

Unrestricted Document Pack

APOLOGIES Committee Services
Tel. 01621 875791

Council Chamber 01621 859677

CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S OFFICE
CHIEF EXECUTIVE
Fiona Marshall

09 July 2018

PLEASE NOTE DATE OF MEETING

Dear Councillor

You are summoned to attend the special meeting of the;

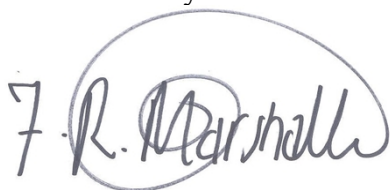
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

on **TUESDAY 17 JULY 2018 at 7.30 pm.**

in the Council Chamber - Council Offices, Princes Road, Maldon.

A copy of the agenda is attached.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Fiona Marshall', enclosed within a large, hand-drawn oval.

Chief Executive

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

CHAIRMAN

Councillor M W Helm

VICE-CHAIRMAN

Councillor R P F Dewick

COUNCILLORS

I E Dobson
P G L Elliott
M S Heard
N R Pudney
S J Savage
Miss S White

Please note: Limited hard copies of this agenda and its related papers will be available at the meeting. Electronic copies are available via the Council's website.

Maldon District Council's Corporate Goals

- Strengthening communities to be safe, active and healthy;
- Protecting and shaping the District;
- Creating opportunities for economic growth and prosperity;
- Delivering good quality, cost effective and valued services;
- Focusing on key projects.



AGENDA
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
TUESDAY 17 JULY 2018

1. **Chairman's notices (please see overleaf)**

2. **Apologies for Absence**

3. **Minutes of the last meeting** (Pages 5 - 12)

To confirm the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6 June 2018 (copy enclosed).

4. **Public Participation**

To receive the views of members of the public on items of business to be considered by the Committee (please see below):

1. A period of ten minutes will be set aside.
2. An individual may speak for no more than two minutes on a specific agenda item, the time slots to be allocated on a "first come first served" basis.
3. Participation may take the form of a statement, or alternatively a question to be addressed to the Chairman. There will be no discussion on questions put unless it is formally moved. In line with the current scheme applied to other Committees, the questions must:
 - not be defamatory, frivolous, vexatious or offensive;
 - not be the same or substantially the same as another question to the same meeting or anything so put in the last six months;
 - not involve the disclosure of confidential or exempt information.
4. Anyone wishing to speak must notify the Committee Clerk between 7.00pm and 7.20pm prior to the start of the meeting.

5. **Disclosure of Interest**

To disclose the existence and nature of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests, other Pecuniary Interests or Non-Pecuniary Interests relating to items of business on the agenda having regard to paragraphs 6-8 inclusive of the Code of Conduct for Members.

(Members are reminded that they are also required to disclose any such interests as soon as they become aware should the need arise throughout the meeting).

6. **Programme of Work 2018 / 19** (Pages 13 - 16)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources, (copy enclosed).

7. **Attendance Management Update 2017 / 18 and Quarter One 2018 / 19** (Pages 17 - 26)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources (copy enclosed).

8. **Any other items of scrutiny Members wish to consider**

9. **Any other items of business that the Chairman of the Committee decides are urgent**

10. **Exclusion of the Public and Press**

To resolve under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest.

11. **Office Accommodation and Lease Update** (Pages 27 - 46)

To consider the report of the Director of Resources (copy enclosed).

NOTICES

Sound Recording of Meeting

Please note that the Council will be recording any part of this meeting held in open session for subsequent publication on the Council's website. At the start of the meeting an announcement will be made about the sound recording. Members of the public attending the meeting with a view to speaking are deemed to be giving permission to be included in the recording.

Fire

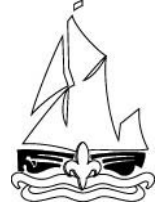
In event of a fire, a siren will sound. Please use the fire exits marked with the green running man. The fire assembly point is outside the main entrance to the Council Offices. Please gather there and await further instruction.

Health and Safety

Please be advised of the different levels of flooring within the Council Chamber. There are steps behind the main horseshoe as well as to the side of the room.

Closed-Circuit Television (CCTV)

Meetings held in the Council Chamber are monitored and recorded by CCTV.



**MINUTES of
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
6 JUNE 2018**

PRESENT

Chairman	Councillor M W Helm
Vice-Chairman	Councillor R P F Dewick
Councillors	P G L Elliott, M S Heard, S J Savage and Miss S White

136. CHAIRMAN'S NOTICES

The Chairman drew attention to the list of notices published on the back of the agenda.

137. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors I E Dobson, and N R Pudney.

138. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING

RESOLVED, that the Minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 28 March 2018 be approved and confirmed.

139. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was none.

140. DISCLOSURE OF INTEREST

There was none.

141. 2017/18 PROGRAMME OF WORK UPDATE AND 2018/19 PROGRAMME OF WORK

The Committee received the report of the Director of Resources confirming the Committee's Work Programme for 2017 / 18, attached as Appendix 1 to the report.

The Director of Resources updated Members on the progress of work:

- Provision of Healthcare Services:
 - 1) Maldon Health Hub – Members were advised that this project has been withdrawn as Maldon District Council (MDC) can no longer commit resources and officer time to the project. When the NHS provides further commitment MDC will reconsider this project.
 - 2) Recruitment and Retention of GPs – MDC would continue to liaise with partners.
- Internal and External Communications:
 - 1) Members discussed the current IT package used by MDC, several Members of the Committee advised that they had problems receiving emails, whilst others advised that the system worked well and had experienced no problems. There was concern to response rates to emails, and it was agreed this item be considered at the next meeting.
 - 2) Members informed the Committee that not all seminars and meetings showed in Outlook calendars. It was requested that this be reviewed to ensure all appointments were uploaded to Member's calendars. A comment was raised that some assumption is placed on emails having been received and read when in fact this may not be the case

Members requested that an update on the Digital Strategy and its success rates be presented to a future meeting of the Committee in six months.

Members were requested to suggest new agenda items future meetings of this Committee.

Councillor P G L Elliott raised concerns over the choice based letting system. It was agreed that Councillor Elliott and the Director of Resources would meet for discussion on how to progress this.

RESOLVED:

- (i) That an update on Internal and External Communications from the Director of Resources be considered at a future meeting of this Committee.
- (ii) That the following item be withdrawn from the program of work:
 - a. Provision of Healthcare Services – Maldon Health Hub.
- (iii) That the following items be removed from the program of work:
 - a. Planning Enforcement,
 - b. Primary School Education within the District,
 - c. Empty Homes Returned to Use.

142. REVIEW OF PERFORMANCE - QUARTER 4 2017/18

The Committee considered the report of the Chief Executive which provided details of performance against targets set for 2017 / 18 (attached at Appendix 1 to the report) and to ensure that progress was being achieved towards overall corporate goals and objectives set out in the Corporate Plan 2015 – 19.

Members' discussed the report in detail focussing on those activities behind schedule or at risk. In response to a number of questions the following information was provided:

Councillor M S Heard declared he had a non-pecuniary interest, as he was currently employed by Essex Police as an auditor.

- Level of Reported Crime - The Chief Executive clarified the wording on page four of Appendix 1 to the report, was mainly regarding gang related activity and child sexual exploitation and that this had been a concern in some schools. Members were advised that the Community Safety Partnership had worked in partnership with Police to raise awareness in schools and highlight risks. It was noted that MDC had been proactive in its approach of explaining the risks to young people, and had received a positive response.
- North Heybridge Garden Suburb - The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services advised that following a declaration from Countryside Properties' stating they would submit an amended application omitting a flood alleviation scheme (FAS), MDC had been working with the Environment Agency and wider partners, including Homes England, and looking into alternatives for delivering a FAS.

Members stated that the current Countryside planning application had limited numbers of affordable housing and, in keeping with the Local Development Plan (LDP), would like to see this figure increase to 30% in any amended application. The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services advised that during discussions with Countryside Properties it had been made clear that plans should be compliant with the policies within the LDP.

The viability of the project was queried by Members as issues around flooding had not been resolved.

The Committee was advised by The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services that it was always going to be challenging to enforce the delivery of the FAS following legal clarification provided during the Examination in Public of the LDP. Members were also advised that Countryside Properties had cited a lack of support from partners and the resultant delays for the failure to deliver the scheme, and their subsequent decision to submit an amended proposal without the FAS.

- Figures for Planning Applications - The Director of Planning and Regulatory Services confirmed that decisions overturned at appeal were down to 6.5%, and that this was considered positive.

Some Members raised concerns that the time taken by the Council to validate planning applications did not compare to those of neighbouring authorities. The

Director of Planning and Regulatory Services drew Members attention to the improvement on figures from previous years, and advised that the validation process can be lengthy.

The Chief Executive informed Members that the upskilling of planning administrative officers had been considered. Members were advised that the Ignite programme would look closely at streamlining planning processes.

It was agreed that the Director of Planning and Regulatory Services would provide a report for the next quarterly review.

- Home Improvements - Councillor Miss S White requested it be noted as a point of clarification that on page 6 of Appendix 1 to the report that improvements offered in relation to the indicator 'No. of households where living conditions were improved through Housing Act interventions' were means tested.
- Waste Collection - Members were concerned that some household waste had not been collected and questioned whether this was due to difficulty accessing smaller roads.

The Director of Resources advised that the contractor had acknowledged difficulties with the vehicles procured, and a number had already been taken off the road due to breakdowns. MDC had often not been advised until late on the day of occurrence.

It was confirmed that the Director of Customers and Community had a number of conversations the contractor, Suez, and they had acknowledged the situation. In regards to the vehicles, the Council had been advised they were pushing the technology to its limit, and was investigating whether this was a contract management issue.

Members were advised that the Director of Customers and Community would provide an email update on the situation.

The Group Manager for Leisure, Countryside and Tourism, confirmed for the Committee that a genuine missed collection was one reported by the resident where the contractor has not noted that the collection was not put out. It was noted that the contract states missed collections should be collected in a timely fashion.

- Crematorium - Members requested an update on the building of a Crematorium within the district.

The Director of Resources advised members that this was not currently viable due to the lack of suitable land to build upon. It was noted that the authority had previously looked at sites towards South Woodham Ferris as this would capture a larger area.

It was agreed that the Director of Resources report back on the conclusions of the crematorium business case.

- Parking - In response to the Members query regarding a lack of car parking spaces in Maldon Town Centre, the Director of Resources advised that the Asset Management Working Group were looking into this.

RESOLVED that the report on performance for quarter four 2017 / 18 and the subsequent actions, as outlined above, be noted.

143. PROCUREMENT AND DELIVERY OF THE 2016/2017 CAPITAL PROGRAMME - IMPLEMENTATION OF RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee received the update report from the Director of Resources on the Procurement and Delivery of the 2016/2017 Capital Programme – Implementation of Recommendations; Appendix 1 of the report showed the status of these recommendations.

The following points were brought to the attention of the Committee:

- The Capital programme for 2018/19 was much smaller and more manageable than 2017/18, however this resulted in limited examples of construction projects to demonstrate implementation of the recommendations previously agreed.
- Safeguards had been put in place around using Quantity Surveyors to ensure that costs estimated were correct.
- The Corporate Leadership Team (CLT) now had a more stringent and robust review process in place.
- For the 2018/19 - 2019/20 period the Council would need to make a large investment in IT rather than bricks and mortar.
- Standard contracts from the Joint Contract Tribunal (JCT contract), would be used to safeguard the Council for construction contracts in excess of £10,000.
- Standard contracts from the Crown Commercial Services included terms pre-negotiated for the Council, and are approved by central government. It was confirmed for the Committee that this had been used during the procurement of Office 365.

The Director of Resources confirmed that MDC was in the process of moving away from the bespoke model of IT currently in place and advised the Committee on the advantages of a standardised approach.

RESOLVED that the content of this report be noted and updates brought to future meetings of this Committee.

144. MOORINGS, LEASES AND LICENCES UPDATE

Group Manager for Leisure, Countryside and Tourism presented Member's with the Moorings, Leases and Licences Update. Members' attention was drawn to the appendices to the report:

- Appendix 1 detailed Hythe Quay Wharfage Charges, and
- Appendix 2 set out the draft agreement for Berthing on Hythe Quay Maldon, addressing queries from the meeting on 28 March 2018.
- Appendices 3A - E contained maps relating to paragraph 3.3.1 of the report.

Members were advised that the Group Manager for Leisure, Countryside and Tourism had worked with the River Bailiff to conduct research into private moorings.

The Committee was advised of the decline in use of moorings across the United Kingdom, and that national trends show people of the United Kingdom prefer using marinas.

The Committee enquired whether there was anything the Council could do to increase use of the Blackwater and Crouch, and encourage people, especially young people, to take an interest in sailing.

Members were informed that the Economic Team had worked with the Place Board and Burnham-on-Crouch Chamber of Trade to support maritime industries in that area and had looked to maximise the impact of festivals, and stated that in Burnham-on-Crouch sailing lessons were a part of this.

RESOLVED

- (i). That part 35 of the draft Licence for Berthing on Hythe Quay Maldon (Appendix 2 to the report) be revised to confirm what British Standard mark(s) are approved for use.
- (ii). That the Planning and Licensing Committee be recommended to request that the¹ Director of Planning and Regulatory Services look into increasing the interest in using the Blackwater and Crouch Rivers.

145. ANY OTHER ITEMS OF SCRUTINY MEMBERS WISH TO CONSIDER

There was none.

146. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

RESOLVED that under Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, and that this satisfies the public interest test.

147. OFFICE ACCOMMODATION AND LEASE

The Director of Resources presented the report on Office Accommodation and Lease.

During this item Councillor M S Heard left the meeting due to a potential conflict of interest as he worked at the police station ²and did not return.

Members discussed the report in detail with a focus on commercial rent, and asked questions which the Director of Resources duly answered.

¹ Minute 226 – 28 June 2018

² Minute 226 – 28 June 2018

The Chairman, on behalf of the Committee, expressed thanks to the Director of Resources on her excellent work on behalf of the Council.

RESOLVED that the contents of the report be noted.

There being no further items of business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.09 pm.

M W HELM
CHAIRMAN

This page is intentionally left blank



REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE
18 JULY 2018**

2018/19 PROGRAMME OF WORK UPDATE

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The purpose of this paper is to provide an update on the work programme of this Committee for 2018 / 19.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) That Members receive and comment on this report.
- (ii) That following the decision by the Council on 7 June 2018 to progress with Ignite's Future Council model, Members consider adding an item to the Committee's work programme regarding the monitoring of the organisational change.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 This report is for Members' information only.
- 3.2 **APPENDIX 1** provides an update on each of the current agreed scrutiny topics.

4. CONCLUSION

- 4.1 The work programme for 2018 / 19 is progressing.

5. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 5.1 The work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee supports the Corporate Goal of: "Delivering good quality, cost effective and valued services".

6. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – Scrutiny work may aid in improvements to service to the public by the Council and external authorities.

- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – None identified.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Recommendations arising from scrutiny could assist in mitigating corporate risks.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – Officer time in preparing the reports and supporting information.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – None identified.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None identified.

Background papers: None.

Enquiries to: Emma Foy, Director of Resources, Chief Executive, (Tel: 01621 875762).

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

2018/19 Programme of Work

Scrutiny topic	Member Sponsor	Lead Officer	Scope of Scrutiny
Provision of Healthcare Services including the recruitment and retention of GPs	Councillor N R Pudney Councillor Mrs M E Thompson	Chief Executive	<p><u>Primary Care Provision</u> The Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) recently updated on progress in primary care provision in the Maldon District.</p> <p>Plans are progressing well for a new primary care facility in Southminster and the Blackwater Surgery in Maldon is wedded to relocation into the new integrated health hub, the strategic outline case for which is due for submission in the Autumn. Assurances have been given that the North Heybridge development will include a new primary care facility.</p> <p><u>GP Recruitment</u> There is a national agenda supporting the expansion of the primary care workforce and approaches to increasing capacity through streamlining clinical systems. Virtually all of our surgeries now have their books open and some have benefited from funding to support the investment required to develop their resilience.</p> <p>Representatives from the CCG and practices have offered to attend the committee, or a separate meeting outside of the committee to provide an update on this agenda.</p>
Section 106	Councillor Mrs M E Thompson	Chief Executive	<p>It was agreed that the Committee would receive an update on Section 106 Agreements on a six monthly basis.</p> <p>A detailed report was submitted to the Committee for its February 2018 meeting; next update will be provided to the October 2018 meeting.</p>

Scrutiny topic	Member Sponsor	Lead Officer	Scope of Scrutiny
Internal and External Communication	Councillor S J Savage Councillor M S Heard	Corporate Leadership Team	<p>The Committee requested a review of the Council's approach to internal and external communications to include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the email system; • telephone communication via the Council's contact centre*; • how the Council can improve the website*; • some examples of other authorities' approach to communication; • the Council's Digital strategy*. <p>A presentation was provided to the February 2018 meeting and a further report received by the Committee in March 2018. A progress report will be provided on those areas above marked * to the October 2018 meeting.</p> <p>See report on the agenda regarding email communications (July 2018).</p>
Staff Sickness	Councillor N R Pudney Councillor Mrs P A Channer	Director of Resources	<p>In light of the levels of sickness absence reported, the Committee requested that this item is looked at again and in particular whether:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the update Attendance Management Policy is having a positive impact on the sickness figures • managers are suitably equipped for and supported in dealing with absence management • the target for sickness absence is appropriate. <p>See report on the agenda (July 2018).</p>
Relocation of the Police Station to Maldon DC offices	Councillor S J Savage	Director of Resources	<p>At its February 2018 meeting the Committee agreed that a review would be undertaken into the relocation of the police station to include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the alteration costs involved • costs/reasons for additional lighting • positioning of police vehicle bays in the car park • the need for an additional container in car park • Valuation Office rent. <p>See report on the agenda (July 2018).</p>



REPORT of DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

**to
OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (SPECIAL MEETING)
17 JULY 2018**

ATTENDANCE MANAGEMENT UPDATE 2017 / 18 AND QUARTER ONE 2018 / 19

1. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 The main purpose of the report is to provide an update on attendance management levels for the 2017 / 18 financial year and quarter one of 2018 / 19.

2. RECOMMENDATION

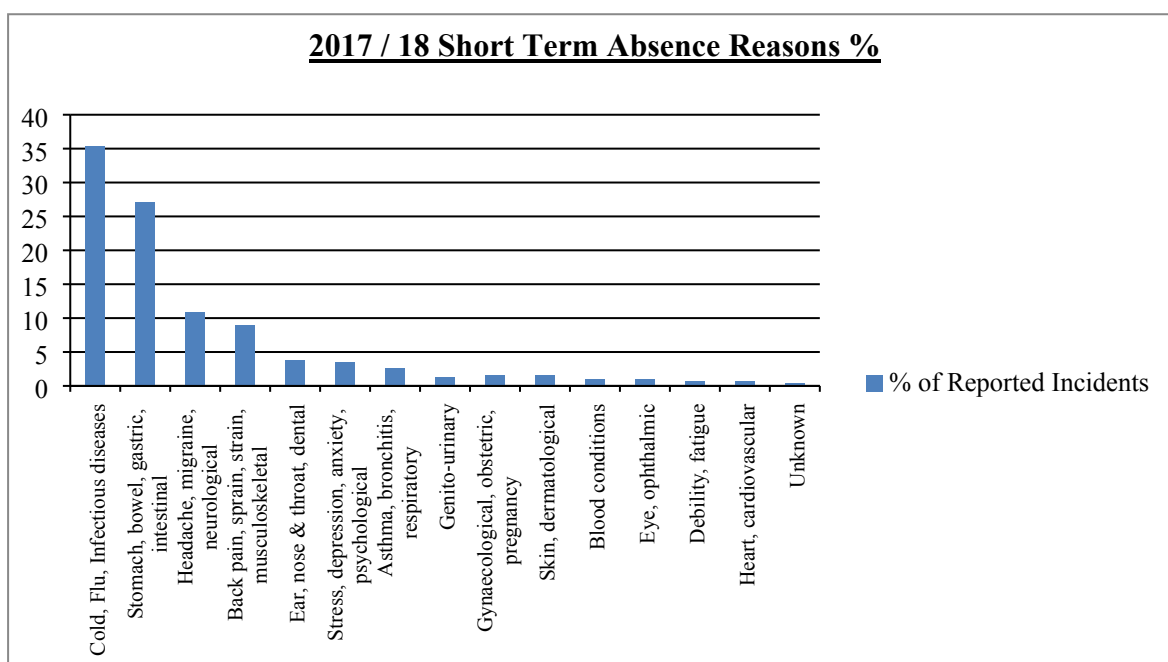
That Members review and comment on this report.

3. SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The annual total days lost per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) for the 2017 / 18 financial year is **10.86**, compared to **12.4** for the 2016 / 17 financial year, a reduction of 1.54 total days lost per FTE. The target figure for the 2017 / 18 financial year is 8, and therefore progress has been made on achieving a reduction closer to this figure.
- 3.2 8.8 FTE days per employee were lost on average by local authority workers in 2016/17¹, therefore attendance levels at the Council are not significantly higher than average (2.06 FTE days greater).
- 3.3 It should also be noted that the Council has an almost 100% rate of sickness absence recorded due to the proactive approach taken to manage attendance. Other local authorities may not have such high levels of recorded sickness absence and therefore their levels of reported absence may not be as accurate, and may appear lower than they actually are.

¹ Local Government Association Workforce Survey 2015/16, published March 2017.

- 3.4 The reasons for short term absence by percentage of reported incidents for 2017 / 18 are shown below:



- 3.5 Managers are continuing to receive a monthly report showing sickness absence trigger information via a 'Bradford Score' report generated by the Human Resources (HR) system. This shows the manager where action must be taken to instigate the formal absence management process with their staff. Other interventions that have been introduced to reduce sickness absence include the mandatory introduction of return to work interviews, the completion of which is monitored, and the provision of a highly responsive occupational health service. HR continues to work closely with and support managers to ensure that all absence cases are managed appropriately and in accordance with policy. Line managers are also required to report back on their actions taken to manage attendance on a monthly basis to HR, and case meetings are frequently held between HR and managers in order to discuss the best way of managing specific cases. HR also operates an open-door policy where managers are free to seek support and discuss cases on an on-going basis.
- 3.6 The Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) reports that the top two most effective approaches for managing short and long term absence include line managers having primary responsibility for managing absence and providing sickness absence information to managers.
- 3.7 Managers continue to be kept informed of progress against the Council's attendance Key Performance Indicator (KPI) target figure and the importance of them taking responsibility to manage attendance levels in their teams and to undertake the appropriate actions under the policy. Attendance levels will continue to be reported at future Manager's Forums.
- 3.8 **Audit of the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure**
- 3.8.1 Internal Audit recently carried out an audit on the Attendance Management policy and procedure and assessed the design as giving '**significant assurance**'. This is a

positive achievement and demonstrates that the Council is aligned to best practice. The operational effectiveness of the process was assessed as giving ‘moderate assurance’ – areas of non-compliance with the Managing Attendance policy and procedure across the Council were identified, with key requirements such as self-certification, Return To Work (RTW) meetings and formal ‘stage’ meetings not being completed by managers or within an appropriate timeframe by managers.

3.8.2 The following areas of good practice were identified in the audit:

- Regular in-depth reporting of sickness absence levels to both the Finance and Corporate Services Committee (F&CS) and the Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).
- An up to date Managing Attendance Policy with associated Toolkits is in place to ensure consistency and awareness across the Council with roles and responsibilities clearly defined, appropriate thresholds for formal meetings recorded and appropriate and relevant guidance provided to staff.
- Regular monitoring of required controls as per the Policy with HR having a good awareness of outstanding items and using this to chase staff to ensure completion of forms and recording meetings.
- There are a number of wellbeing initiatives within the Council including recently winning an award for the Active Essex Workplace of the Year.

3.8.3 The following areas for improvement were identified:

- The levels of compliance with the Managing Attendance Policy varies across the Council with services taking too long to complete self-certification, Return to Work meetings and formal meetings.
- The Council is recommended to sign up to the Workplace Wellbeing Charter which acts as a form of best practice.

3.8.4 As a consequence and further to audit recommendations HR will be undertaking regular monitoring of compliance against the controls within the Policy with these reported to Committee and CLT to ensure that areas of poor performance are held to account. These will be reported in the F&CS Strategic HR Reports from Quarter One 2018 / 19.

3.8.5 The audit recognised the significant work and achievement of the Council’s Mind Body and Soul group, in contributing to the wellbeing agenda across the Council, and the Council’s achievement of the ‘Active Essex Workplace of the Year’. The links between employment and improved health are well documented and there is also strong evidence to show how having a healthy workforce can reduce sickness absence, lower staff turnover and boost productivity.

3.9 **Workplace Wellbeing Charter**

3.9.1 Over the next financial year the Council will be looking to attain the Workplace Wellbeing Charter, which is a voluntary, self-assessment scheme open to all public, private and voluntary sector organisations based in England and is a statement about the way in which the organisation is run and supports the workforce, demonstrated by adherence to a set of standards. To achieve the Charter, the Council will be asked to

demonstrate commitment and support by taking action to deploy any changes which may be necessary in the organisation. By following the Charter, the Council may further improve staff wellbeing, obtain buy-in from staff and management and reduce staff sickness.

3.10 Management of the Attendance Management Policy and Procedure

- 3.10.1 Management and HR continue to work together in order to make successful interventions to help staff manage health conditions through a more flexible working agreement, for example working from home or adjusting the daily hours working pattern which avoids staff taking sick days which could lead to a longer period of absence and maintains productivity. In addition, where an employee has a disability, under the Equalities Act 2010, the employer must consider making reasonable adjustments. Flexible working interventions, particularly in instances where mental health issues have existed, have proved to be a very positive reasonable adjustment.
- 3.10.2 Whilst a policy and procedure exists, each absence case is managed on a case by case basis and HR has worked with managers to ensure that discretion is applied depending on the situation. At the Manager's Forums in August / September last year, following feedback from Unison, workshop sessions were held for managers which explored case studies and focussed on how discretion could be applied. Positive feedback was received following the sessions.
- 3.10.3 The reduction in long term absence this financial year is as a consequence of the revised Attendance Management Policy and HR and management implementing interventions, supported by Occupational Health that facilitate a return to work for staff as soon as they are well enough to do so.
- 3.10.4 Examples of the interventions that have been implemented this year include a number of phased returns – i.e. staff returning on reduced hours, and gradually working up to contracted hours generally over a period of 2 - 4 weeks. Out of the 21 staff who were on long term sick, 11 staff returned on a phased return.
- 3.10.5 Where medical capability has been an issue this year and the individual is no longer deemed fit for their substantive role, HR and management has worked with the member of staff to re-deploy them into an alternative position - there are three examples of this in the 2017 / 18 financial year. In such circumstances and during the re-deployment period, staff continue to be closely monitored to ensure they settle into their new role, with regular meetings booked in with HR and management to ensure these staff are supported appropriately, with referrals made back to Occupational Health (OH) if further support or adjustments are required. Without such intervention, long term absence can be protracted.
- 3.10.6 Other interventions to help staff get back to the workplace have include amended duties, flexible working arrangements such as amended daily working hours or working from home, referral for counselling under the employee assistance programme and workplace modifications such as the purchasing of specific equipment where a physical condition exists, amongst many.
- 3.10.7 Research has identified that after six weeks of sickness absence, an employee is less likely to make an early return to work. In addition if the employee has been absent

for more than six months, they are unlikely to make any return back to the workplace. The Government recommends that a referral is made to OH after an absence has reached four weeks - all staff who are deemed as long term absent in the Council are referred to OH. The rationale for the early involvement of OH is based on evidence indicating that prompt diagnosis and intervention increases the likelihood of an early return to work².

- 3.10.8 In addition to the mandatory attendance management training which was provided to all managers in early 2017 when the revised policy was launched and the further workshop sessions held at managers forums in August / September last year, follow up sessions, where attendance levels were reported to managers, were held at the Managers Forums in November / December 2017 and May 2018. Managers were made aware again of the KPI target figure and the importance of them taking responsibility to manage attendance levels in their teams and to undertake the appropriate actions under the policy. Attendance levels will continue to be reported at future Manager's Forums to ensure that managers are kept informed and therefore continue to engage with the process.
- 3.10.9 All new managers continue to receive one to one Attendance Management policy training to ensure they are aware of the process for managing staff attendance.
- 3.10.10 HR and managers continue to promote the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP), Workplace Options, which is offered to both employees and Members. Feedback is generally very positive, particularly regarding the quality of counselling services received. As well as using an EAP to help 'safeguard employees' mental health and wellbeing, employers can also benefit. A healthier, happier workforce means lower sickness absence rates, increased productivity and higher levels of engagement.

3.11 2017 / 18 Summary

- 3.11.1 There has been positive progress in improving this year's attendance figures. It must be noted however, that progress in achieving change following policy implementation does take time. Continuing to manage attendance as a priority within HR coupled with greater manager compliance and compliance reporting should effect a further improvement in overall target figures over the next financial year.
- 3.11.2 The below table shows the last four financial year's overall attendance figures – **the 2017 / 18 figures are the lowest since the 2014 / 15 financial year**, demonstrating that the new policy, procedure and HR and management interventions are having an impact on the overall figures.

Year	Total days lost per FTE
2017 / 18	10.86
2016 / 17	12.4
2015 / 16	12.42
2014 / 15	12.23

² Personnel Today, published 28 April 2015

3.12 Quarter One 2018 / 19 Latest Attendance Statistics:

- 3.12.1 The overall attendance figures (short and long term absence combined) for Quarter One (Q1) 2018 / 19 have decreased from 498.86 total FTE days lost in Quarter Four (Q4) 2017 / 18, to 434.72 total FTE days lost in Q1 2018 / 19 (2.47 total days lost per FTE in Q4 2017 / 18 compared to 2.13 total days lost per FTE in Q1 2018 / 19).
- 3.12.2 It should be noted that the Q1 total days lost per FTE figure of **2.13** is the **lowest since Q1 2014 / 15**.
- 3.12.3 The figures for Q1 2018 / 19 with regard to short term sickness have decreased from 300.62 total FTE days lost in Q4 2017 / 18 to 218.80 total FTE days lost in Q1 (1.49 total days lost per FTE in Q4 2017 / 18 compared to 1.07 total FTE days lost in Q1 18/19).
- 3.12.4 The figures for Q1 2018 / 19 with regard to long term absence have increased slightly from 198.24 total FTE days lost in Q4 17/18 to 215.92 in Q1 (0.98 total days lost per FTE in Q4 17/18 compared to 1.06 total FTE days lost in Q1 2018 / 19). Despite this slight increase however, out of the five long term absence cases in Q1, two staff have returned to work, two have left the organisation and only one remains on long term absence and is expected back to work shortly.
- 3.12.5 Figure 1, detailed overleaf, shows the quarterly sickness absence figures for the years 2016 / 17, 2017 / 18 and 2018 / 19 and Figure 2 details these by Directorate.

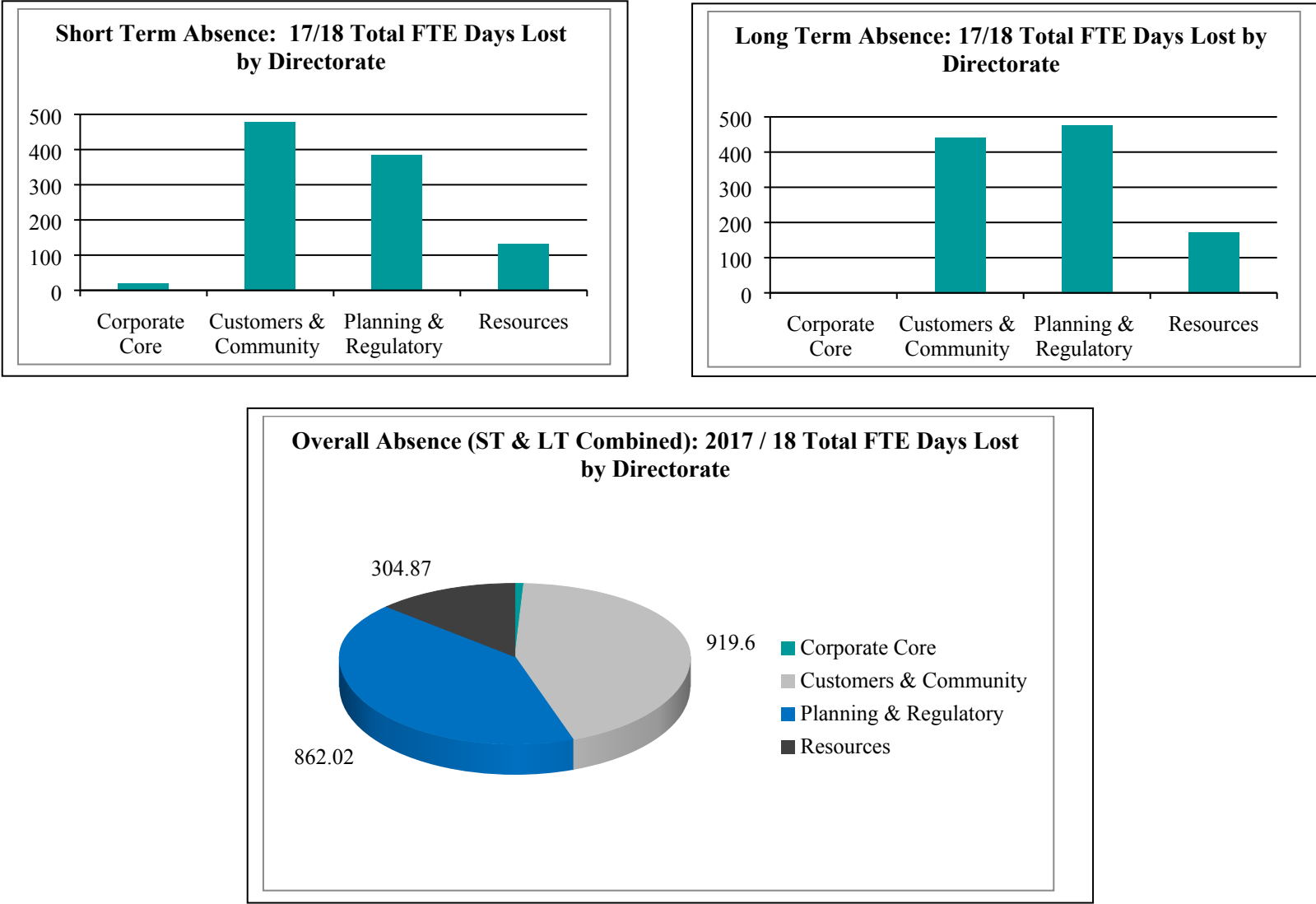
Figure 1 – Quarterly Sickness Absence Figures

2018 / 19	Quarter One		Quarter Two		Quarter Three		Quarter Four		Cumulative Figures	
	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE
Short Term Absence	218.80	1.07								
Long Term Absence	215.92	1.06								
Total	434.72	2.13								

2017 / 18	Quarter One		Quarter Two		Quarter Three		Quarter Four		Cumulative Figures	
	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE
Short Term Absence	163.65	0.85	230.32	1.25	322.64	1.64	300.62	1.49	1017.23	5.23
Long Term Absence	393.05	2.04	198.64	1.08	300.12	1.53	198.24	0.98	1090.05	5.63
Total	556.70	2.89	428.96	2.33	622.76	3.17	498.86	2.47	2107.28	10.86

2016 / 17	Quarter One		Quarter Two		Quarter Three		Quarter Four		Cumulative Figures	
	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE	Total Number of FTE Days Lost	Total Days Lost per FTE
Short Term Absence	237.94	1.25	241.39	1.21	259.46	1.31	306.53	1.55	1045.32	5.32
Long Term Absence	290.83	1.52	372.46	1.89	393.37	1.99	331.78	1.68	1388.44	7.08
Total	528.77	2.77	613.85	3.1	652.83	3.3	638.31	3.23	2433.76	12.4

Figure 2: 2017 / 18 Short Term, Long Term and Overall Absence (short term and long term combined) by Directorate



4. IMPACT ON CORPORATE GOALS

- 4.1 The effective implementation of the Attendance Management policy, including high levels of compliance with the policy, is critical to ensure that staff attendance levels are kept at the highest possible level to ensure resourcing is adequate in order to deliver an effective and efficient service for our customers.

5. IMPLICATIONS

- (i) **Impact on Customers** – No direct impact on customers from this report, although the wider staff context concerning recruitment, vacancies and sickness has an impact on the ability to deliver services to customers.
- (ii) **Impact on Equalities** – More detailed information on the protected characteristics of the Council's workforce, is now available on the new Human Resources system. This will allow the team to consider the needs of those groups when writing new Policies and Procedures and when carrying out its functions.
- (iii) **Impact on Risk** – Effective and proactive management of staff sickness and recruitment helps mitigate risk.
- (iv) **Impact on Resources (financial)** – The cost of advertisements and other necessary costs related to recruitment are included within current approved budgets.
- (v) **Impact on Resources (human)** – HR continues to regularly provide advice and guidance to both employees and managers on how best to manage attendance using the good practice steps outlined within the Managing Attendance Policy and Procedure. Staff absences do affect direct colleagues and this is addressed by the use of the Managing Attendance Policy with individuals.
- (vi) **Impact on the Environment** – None.

Background Papers: None.

Enquiries to:

Dawn Moyse, Group Manager, People, Performance and Policy, (Tel: 01621 875869) or
Helena Beattie, Senior HR Business Partner / Team Leader, (Tel: 01621 876281).

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank

By virtue of paragraph(s) 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

This page is intentionally left blank