

SELECT COMMITTEE

19 February 2020

Present – The Chair (Councillor Staveley) and Councillors Brown, Mercer, Metcalfe, Moorby, Pighills, Shuttleworth, Solloway and Sutcliffe.

Officers – Chief Executive, Human Resources Manager, Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager, Democratic Services Manager and Democratic Services and Scrutiny Officer.

Apologies for Absence –

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Jaquin, Hull and Harbron.

Start: 6.30pm

Finish: 7.50pm

Confirmation of Minutes –

The minutes of the meeting held 15 January 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

Public Participation –

There were no members of the public in attendance.

Declarations of Interest –

There were no declarations of interest.

Minutes for Report

OS.446 **ABSENCE MANAGEMENT - APRIL TO SEPTEMBER 2019**

The Human Resources (HR) Manager submitted a report, which outlined Craven District Council's sickness absence statistics from 1 April to 30 September 2019.

The HR Manager provided a breakdown of long and short term absence statistics. The number of days lost due to sickness per full time equivalent (FTE) was 5.6 days, which was 32% above target. This was a 20% increase in days lost per FTE compared to the same period last year.

Members were reminded that absence was considered long term if it lasted more than four continuous weeks. In comparison to the same period last year, long term absence had increased by 24%. Members noted that 17 members of staff had a period of long term absence between April and September 2019. It was noted that all 17 members of staff had now returned to work. The HR Manager explained the process for dealing with long term absence, which included phased returns and Oasis Counselling.

It was reported that the number of days per FTE lost to short term absence had increased slightly, from 1.34 days in September 2018 to 1.46 days in the 12 months to September 2019. Members attention was drawn to a chart that showed a breakdown of the reasons for short term absence, which included, musculo-skeletal problems (21%), stress / depression / anxiety (17%) and stomach issues (17%).

A breakdown of absence by service area was also provided. Members noted that whilst overall absence in Waste Management had increased by 5%, short term absence had decreased by 32%. One Member questioned the impact of recent policy changes. The Chief Executive responded that it was too early to say at this stage, although he did refer to the meticulous monitoring of short term absences now in place by Waste Management at Engine Shed Lane, which had resulted in a significant decrease.

Resolved – That the sickness absence statistics from 1 April to 30 September 2019 are noted.

OS.447

CUSTOMER SERVICES PERFORMANCE

The Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager submitted a report, which presented Customer Service's performance statistics for 2019/20 and informed Members of improvements made to the service and future plans.

The Communications, Customer Services and Partnerships Manager informed Members of key changes within the service. There had been recent staffing changes, which included the Team Leader of Business Support undertaking a dual role as Team Leader for Customer Services and Business Support. In addition, two apprenticeship roles had been introduced, which combined Customer Services and Business Support, enabling flexibility within the teams. Members were also informed of the retirement of two Customer Services staff members and due to these roles not being replaced it had resulted in a £40,000 saving.

It was reported that over the last 3 years there had been a consistent drop of incoming calls into the call centre, however, Members noted that calls had increased following the decision not to post out waste recycling calendars to residents. Members were assured that calls would be monitored closely to assess the impact of not sending out the calendars. If the impact was considered significant then it would result in the re-introduction of posting out the calendars.

Members noted several improvements, which included the introduction of a 'wait here' sign in reception, the monitoring of monthly statistics against targets and call recording, which allowed for the collection of qualitative data. Members questioned whether a call-back facility would improve performance. It was advised that the system had been reviewed and would only be beneficial during the busiest times of the year when it would prove difficult for advisors to 'call back'.

Concerns were also raised in relation to calls not being answered or dealt with in a timely matter. These concerns had been addressed with staff on an individual basis. There was also an intention to introduce a customer service charter to drive forward improvements.

Members commended the Customer Services team on their courteous manner when dealing with customers, which the Customer Services Communications and Partnerships Manager said she would report back to the team.

Resolved – That the Customer Service performance during 2019/20, including improvements and future plans are noted.

OS.448

WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Manager submitted a report which presented the most recent version of the Select Committee's work programme.

Members were reminded that due to unforeseen problems with the Microsoft Office 365 roll out, the Members' IT Options report would now be presented to the April Select Committee meeting instead.

Members agreed that due to a lack of business, to cancel the March Select Committee meeting.

Resolved – That the work programme, as amended, is noted.

Minutes for Decision

There were no items for decision.

Chairman.