

Name of meeting: Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel

Date: 12th April 2018

Title of report: People Strategy Update – Health & Wellbeing

Purpose of report

This report is for information only and provides an update on the Health & Wellbeing strand of the People Strategy.

No decision is required

Key Decision - Is it likely to result in spending or saving £250k or more, or to have a significant effect on two or more electoral wards?	Not applicable
Key Decision - Is it in the Council's Forward Plan (key decisions and private reports?)	Not applicable
The Decision - Is it eligible for call in by Scrutiny?	Information only paper
Date signed off by <u>Strategic Director</u> & name	Rachel Spencer-Henshall, Strategic Director Corporate Strategy, Commissioning and Public Health
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Finance IT and Transactional Services?	Not applicable
Is it also signed off by the Service Director for Legal Governance and Commissioning Support?	Not applicable
Cabinet member portfolio	Councillor G Turner

Electoral wards affected: Not Applicable

Ward councillors consulted: Not Applicable

Public or private: Public

1. Background

- 1.1 The Kirklees People Strategy was launched in November 2017, providing a specific people 'lens' to organisational thinking around how we will work in Kirklees to realise our vision and outcomes.
- 1.2 At its initial launch, 8 work streams were established to deliver the strategy. These were:
- Workforce planning
 - Recruitment
 - Induction
 - Apprenticeships
 - Leadership & Management
 - Coaching & Mentoring
 - Performance
 - Employee Health and Wellbeing
- 1.3 Recognising the overlap between aspects of the different work streams and to ensure that they were better joined up and outcome focused, in early 2018, the work streams were refocused into three areas:
- Attraction and retention
 - Development
 - Health & Wellbeing
- 1.4 The previous report presented to the Corporate Scrutiny Panel on 11th October 2018 provided an update on progress with the 'Development' strand of the People Strategy, setting out how we are developing our workforce; this report provides an update on the 'Health & Wellbeing' strand of the strategy and how we are supporting our staff to be healthy and well in the workplace.

2.0 Health and Wellbeing

- 2.1 We know that valued employees are more motivated and have a positive impact on the productivity and effectiveness of an organisation. Providing outstanding health care is one way of demonstrating that we value our employees
- 2.2 In January 2019 Public Health England confirmed;
- 1 in 3 working age people in the UK have a health condition
 - 1 in 6 adults will have experienced a common mental health disorder in the past week
 - 1 in 10 employees in the UK have reported having a musculoskeletal condition

- 1 in 3 employees with a long term health condition have not discussed it with their employer

2.3 Moreover, there is a raft of clinical evidence to support the value of self-care and early intervention and prevention. In November 2018, the Health Secretary said that if we get prevention right, it holds the key to longer, healthier, happier lives and a sustainable, high quality and care system guaranteed for many generations to come. This is not just about keeping well physically and mentally, or preventing ill health in the future - it's about the environment around us, the lifestyle choices we make and how we manage existing health conditions, many of which cannot be currently prevented.

3.0 The Employee Health Care Unit

3.1 In 2017, the unit faced some significant challenges; it saw a number of key staff leave the business and for a period of time there was a reliance upon a bank of agency staff and nurses. At the same time, the unit moved away from being under the line management of the Public Health Service and was transferred across to sit within the new People Services structure, under the line management of the Head of People Services.

3.2 Whilst this was a challenging time for the unit, those challenges also presented opportunities for us to reshape and refocus the unit, to reflect the national context as well as the outcomes of our new People Strategy. This was an opportunity to reshape operations from a traditional, reactive Occupational Health Service to one that offers proactive opportunities for employee engagement and the delivery of innovative health solutions that are designed for the workforce of the future.

3.3 The vision for the unit therefore became one of early intervention and prevention; of staff wellbeing rather than staff absence and of taking a holistic approach to wellbeing that includes physical, mental and financial support for the workforce.

4.0 The New Approach to Wellbeing

4.1 In light of the new approach, a modernised wellbeing offer was developed for our services and schools and that offer is set out at Appendix 1. It focuses on early intervention and prevention by encouraging self-care through a range of services that employees can self-refer for.

4.2 That approach translated through to the support offered to line managers and the unit started to actively encourage managers to support employee wellbeing in the workplace, to actively provide reasonable adjustments where required and to take the appropriate actions to enable staff to remain at work, rather than focusing on absences and return to work processes. That is not to

say that these processes aren't important, however, the message was that it is critical to concentrate on keeping staff healthy and well whilst they are at work.

4.3 To promote the new approach and our new offer, the unit ran a campaign during 2018 based upon a theme of 'It's Okay not to be Okay' and an example leaflet is attached at Appendix 2.

4.4 We refer to our new approach as an 'integrated offer' as it is targeted at both employees and managers and focuses on a holist approach to wellbeing. We have now also extended the offer to support our elected Members and a wellbeing taster session was provided at a recent Council meeting.

5.0 Key Achievements and Outcomes

5.1 Over the past 12 months, reflecting our new, proactive and holistic approach to wellbeing, we have achieved some significant outputs and outcomes.

5.1.1 Sickness Absence Levels

The most significant outcome has been on sickness absence levels across the Council. In April 2018, levels were at an all-time high reaching an average of 12.3 days per annum, per employee. However, month on month throughout 2018, we saw absence levels falling steadily. As at December 2018, levels had fallen to just under 11.6 days per employee and our latest figures show that as at February 2019, that figure has reduced even further to an average of 11.1 days per annum per employee. That is the lowest level it has been at since January 2017.

Table 1 shows the downward trend in sickness absence levels.

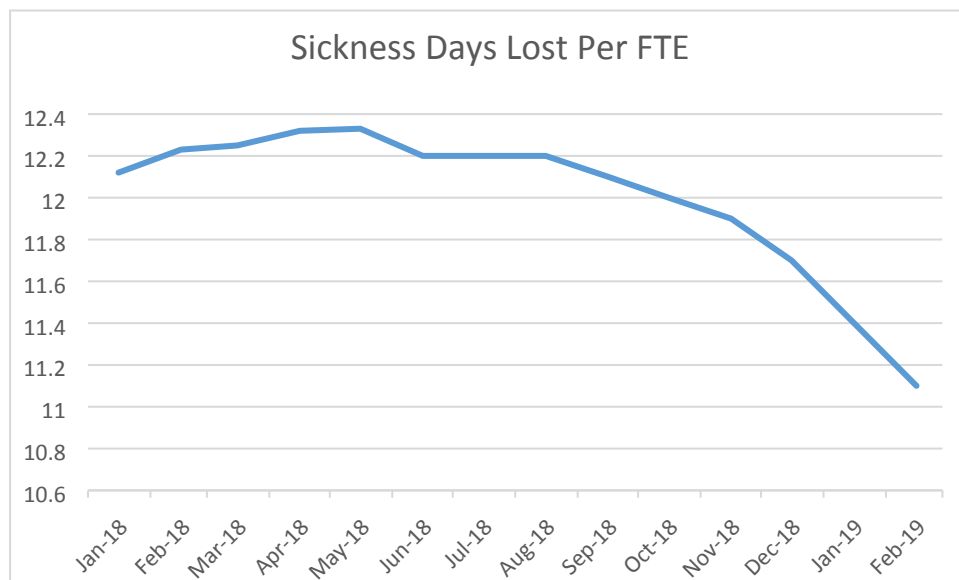


Table 2 shows the main reasons for sickness absence are mental health and musculoskeletal conditions and these are key areas targeted in our approach to wellbeing.

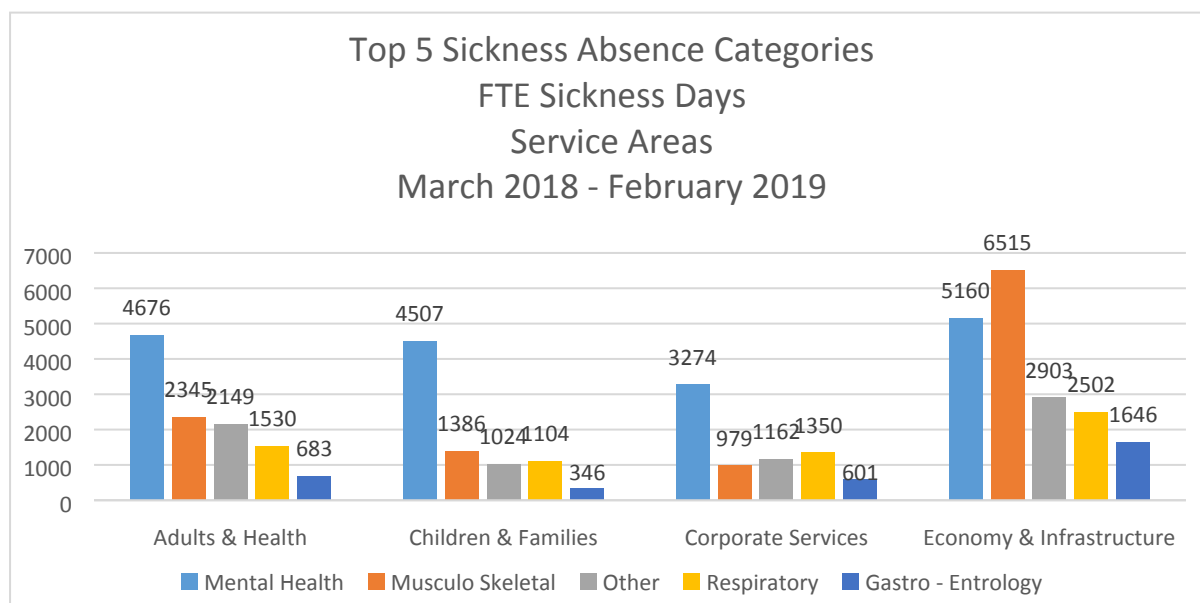


Table 3 shows the level of appointment activity that has taken place within the unit in 2018 to support the improvement in staff wellbeing and the reduction in absence levels

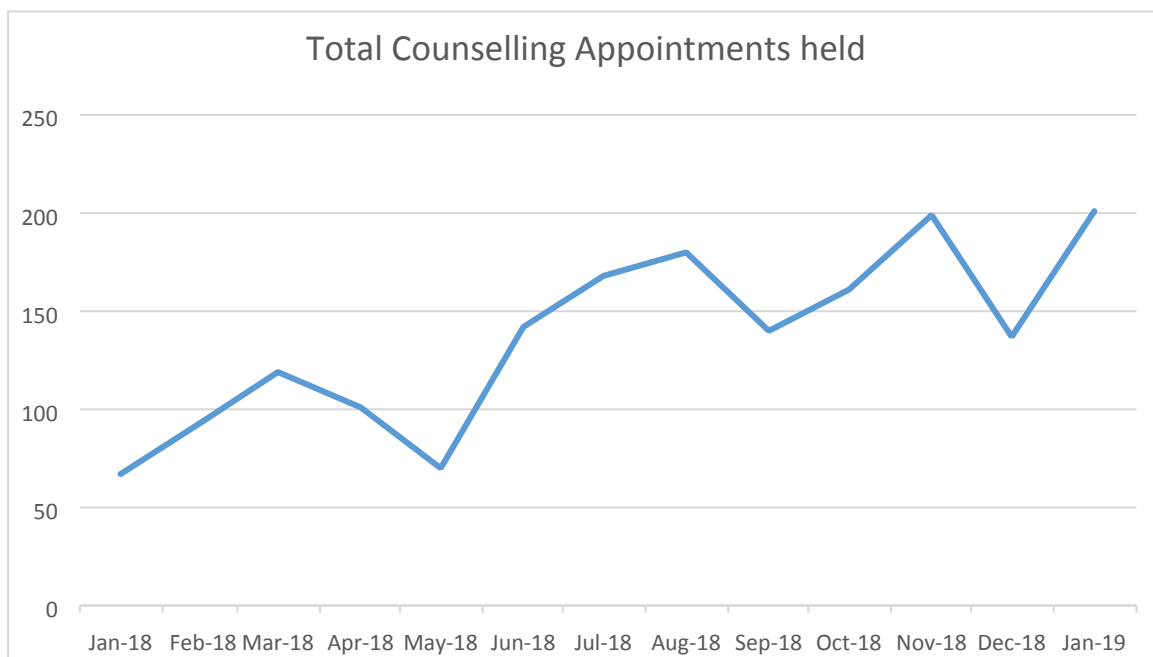
APPOINTMENT TYPE:	NUMBER OF APPOINTMENTS:
Management Referrals	1247
Counselling	1578
Physiotherapy	497
Healthy Eating Active Lifestyle advise	550
Specialist Workplace Assessment	243
Specialist Health checks	986
Vaccinations	584
*others	204
TOTAL	5889

**This includes ad hoc appointments such as alcohol testing, HGV, case conference meetings, eye sight test etc.*

5.1.2 Counselling

We know that nationally, the demand for mental health services is increasing. Our new approach encourages staff to self-refer and has meant that self-referrals for counselling services now exceed management referrals. Counselling appointments have increased significantly over the last 12 months from the lowest appointment level of 66 in January 2018 to the highest being in January 2019, where we saw 201 counselling appointments (see Table 4).

Table 4



We are able to manage this increase in demand by working in partnership with IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) and Able Futures, integrating their services into our offer. These services are funded by central government and therefore absorb some of the costs associated with running our counselling services.

The Unit has recently introduced and promoted the option of a fast track counselling referral. This option is proving popular particularly in schools where key employee absence impacts significantly on outcomes for children. The schools accessing this service are charged at a cost only basis, with the aim being to support schools to keep teaching and support staff in the classroom. We know that external providers charge significantly higher rates than we charge for this type of service, by keeping this service in house we are able to control the costs to schools and we are also able to monitor the quality of the service, ensuring that it meets the customer needs.

5.1.3 Wellbeing Events and Education Initiatives

We have proactively targeted and delivered education, instruction and advice on a much wider range of issues than traditional Occupational Health care topics which tend to focus on blood pressure, weight and physical activity. In addition to the traditional topics, we have led the way by delivering on some of the more sensitive topics which affect health and wellbeing such as the menopause, forced marriage, suicide prevention and mental health.

The total number of employees who have attended a wellbeing course or event during 2018/19 is **4053** which is around a third of the workforce, including schools.

Continuing that commitment to education and advice, we have a number of forthcoming actions and events. These include:

- Delivering development days in the Refuse Service;
- Delivering a 'Taking Care of You' staff wellbeing event on 28th March at Huddersfield Town Hall;
- Establishing 164 Mental Health and Wellbeing champions within our schools;
- Piloting partnership working with Public Protection around Mental Health First Aid training

5.1.4 Workplace Health & Wellbeing Champions

We have also established and developed a team of Mental Health and Wellbeing Champions. There are 70 Champions across the Council and we will build on this model as we create our Champions in schools. The benefit that these Champions offer is that they are in touch with front line staff and promote the vision that we make every contact count. Over 80% of our workforce are Kirklees residents, so having a Champion Model enables us to capitalise on their reach as well as their knowledge of local health and wellbeing issues and this helps us to have an impact beyond the workplace.

5.1.5 Job-specific Health Improvement

We have worked closely with various services to improve some specific job related issues. For example, a trial of podiatry in manual working teams during 2018 proved extremely successful. Some of our employees may walk around 10 – 12 miles per day; a total of 59 staff took part in the trial and the trial highlighted that 70% of those staff had clinical foot problems.

The teams that benefitted from this trial included the refuse teams who prior to the trial, were not fully engaged with the Health Care Unit. On the back of this work, those hard to reach teams have now started to engage in a health care programme which aims to enhance their overall wellbeing. The cost of the trial was £22.49 per employee, which is a small investment for support that can keep these employees healthy and help them to stay in work.

As a result of the trial:

- A review of workwear/boots provided by the Council has been undertaken
- We will now undertake annual clinical foot health inspections for some specific job roles
- A more detailed assessment of the health needs of our manual workers will be undertaken, which will include body mapping for musculoskeletal assessments.

5.1.6 Partnerships

Since April 2018 the unit has developed links with the NHS to support the delivery of counselling services for Kirklees employees. IAPT (Improving Access to Psychological Therapies) now operate from the Employee Health Care unit for two days a week. IAPT are the service that local GP's refer Kirklees/ Calderdale residents to if they need to access to psychological services. This is a mutually beneficial arrangement which has meant that our unit can offer self-help Cognitive Based Therapy to our staff. This arrangement is free for our employees and the only cost incurred is the use of a room 2 days per week.

The unit has also developed a partnership with Able Futures. Able Futures is funded by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to support individuals with a mental health issue to remain in work. An accredited psychotherapist from Able Futures is based at the unit 1 day a week, offering support and a wellbeing programme that is tailored to an individual's needs. Where the EHC unit offers short term therapies, Able Futures offer longer term support for a period of up to 9 months. The Able Futures arrangement ensures that staff receive continuing care to help maintain their mental health and remain in work.

In addition, the unit has developed a strong partnership with Public Health colleagues working together on initiatives such as Tackling Obesity, Clean Air, Active Travel, etc. and there has been a significant partnership approach to developing our Health & Wellbeing and Mental Health Champions. This partnership with Public Health extends to our in-house physician who is also working closely with Public Health colleagues to understand local health inequalities and consider how we can improve the way in which our employees access services and support available.

Finally, Public Health received funding from Public Health England this financial year and our partnership working with them enabled the unit to broaden its flu campaign and vaccinate employees in private care homes

5.1.7 Volunteering

There is clinical evidence to support the benefits of volunteering on health and wellbeing and the EHC unit was instrumental in driving forward the Council's revised approach to Staff Volunteering which was launched in February 2019. The previous scheme was limited in scope and impact, however the new scheme enables staff to take 2 days paid time off per annum to volunteer. This will not only benefit our communities but it will also help to improve staff morale, wellbeing and satisfaction for those who undertake volunteering activities.

If all 8000 Kirklees staff in our services take two full days of volunteering time this will equate to 120,000 employer supported volunteering hours. We will be monitoring take up and impact over the next 12 months.

5.1.8 Reputation

The improvements we have made and continue to make to our wellbeing offer are also now starting to filter out to other organisations and we have been contacted by a number of neighbouring authorities, expressing an interest in buying into the services we offer. To date, we have a contract with one of our neighbours and we have three others that we are in dialogue with. This is enhancing the reputation of Kirklees as being a leading name in supporting employee wellbeing.

6.0 Future Ambitions

6.1 Whilst much has been achieved over the past 12 months, there is more to do to ensure that the services provided are sufficiently flexible and resilient to meet the needs of our workforce; that they are of the highest quality and that they are creative and innovative, tapping into the array of intelligence and new techniques that are continuously becoming available.

6.2 Some of our plans for the future include:

6.2.1 Workplace Wellbeing Charter

We have signed up to the above charter which contains a set of quality standards that we will work towards over the next 12 months. This work will inform the rolling programme of training for our workplace health and wellbeing champions

Other pledges that the Council has committed to and which the unit will support to implement over the next 12 months include Mindful Employer, Mental Health Pledge and Disability Confident Employer

6.2.2 SEQOHS

To ensure that the unit offers a competitive and quality service, we have recently signed up to Safe Effective Quality Occupational Health Service accreditation. SEQOHS is the formal recognition that an Occupational Health

service provider has to demonstrate to show that it has the competence to deliver against the measures in the SEQOHS standards

- Business probity
- Information Governance
- People
- Facilities and Equipment
- Relationships with Purchasers Relationships with Workers

The scheme is managed by the Royal College of Physicians of London on behalf of the Faculty of Occupational Medicine and contractors are increasingly demanding this as core standard in procurement exercises. We hope that by working towards this standard we can be recognised as a Centre of Excellence for Occupational Health Care

On the back of our commitment to this standard, we have recently been successful in a tender process with the NHS to deliver bespoke services for their employees as part of a framework arrangement. This contract offers a potential income generation stream for the unit.

6.2.3 Working in Partnership with GPs

With support from our in-house Physician, we plan to reach out to local GPs to provide them with a better understanding of our Employee Health Care offer and assess how we might work in partnership with them to ensure employees are able to remain in work and can access our services. We hope that by raising awareness of our services, it may reduce the number of occasions that GPs sign staff off as unfit for work.

6.2.4 Supporting the Local Business Community

After the DWP 'Fit for Work' Scheme folded, the DWP has raised concern around the need for greater Occupational Health support for local businesses. We have recently been approached by several local businesses who are interested in accessing our services and we have been talking to the Economic Resilience Team to explore how we might take this forward with the aim of supporting employee wellbeing within Kirklees small and medium sized businesses over the coming years.

6.2.5 Supporting Health and Social Care

We are currently in dialogue with colleagues in the Adults Directorate to explore how we might offer support to reduce sickness absence and aid recruitment and retention difficulties within care homes. In particular we are looking at supporting care homes that are classed as requiring improvement. Should these care homes fail to improve, it would result in a significant and negative impact upon the local community, the services of the NHS and the Council's ability to meet statutory requirements. This piece of work is in the early stages of development.

6.2.6 Supporting our schools

We are currently working with Early Learning and Support to establish necessary interventions to meet the Wellbeing criteria in the new Ofsted framework and to gain a better understanding of teacher recruitment and retention difficulties. Kirklees is not unique in the problems it faces in education, it mirrors the national picture where Newly Qualified Teachers leave the profession in the first or second year of teaching.

6.2.7 New Services Lines

As part of the commitment to continuous improvement, the unit is also currently exploring the following enhancements to the wellbeing offer:

- An E- referral system that flags stress/anxiety cases on day 1. The best approach to getting staff back to work is to intervene at the earliest opportunity. We are therefore exploring a system that enables us to do this and to triage cases, making contact with the employee to support them, where appropriate.
- A clinical Helpline that Managers can access to discuss cases at the earliest opportunity. Traditionally there has been very little interaction between the Clinical Team and the Manager when managing health cases. Manager support and education is very important in meeting Occupational Health needs of the future
- A portal based referral system. The current IT system will not be supported by the contractor from November 2019 and we recognise that our end to end referral process is labour intensive, inefficient and presents an increased risk of data breaches. A new digital solution will therefore be procured that will achieve significant efficiencies in terms of resources and costs as well as minimising data security risks. This exercise will commence over the next couple of months.

7.0 Conclusion

7.1 The Employee Healthcare Unit has transformed and improved significantly over the past 12 months and this has had a really positive impact on the wellbeing of the workforce which is evidenced at the highest level by the improvement in sickness absence.

7.2 The unit is ambitious for the future in terms of its continuous improvement, its partnership working and its growth strategy.

7.3 The unit would welcome comments and suggestions from the Scrutiny Panel on how it might continue to improve its offer and model of delivery as we move forward.

Kirklees Employee Healthcare

Standard Service Offer

Support is triaged on clinical need and includes:

- Occupational Health Management referral. This includes sickness absence referrals and comprehensive reports, advice around reasonable adjustments and proactive support to speed up returns to work.
- Health Surveillance. This includes Hand Arm Vibration (HAV), noise assessments, etc.
- Physician advice for complex cases. This includes HAV'S tier 4 and 5 reviews, ill health retirement cases, etc. We have a Physician who, from his partnership working with the HSE, has recently developed an enhanced stress risk assessment tool for employers which we are in the process of implementing for Kirklees.
- Vaccinations - hepatitis B and Flu
- Physiotherapy including acupuncture
- Healthy Eating and Active lifestyle advice. This includes rehabilitation post physiotherapy
- Bespoke Wellbeing workshops around low mood, anxiety, sleep, mindfulness, pressure management, how to look after yourself and domestic abuse
- Alternative therapies. This includes podiatry advice in areas such as cleansing where colleagues are expected to walk 10 miles + per day
- Specialist Workplace Assessments
- A range of psychological interventions including:
 - An Employee Assistance Programme with 24/7 telephone based support. The CareFirst contract includes Citizen Advice Bureau trained personnel who specialise in financial and debt management
 - Guided self-help to manage symptoms of low mood
 - Face to Face counselling
 - Specialist EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitisation Reprocessing) for individuals / teams who are affected by traumatic situations or events