

Indicator	West Sussex County Council						Adults Services		Children & Family Services		Fire & Rescue Service		All other Services	
	2020 Q3	2020 Q2	Change since last quarter	Intended Direction of Travel	Target 2019/2020	Commentary	2020 Q3	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q2	2020 Q3	2020 Q2

Health, Safety & Wellbeing								
Level of sickness absence (May retrospectively increase due to late reporting of sickness)	Sick days lost (calendar days lost)	17,952	13,753	↑	4,199	N/A	N/A	Total overall sickness has increased noticeably this quarter and is higher by 4,199 days compared to the previous quarter. However, when compared with the same quarter last year, the increase reduces to 701 days in overall sickness (Q3 2020 17,952 days; Q3 2019 17,251 days). Comparison with the same quarter in the previous year ensures the seasonal nature of illnesses is accounted for. The average sick days per FTE has increased from 2.6 days to 3.3 days sickness but is only slightly higher this quarter when compared with the same quarter last year.
	Average sick days per FTE	3.3	2.6	↑	0.7	↓	TBC	
Short term sickness absence (less than 21 calendar days)	Number of calendar days lost	4,054	2,618	↑	1,436	↓	N/A	There has been a rise of 1,436 days lost due to short term sickness compared with the last quarter, but when compared with the same quarter last year, there has been a fall of 2,365 days. The top reason for short term absence remains Musculoskeletal following the change from Anxiety/Stress that occurred in Q1. This continuation of Musculoskeletal as the top reason for short term absence is particularly important given the change to employees working from home. This is continuing to be monitored by the New Ways of Working group. For long term sickness, Anxiety/Stress continues to be the top reason for absence.
	Top reason for short term absence	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery		N/A	N/A	N/A	
Long term sickness absence (more than 21 calendar days) - see Note below	Number of calendar days lost	13,898	11,135	↑	2,763	↓	N/A	The top reason for short term absence remains Musculoskeletal following the change from Anxiety/Stress that occurred in Q1. This continuation of Musculoskeletal as the top reason for short term absence is particularly important given the change to employees working from home. This is continuing to be monitored by the New Ways of Working group. For long term sickness, Anxiety/Stress continues to be the top reason for absence.
	Top reason for long term absence	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health		N/A	N/A	N/A	
Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDOR) incidents to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE)	Violence at work	1	0	↑	1	↓	N/A	A significant increase in RIDDORs reported to the HSE, rising from 1 in Q2 to 20 in Q3. 17 of the 20 are for occupation exposure to disease resulting in COVID-19 positive cases; 15 of these 17 occurred in FRS. Of the 3 other RIDDOR reports there was one violence at work incident where a member of staff was hit when assisting a person being supported; and two were separate accidents where the injuries sustained resulted in the employee having more than 7 days off work
	Accident	2	1	↑	1	↓	N/A	
	Dangerous occurrence	0	0	→	0	↓	N/A	
	Total RIDDORs reported to HSE	20	1	↑	19	↓	N/A	

5,261	4,287	6,447	4,185	1,797	1,437	4,447	3,844
4.9	4.1	4.6	3.0	2.4	1.93	2.0	1.77
1,273	879	1,066	652	427	289	1,288	798
Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	Digestion, Reproduction & Glandular systems	Respiratory, Cough, Cold, Flu	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Unknown	Unknown	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health
3,988	3,408	5,381	3,533	1,370	1,148	3,159	3,046
Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Unknown	Anxiety, Stress, Depression, Mental Health	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery	Musculoskeletal, Fractures, Injury, Surgery
1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1	0	1	0	0	1	0	0
0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	1	0	15	1	0	0

Workforce Report – December 2020

General

An initial view on the impact of Covid-19 on the workforce was provided in the last report for Quarter 2. This highlighted several areas where Covid-19 might be affecting the workforce such as employee welfare.

With more data available this quarter it is possible to have a firmer view on how Covid-19 is, or isn't, impacting on our workforce.

Last quarter it was reported that short-term sickness absence had been consistently lower since the start of the first government restrictions in March 2020 and the change to a predominantly home working model. This quarter, the number of days lost to short-term sickness absence has increased and is now at a level just below the same quarter in 2019. This might indicate that the impact on the workforce and the changes made because of Covid-19 have now been normalised to some extent and we may be seeing a return to sickness levels experienced before the pandemic. The level of short-term sickness absence during the next quarter will either help to confirm this view or show that this quarter's rise in short-term sickness was an exception.

There was a proposition last quarter that employees using their own desks, chairs and other general office equipment etc. may be a contributing factor rise in short-term sickness attributed to musculoskeletal. Musculoskeletal has remained the top reason for short-term sickness this quarter. An assessment has been made on the musculoskeletal sub-categories (back pain, knee injury etc) and this has found that there is general alignment of the sub-categories in their ranking and scale when compared to the same quarter in 2019. This may indicate that the previous link to employees using their own office equipment is not a significant reason for musculoskeletal being the top reason for absence. This continues to be monitored.

There has been an increase in the percentage of calendar days lost due to Anxiety/Stress during Covid-19, particularly for long-term sickness. The number of days attributed to this reason for absence are higher this quarter than in the same quarter in 2019. This might indicate that employees are beginning to experience higher levels of anxiety/stress as a result of factors associated with the pandemic not necessarily work related.

The situations outlined in the paragraphs above are continuing to be monitored by the New Ways of Working group.

For West Sussex County Council overall and for long term sickness, there has been no change in the order of the top four sickness absence categories since the start of the pandemic. The relative scale of each category has remained fairly consistent since March 2020.

There has been a noticeable drop in 'Respiratory, Cold & Flu' this quarter with this category ranked as the fourth highest reason for absence compared to the same quarter in 2019 when it was the second highest reason for sickness absence. This might be due to several factors, but social distancing and the wearing of masks and higher reported uptake of the flu vaccine this winter are possible to have been significant contributing factors.

The impact of Covid-19 is fluctuating, and we are seeing previous impacts lessen as new potential impacts emerge. The New Ways of Working group is monitoring these impacts as they recede and emerge.

Workforce KPIs

Resourcing and Talent

Headcount and FTE has increased slightly this quarter. There has been a £5.9m increase in the Employee Paybill for Q3. This is primarily due to an NJC pay award of 2.75% being paid and backdated to April 2020. In the previous quarter, the Employee Paybill for FRS showed a significant increase due to the cost code for Covid-19 related expenditure being placed in Fire and Rescue Services. This cost code has now been disaggregated and allocated to the relevant directorate which results in a decrease being shown in Fire and Rescue Services and an increase in all other services.

Agency headcount and contract spend has remained virtually static from the previous quarter. In Adults Services the headcount is lower than Q2 but the contract spend is higher. This is due to a number of higher-grade agency workers being contracted plus an increase in the number of hours worked.

There has been a fall in the number of both starters and leavers this quarter with a net gain of starters. The fall in starters in 'all other services' from 139 to 80 is mostly a result of the significant increase last quarter following the insourcing of Service Finance to Resources.

Rolling turnover is up slightly and is now just inside the rolling quarterly target of 2%-3.75%.

Performance & Skill

The staff induction completion rate has increased again this quarter and the rate is now at 80% and approaching the 90% target. There has been a noticeable

increase in the completion rate in Adults Services from 69% in Q2 to 92% in Q3, but also a fall in 'all other services' from 85% in Q2 to 77% in Q3.

There has been an increase overall in the percentage of 'did not attend' a booked training session and the percentage of short-term cancellations. There are some significant increases in these percentages shown for individual services, but as mentioned last quarter the percentage can be volatile due to the significant reduction in scale of bookings since the start of the pandemic.

Formal appraisal training for managers has shown another increase and is now at 85% and is now five percentage points away from the annual target.

There has been a fall in disciplinary cases from five in Q2 to one in Q3 and there was an appeal rejected by the Staff Appeals Panel. Otherwise the employee relations figures are similar or the same as those from the previous quarter.

Health, Safety & Wellbeing

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There has been a rise of 1,436 days lost due to short term sickness compared with the last quarter, but when compared with the same quarter last year, there has been a fall of 2,365 days.

The top reason for short term absence remains Musculoskeletal following the change from Anxiety/Stress that occurred in Q1. This continuation of Musculoskeletal as the top reason for short term absence is particularly important given the change to employees working from home. This is continuing to be monitored by the New Ways of Working group. For long term sickness, Anxiety/Stress continues to be the top reason for absence.

As reported last quarter, Public Health, HR & Organisational Development and Health and Safety teams have been working to develop a strategic whole Council approach to mental health and to draft a mental health action plan. A working group has been formed to shape and develop this plan.

One of the activities arising from this work has been the creation of Mental Health First Aiders. Employees have been invited to apply to receive training and become Mental Health First Aiders. 80 employees have been selected from those who applied.

Mental Health First Aider training started on the 25th January 2021 and weekly training will be provided with a plan for all 80 employees to be trained by the end of March 2021.

A significant increase in Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations (RIDDORs) reported to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE), rising from one in Q2 to 20 in Q3. 17 of the 20 are for occupation exposure to disease resulting in Covid-19 positive cases; 15 of these 17 occurred in the Fire and Rescue Service. Of the three other RIDDOR reports there was one violence at work incident where a member of staff was hit when assisting a person being supported; and two were separate accidents where the injuries sustained resulted in the employee having more than seven days off work.