

SICKNESS ABSENCE 1 OCTOBER 2020 TO 31 DECEMBER 2020

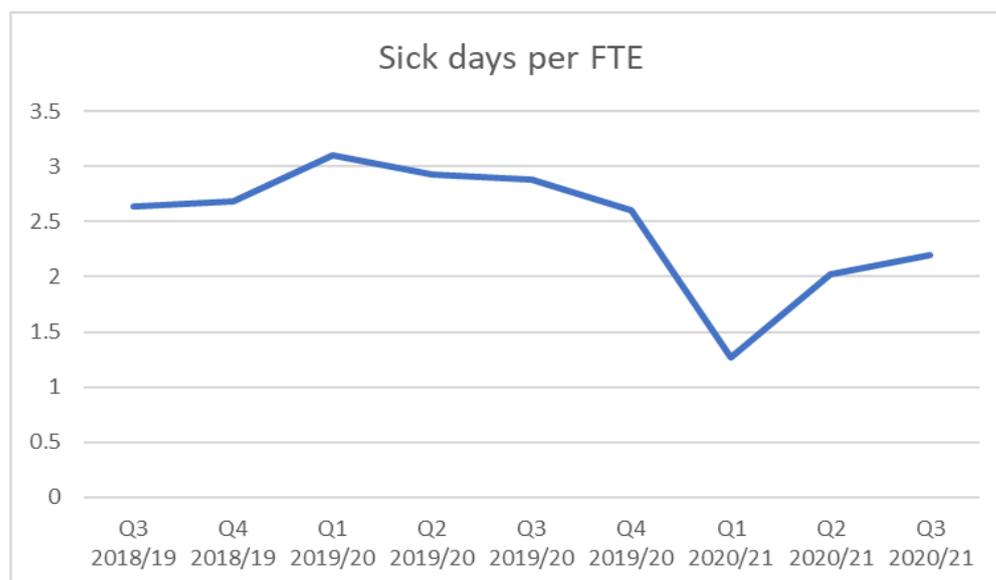
Purpose

1. The purpose of this report is to provide high-level information on sickness absence for the period 1st October 2020 to 31st December 2020 and is a quarterly performance monitoring report.

This is not a key decision because it is for information only.

2. **Summary**

Our BVPI figure is 2.20 days per FTE (based on 572.3 FTE), which is 22.8% decrease compared to last year's Q3 figure (2.88 days based on 551 FTE). This quarter's performance has shown a 8.18% increase on the previous quarter's figure (Q2 2020-21) in the number of sick days.

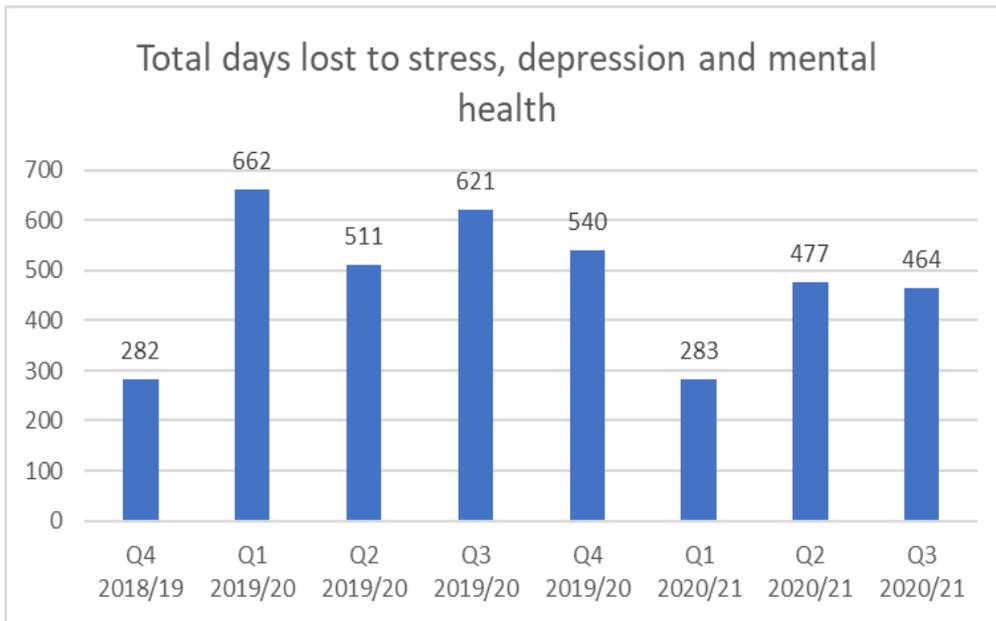


Within this quarter 110 employees have had absences due to sickness, meaning 481 employees have not had any absences within this period.

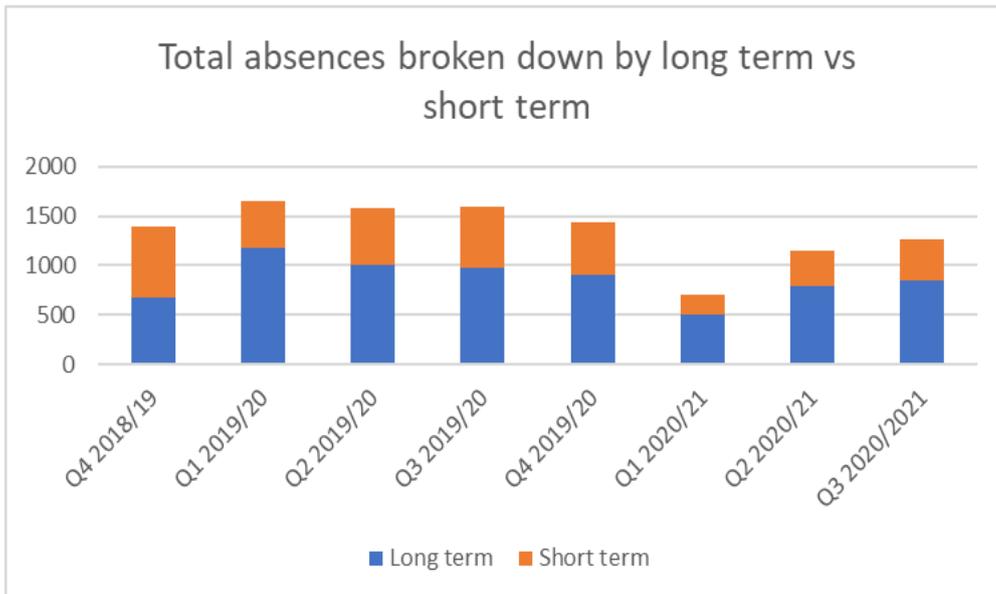
The total days lost in Q3 for SSWS account for 60.9% of total days' absences (767 days), an increase of 122 days from Q2.

In terms of the reasons behind absences, the three highest categories for absence are stress, depression & mental health (464), Other muscular-skeletal (355), and Genito-Urinary (130) which accounted for 75.5% of total absence for this quarter.

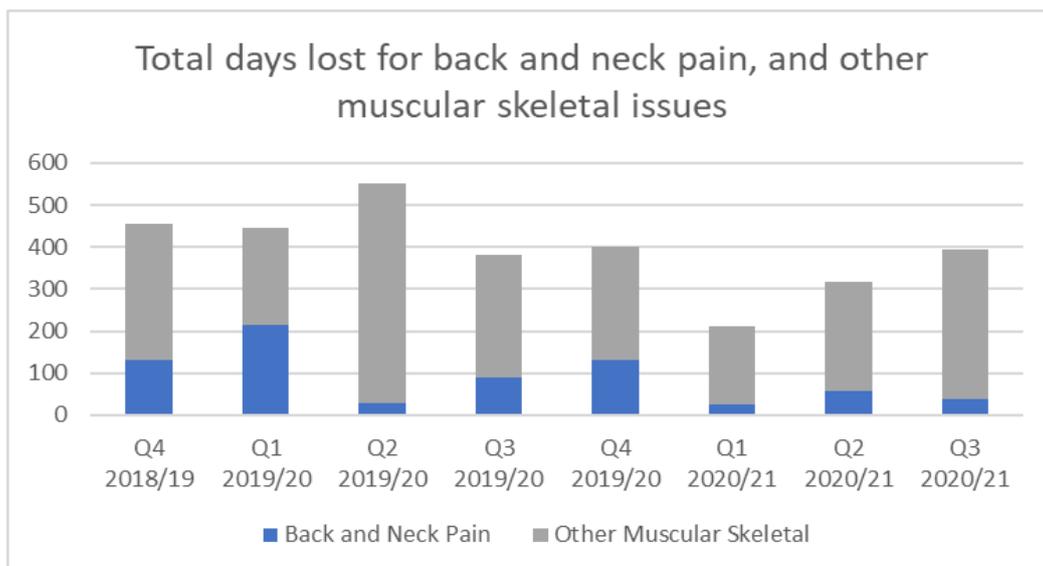
The chart below shows the number of days absence attributed to stress/depression & mental health.



Looking at the breakdown in terms of long-term absences, there were 22 employees with long term absences within the quarter, and they accounted for 852 days.



The chart below shows the number of day's absence attributed to Back and Neck Pain, and Other Muscular-Skeletal over that last year.



During Q3, the HR team have been working alongside managers, introducing a new way of working/new tools to try to assist managers in proactively managing long term absence. Virtual welfare visits are carried out with all long-term sickness cases. The HR team have also been carrying out weekly checks on absence rates and highlighting where an absence is due to stress, depression and mental health to ensure the necessary support has been put in place.

A training session has been held at the Waterbeach depot in December on the use of the stress identification tool and best practise. A custom designed session on mental wellbeing tools available to managers at the Council is being designed in-house for delivery mid-end of February 2021.

We have also been supporting employees during the change to working practices following the Covid-19 outbreak and have been especially focussing on supporting our employee’s mental health through offering weekly wellbeing sessions, circulating useful information, and promoting access to support services such as counselling or the Mental Health First Aid team.

With respect to muscular skeletal absences HR have been encouraging all staff to undertake a DSE assessment on their home set up and sending out wellbeing tips about regular breaks and additional equipment. 318 employees have used the DSE training/assessment tool, 24 employees are yet to complete the assessment and 146 employees have not yet started. A trial was carried out on installing software to encourage staff to take regular breaks but the benefits of this were not realised.

Our absence figures have increased slightly since last quarter but are still lower than pre-covid and Q3 2019. Our stress and mental health related absence figures are again still lower than they were pre-covid and have reduced by 13 days in total since Q2.

We have also been promoting our new Employee Assistance Programme (Vivup) which includes free confidential counselling for all staff, as well as access to additional resources such as CBT guides. During Q3 25 employees accessed the CBT resources, 6 employees had telephone assessments, and 3 telephone counselling sessions took place. A new app named MyMindPal (a mental fitness app enabling staff to explore mental fitness exercises and create their very own 5 minute a day routine) received 23 views.

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