

## **SELECT COMMITTEE**

9 September 2020

**Present** – The Chair (Councillor Staveley) and Councillors Brockbank, Brown, Hull, Jaquin, Mercer, Moorby, Shuttleworth and Solloway.

**Officers** – Chief Executive, HR Manager, Planning Manager, Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

### **Apologies for Absence –**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Sutcliffe, Pighills and Harbron.

Start: 7.40pm

Finish: 9.00pm

### **Confirmation of Minutes –**

The minutes of the meeting held 15 July 2020 were approved as a correct record.

### **Public Participation –**

There were no members of the public in attendance.

### **Declarations of Interest –**

There were no declarations of interest.

## **Minutes for Report**

OS.452

### **Absence Management Report – 2019/20**

The HR Manager presented a report which presented Craven District Council's sickness absence statistics from 1 April 2019 to 31 March 2020. Members noted that the annual target for 2019/20 for the number of days lost per FTE (Full Time Equivalent) was 8.5 days, however, the actual days lost was 7.88% above target at 9.17 days per FTE. Compared to the same period last year, this was a 15.09% decrease in days lost per FTE.

Members were reminded that long term absence was classed as long term if it lasted for more than 4 continuous weeks. Members were pleased to note that the number of days per FTE lost to long term absence had decreased by 22% in the last 12 months, of the 22 staff members that had a period of long term absence between 2019 and March 2020, 2 were still absent. Members noted that the Council continued to encourage staff to contact the Oasis Counselling service when they experienced difficulties. Feedback from staff who had used this resource had been very positive.

The number days lost to short term absence had remained at 3.4 days per FTE since March 2019. The reasons for short term absence were detailed in the report and Members noted that the main causes of short term absence were stomach/liver/kidney/digestive reasons (37%), viral infections (17%) and musculo-skeletal problems (15%). Members were informed that back to work interviews following absence were carried out by Line Managers which were recorded and placed on the individual's personnel file for future reference.

A further breakdown of absence by service area was presented to Members, which showed that the Director of Services area which includes Waste Management had the highest

number of days lost. Despite this, Members were pleased to note that the overall level of absence in Waste Management had decreased by 33% over the last 12 months.

The report detailed the impact Covid-19 had on absence to date. In March 2020 there were 3 suspected cases of Covid-19, 22 employees were absent and unable to work from home for 128.9 days due to self-isolation, shielding and caring responsibilities. To date 6 employees were shielding with 4 unable to work from home and 1 employee with caring responsibilities remained unable to work from home. In response to the Coronavirus pandemic the Council had produced a wellbeing survey, 10 top tips for working from home, monthly leaflets in the Core Brief and a weekly update from the Chief Executive.

The Chief Executive addressed Members questions regarding plans for next steps and the impact of working from home on Council Services which Members noted as minimal. Members praised Council staff for their continued efficiency and service provision.

**Resolved** – That the sickness absence statistics up to 31 March 2020 are noted.

OS.453                    **Recommendation Tracking – Review of Development Control Performance**

The Planning Manager submitted a report which presented the recommendations submitted in relation to Development Control and verbally updated Members on the status on each one. Members agreed that recommendation C had been achieved and recommendations A, B and D had made acceptable progress and would continue to be monitored.

Members discussed the Planning Manager's suggestion of reviewing fees and charges for Planning services and Members noted that the Planning Manager would liaise with the Strategic Manager in relation to this matter.

**Resolved** – That the status of Select Committee's recommendations is agreed and no further action is required in relation to each of the recommendations submitted.

OS.454                    **Work Schedule**

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report which presented the work schedule for the 2020/21 municipal year.

The Democratic Services Manager highlighted the commencement of the review of Building Control at the next meeting and after a lengthy discussion Members agreed to begin work on Building Control review at the next meeting on 28 October. One Member suggested the inclusion of a review of consultancy at the Council which Members agreed to recommend the Audit and Governance Committee to look into and report back to the Select Committee.

**Resolved** – That the work schedule for 2020/21 is agreed and the review of Consultancy Staff members is recommended to the Audit and Governance Committee.

**Minutes for Decision**

There were no items for decision.

Chairman.