Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority Item 13

Finance and Resources Committee

28 May 2024

Sickness Absence

Purpose of the Report

1. To advise Members of the current level of sickness absence within the National Park Authority staffing establishment.

Recommendation

2. That the report be noted.

Strategic Framework

3. The information and recommendation(s) contained in this report are consistent with the Authority's statutory purposes and support the strategic planning framework:

   - Corporate Plan Objective 30
     Plan and manage all aspects of the Authority's business so as to make the most effective use of its resources, including generating sufficient income to maintain expenditure at the same level as 2014/15 in real terms across the extended National Park area.

Background

4. Analysis has been undertaken of sickness absence data covering all staff employed by the Authority during the fourth quarter of 2023/24 (so from 1 January to 31 March 2024). The data has been categorised by individual Directorates and is attached as an **Appendix** to this report. Information is provided both in terms of the percentage of time lost and then what this means in actual days lost, to illustrate the proportionate and absolute size of sickness absence.

Method of Calculation

5. As with previous reports, the Appendix presents data for all staff based on a five day working week, taking into account vacant posts, bank holidays, and an average annual leave and flexi leave entitlement, to give 'actual' working days available for both full and part-time staff. The following data is provided:

   (i) Number of staff in post as at 31 March 2024 (Full-Time Equivalent)
   (ii) The total number of days lost due to sickness within the reporting period
   (iii) The total number of working days available within the reporting period

(iv) Each Directorate's lost time rate, being the percentage of lost days compared with the number of days available, is calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Total Number of Days Lost}}{\text{Total Number of Days Available}} \times 100$$

The Authority's lost time rate for the quarter ending 31 March 2024 was **2.7%.** The rate for the previous quarter to 31 December 2023 was **3.9%.** Also provided within the Appendix are details of the quarterly lost time rates over the last five years.

We plan to review our Sickness Absence policy this year, including with a view to understanding what options there might be to help us to manage down longer term absences.

Performance Indicator results

6. The Authority uses a Performance Indicator to report the proportion of working days lost due to sickness absence. Rather than reporting the annual lost time rate, sickness absence for Performance Indicator purposes is calculated and expressed as the number of days' absence per Full Time Equivalent (FTE) member of staff, as follows:

$$\frac{\text{Aggregate of lost working days}}{\text{Average number of FTE staff Calculated by reference to the start and end of the financial year}} = \text{X days per FTE}$$

The situation as at the end of the fourth quarter (ending 31 March 2024) using the Performance Indicator methodology (as opposed to the 'lost time rate', percentage-based approach) yields a figure of **1.4 days per FTE** for that quarter. The cumulative total for 2023/24 is **6.2** days per FTE.

Financial Implications

7. There are no financial implications this quarter.

Legal Implications

8. None

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Implications

9. None

Caszandra Peterson
Senior Administrative Officer

APPENDIX

SICKNESS ABSENCE LEVELS – 1 JANUARY – 31 MARCH 2024

DIRECTORATE	FULL TIME EQUIVALENT IN POST as at 31.3.24	TOTAL NO. OF DAYS LOST	TOTAL DAYS AVAILABLE	LOST TIME %
Corporate Services	24.32	16.41	1313.28	1.2
Conservation & Community	52.48	89.64	2833.92	3.2
Park Services	55.37	85.93	2989.98	2.9
TOTAL	**132.17**	**191.98**	**7137.18**	**2.7**

NOTES

1. Of the 89.64 days lost in Conservation & Community, 44.24 days relate to three members of staff, who have all since returned to work.
2. Of the 85.93 days lost in Park Services, 45 days relate to two members of staff, one has since returned to work, the other remains on long term sick.
3. Of the 16.41 days lost in Corporate Services, 10.2 days relates to one member of staff, who has since returned to work.
4. Taking out the periods of long-term sickness absence (defined here as any instance lasting for more than ten working days), the Authority's lost time rate would be **1.3%** and the days of absence per FTE would be **0.7** days.

ANALYSIS OF SICKNESS LEVELS (LOST TIME RATE) AT QUARTERLY INTERVALS FOR THE PERIOD 1 APRIL 2019 TO 31 MARCH 2024. FROM 1 APRIL 2023 FIGURE IN BRACKETS SHOWS ANALYSIS OF SICKNESS LEVELS MINUS LONG TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE

1 April 2019 – 30 June 2019	1 July 2019 – 30 September 2019	1 October 2019 – 31 December 2019	1 January 2020 – 31 March 2020
2.2%	1.6%	2.5%	1.3%

1 April 2020 – 30 June 2020	1 July 2020 – 30 September 2020	1 October 2020 – 31 December 2020	1 January 2021 – 31 March 2021
1.3%	2.7%	1.0%	3.4%

1 April 2021 – 30 June 2021	1 July 2021 – 30 September 2021	1 October 2021 – 31 December 2021	1 January 2022 – 31 March 2022
2.5%	2.4%	3.0%	2.6%

1 April 2022 – 30 June 2022	1 July 2022 – 30 September 2022	1 October 2022 – 31 December 2022	1 January 2023 – 31 March 2023
2.4%	2.0%	2.9%	1.6%

1 April 2023 – 30 June 2023	1 July 2023 – 30 September 2023	1 October 2023 – 31 December 2023	1 January 2024 – 31 March 2024
2.5% (0.9%)	2.5% (1.09%)	3.9% (1.2%)	2.7% (1.3%)