, consistency and analysis of absence through the HRMS system.

4.2   It is now appropriate, however, to undertake a formal review of the Council's absence management procedures. Such a review will be completed over the next three months and will examine the following areas:

- The link between the launch of the revised absence procedures and improvement in sickness levels.

- The consistency of sickness absence information across Directorates.

- The analysis of absence levels in Directorates and the effect of local interventions.

- The link between the Council's absence management approach and the interventions from the Healthy Employees Strategy.

4.3   The review will be conducted in consultation with trade union colleagues and include their views and comments on this important agenda. The outcomes will be reported to this Committee in September 2007.

5.   Conclusion

5.1   The focus on absence management continues to be encouraging despite the increase in absence levels over the last reporting period. The focus needs to be maintained across all Directorates of the Council, and at all management levels if sustainable reductions in absence levels are to be achieved.

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5.2 A further and more detailed report will be submitted to this Committee in September 2007.

David Carter   Strategic Director of Performance   September 2006
                             and Development

Shire Hall
Warwick

Warwickshire
County Council

Absence levels (average numbers of day's absence per FTE employee) for the last three reporting periods.

Department *	Directorate*	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	Sept 06	Dec 06 **
CAMS		6.9	6.7	6.8		
Treasurers	Resources	10.0	9.8	6.1	6.9	8.2
Property Services		5.8	4.6	7.4		
Education (inc. school emps)	Children YP&F	9.0	7.9	8.2	8.2	9.3
Chief Executives	Performance & Development	6.9	8.9	6.6	5.3	8.1
Fire and Rescue	Community Protection	8.2	8.0	9.8	9.0	8.6
LHTS		11.3	11.1	8.4		
	Adult Health & C. Services				18.7***	19.1
Social Services		32.0	20.8	23.5		
PTES	Environment & Economy	11.1	8.4	6.5	5.4	6.6
TOTAL		**12.47**	**10.12**	**10.57**	**9.35**	**9.80**

(*)   The former nine departments have been identified for general guidance, but do not give a strictly "like for like" comparison of absence data between employees in the "old" and "new" service areas.

(**)   These figures include absence data for "year ending" December 2006

(***)   It is expected that this figure will reduce as part of the development of the HRMS system over the next 12 months (and the related improvements to the recording of absence figures). Following a manual "scaling" exercise within the directorate a revised estimate was issued as 14.1