

## **ABSENCE MANAGEMENT**

### **SUMMARY**

1. This report provides an update to Members with regard to absence management for the second quarter of 2018/19, as reported at the HFA meeting on 28 October 2018. For the second quarter in a row, absence remains below the targets agreed.
2. This report also provides a detailed analysis at Appendix 1 of absence figures from this quarter with the same period last year and again shows significant improvements.
3. Appendix 2 provides a comparison of local Quarter 2 absence management with the national data available which was given to Members at the October meeting. Again this shows a broadly favourable picture save for that of support staff, where we are slightly above the national average for duty days lost.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

4. That Members note the content of the report and take assurance from the actions taken in the HR Directorate to continue to improve the management of absence and the support offered to staff who are unwell.

### **ABSENCE MANAGEMENT ACROSS THE SERVICE**

5. Members are requested to note that the approach taken with the introduction of the Case Review Boards co-chaired by the Deputy Chief Fire Officer and the Director of Human Resources is having a positive impact on both the consistency of management of absence and the absence data.
6. Members are also requested to note that the HR Service Partner model has introduced a coaching approach with managers to improve their understanding of the management of absence is also having a considerable positive impact as the cases coming before the CRB are increasingly better managed.

### **DATA MANAGEMENT**

7. At the 17 March 2017 HFA meeting, it was agreed that a quarterly report would be brought before members with an update on the management of absence to include detailed data on absence levels by staff group, as well as development and dissemination of fair and appropriate mechanisms for the same.
8. The data in Table 1 shows, as previously reported, that as a comparison with the same quarter last year, absence has reduced considerably across all staff groups and is below target in performance management terms.



12. **Table 2**

| <b>FTE Establishment Figures ex firewatch - 10-10-18</b> |           |            |             |
|--|-----------|------------|-------------|
|  | Long Term | Short Term | Grand Total |
| Control  | 0.00      | 60.00      | 60.00       |
| Green Book   | 501.28    | 218.11     | 719.39      |
| Retained   | 447.33    | 183.27     | 630.60      |
| Wholetime  | 1148.00   | 380.00     | 1528.00     |
| Grand Total  | 2096.61   | 841.38     | 2937.99     |
|  |           |            |             |
|  |           |            |             |

| <b>FTE Establishment Figures ex firewatch - 28-09-17</b> |           |            |             |
|--|-----------|------------|-------------|
|  | Long Term | Short Term | Grand Total |
| Control  | 216       | 70         | 286         |
| Green Book   | 897.26    | 263.6      | 1160.86     |
| Retained   | 905.91    | 163.53     | 1069.44     |
| Wholetime  | 1412      | 440        | 1852        |
| Grand Total  | 3431.17   | 937.13     | 4368.3      |
|  |           |            |             |
|  |           |            |             |

**STRATEGIC PLAN COMPATIBILITY**

- 13. It is crucial to the success of the Service’s Strategic Plan that sickness absence is managed fairly, consistently and appropriately, ensuring that as far as possible, staff are able to attend work regularly and reliably.
- 14. Specifically, the effective management of sickness absence will support the delivery of our two underpinning strategic objectives of “Strengthening our Leadership and Line Management” and “Continuing to support the health and wellbeing of our people”.

**FINANCIAL/RESOURCES/VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS**

- 15. The continuing development of effective and fair processes and accurate data will better enable the Service to manage both the finances and the staffing resources, which will result in better value for money and increased personnel available for deployment.

**LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 16. Improved processes in relation to fair and consistent management of absence will reduce the risk to the Service of Employment Tribunal claims that are difficult to defend and any claims made are more likely to be unsuccessful. Where a return to work isn’t possible and an appropriate and fair exit from the Service is more favourable, this can be enacted quickly with the least pain for all concerned and with significantly less litigation risk.

## EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT/HR IMPLICATIONS

17. Fair processes which support staff to return to work wherever possible, in the shortest possible timeframe, will improve morale and facilitate a culture where staff can feel able to share their difficulties and health concerns earlier. Improved awareness of mental health will have a positive effect on the support available to staff with mental health difficulties and reduce stigma.

## CORPORATE RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

18. No direct issues arising.

## HEALTH AND SAFETY IMPLICATIONS

19. Increased focus on Absence Management and the role of Human Resources, Occupational Health and Managers, with a clear process, accurate data and better developed skill sets will decrease the risk of reportable incidents occurring which are due to the individual health needs of staff.

## COMMUNICATION ACTIONS ARISING

20. A management development programme has been developed to increase the skills and knowledge of all managers in the Service.

## DETAILS OF CONSULTATION AND/OR COLLABORATION

21. No direct issues arising.

## BACKGROUND PAPERS AVAILABLE FOR ACCESS

22. Absence Management Policy and Capsticks Absence Management Report.

## RECOMMENDATIONS RESTATED

23. That Members note the content of the report and take assurance from the actions taken in the HR Directorate to continue to improve the management of absence and the support offered to staff who are unwell.

**M HEPPELL**

Officer Contact: Miriam Heppell ☎ 01482 567454  
Director of Human Resources

Humberstone Fire & Rescue Service  
Summergroves Way  
Kingston upon Hull

MH  
28 November 2018

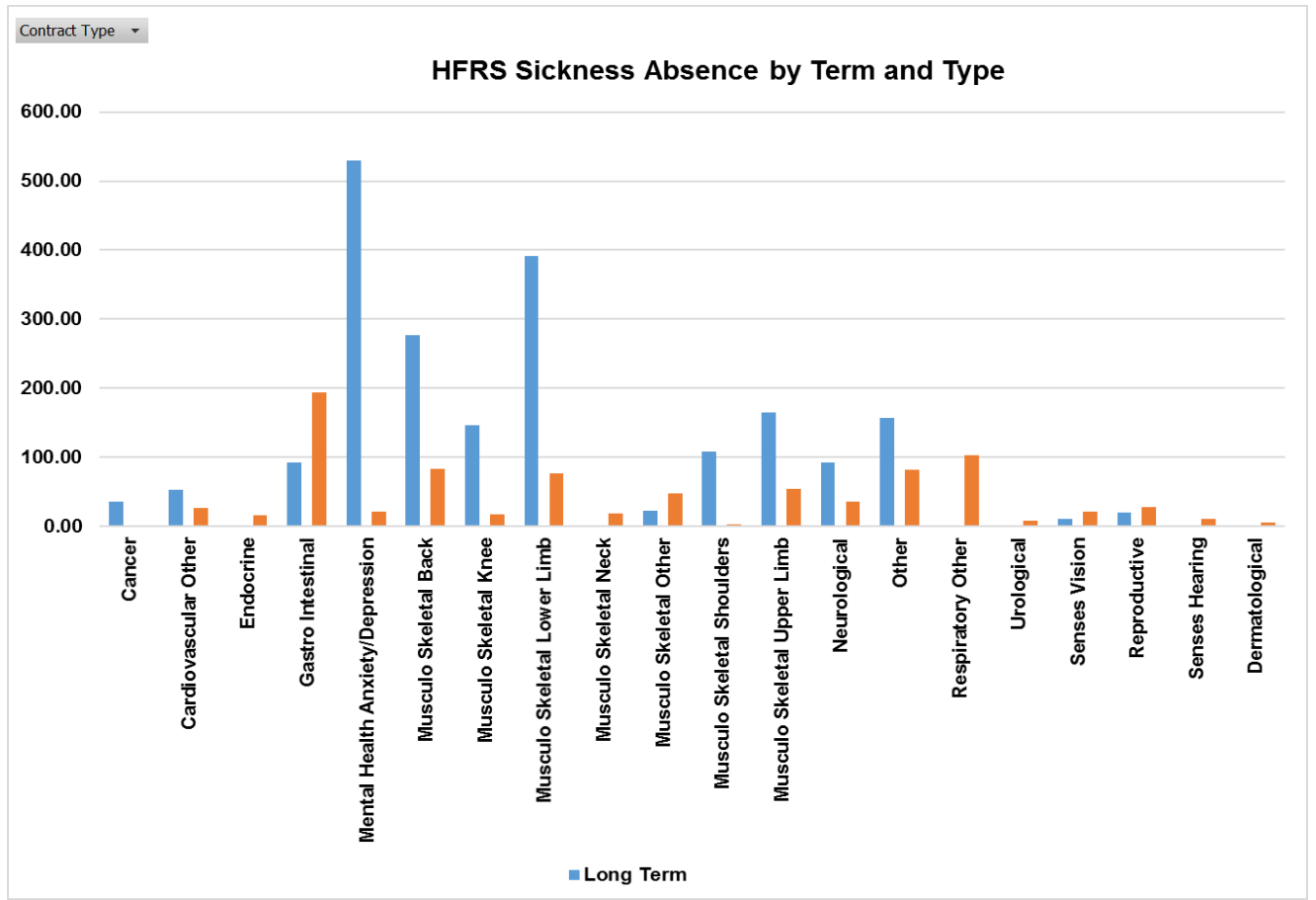
**Table 3**

| Contract Type               | (All)          |               |                |
|-----------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| CLG Category                | Long Term      | Short Term    | Grand Total    |
| Cancer                      | 36.00          | 0.00          | 36.00          |
| Cardiovascular Other        | 52.00          | 26.26         | 78.26          |
| Endocrine                   | 0.00           | 15.30         | 15.30          |
| Gastro Intestinal           | 92.12          | 193.25        | 285.37         |
| Mental Health               |                |               |                |
| Anxiety/Depression          | 529.41         | 21.48         | 550.89         |
| Musculo Skeletal Back       | 276.45         | 82.65         | 359.10         |
| Musculo Skeletal Knee       | 146.52         | 16.96         | 163.48         |
| Musculo Skeletal Lower Limb | 391.66         | 75.90         | 467.56         |
| Musculo Skeletal Neck       | 0.00           | 18.14         | 18.14          |
| Musculo Skeletal Other      | 22.00          | 47.13         | 69.13          |
| Musculo Skeletal Shoulders  | 108.11         | 2.00          | 110.11         |
| Musculo Skeletal Upper Limb | 164.70         | 53.66         | 218.36         |
| Neurological                | 92.16          | 35.29         | 127.45         |
| Other                       | 156.48         | 80.93         | 237.41         |
| Respiratory Other           | 0.00           | 102.85        | 102.85         |
| Urological                  | 0.00           | 7.28          | 7.28           |
| Senses Vision               | 10.00          | 20.30         | 30.30          |
| Reproductive                | 19.00          | 27.00         | 46.00          |
| Senses Hearing              | 0.00           | 10.00         | 10.00          |
| Dermatological              | 0.00           | 5.00          | 5.00           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>          | <b>2096.61</b> | <b>841.38</b> | <b>2937.99</b> |

**Table 4**

| Contract Type                    | (All)          |               |                |
|----------------------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------|
| CLG Category                     | Long Term      | Short Term    | Grand Total    |
| Cancer                           | 36.00          | 0.00          | 36.00          |
| Cardiovascular Other             | 52.00          | 26.26         | 78.26          |
| Dermatological                   | 0.00           | 5.00          | 5.00           |
| Endocrine                        | 0.00           | 15.30         | 15.30          |
| Gastro Intestinal                | 92.12          | 193.25        | 285.37         |
| Mental Health Anxiety/Depression | 529.41         | 21.48         | 550.89         |
| Musculo Skeletal Back            | 276.45         | 82.65         | 359.10         |
| Musculo Skeletal Knee            | 146.52         | 16.96         | 163.48         |
| Musculo Skeletal Lower Limb      | 391.66         | 75.90         | 467.56         |
| Musculo Skeletal Neck            | 0.00           | 18.14         | 18.14          |
| Musculo Skeletal Other           | 22.00          | 47.13         | 69.13          |
| Musculo Skeletal Shoulders       | 108.11         | 2.00          | 110.11         |
| Musculo Skeletal Upper Limb      | 164.70         | 53.66         | 218.36         |
| Neurological                     | 92.16          | 35.29         | 127.45         |
| Other                            | 156.48         | 80.93         | 237.41         |
| Reproductive                     | 19.00          | 27.00         | 46.00          |
| Respiratory Other                | 0.00           | 102.85        | 102.85         |
| Senses Hearing                   | 0.00           | 10.00         | 10.00          |
| Senses Vision                    | 10.00          | 20.30         | 30.30          |
| Urological                       | 0.00           | 7.28          | 7.28           |
| <b>Grand Total</b>               | <b>2096.61</b> | <b>841.38</b> | <b>2937.99</b> |

**Graph 1**



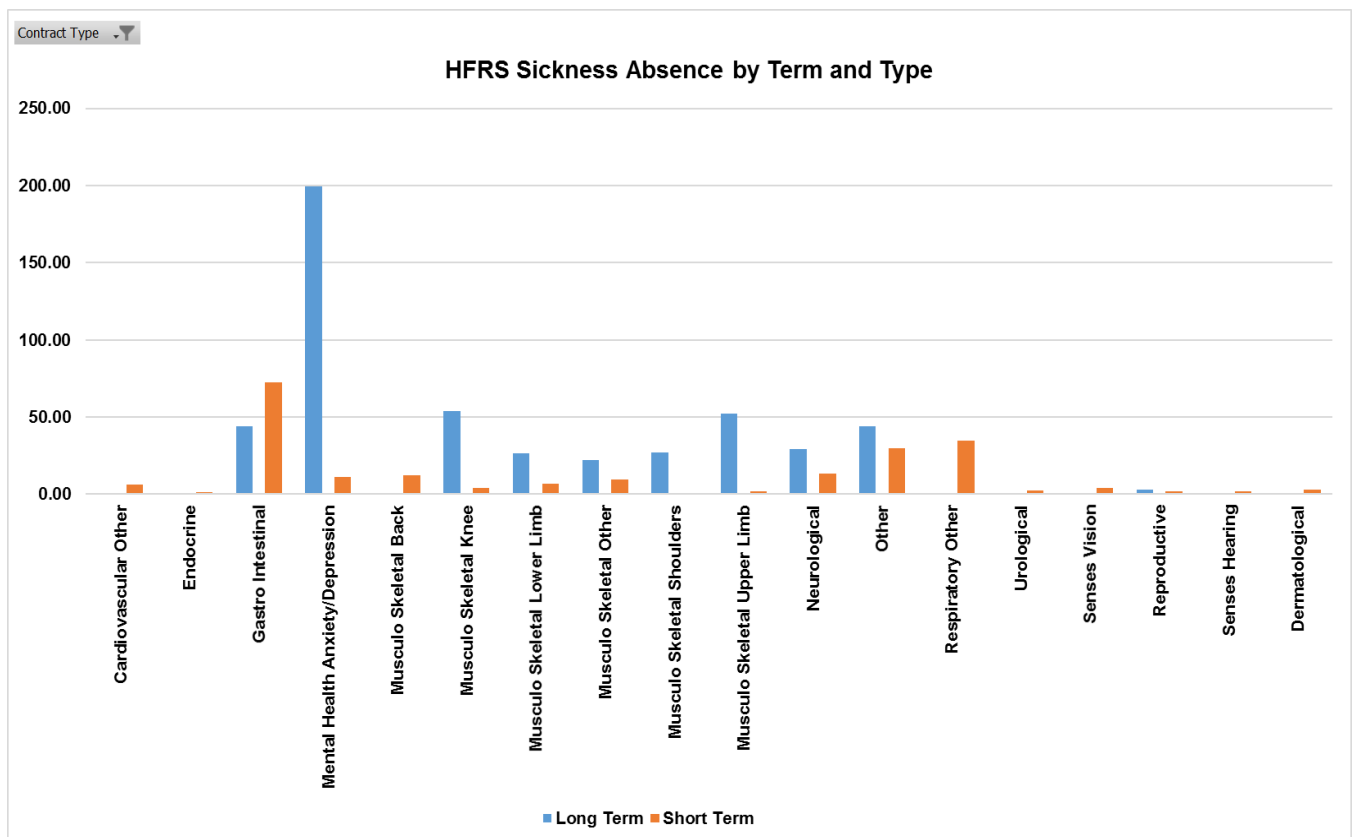
**Top 3 causes of long term absence across the service:**

- Mental Health Anxiety/depression
- Musculo Skeletal Lower limb
- Musculo Skeletal Back

**Table 5**

| Contract Type                    | Green Book           |
|----------------------------------|----------------------|
| CLG Category                     | Total Duty Days Lost |
| Mental Health Anxiety/Depression | 210.72               |
| Gastro Intestinal                | 116.56               |
| Other                            | 73.91                |
| Musculo Skeletal Knee            | 58.08                |
| Musculo Skeletal Upper Limb      | 54.16                |
| Neurological                     | 42.67                |
| Respiratory Other                | 34.64                |
| Musculo Skeletal Lower Limb      | 33.57                |
| Musculo Skeletal Other           | 31.48                |
| Musculo Skeletal Shoulders       | 27.00                |
| Musculo Skeletal Back            | 12.44                |
| Cardiovascular Other             | 6.26                 |
| Reproductive                     | 5.00                 |
| Senses Vision                    | 4.00                 |
| Dermatological                   | 3.00                 |
| Urological                       | 2.60                 |
| Senses Hearing                   | 2.00                 |
| Endocrine                        | 1.30                 |
| <b>Grand Total</b>               | <b>719.39</b>        |

**Graph 2**

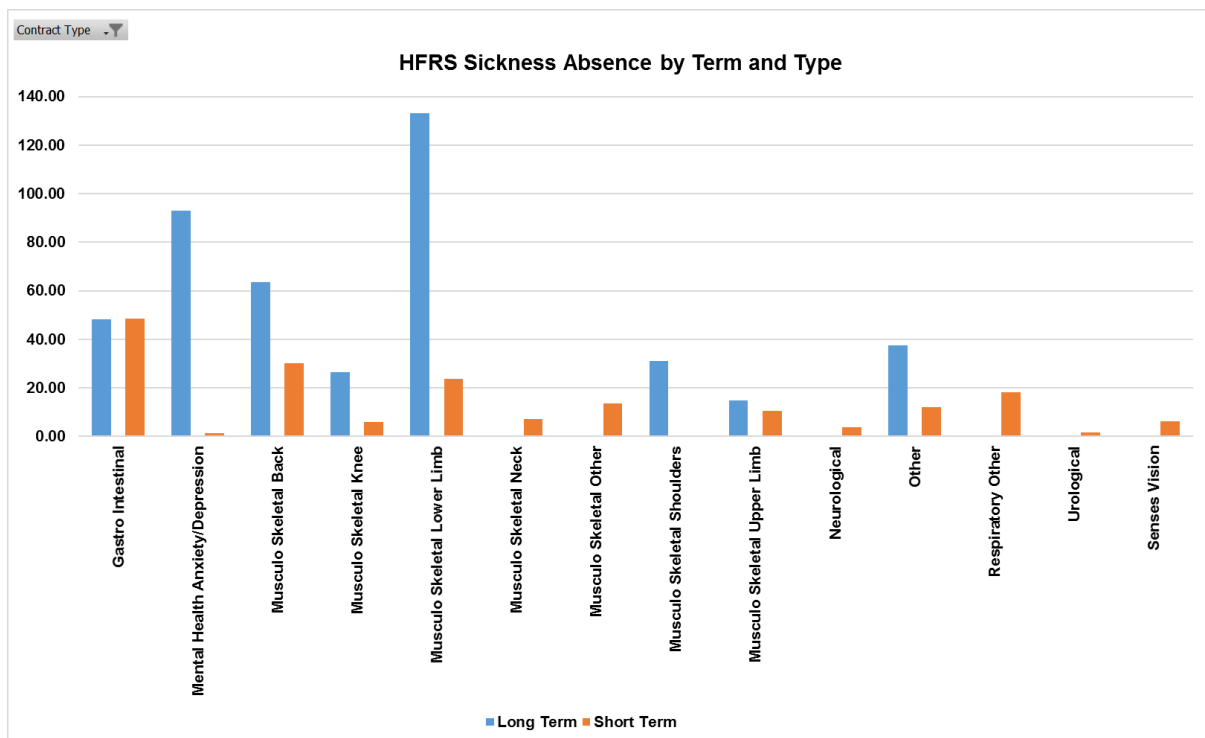




**Table 7**

| Contract Type                    | Retained                    |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>CLG Category</b>              | <b>Total Duty Days Lost</b> |
| Musculo Skeletal Lower Limb      | 156.99                      |
| Gastro Intestinal                | 96.81                       |
| Mental Health Anxiety/Depression | 94.17                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Back            | 93.66                       |
| Other                            | 49.50                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Knee            | 32.40                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Shoulders       | 31.11                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Upper Limb      | 25.20                       |
| Respiratory Other                | 18.21                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Other           | 13.65                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Neck            | 7.14                        |
| Senses Vision                    | 6.30                        |
| Neurological                     | 3.78                        |
| Urological                       | 1.68                        |
| <b>Grand Total</b>               | <b>630.60</b>               |
|                                  |                             |
|                                  |                             |
|                                  |                             |

**Graph 3**



**Table 8**

| Contract Type                    | Wholetime                   |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| <b>CLG Category</b>              | <b>Total Duty Days Lost</b> |
| Musculo Skeletal Lower Limb      | 277.00                      |
| Musculo Skeletal Back            | 247.00                      |
| Mental Health Anxiety/Depression | 246.00                      |
| Musculo Skeletal Upper Limb      | 138.00                      |
| Other                            | 108.00                      |
| Neurological                     | 73.00                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Knee            | 73.00                       |
| Cardiovascular Other             | 72.00                       |
| Gastro Intestinal                | 59.00                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Shoulders       | 52.00                       |
| Cancer                           | 36.00                       |
| Respiratory Other                | 33.00                       |
| Reproductive                     | 32.00                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Other           | 24.00                       |
| Senses Vision                    | 20.00                       |
| Endocrine                        | 14.00                       |
| Musculo Skeletal Neck            | 11.00                       |
| Senses Hearing                   | 8.00                        |
| Urological                       | 3.00                        |
| Dermatological                   | 2.00                        |
| <b>Grand Total</b>               | <b>1528.00</b>              |

**Graph 4**

