

Governance Committee

Monday, 22nd July, 2024
at 5.00 pm

PLEASE NOTE TIME OF MEETING

Conference Rooms 3 and 4 - Civic Centre

This meeting is open to the public

Members of the Committee

Councillor Rayment (Chair)
Councillor Mrs Blatchford
Councillor Cooper
Councillor Denness
Councillor Gravatt
Councillor Harwood
Councillor McCreanor

Contacts

Director of Legal and Governance
Richard Ivory
Tel. 023 8083 2794
Email: richard.ivory@southampton.gov.uk

Senior Democratic Support Officer
Claire Heather
Tel. 023 8083 2412
Email: claire.heather@southampton.gov.uk

PUBLIC INFORMATION

Role of the Governance Committee

Information regarding the role of the Committee's is contained in Part 2 (Articles) of the Council's Constitution.

[02 Part 2 - Articles](#)

It includes at least one Councillor from each of the political groups represented on the Council, and at least one independent person, without voting rights, who is not a Councillor or an Officer of the Council.

Access – Access is available for disabled people. Please contact the Democratic Support Officer who will help to make any necessary arrangements.

Public Representations At the discretion of the Chair, members of the public may address the meeting on any report included on the agenda in which they have a relevant interest. Any member of the public wishing to address the meeting should advise the Democratic Support Officer (DSO) whose contact details are on the front sheet of the agenda

Southampton: Corporate Plan 2022-2030 sets out the four key outcomes:

- Communities, culture & homes - Celebrating the diversity of cultures within Southampton; enhancing our cultural and historical offer and using these to help transform our communities.
- Green City - Providing a sustainable, clean, healthy and safe environment for everyone. Nurturing green spaces and embracing our waterfront.
- Place shaping - Delivering a city for future generations. Using data, insight and vision to meet the current and future needs of the city.
- Wellbeing - Start well, live well, age well, die well; working with other partners and other services to make sure that customers get the right help at the right time

Smoking policy – The Council operates a no-smoking policy in all civic buildings.

Mobile Telephones:- Please switch your mobile telephones or other IT devices to silent whilst in the meeting

Use of Social Media:- The Council supports the video or audio recording of meetings open to the public, for either live or subsequent broadcast. However, if, in the Chair's opinion, a person filming or recording a meeting or taking photographs is interrupting proceedings or causing a disturbance, under the Council's Standing Orders the person can be ordered to stop their activity, or to leave the meeting. By entering the meeting room you are consenting to being recorded and to the use of those images and recordings for broadcasting and or/training purposes. The meeting may be recorded by the press or members of the public.

Any person or organisation filming, recording or broadcasting any meeting of the Council is responsible for any claims or other liability resulting from them doing so.

Details of the Council's Guidance on the recording of meetings is available on the Council's website.

Dates of Meetings: Municipal Year:

2024	2025
10 June	10 February
22 July	14 April
23 September	
4 November	
9 December	

CONDUCT OF MEETING

Terms of Reference

The terms of reference of the Governance Committee are contained in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution.

[03 - Part 3 - Responsibility for Functions](#)

Rules of Procedure

The meeting is governed by the Council Procedure Rules as set out in Part 4 of the Constitution.

Business to be discussed

Only those items listed on the attached agenda may be considered at this meeting.

Quorum

The minimum number of appointed Members required to be in attendance to hold the meeting is 3.

DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS

Members are required to disclose, in accordance with the Members' Code of Conduct, **both** the existence **and** nature of any "Disclosable Pecuniary Interest" or "Other Interest" they may have in relation to matters for consideration on this Agenda.

DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS

A Member must regard himself or herself as having a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any matter that they or their spouse, partner, a person they are living with as husband or wife, or a person with whom they are living as if they were a civil partner in relation to:

- (i) Any employment, office, trade, profession or vocation carried on for profit or gain.
- (ii) Sponsorship:

Any payment or provision of any other financial benefit (other than from Southampton City Council) made or provided within the relevant period in respect of any expense incurred by you in carrying out duties as a member, or towards your election expenses. This includes any payment or financial benefit from a trade union within the meaning of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992.

(iii) Any contract which is made between you / your spouse etc (or a body in which the you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest) and Southampton City Council under which goods or services are to be provided or works are to be executed, and which has not been fully discharged.

(iv) Any beneficial interest in land which is within the area of Southampton.

(v) Any license (held alone or jointly with others) to occupy land in the area of Southampton for a month or longer.

(vi) Any tenancy where (to your knowledge) the landlord is Southampton City Council and the tenant is a body in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interests.

(vii) Any beneficial interest in securities of a body where that body (to your knowledge) has a place of business or land in the area of Southampton, and either:

- a) the total nominal value of the securities exceeds £25,000 or one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that body, or
- b) if the share capital of that body is of more than one class, the total nominal value of the shares of any one class in which you / your spouse etc has a beneficial interest that exceeds one hundredth of the total issued share capital of that class.

Other Interests

A Member must regard himself or herself as having an, 'Other Interest' in any membership of, or occupation of a position of general control or management in:

Any body to which they have been appointed or nominated by Southampton City Council

Any public authority or body exercising functions of a public nature

Any body directed to charitable purposes

Any body whose principal purpose includes the influence of public opinion or policy

Principles of Decision Making

All decisions of the Council will be made in accordance with the following principles:-

- proportionality (i.e. the action must be proportionate to the desired outcome);
- due consultation and the taking of professional advice from officers;
- respect for human rights;
- a presumption in favour of openness, accountability and transparency;
- setting out what options have been considered;
- setting out reasons for the decision; and
- clarity of aims and desired outcomes.

In exercising discretion, the decision maker must:

- understand the law that regulates the decision making power and gives effect to it. The decision-maker must direct itself properly in law;
- take into account all relevant matters (those matters which the law requires the authority as a matter of legal obligation to take into account);
- leave out of account irrelevant considerations;
- act for a proper purpose, exercising its powers for the public good;
- not reach a decision which no authority acting reasonably could reach, (also known as the "rationality" or "taking leave of your senses" principle);
- comply with the rule that local government finance is to be conducted on an annual basis. Save to the extent authorised by Parliament, 'live now, pay later' and forward funding are unlawful; and
- act with procedural propriety in accordance with the rules of fairness.

AGENDA

1 **APOLOGIES**

To receive any apologies.

2 **DISCLOSURE OF PERSONAL AND PECUNIARY INTERESTS**

In accordance with the Localism Act 2011, and the Council's Code of Conduct, Members to disclose any personal or pecuniary interests in any matter included on the agenda for this meeting.

NOTE: Members are reminded that, where applicable, they must complete the appropriate form recording details of any such interests and hand it to the Democratic Support Officer.

3 **STATEMENT FROM THE CHAIR**

4 **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)** (Pages 1 - 2)

To approve and sign as a correct record the Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd April 2024 and to deal with any matters arising, attached.

5 **APPOINTMENT OF VICE-CHAIR**

To appoint a Vice-Chair for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

6 **HR QUARTERLY REPORT** (Pages 3 - 8)

Report of the Executive Director of Enabling Services detailing HR information for April to June 2024, attached.

Friday, 12 July 2024

Director Legal and Governance

This page is intentionally left blank

GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 22 APRIL 2024

Present: Councillors Leggett (Chair), P Baillie, Chapman, Denness, McCreanor (Vice-Chair), McEwing and Rayment

39. **MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING (INCLUDING MATTERS ARISING)**

RESOLVED: that the minutes for the Committee meeting on 12 February, 2024 be approved and signed as a correct record.

40. **ANNUAL REVIEW OF THE CONSTITUTION**

The Committee considered the report of the Director of Legal and Governance and Monitoring Officer detailing the Annual Review of the Constitution.

RESOLVED: To recommend the changes to the Constitution to Council for adoption including the creation of a new Audit Committee with or without independent, non-voting members.

41. **PAY POLICY – CHANGES TO DISCRETIONARY SEVERANCE AND PENSIONS PAYMENT POLICY**

The Committee considered the report of the Executive Director of Enabling Services detailing changes to discretionary severance and pensions payment policy.

RESOLVED: To approve revisions to the Severance and Pensions Payments: Discretionary Powers Policy, including the Council adoption statutory redundancy payment levels for Compulsory Redundancy and Voluntary Redundancy.

42. **TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY AND PRUDENTIAL LIMITS 2022/23 TO 2025/26**

The Committee received and noted the Treasury Management Strategy and Prudential Limits 2022/23 to 2025/26.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To approve the Council's Treasury Management Strategy and Indicators for 2024/25 to 2027/28, as set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (ii) To note the Executive Director for Enabling Services would report any amendments and in year revisions to the Treasury Management Strategy as part of the quarterly financial and performance monitoring; and
- (iii) To endorse the proposal to continue to explore an alternative Treasury Strategy to generate additional income that can support local services, whilst maintaining a prudent approach.

43. **APPOINTEESHIP SERVICE PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received and noted the report from the Interim Director of Finance detailing the Appointeeships Progress and Update Report.

RESOLVED: to note:

- (i) The service improvements and reduced likely risk exposure following the recent audit;
- (ii) The intention to review financial thresholds at which clients are referred to Hampshire County Council for deputyship;
- (iii) The plans to introduce charging and invest in a case management system, with consequent positive impact on capacity and quality of service; and
- (iv) That a follow up audit is not expected until further progress has been made.

44. **VOID PROGRESS REPORT**

The Committee received and noted the report from Councillor Frampton, Cabinet Member for Housing detailing Housing Voids update.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To note the progress being made to improve housing Void performance and require a further report on progress in July 2024; and
- (ii) To accept and endorse the Voids Action Plan.

45. **ANNUAL INTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2024-25**

The Committee received and noted the report of the Chief Internal Auditor detailing the Annual Internal Audit Plan 2024-25, Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Charter and Code of Ethics 2024-25.

RESOLVED:

- (i) To approve the provisional Annual Internal Audit Plan for 2024-25; and
- (ii) To note the Internal Audit and Counter Fraud Charter and Counter Fraud Charter and Code of Ethics detailed in the report.

46. **EXTERNAL AUDIT PLAN 2023/24**

The Committee received and noted the report of the External Auditor detailing the 2023/24 Audit Planning Report.

RESOLVED: to note the 2023/24 Audit Planning Report.

Agenda Item 6

DECISION-MAKER:		GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE	
SUBJECT:		Human Resources (HR) Data Quarter One (24/25)	
DATE OF DECISION:		22 July 2024	
REPORT OF:		Acting Head of Human Resources and Organisational Development	
<u>CONTACT DETAILS</u>			
AUTHOR:	Name:	Chris Bishop	Tel:
	E-mail:	Chris.bishop@southampton.gov.uk	
Executive Director – Enabling Services	Name:	Mel Creighton	Tel:
	E-mail:	mel.creighton@southampton.gov.uk	

STATEMENT OF CONFIDENTIALITY
None. This report contains no personal information relating to specific individuals.

BRIEF SUMMARY
The Governance Committee requested quarterly, council wide information on key employment data covering disciplinaries, dismissals, suspensions and grievances.
The report format is as requested and agreed with the Governance Committee.

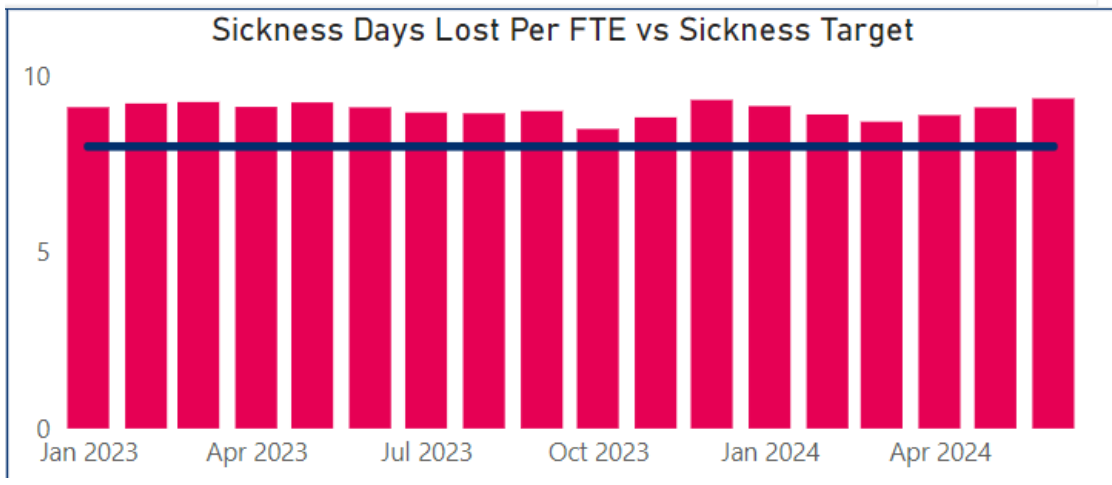
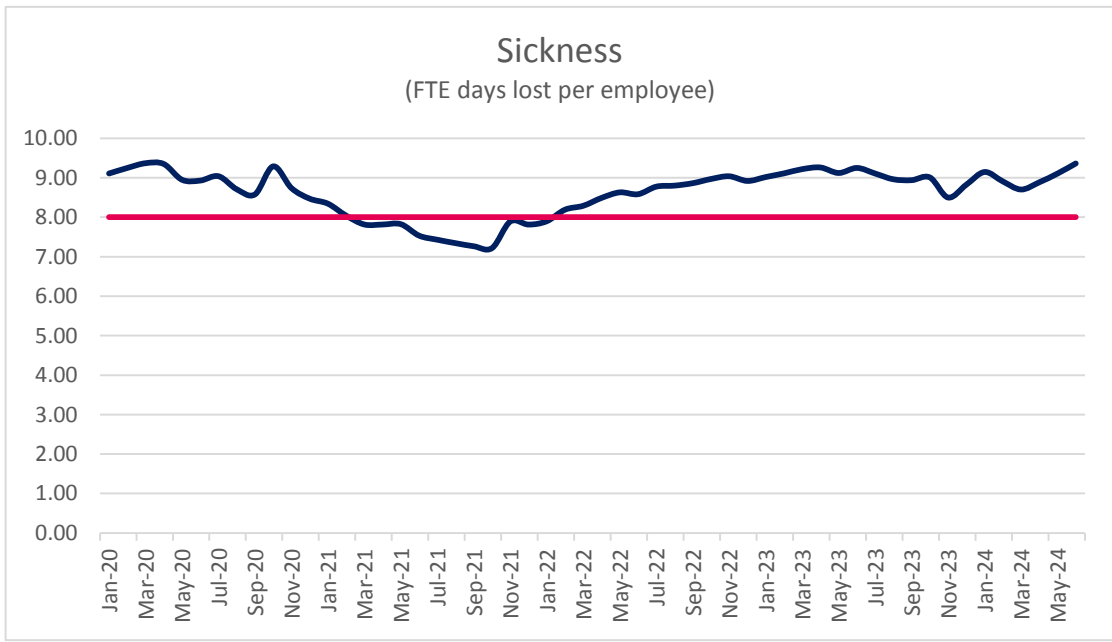
RECOMMENDATIONS:
(i) To note the latest HR statistics as requested.

REASONS FOR REPORT RECOMMENDATIONS
1. As requested by the Governance Committee.

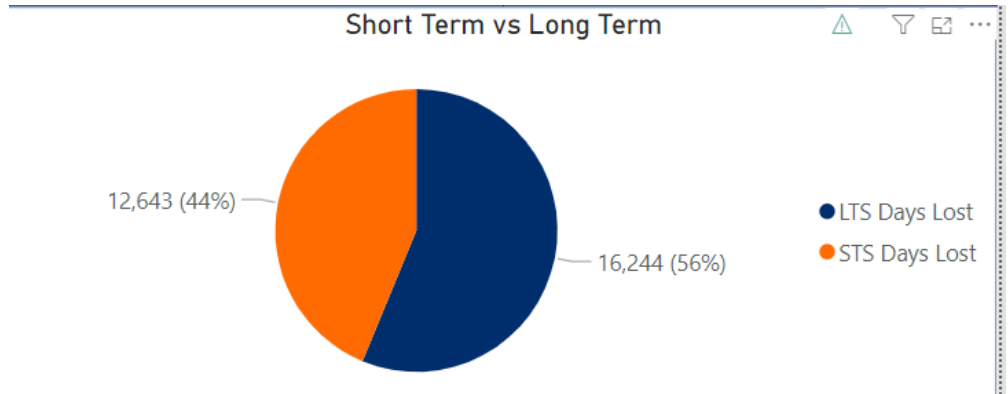
ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS CONSIDERED AND REJECTED
2. N/A

DETAIL (Including consultation carried out)
3. Quarter 1, April 2024 – June 2024: A total of 21 dismissals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 for end of fixed term contracts • 13 as a result of service restructures • 1 for sickness absence • 2 for ill health retirements • 1 for failed probation <p>We also had 5 suspensions within this quarter and 3 grievance/dismissal appeals.</p>
4. Overall sickness levels for the council this quarter showed an average 9.12 days per employee. The sector “average” is 8 days. When analysing the data over the last 4.5 years the trends are shown below. The data reveals SCC is consistently above the sector

average 8 days sickness per Full Time Equivalent (FTE), with some small fluctuations across the periods shown.

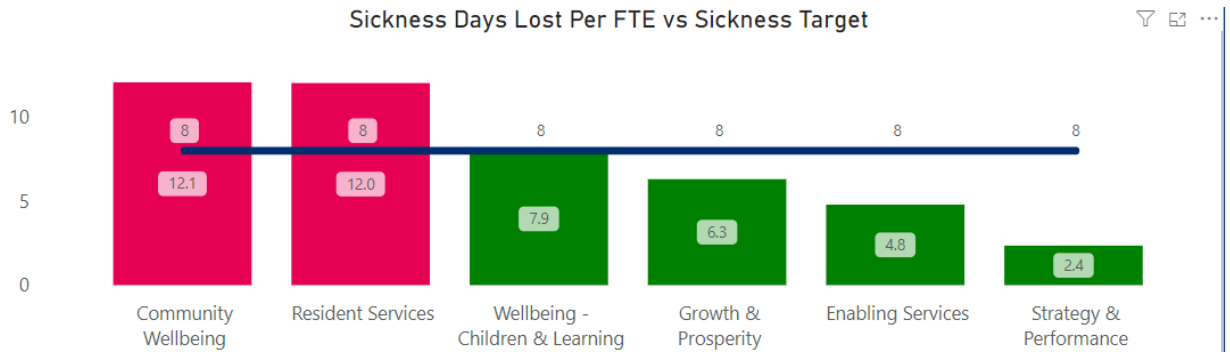


5. Short term absence accounts for 44% of the overall absence, whilst long term sickness accounts for 56%. Long term sickness is defined as a continuous period of absence exceeding 20 days.

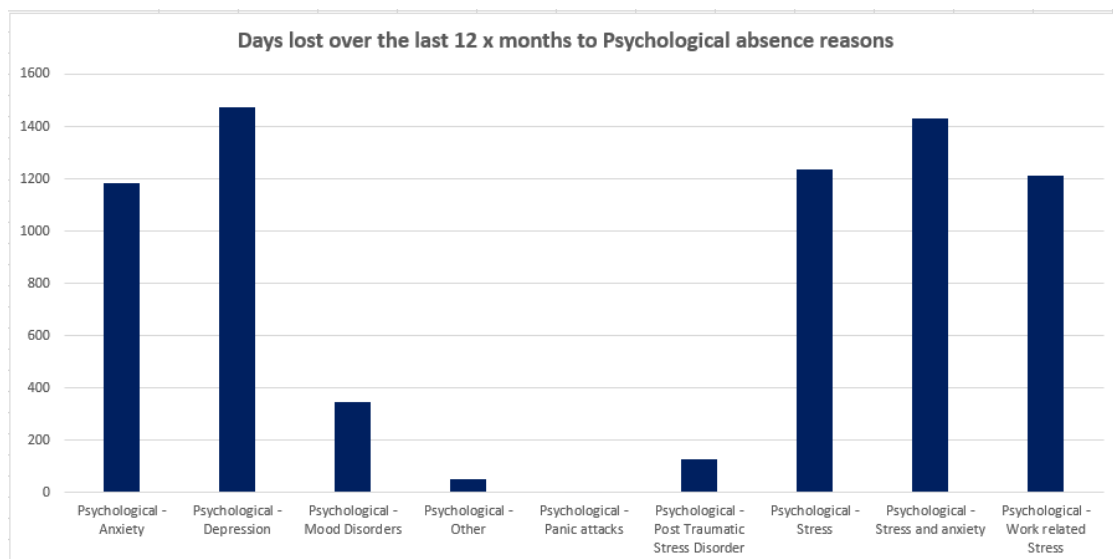


The biggest causes of long term sickness by a significant proportion are musculoskeletal and psychological related absences.

6. When looking at the data across our broad directorates, sickness is more prevalent in 'Community Wellbeing' and 'Resident Services', where sickness rates are 12.1 days and 12 days lost per FTE. Comparatively, 'Growth & Prosperity', 'Enabling Services' and 'Strategy & Performance' have lower sickness rates, all under the 8 x days target.



The graph below shows the breakdown of psychological absence reasons across the last 12 months. The highest number of days lost has been due to depression, followed by stress & anxiety. Health and Safety Executive data shows that 49 per cent of all occupational ill-health last year was stress related.



The table below shows the absence split by legal sex to demonstrate the impact of absence by this characteristic. This shows that proportionally male employees have more sickness absence compared to female employees at 9.38 days lost per male versus 8.49 days lost per female.

Legal Sex	Total days lost to absence in the last 12 x months	FTE	Avg. Days Lost per Employee
Female	14,604	1,719	8.49
Male	12,892	1,375	9.38

For context, staff numbers are provided below to show the split of our workforce by employment type. Apprenticeships include existing employees who are undergoing an apprenticeship for their development, as well as those who joined the council as an apprentice.

	Perm	FTC	Secondment	Agency	Apprenticeships
Community Wellbeing	456	9	6	26	22
Enabling Services	441	12	9	13	16
Growth & Prosperity	349	93	4	78	20
Resident Services	1236	32	10	122	30
Strategy & Performance	64	18	5	2	2
Wellbeing - Children & Learning	635	29	6	11	16
SCC	3181	194	40	252	106

7. The HR team provide managers with monthly detailed absence data, and look to identify and address “hot spots” and underlying issues against which to target interventions including information, support, occupational health appointments, phased return and in some cases, dismissal.

Managers are supported at all levels in applying the absence management policies consistently. The need for further support following a change in work practices was identified in Waste Services, which has been met and has led to ensuring that HR policies are applied in a consistent and timely manner.

A lot of our wellbeing activity has been focused on increasing and promoting our Mental Health First Aiders, local Wellbeing Champion support, menopause cafes, and helping people deal with the cost of living situation. We have a new wellbeing SharePoint site to share information and signpost employees to internal and external support. We also run wellbeing and resilience sessions for managers and staff.

RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS

Capital/Revenue

8. None

Property/Other

9. None

LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Statutory power to undertake proposals in the report:

10. S1 Localism Act 2011 and S101 Local Government Act 1972

Other Legal Implications:

11. None

RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

12. None

POLICY FRAMEWORK IMPLICATIONS

13.	None
-----	------

KEY DECISION?	No
WARDS/COMMUNITIES AFFECTED:	none
<u>SUPPORTING DOCUMENTATION</u>	
Appendices	
1.	None
Documents In Members' Rooms	
1.	None
Equality Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require an Equality and Safety Impact Assessment (ESIA) to be carried out.	No
Data Protection Impact Assessment	
Do the implications/subject of the report require a Data Protection Impact Assessment (DPIA) to be carried out.	No
Other Background Documents	
Other Background documents available for inspection at:	
Title of Background Paper(s)	Relevant Paragraph of the Access to Information Procedure Rules / Schedule 12A allowing document to be Exempt/Confidential (if applicable)
1.	None

This page is intentionally left blank