

**M. Pearson
CLERK TO THE AUTHORITY**

**To: The Chair and Members of the
Human Resources Management
and Development Committee
(see below)**

**SERVICE HEADQUARTERS
THE KNOWLE
CLYST ST GEORGE
EXETER
DEVON
EX3 0NW**

Your ref :
Our ref :
Website : www.dsfire.gov.uk

Date : 23 September 2011
Please ask for : Sam Sharman
Email : ssharman@dsfire.gov.uk

Telephone : 01392 872200
Fax : 01392 872300
Direct Telephone : 01392 872393

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

Monday 3 October 2011

A meeting of the Human Resources Management and Development Committee will be held on the above date, **commencing at 10:00 hours in Conference Room B in Somerset House, Service Headquarters** to consider the following matters.

M. Pearson
Clerk to the Authority

AGENDA

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes** of the meeting held on 17 June 2011 attached (Page 1).
3. **Items Requiring Urgent Attention**

Items which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered at the meeting as matters of urgency.

4. **Declarations of Interest**

Members are asked to consider whether they have any **personal/personal and prejudicial interests** in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and declare any such interests at this time. *Please refer to the Note 2 at the end of this agenda for guidance on interests.*

PART 1 – OPEN COMMITTEE

5. **Election of Vice Chair**

6. **Absence Management**

Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/9) attached (page 4)

7. **Equalities Framework Peer Assessment (EFPA)**

Presentation to be given by the Director of People and Organisational Development at the meeting.

8. **Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RECOMMENDATION that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that, for both agenda items 9 and 10 below, they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A (as amended) to the Act, namely:

- Paragraph 3 - information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person, including the Authority, and;
- Paragraph 4 – information relating to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with any labour relations matter arising between the Authority and its employees.

PART 2 – ITEMS WHICH MAY BE TAKEN IN THE ABSENCE OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

9. **Business Continuity**

Report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/10) attached (page 12).

10. **Fire Control Staffing Issues**

Report of ACFO Smith, Director of Service Delivery (HRMDC/11/11) TO FOLLOW.

MEMBERS ARE REQUESTED TO SIGN THE ATTENDANCE REGISTER

Membership:-

Councillors Cann (Chair), Bown, Boyd, Brooksbank, Burrige-Clayton, Horsfall and Wright

Substitute Members

Members are reminded that, in accordance with Standing Order 36, the Clerk (or his representative) **MUST** be advised of any substitution prior to the start of the meeting.

NOTES

1. ACCESS TO INFORMATION

Any person wishing to inspect any minutes, reports or lists of background papers relating to any item on this agenda should contact Sam Sharman on the telephone number shown at the top of this agenda.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

What Interests do I need to declare in a meeting?

As a first step you need to declare any personal interests you have in a matter. You will then need to decide if you have a prejudicial interest in a matter.

What is a personal interest?

You have a personal interest in a matter if it relates to any interests which you must register, as defined in Paragraph 8(1) of the Code.

You also have a personal interest in any matter likely to affect the well-being or financial position of:-

- (a) you, members of your family, or people with whom you have a close association;
- (b) any person/body who employs/has employed the persons referred to in (a) above, or any firm in which they are a partner or company of which they are a director;
- (c) any person/body in whom the persons referred to in (a) above have a beneficial interest in a class of securities exceeding the nominal value of £25,000; or
- (d) any body of which you are a Member or in a position of general control or management and which:-
 - you have been appointed or nominated to by the Authority; or
 - exercises functions of a public nature (e.g. a constituent authority; a Police Authority); or
 - is directed to charitable purposes; or
 - one of the principal purposes includes the influence of public opinion or policy (including any political party or trade union)

more than it would affect **the majority** of other people in the Authority's area.

Anything that could affect the quality of your life (or that of those persons/bodies listed in (b) to (d) above) either positively or negatively, is likely to affect your/their "well being". If you (or any of those persons/bodies listed in (b) to (d) above) have the potential to gain or lose from a matter under consideration – to a **greater extent** than **the majority** of other people in the Authority's area - you should declare a personal interest.

What do I need to do if I have a personal interest in a matter?

Where you are aware of, **or ought reasonably to be aware of**, a personal interest in a matter you must declare it when you get to the item headed "Declarations of Interest" on the agenda, or otherwise as soon as the personal interest becomes apparent to you, **UNLESS** the matter relates to or is likely to affect:-

- (a) any other body to which you were appointed or nominated by the Authority; or
- (b) any other body exercising functions of a public nature (e.g. membership of a constituent authority; other Authority such as a Police Authority);

of which you are a Member or in a position of general control or management. In such cases, provided you do not have a prejudicial interest, you need only declare your personal interest if and when you speak on the matter.

Can I stay in a meeting if I have a personal interest?

You can still take part in the meeting and vote on the matter unless your personal interest is also a prejudicial interest.

What is a prejudicial interest?

Your personal interest will also be a **prejudicial** interest if **all** of the following conditions are met:-

- (a) the matter is not covered by one of the following exemptions to prejudicial interests in relation to the following functions of the Authority:-
 - statutory sick pay (if you are receiving or entitled to this);
 - an allowance, payment or indemnity for members;
 - any ceremonial honour given to members;

- setting council tax or a precept; **AND**
- (b) the matter affects your financial position (or that of any of the persons/bodies as described in Paragraph 8 of the Code) or concerns a regulatory/licensing matter relating to you or any of the persons/bodies as described in Paragraph 8 of the Code); **AND**
- (c) a member of the public who knows the relevant facts would reasonably think your personal interest is so significant that it is likely to prejudice your judgement of the public interest.

What do I need to do if I have a prejudicial interest?

If you have a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting, you must declare that you have a prejudicial interest (and the nature of that interest) as soon as it becomes apparent to you. You should then leave the room unless members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter by statutory right or otherwise. If that is the case, you can also attend the meeting for that purpose.

You must, however, leave the room **immediately after you have finished speaking (or sooner if the meeting so decides)** and you cannot remain in the public gallery to observe the vote on the matter. Additionally, you must not seek to **improperly influence** a decision in which you have a prejudicial interest.

What do I do if I require further guidance or clarification on declarations of interest?

If you feel you may have an interest in a matter that will need to be declared but require further guidance on this, please contact the Clerk to the Authority – preferably before the date of the meeting at which you may need to declare the interest. Similarly, please contact the Clerk if you require guidance/advice on any other aspect of the Code of Conduct.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT AND DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE

(Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Authority)

17 June 2011

Present:-

Councillors Boyd, Brooksbank, Cann, Horsfall, Randall-Johnson (vice Bown) and Wright

Apologies:-

Councillors Bown and Burridge-Clayton

***HRMDC/1. Election of Chair**

RESOLVED that Councillor Cann be appointed Chair of the Committee until the first meeting after the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2012.

***HRMDC/2. Minutes**

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the meeting held on 11 April 2011 be signed as a correct record.

***HRMDC/3. Declarations of Interest**

Members of the Committee were asked to consider whether they had any personal/personal and prejudicial interests in items as set out on the agenda for this meeting and to declare any such interests at this time.

No interests were declared.

***HRMDC/4. Election of Vice Chair**

RESOLVED that this item be deferred for consideration at the next meeting of the Committee.

***HRMDC/5. Overview of Union Recognition Arrangements**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/7) that provided information in respect of the collective working arrangements with Devon and Somerset Fire and Rescue Service. The report included details of the arrangements that were in place currently for the recognised trade unions, namely the Fire Brigades' Union (FBU), Fire Officers' Association (FOA), Retained Firefighters' Union (RFU) and UNISON (for non uniformed staff). Details of the facilities that were currently provided for the trade unions were also provided, together with an overview of the collective arrangements.

In response to questions, the Chief Fire Officer advised that the Service had worked hard to foster good relations with the Chairman and Secretary of the FBU. He added that the union representatives had been given time off to undertake their duties for the FBU and to clear a backlog of work that had arisen as a result of combination. The release of these staff from station had thus achieved the intended result and smoothed industrial relations.

Councillor Boyd commented that he felt that there was a much better relationship in place with FBU recently but that he would encourage the exchange of ideas and more open opinions rather than negativity from the union. The Chairman enquired as to whether discussions would be on a unilateral basis or regional. The Chief Fire Officer replied that current discussions were on a local basis but there were instances where regional officials may become involved. As such, the model of engagement may need to be modified.

***HRMDC/6. European Focus Group - Update**

The Chief Fire Officer reported that the European Union (EU) was to debate the removal of the "opt out" clause on the Working Time Directive in November 2011. This currently permitted staff to opt out of the requirement to be bound by the 48 hour restriction on working time. The removal of this clause would have a significant impact on the Service in terms of how services were provided and would present an additional financial burden. There were a number of other EU Countries that did not wish to see this opt out removed and work was being undertaken to try to influence this decision.

The Committee was advised that the Chief Fire Officer had recently initiated and secured agreement from 27 EU member states for a pan European strategy to improve public and fire fighter safety across Europe. This will be launched formally in the EU Parliament in October 2011. The Chief Fire Officer, along with the Director of People and Organisational Development, also represent the Chief Fire Officers' Association (CFOA) on a European Focus Group which was meeting to further develop engagement in Europe. Congratulations were extended by the Committee to the Chief Fire Officer and Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development for the work that had been undertaken.

***HRMDC/7. Absence Management**

The Committee received for information a report of the Director of People and Organisational Development (HRMDC/11/8) that provided details of the Service performance for absence levels in 2010/11 as compared with the target set of 9.0 days/shifts lost per person.

It was noted that the actual performance in 2010/11 was 8.25 days/shifts lost per person, which was a retrograde step when compared with performance in 2009/10 (8.02 days/shifts lost per person), although this exceeded the target set. In terms of performance against other organisations, the Service was below the 8.3 days average for the public sector but above the private sector average of 5.8 days. The Service would need to reduce absence levels by 22.42% to achieve the national average of 6.4 days.

The Head of Human Resources circulated additional information at the meeting on sickness absence for the period May 2009 to March 2011 that showed the trends that had arisen over this period. This showed a peak in March 2011 but there was no apparent, single reason for this. He reported that the Service was in the 3rd quartile of performance for the country and it was recognised that there was still a long way to go. The Committee indicated that this was a good report, however, and that the Service should continue with the action being taken to reduce the levels of sickness absence within the organisation.

***HRMDC/8. Determination of Membership of the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Internal Dispute Resolution Procedure Stage 2 Panel**

The Committee was **RECOMMENDED** to appoint (from amongst its membership) 3 members to serve on the Firefighters' Pension Scheme internal Dispute Resolution Panel until the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2012.

RESOLVED that Councillors Bown, Boyd and Wright be appointed to the Firefighters' Pension Scheme Internal Dispute Resolution Panel until the first meeting of the Committee following the Annual Meeting of the Authority in 2012.

***HRMDC/9. Exclusion of the Press and Public**

RESOLVED that, in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it will involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, namely information relating to consultations on labour relations matters between the Authority and its employees.

***HRMDC/10. Emerging Industrial Relations Committee (IRC) Issues**

(An item taken in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972 during consideration of which the press and public were excluded from the meeting).

The Head of Human Resources gave an update at the meeting in respect of emerging industrial relations issues, including those related to Gartan and retained duty system contracts.

***DENOTES DELEGATED MATTER WITH POWER TO ACT**

The meeting started at 10.00hours and finished at 11.10hours.



DEVON & SOMERSET FIRE & RESCUE AUTHORITY

REPORT REFERENCE NO.	HRMDC/11/9
MEETING	HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE
DATE OF MEETING	3 OCTOBER 2011
SUBJECT OF REPORT	ABSENCE MANAGEMENT
LEAD OFFICER	Director of People and Organisational Development
RECOMMENDATIONS	<i>That the report be noted.</i>
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	The progress with Absence Management has been included as a standing item within the Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) Committee agenda. This report includes an update of the Service performance for absence levels.
RESOURCE IMPLICATIONS	There are ongoing resource implications in relation to absence management in terms of providing cover when required.
EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT	The Absence Management policy has had an equality impact assessment.
APPENDICES	None
LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS	None

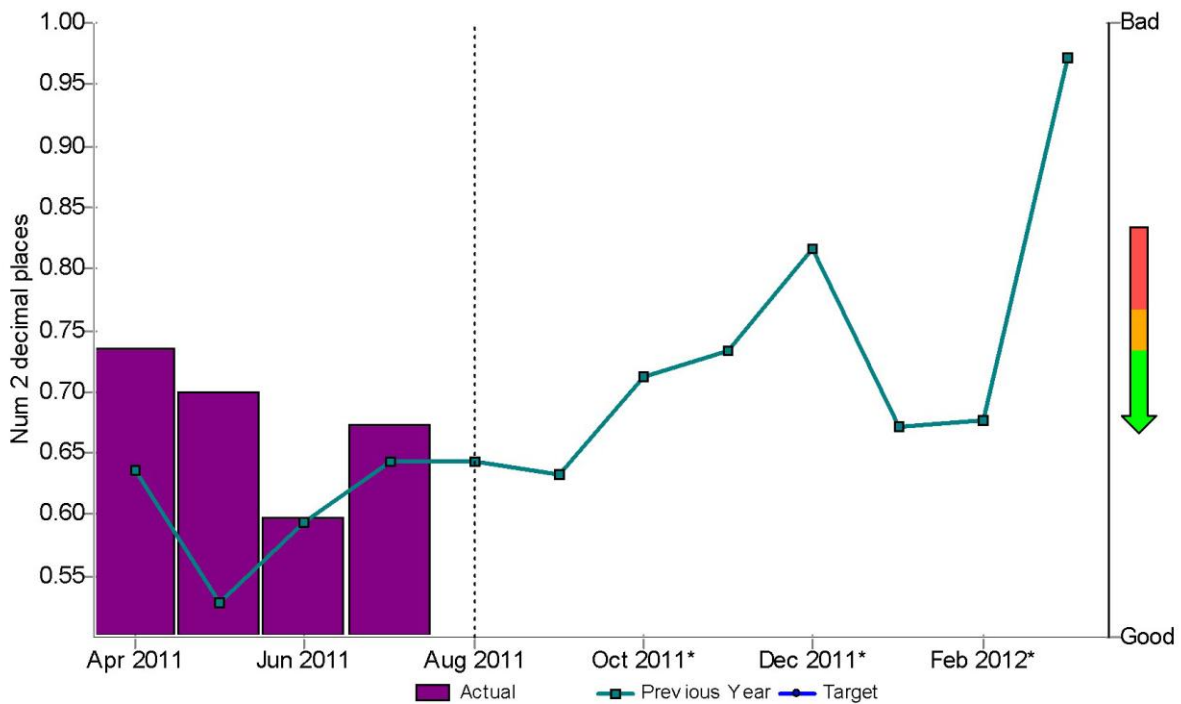
1. **INTRODUCTION**

1.1 Absence levels have previously been identified as a key measure as they affect the efficiency and the effectiveness of the Service. The Human Resources Management and Development (HRMD) Committee have therefore determined that this measure will be monitored and reviewed as a standing item.

2. **2011/12 PERFORMANCE**

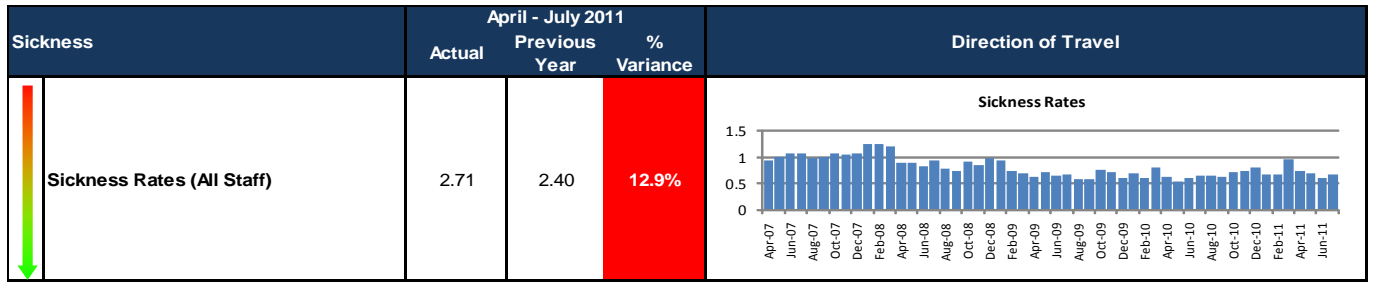
2.1 The current actual level for 2011/12 is 2.70 days/shifts lost per person compared with the previous year when it was as at an average of 2.40 days per person. This equates to 12.7% worse than at this time last year.

All Staff – Sickness Rates per Person – by Month



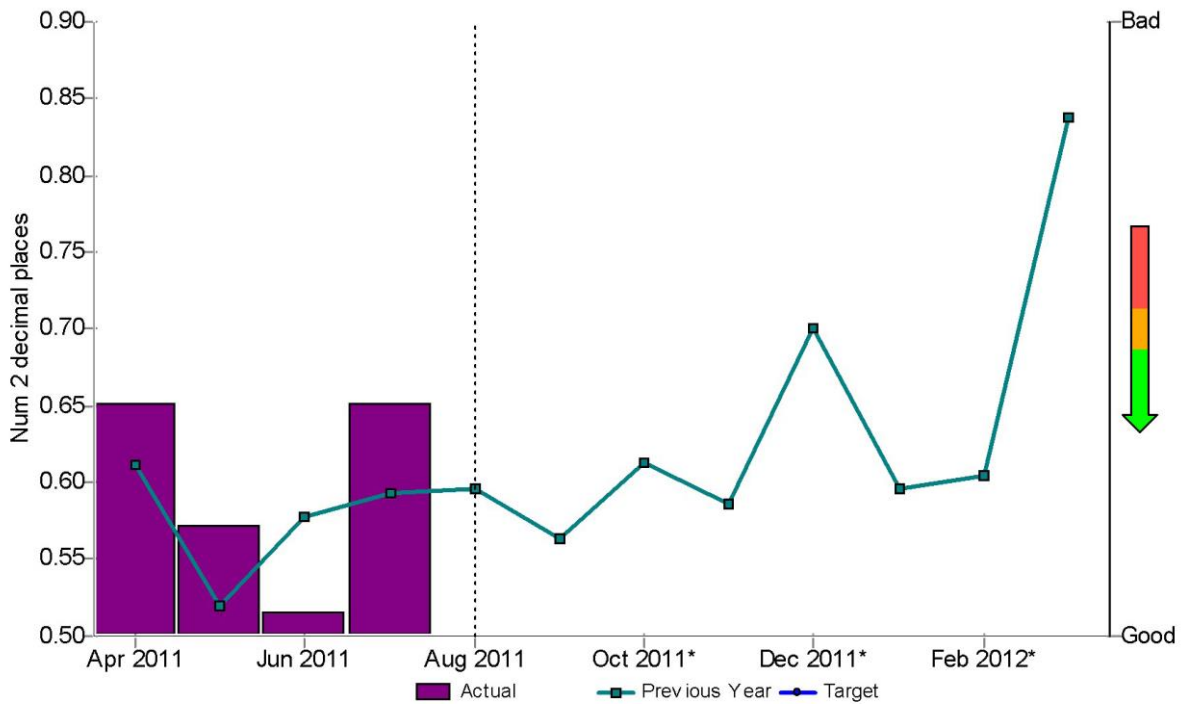
	Actual 11/12	Previous Year 10/11	% variance on previous year
Apr-11	0.73	0.64	(15.6%)
May-11	0.70	0.53	(32.6%)
Jun-11	0.60	0.59	(0.5%)
Jul-11	0.67	0.64	(4.7%)
Aug-11		0.64	
Sep-11		0.63	
Oct-11		0.71	
Nov-11		0.73	
Dec-11		0.82	
Jan-12		0.67	
Feb-12		0.68	
Mar-12		0.97	
YTD	2.70	2.40	(12.7%)

2.2 The direction of travel for the sickness rates since combination are shown below from the April – July 2011 Performance Report:

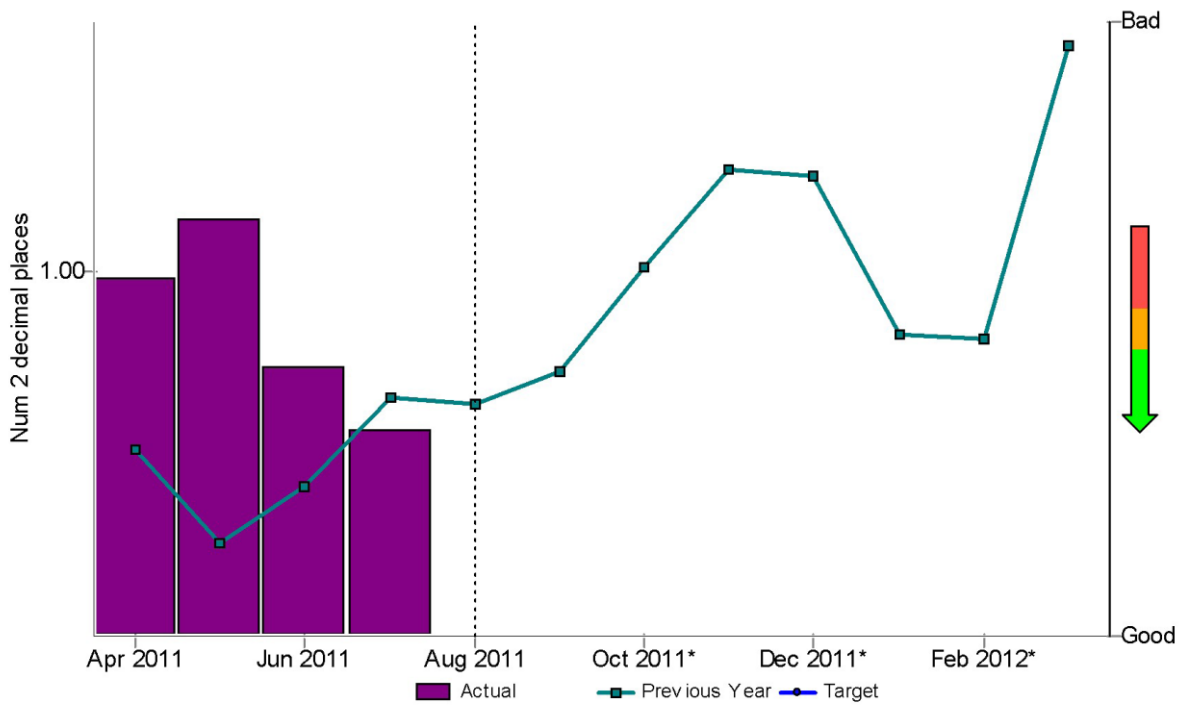


2.3 The Service can break down the figures by staff category and the rates for uniformed, control and non-uniformed are shown below.

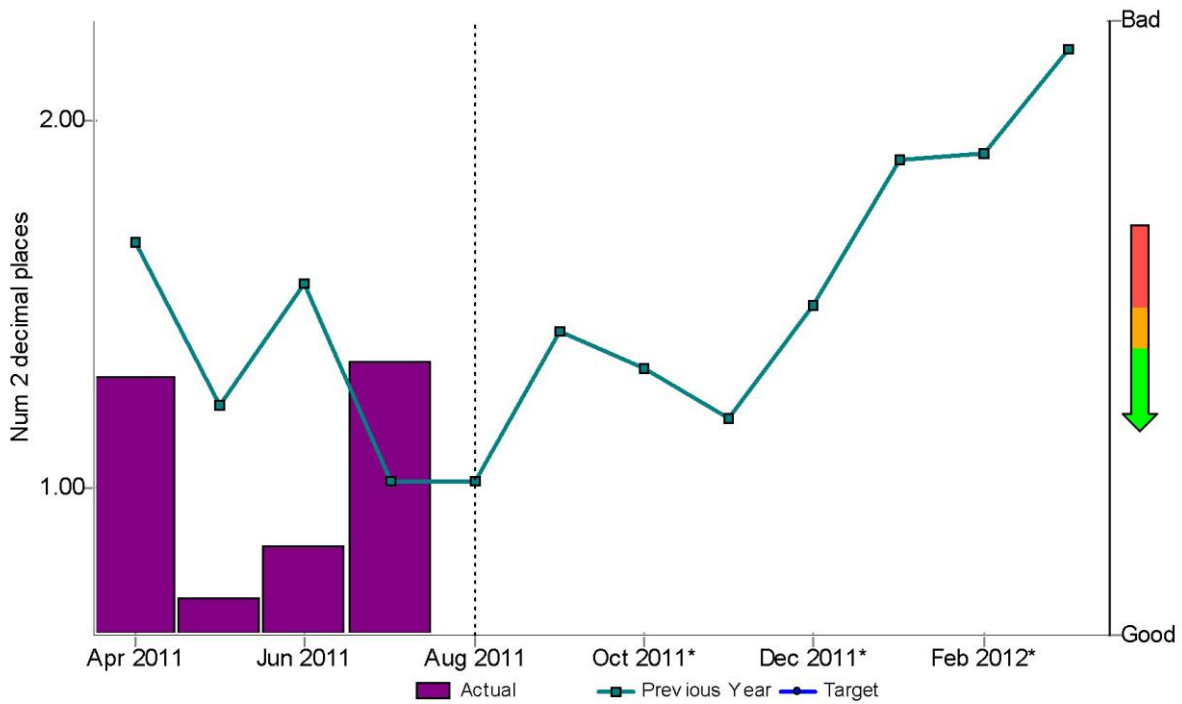
Uniformed Staff Sickness Rates by Month 2011/12



Non-uniformed Staff Sickness Rates by Month 2011/12



Control Staff Sickness Rates by Month 2011/12

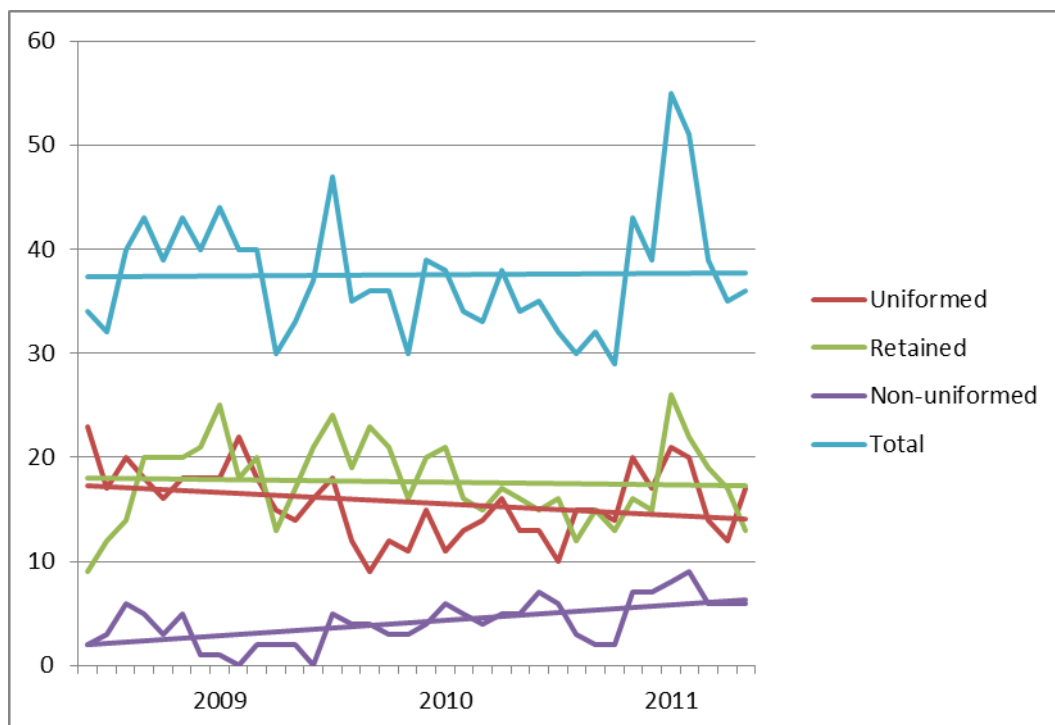


3. **DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF LONG TERM SICKNESS**

3.1 The monitoring of long term sickness i.e. those over 28 days, is reported on a monthly basis and includes those who are long term sick and those on restricted duties. There has been a significant increase in Long term sickness levels over the period March to May 2011 and these represent the highest levels since April 2008. However, these levels have again dropped from June and are more typical of our long-term sickness levels.

2011/12

Number of staff	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar
Uniformed	21	20	14	12	17							
Retained	26	22	19	17	13							
Non-uniformed	8	9	6	6	6							
Total	55	51	33	38	34							



Long-term Sickness 2008 to 2011 – Number of Staff

3.2 The Long term sickness can then be further broken down for staff with absences that have been ongoing for a period longer than 6, 12, 18 and 24 months as requested previously by the HRMD Committee. These have been reported at the last 5 HRMD committee meetings. The performance has been good in this area with the number of cases having reduced from 16 in August 2010 to 8 in August 2011.

Aug-10

Number of staff	>6 mths	>12 mths	>18 mths	>24 mths	Total
Uniformed	4	0	0	2	6
Retained	2	1	1	3	7
Non-uniformed	2	0	0	1	3
Total	8	1	1	6	16

Nov-10

Number of staff	>6 mths	>12 mths	>18 mths	>24 mths	Total
Uniformed	2	1	0	2	5
Retained	1	1	2	1	5
Non-uniformed	2	0	0	0	2
Total	5	2	2	3	12

Jan-11

Number of staff	>6 mths	>12 mths	>18 mths	>24 mths	Total
Uniformed	1	0	0	2	3
Retained	0	0	1	0	1
Non-uniformed	2	0	0	0	2
Total	3	0	1	2	6

Mar-11

Number of staff	>6 mths	>12 mths	>18 mths	>24 mths	Total
Uniformed	2	0	0	1	3
Retained	1	0	0	1	2
Non-uniformed	2	1	0	0	3
Total	5	1	0	2	8

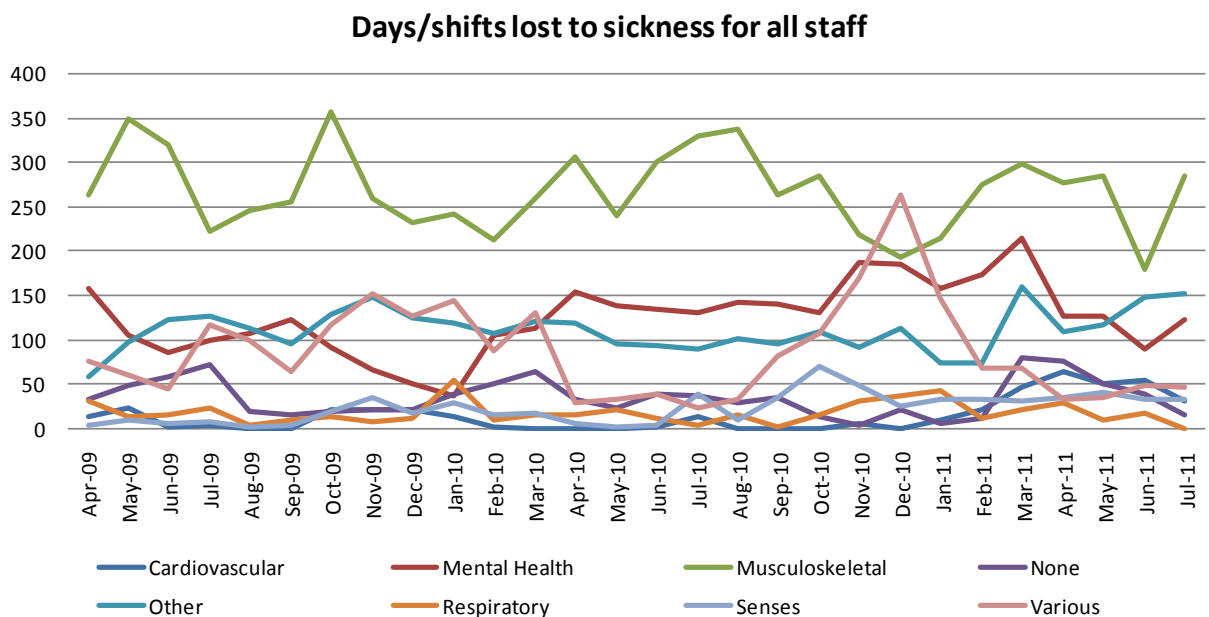
Aug-11

Number of staff	>6 mths	>12 mths	>18 mths	>24 mths	Total
Uniformed	1	0	0	0	1
Retained	4	0	0	1	5
Non-uniformed	2	0	0	0	2
Total	7	0	0	1	8

4. CAUSES OF ABSENCE

- 4.1 The graph overleaf shows the number of days lost to each type of sickness absence since April 2009.

- Looking at the longer term trend, sickness due to musculoskeletal problems has seen a slight decrease in the last few months; however it still remains the overall highest cause of absence across the Service.
- Sickness due to mental health is showing a decrease compared to levels of this type of sickness in the same periods for previous years.
- The 'various' type of sickness is showing a significant increase in the period from October 2010 to January 2011. This sickness category includes colds/flu/dental/sore throats etc; there is a tendency for a seasonal trend however levels were particularly high this winter.



5. LENGTH OF SERVICE AND AGE

5.1 We have looked at sickness in relation to both age of the employee and time they have worked for DSFRS from April 2010. As the table below shows, employees are less likely to have sickness absences within their first year of employment. Thereafter the sickness levels are on average above 8 days per person.

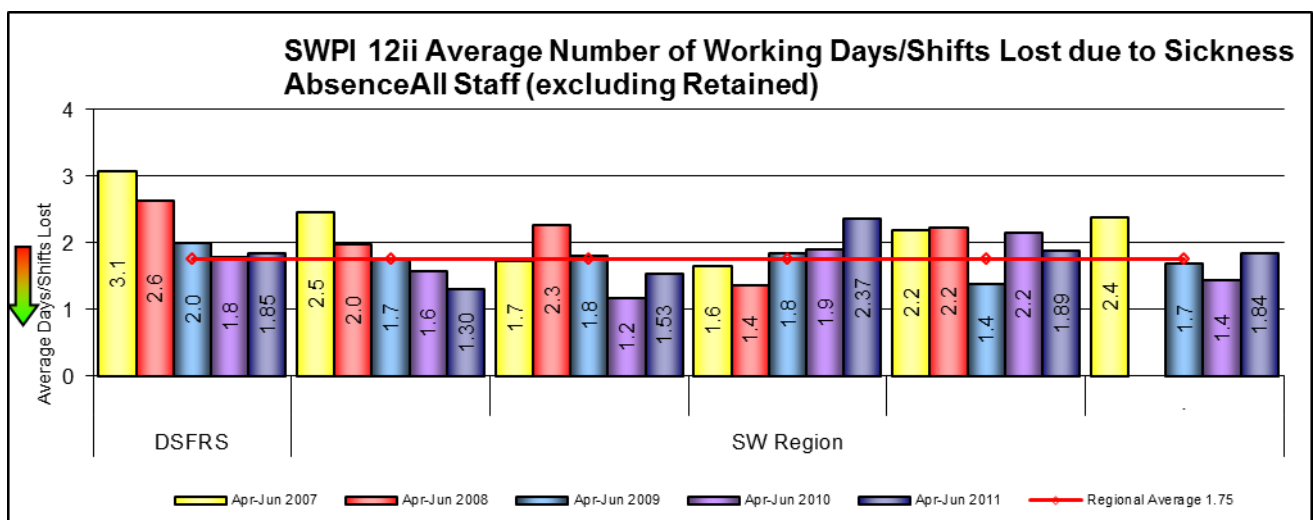
Length of Service	Long Term	ST Cert	ST Uncert	Total
year 1	1.00	0.55	1.19	2.73
2 - 5	4.84	1.63	2.62	9.09
6 - 10	4.01	1.66	3.15	8.82
11 - 20	6.39	1.70	2.80	10.89
over 20	6.53	1.08	2.35	9.96

5.2 As can be seen from the table below, the number of days lost due to sickness is more likely to increase with the age of employee.

Age of Employee	Long Term	ST Cert	ST Uncert	Total
under 30	1.74	0.66	1.52	3.92
31 - 39	3.79	1.42	2.54	7.75
40 - 49	5.28	1.53	2.79	9.60
50 - 59	5.02	1.47	2.62	9.11
over 60	25.59	3.21	4.67	33.47

6. REGIONAL SICKNESS LEVELS

- 6.1 The Service is able to get sickness data from other South West, Fire and Rescue Services (FRSs) on a quarterly basis and therefore this information relates to the period from April to June 2011. Currently DSFRS is above the SW regional average of 1.75 with 1.85 days being lost due to a sickness absence (excluding Retained).



7. CONCLUSION

- 7.1 For the year to date, the Service has seen a deterioration in the sickness absence compared with the same period last year. The Service continues to monitor and manage sickness levels. As part of the Middleware Project in partnership with Cambridgeshire FRS and Bedford and Luton FRS the Service will be seeking process improvements in the sickness absence process.

JANE SHERLOCK
Director of People and Organisational Development