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To: Councillor Copland, Convener; Councillor Al-Samarai, Vice-Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost; Councillor Steve Delaney, the Depute Provost; and Councillors Boulton, Davidson, McLeod, Thomson and Tissera.

Trade Union Advisers: Doug Haywood and Jacqueline Munro (EIS); Kevin Masson and David Willis (GMB); Jason Currie and 1 vacancy (SSTA); David Cadenhead and Mark Musk (UNISON); Joe Craig and Mishelle Gray (UNITE); Fiona Sales (UCATT) and Rob Stephen and 1 vacancy (VOICE).

Town House,
ABERDEEN, 24 October 2025

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

The Members of the **STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE** are requested to meet in **Committee Room 2 - Town House on MONDAY, 3 NOVEMBER 2025 at 10.00am**. This is a hybrid meeting and Members may also attend remotely.

The meeting will be webcast and a live stream can be viewed on the Council's website.
<https://aberdeen.public-i.tv/core/portal/home>

JENNI LAWSON
CHIEF OFFICER – GOVERNANCE

B U S I N E S S

NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS

1.1. There are no items at this time

DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT BUSINESS

2.1. There are no items of exempt business

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

3.1. Members are requested to declare any interests

DEPUTATIONS

- 4.1. None at this time

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING

- 5.1. Minute of Previous Meeting of 25 August 2025 - for approval (Pages 3 - 10)

COMMITTEE PLANNER

- 6.1. Committee Business Planner (Pages 11 - 16)

NOTICES OF MOTION

- 7.1. None at this time

REFERRALS FROM COUNCIL, COMMITTEES AND SUB COMMITTEES

- 8.1. None at this time

GENERAL BUSINESS

- 9.1. Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update - July to September 2025 - CORS/25/249 (Pages 17 - 38)
- 9.2. Policies for People Update - CORS/25/251 (Pages 39 - 50)
- 9.3. Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy - CORS/25/198 (Pages 51 - 154)

Integrated Impact Assessments related to reports on this agenda can be viewed [here](#)

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Website Address: aberdeencity.gov.uk

Should you require any further information about this agenda, please contact Stephanie Dunsmuir, email sdunsmuir@aberdeencity.gov.uk

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

ABERDEEN, 25 August 2025. Minute of Meeting of the STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE. Present:- Councillor Copland, Convener; Councillor Al-Samarai, Vice-Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost; and Councillors Boulton, Macdonald (as substitute for Councillor Tissera for article 5), MacGregor (as substitute for Councillor Delaney for part of article 8 to the end of the meeting), McLeod, McRae (as substitute for Councillor Davidson), Thomson, Tissera (for articles 1 to 4 and 6 to 9) and Yuill (as substitute for Councillor Delaney for articles 1 to part of article 8).

Also present:- Councillor Macdonald for article 4 and Councillor Kuszniir for article 5.

Trade Union Advisers:- Kevin Masson and Neil Watson, GMB; David Cadenhead and Nigel McDowell, UNISON; Doug Haywood and Jacqueline Munro, EIS; and Mishelle Gray, UNITE.

The agenda and reports associated with this minute can be located [here](#).

Please note that if any changes are made to this minute at the point of approval, these will be outlined in the subsequent minute and this document will not be retrospectively altered.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND TRANSPARENCY STATEMENTS

1. The following transparency statements were noted:-

- Councillor McRae made a general statement of transparency by virtue of being a staff representative for UNITE in a healthcare setting.
- Councillor Thomson made a general statement of transparency by virtue of her membership of UNISON Grampian Health Branch.

Neither Member considered that the above amounted to an interest which required to be declared and would prevent them from participating in the meeting.

MINUTE OF PREVIOUS MEETING OF 16 JUNE 2025

2. The Committee had before it the minute of its previous meeting of 16 June 2025 for approval.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the minute as a correct record.

STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

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COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER

3. The Committee had before it the business planner as prepared by the Chief Officer – Governance.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note the reasons outlined in the planner for the delay to items 4 (Mortuary Staff Move) and 8 (Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy); and
- (ii) to otherwise the report.

NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR MACDONALD

4. The Committee had before it a Notice of Motion from Councillor Macdonald, referred from Council on 2 July 2025, in the following terms:-

On 16 April 2025 the Supreme Court judgement in the For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers case was delivered. This gave an unequivocal ruling that women's rights are protected in law, as well as highlighting the continued protections for trans people under the Equality Act.

The Supreme Court unanimously agreed that the terms 'man', 'woman' and 'sex' in the Equality Act 2010 refer to biological sex. Holding a Gender Recognition Certificate does not change sex for the purposes of the 2010 Act.

The court ruling makes clear that the law protects women's rights to single-sex spaces and services.

As a consequence, the UK, Welsh and Scottish Governments, regulators and public bodies will now require to review and clarify their policies and guidance.

That Council agrees that in addition to reviewing all Council policies, procedures, guidance and training materials to ensure compliance with the Supreme Court ruling, the Chief Executive Officer should seek assurance from any services run or commissioned by the Council for compliance to the same end.

Councillor Macdonald was in attendance and spoke in support of her Notice of Motion.

Councillor Macdonald moved, seconded by Councillor Thomson:-

That the Committee approve the Notice of Motion.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved as an amendment:-

That the Committee –

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Note that on 16 April 2025 the Supreme Court judgement in the For Women Scotland v The Scottish Ministers case was delivered.

The Supreme Court unanimously agreed the terms ‘man’, ‘woman’ and ‘sex’ in the Equality Act 2010 mean biological sex i.e. sex recorded at birth, and holding a Gender Recognition Certificate does not change sex for the purposes of the 2010 Act. The Court also confirmed that trans people are protected from discrimination under the gender reassignment provisions of the Act.

As a consequence of this judgement, the UK, Welsh and Scottish Governments, regulators and public bodies will now require to review and clarify their policies and guidance as will employers and service providers. The Equality and Human Rights Commission is in the course of updating statutory Codes of Practice which will include practical guidance for service providers, associations and those delivering public functions on how they should comply with the Act.

The ongoing work of Officers to review and update policies and guidance for staff and building managers to ensure compliance with the judgment in For Women Scotland Ltd is noted, as well as the importance of sensitive and inclusive implementation, avoiding unlawful discrimination and maintaining a culture of dignity and respect for all employees and citizens.

The Council awaits the updated statutory guidance from The Equality and Human Rights Commission and guidance from The Scottish Government to ensure that the changes made to policies and guidance is fully compliant with the Equality Act.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (4) – Councillors Boulton, McLeod, Thomson and Tissera; for the amendment (5) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost; and Councillors McRae and Yuill.

That Committee notes:

to approve the amendment.

NOTICE OF MOTION - COUNCILLOR KUSZNIR

5. The Committee had before it a Notice of Motion from Councillor Kusznir, referred from Council on 2 July 2025, in the following terms:-

That the Council –

1. Notes the Supreme Court decision in For Women Scotland Ltd v The Scottish Ministers [2025] UKSC 16, clarifying legal protections for single-sex spaces.
2. Notes the declarator by Lady Ross in a judicial review brought by parents against Scottish Borders Council, affirming the requirement to provide single-sex toilets in schools.

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3. Acknowledges reports of increased incursions into women-only spaces by activists following the For Women Scotland Ltd decision, highlighting the need for clear Council guidance on separate or single-sex spaces.
4. Recognises the ongoing work of Officers to update guidance for staff and building managers to ensure compliance with the judgment in For Women Scotland Ltd.
5. Further recognises that the Council await updated statutory guidance from both The Equality and Human Rights Commission and The Scottish Government.
6. Instructs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord, in consultation with the Chief Officer - People and Citizen Services, to develop a separate or single-sex space policy or policies, in line with statutory guidance, for Aberdeen City Council to ensure the protection of such spaces in Council-owned and operated buildings.
7. Directs the Chief Officer - Corporate Landlord to present the proposed policy/ies to Council or the relevant committee for consideration and approval.
8. Recognises that a similar request was previously rejected by the Communities, Housing and Public Protection Committee before the aforementioned court decisions on 23 January 2024.
9. Affirms the necessity of this policy/ies, as the current delegation of decision-making on single-sex spaces to individual building managers lacks an overarching framework, potentially exposing the Council to legal risks due to inconsistent decisions across different buildings.

Councillor Kuszniir was in attendance and spoke in support of his Notice of Motion.

Councillor Kuszniir moved, seconded by Councillor Boulton:-
That Committee approve the Notice of Motion.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener, moved as an amendment:-
That the Committee take no action in respect of the Notice of Motion.

On a division, there voted:- for the motion (2) – Councillors Boulton and McLeod; for the amendment (7) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost; and Councillors Macdonald, McRae, Thomson and Yuill.

The Committee resolved:-

to approve the amendment and take no action in respect of the Notice of Motion.

CORPORATE HEALTH & SAFETY QUARTERLY REPORT - APRIL TO JUNE 2025 - CORS/25/195

6. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which provided a summary of statistical health and safety performance information for the 3-month reporting period April to June 2025 to provide the Committee with the opportunity to monitor compliance with health and safety legislation.

The report recommended:-

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that the Committee note the report and provide comment on the health, safety policy, performance, trends, and improvements.

The Committee resolved:-

to note the report.

EMPLOYEE EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN 2025-2029 - CORS/25/109

7. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which presented the Aberdeen City Council Employee Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029. The report provided detail on how the action plan had been developed to support the Council's Equality Outcomes as an Employer.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee –

- (a) note the approach to and implementation of the proposed Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan 2025-2029;
- (b) note that officers would continue to engage with Employees and Trade Unions and incorporate changes to the action plan as required; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services to report to the Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee on progress against the action plan, in line with relevant statutory deadlines and to present an update to the Staff Governance Committee regarding any impacts this report had on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, including any changes, updates, or new areas of focus identified through available data and analysis.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would look at the timing of related reports on the Staff Governance Committee business planner, for example, the Leadership and Management update;
- (ii) to note the recommendations;
- (iii) to agree that officers would continue to engage with Employees and Trade Unions as well as Elected Members and incorporate changes to the action plan as required;
- (iv) to agree the report states 'our goal is to improve the diversity of our workforce to reflect that of our city's varied experiences and needs' and acknowledges the work of the Aspiring Leaders and Accelerator Scheme in playing an important role in helping to achieve this; and
- (v) to instruct the Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services to report to Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee on progress against the action plan, in line with relevant statutory deadlines. This report to include the progress of the Aspiring Leaders and Accelerator Schemes to ensure these are achieving the Council's ambitions to develop future leaders from underrepresented groups and to present an update to the Staff Governance Committee regarding any impacts this report has on the

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Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, including any changes, updates or new areas of focus identified through available data and analysis.

EMPLOYEE EXPERIENCE SURVEY 2024/25 - CORS/25/148

8. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which presented the results of the Employee Experience Survey 2024, including analysis, commentary and further actions proposed to respond to issues which the survey had highlighted.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee note the results of the 2024 Employee Experience Survey and the action areas in Appendix 1 to this report.

During discussion of the report, there was mention of NHS Grampian, and Councillor Yuill made a transparency statement that he was a member of the Board of NHS Grampian, however he did not consider that this amounted to an interest which needed to be declared and would require him to leave the meeting.

Prior to the vote, Councillor Yuill had to leave the meeting, and was replaced by Councillor MacGregor from this point of the meeting forward.

The Convener, seconded by the Vice Convener moved:-
That the Committee note the report.

Councillor Thomson, seconded by Councillor Tissera, moved as an amendment:-

That Committee -

- (a) note the recommendation;
- (b) note that response rates varied considerably between different job families with response rates from Frontline Operational Services, Social and Community services and Teachers all less than 16%, whilst at a Chief Officer level the response rate was over 70%;
- (c) agree that with the wide variation in response rates, the overall results in this report may not provide a true reflection of employees' experiences in particular job families, whereas cluster-specific analysis is potentially more meaningful; and
- (d) instruct the Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services to report back to the Committee within 3 cycles on why the response rates between job families varies to such a high degree, a plan on how this can be addressed in future surveys, a summary of any significant differences in employee experience between different job clusters and the reasons for these differences.

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On a division, there voted:- for the motion (5) – the Convener; the Vice Convener; Councillor David Cameron, the Lord Provost; and Councillors MacGregor and McRae; for the amendment (4) – Councillors Boulton, McLeod, Thomson and Tissera.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would consider the suggestion made by Members that an incentive scheme might encourage higher rates of participation; and
- (ii) to adopt the motion.

WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY REVIEW - CORS/25/197

9. The Committee had before it a report by the Executive Director Corporate Services which presented the reviewed and revised Whistleblowing Policy.

The report recommended:-

that the Committee -

- (a) note the undertaking of the review of the Whistleblowing Policy and the minor amendments as a result;
- (b) note the updates to guidance (outlined at section 3.9 of the report), in line with the recommendations of the Accounts Commission Section 102 Report on Aberdeen City Council, as reported to Council on 17 February 2025, and wider process review; and
- (c) instruct the Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services to widely communicate the Policy and Guidance as outlined within the report at section 3.18.

The Committee resolved:-

- (i) to note that officers would take on board the points raised by Members at the meeting in respect of highlighting anonymity and ensuring information was clear for new and less-experienced members of staff; and
- (ii) to approve the recommendations.

- **COUNCILLOR NEIL COPLAND, Convener**

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	STAFF GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE BUSINESS PLANNER The Business Planner details the reports which have been instructed by the Committee as well as reports which the Functions expect to be submitting for the calendar year.								
2	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
3	3 November 2025								
4	Bairns Hoose	To present an update to Committee		Graeme Simpson	Children's Social Work and Family Support	Families and Communities	2.2	D	The Bairns Hoose opened in September and recruitment is ongoing to certain key posts. Officers therefore consider that it would be beneficial to provide a full report to the next cycle to allow this to be completed before Committee receives the report
5	Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update	To present the quarterly update		Colin Leaver	Governance	Corporate Services	3.2		
6	Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy	To seek approval of the policy		Sharon Robb	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		
7	People Policy Data	SGC 26/06/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development to report disciplinary, grievance and dignity and respect at work data to the Staff Governance Committee on an annual basis		Sharon Robb	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5, 2.7		
8	Leadership and Management Development Update	SGC 03/10/22 - to agree that an annual update on the refreshed approach to leadership and management development be presented to Committee		Sandie Scott	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.4	D	As per the discussion at the August 2025 SGC, officers are reviewing the business planner to ensure alignment of the timing of reports with work in respect of the approved Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan and as such, this report will now be presented to the February 2026 meeting

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2									
9	Managing Substance Misuse Policy	The revised policy was approved at Committee in November 2023 - to be reviewed annually	Report will not be required if there are no changes to be made	Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5	R	In line with the usual process, as there are no changes required to be made following officer review, there is no report to be presented. The Policy will be kept under review and reported next year to Committee if changes are required
10	Corporate Health & Safety Policy	To present the revised Health & Safety Policy	Report will not be required if there are no changes to be made	Colin Leaver	Governance	Corporate Services	2.5	R	In line with the usual process, as there are no changes required to be made following officer review, there is no report to be presented. The Policy will be kept under review and reported next year to Committee if changes are required
11	2 February 2026								
12	Volunteers Policy	The revised policy was approved at Committee in January 2025 - due for annual review	Report will not be required if there are no changes to be made	Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		
13	Mortuary Staff Move	To present an update to Committee following completion of the new mortuary at Aberdeen Royal Infirmary	Originally due to be presented in Summer 2025, however the mortuary opening was delayed and so officers considered that a report should wait until the mortuary had been completed and operational for a time. It was advised at the August 2025 meeting that a report would be presented to the first meeting in 2026	Lesley Strachan	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.2		

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	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2									
26	Corporate Health & Safety Quarterly Update	To present the quarterly update		Colin Leaver	Governance	Corporate Services	3.2		
27	Leadership and Management Development Update	SGC 03/10/22 - to agree that an annual update on the refreshed approach to leadership and management development be presented to Committee		Sandie Scott	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.4		
28	Managing Substance Misuse Policy	The revised policy was approved at Committee in November 2023 - to be reviewed annually	Report will not be required if there are no changes to be made	Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		
29	Corporate Health & Safety Policy	To present the revised Health & Safety Policy	Report will not be required if there are no changes to be made	Colin Leaver	Governance	Corporate Services	2.5		
30	People Policy Data	SGC 26/06/23 - to instruct the Chief Officer - People and Organisational Development to report disciplinary, grievance and dignity and respect at work data to the Staff Governance Committee on an annual basis		Lesley Strachan	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5, 2.7		
31	2027								
32	Flexible Working Policy	The revised policy was approved at Committee in January 2025 - due for review February 2027	Scheduled for review February 2027	Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		
33	Fleet Driver Policy	To seek approval of the policy	Scheduled for review April 2027	Patric Bakhuizen	Operations	City Regeneration and Environment	2.5		
34	REPORTING DATE TO BE CONFIRMED								
35	Employee Code of Conduct	To present an update on the Employee Code of Conduct		Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
	Report Title	Minute Reference/Committee Decision or Purpose of Report	Update	Report Author	Chief Officer	Directorate	Terms of Reference	Delayed or Recommended for removal or transfer, enter either D, R, or T	Explanation if delayed, removed or transferred
2	Staff Travel Plan & Policy	NZET 27/03/24 - The Committee resolved:- (i)to replace recommendation 2.1 with "instruct the Chief Officers – Strategic Place Planning and People and Citizen Services, in consultation with the Chief Officer-Finance, to set up an internal officer working group to review and refresh the Council's Staff Travel Policy with the emphasis on walking and cycling"; (ii) to instruct the Chief Officer – Strategic Place Planning to update the Council's Travel Plan to align with any proposed changes to the Staff Travel Policy resulting from (i); (iii) to instruct the Chief Officers – Strategic Place Planning and People and Citizen Services to thereafter undertake consultation with Council staff and trade unions on any proposed changes to the Staff Travel Policy and/or the Council Travel Plan; and (iv) to instruct the Chief Officers – Strategic Place Planning and People and Citizen Services, following analysis of the consultation and finalisation of the documents, to report both the updated Staff Travel Policy and Council Travel Plan back to this Committee and / or other relevant committees by Summer 2025 for approval.		Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		The draft Council Travel Plan (2025) was due to be presented to Net Zero, Environment and Transport Committee in September however was not considered on the day due to the large volume of business. The report is now due to the November NZET Committee and therefore no date can be put against this report for SGC until it has been considered at NZET Committee
36	Impacts on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan	SGC 25/08/25 - to instruct the Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services to report to Anti-Poverty and Inequality Committee on progress against the action plan, in line with relevant statutory deadlines. This report to include the progress of the Aspiring Leaders and Accelerator Schemes to ensure these are achieving the Council's ambitions to develop future leaders from underrepresented groups and to present an update to the Staff Governance Committee regarding any impacts this report has on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Action Plan, including any changes, updates or new areas of focus identified through available data and analysis.		Baldeep McGarry	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.6		
37	People development policy / guidance	To seek approval of the policy		Isla Newcombe	People & Citizen Services	Corporate Services	2.5		

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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance Committee
DATE	3 November 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Corporate Health and Safety – July to September 2025
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/249
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald
CHIEF OFFICER	Jenni Lawson
REPORT AUTHOR	Colin Leaver
TERMS OF REFERENCE	3.2

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 The appendix to this report summarises statistical health and safety performance information for the 3-month reporting period July to September 2025 to provide the Committee with the opportunity to monitor compliance with health and safety legislation.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That the Committee:

- 2.1 Note the report and provide comment on the health, safety policy, performance, trends, and improvements.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

- 3.1 The appendix to the report contains a dashboard of the statistical information in relation to health and safety activities for the three-month reporting period July to September 2025. The statistical information also contains an analysis of the key figures in each of the incident and near miss sections.

- 3.1.1 The Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 (RIDDOR) places duties on employers, the self-employed and people in control of work premises (the Responsible Person) to report certain serious workplace accidents, occupational diseases and specified dangerous occurrences (near misses) to the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). This reporting duty includes incidents which result in an employee being absent from work for 7 days or longer as a result of an injury, which have historically been the main reason for Aberdeen City Council's reports to HSE.

This report addresses the following matters:

- All incidents involving employees and members of the public (serious and minor)

- HSE Reportable Incidents
- Reportable Diseases
- Near Miss Information
- Enforcement Interventions
- Fire Risk Assessment
- Health and Safety Audits
- Compliance Monitoring
- Health and Safety Policies, Procedures and Guidance

3.2 Incidents (July to September 2025)

All incident and near miss information in the appendix to this report has been provided to Cluster level in the appendix. However, within Education incidents have been reported to nursery, primary and secondary school level.

Incident information

- 3.3** The figures are reported to Cluster level for both employee and third-party incidents. Causation figures are also included within the appendix. There is also now a comparison for each of the three years prior to this reporting period.
- 3.4** Pages 2 and 6 now show the comparison figures for corresponding quarters for injury incidents and near misses.
- 3.5** When an incident is reported, the manager is required to complete an investigation report, and this should be shared with the employee and signed off by both. This investigation report highlights categories of criteria which require to be considered including root cause, actions identified and completion dates.
- 3.6** Page five of the appendix details the breakdown of incident causation within the Education Service, where the largest number of incidents occur.
- 3.7** Total incident figures have increased from the corresponding period last year to 367 from 266 the corresponding quarter the year before.
- 3.8** Whilst it is difficult to identify exact reasons for incident increase, it would be reasonable to conclude it is possibly due to an increase in reporting following encouragement from Senior Managers and Trade Unions, a possible increase in the level of incidents or more likely a mix of both.
- 3.8** The trend from the last quarter has again dropped similarly to previous years. This drop has possibly happened due to the school summer holidays.
- 3.9** On page 11 of the appendix, the charts represent incident figures in primary and secondary schools to show whether there was a reduction in reporting during school holiday periods. The charts show that in each of the last two years the incident reporting levels drop at the same time during the year and coincide with the school holiday periods. This would be as expected as most incidents are pupil behaviour related. However surprisingly perhaps week 40 shows a slight spike upwards in secondary schools, which doesn't follow past trends.

- 3.10** The main categorisation of the incidents is either as 'physical injury and violence', unacceptable behaviour or 'externalising behaviour' and are mainly due to pupil behaviours. There are no differences in the consequences of these incidents to the staff involved in the different categorisations. The choice on where to report the incident should be done following a consultation between the line manager and the affected member of staff.
- 3.11** The support provided by the staff continues to play a vital role in helping children learn to regulate their emotions and behaviours, and to cope with the demands and expectations of the school environment. This consistent, positive, and supportive guidance can help the children understand the rules, boundaries, and consequences of their actions, and to develop skills such as self-control, problem-solving, and empathy. This can continue to lead to a medium to long term reduction in the level of incidents from an individual child, as they become more confident, cooperative, and resilient.

HSE Reportable incidents (July to September 2025)

- 3.12** The table in the Appendix also shows the number of RIDDOR reportable incidents. During the reporting period between July and September 2025 four incidents involving an employee required to be reported to the Health and Safety Executive. The majority of these continue to be for over 7-day absences.
- 3.13** The corporate health and safety team contact the reporting manager when a RIDDOR incident is reported to HSE to get assurance that the correct causation and remedial actions have been identified and that any identified remedial actions have been implemented.

Incident (reportable employee) frequency rates

Period – Quarterly	Reportable Incidence rate	Reporting period
July - September 2025	0.5	2025/26

- 3.14** The above figures are calculated using the formula:

$$\frac{\text{Incidence rate} = \text{RIDDOR injuries per period} \times 1000}{\text{Number of employees}}$$

- 3.15** The figure for the corresponding period last year (Jul-Sep 2024) was 6 RIDDOR reportable incidents and a reportable incident rate of 0.75.

Reportable Diseases

- 3.16** There were no reportable diseases reported under RIDDOR; which was also the case in the corresponding reporting period last year.

Near Miss Information

- 3.17** Near-miss incidents help to identify potential hazards and mitigation strategies before an injury occurs. Recognising and reporting near-miss incidents can significantly improve employee safety before an incident occurs.
- 3.18** Reporting managers are required to investigate the near miss to identify the root cause and implement any new identified controls, where possible, to reduce the likelihood of any reoccurrence or for any future incident to result in injury. These elements of a health and safety management system are now monitored daily when a manager reports an incident or near miss to ensure that reporting managers have both elements in place.
- 3.19** The figures have reduced slightly from last year's corresponding quarter to 186 from 192 for all areas and within Families and Communities also showing a reduction from 184 to 153.
- 3.20** The appendix shows information on the number of near miss figures for this reporting period and again a comparison with the three previous reporting years.
- 3.21** Page eight of the appendix gives a breakdown of near misses within the Families and Community function. As with incidents, the majority are within the Education services. Like incident figures, these are mainly because of distressed behaviours evident in some children with additional support needs. Risk assessments are reviewed after every near miss to consider any actions which can be taken to prevent or reduce the risk of reoccurrence.

Regulator interventions (HSE / SFRS)

- 3.22** There are occasions where HSE and Scottish Fire and Rescue Services (SFRS) contact Aberdeen City Council to request further information or ask for action to be taken regarding the way Aberdeen City Council undertake their legal duties.
- 3.23** HSE carried out no visits of any ACC (Aberdeen City Council) owned or managed buildings during this reporting period which resulted in action being taken.
- 3.24** SFRS carried out no audit visits of an ACC (Aberdeen City Council) owned or managed building during this reporting period.

Fire risk assessments

- 3.25** Fire risk assessments are completed on a rolling 5-year programme. A total of 33 fire risk assessments were completed during this reporting period. The issues identified are across the range of topics considered in the assessment process. These issues are given a priority level requiring an action by a specified date dependent on the resultant risk. No building is left at risk during this process.

- 3.26** There were 240 identified actions allocated to Managers, these are inserted into the fire risk actions database and monitored to a close. This database is available to all Chief Officers and Service Managers on the managers' portal, which shows live data on open, closed, and overdue actions. Should an action pass the compliance date a reminder is sent to the responsible manager and the Service Manager. They are also taken to the next relevant senior management team meeting to make everyone is aware of the need to close these off.

Health and Safety Audits

- 3.27** Compliance visits have been undertaken on several topics / premises within the ACC estate; Line Managers Health & Safety Responsibilities; Risk assessment; Workplace Inspections; Lifting Operations & Lifting Equipment Operations, Working at Height.
- 3.28** Actions raised against Managers are recorded in an action log. Managers who have had actions allocated to them are given access to the action log to record the action taken to remove the risk and to record the date completed. This action log is reviewed monthly and where they become overdue then the responsible manager is reminded of the action and the Service manager also made aware of the need to close it off.
- 3.29** Follow up visits are also carried out on several of the completed actions which have the potential to result in more serious consequences and to audit that controls continue to be suitable and sufficient and are being followed.

Health and safety policies, procedures, and guidance

- 3.30** There were no corporate procedures reviewed this quarter.

4 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1** There are no direct financial implications arising from the recommendations of this report.

5 LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1** The Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 requires that an organisation has a suitably robust safety management system to ensure the health, safety, and welfare of their employees. Where any incident is of sufficient seriousness there is a requirement to report these under the Reporting of Injuries, Diseases and Dangerous Occurrences Regulations 2013 which provides a potential for the Enforcing Authorities to become involved and carry out their own investigation into the circumstances of the incident. Any investigation could result in prosecution of the organisation and in some cases prosecution of managers and/or employee.

6 ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1** There are no direct environmental implications because of this report.

7 RISK

Risk Appetite

The assessment of risk contained within the table below is consistent with the Council's Risk Appetite Statement

Management Of Risk

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *Considering controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	N/A	N/A		
Compliance	There is the risk that any injury or serious health and safety incident could result in focus from the Health and Safety Executive which could result in enforcement action in the form of notices or prosecution.	<p>Corporate Procedures require all tasks to be risk assessed and the controls implemented and supervised by line managers.</p> <p>All employees are trained to a level where they are competent to carry out the work.</p> <p>Analysis of the causes of the incidents, near misses and work-related absences and resultant improvements to prevent, where possible, reoccurrences, can reduce the financial exposure to the Council.</p> <p>This effective health and safety management system in which risks are identified and either eliminated or reduced will result in a reduction of costs to the organisation.</p>	L	Yes

Operational	<p>The risk is that any health and safety incident can lead to an injury to an employee which could have the potential to temporarily or permanently affect either or both their employment and/or their life.</p> <p>The risk to our citizens is that we are unable to provide the same level of service delivery due to staff absences from illness and injury sustained during their work. Also, there is the possibility of a reduced budget due to the associated financial costs.</p>	The task has been risk assessed; employees are trained, competent and supervised then there should be less likelihood of incidents.	L	Yes
Financial	The risk is that any incident has the potential to bring a reduction in the overall	As per compliance above	L	Yes

	budget in place to provide service delivery.			
Reputational	Local and National press coverage of any incident can present reputational damage to the organisation.	Each Function should have a robust safety management system in place. There are many facets to this which are important starting from ensuring employees are trained and competent, every hazard is risk assessed, and employees are up to carrying out investigation of near misses to ensure controls are reviewed to consider whether remedial actions are required.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	N/A	N/A	N/A	

8 OUTCOMES

<u>Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan</u>	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	A healthy and safe workplace assists the overarching principles of the stretch outcomes within the LOIP (Local Outcome Improvement Plan) by ensuring that resource is directed at the services required by the city. Removing the level of lost resource to the financial penalties incurred through the Civil and Criminal Courts and from the Regulators will allow the available resource to be best used to ensure funding of the growth sectors of the local economy.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The areas reported on within this report allow Clusters a further opportunity to recognise areas which when acted upon can assist with engagement of staff and service users to support the meaningful educational progress of children and young people.

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Vikki Cuthbert, acting Chief Officer Governance in March 2025.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required

9 BACKGROUND PAPERS

9.1 N/A

10 APPENDICES

10.1 Quarterly Staff Governance Health and safety dashboard July - September 2025

11 REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Colin Leaver
Title	Corporate Health and Safety Lead
Email Address	cleaver@aberdeencity.gov.uk

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Staff Governance Health & Safety Report

Quarter 2 2025/2026 (Jul 25 to Sep 25)

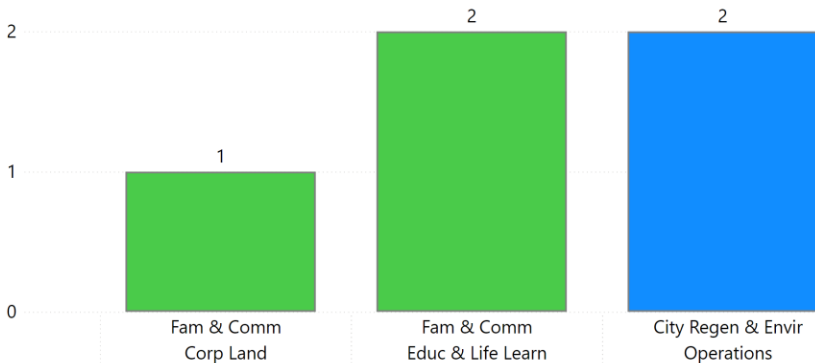
DISCLAIMER

The content of this Staff Governance H&S Report is confidential and protected by copyright. The relevant Data Stewards supplied the data used in this report. The report shows the position as at the dates identified within the report. Data and/or visuals (charts) contained within this Staff Governance H&S Report must not be copied, shared electronically or in hard copy, published or reproduced without the prior written consent of the Analytics & Insight Team (contact Claudine Mackie at claudinm@aberdeencity.gov.uk). If you find any errors or omissions please report this to the Analytics & Insight Team at the aforementioned email address.

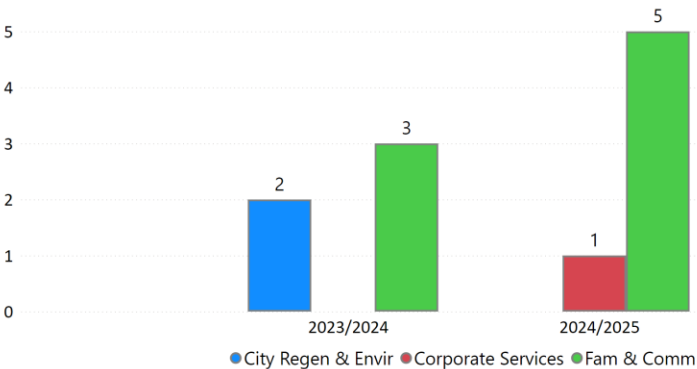
Reported H&S Incidents (Employee)
Between Jul to Sep 2025

The following tables give breakdown of all employee incidents across all Functions and Clusters in Aberdeen City Council. The tables on the left initially show the number of incidents for each Cluster this reporting period with those tables on the right giving a quarter 2 comparison for each Function from 2023/24 to 2024/25 where applicable.

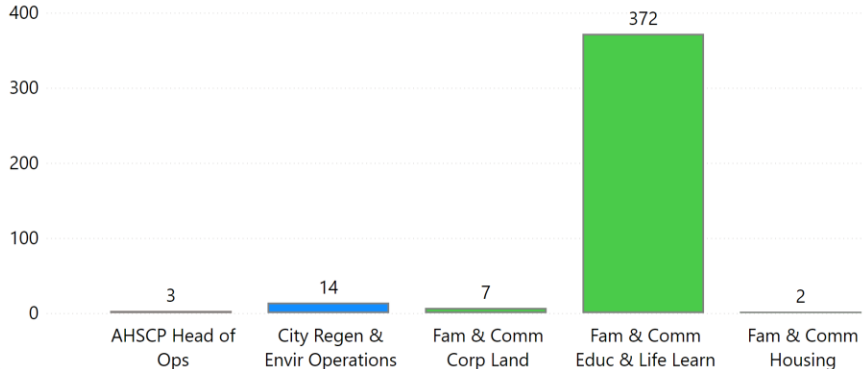
RIDDOR Reportable Employee



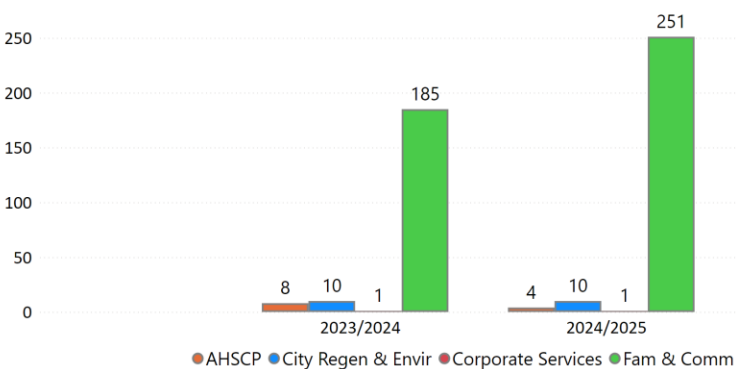
RIDDOR Reportable Employee 2023/24 & 2024/25 (Comparison)



Non RIDDOR Reportable Employee



Non RIDDOR Reportable Employee 2023/24 & 2024/25 (Comparison)

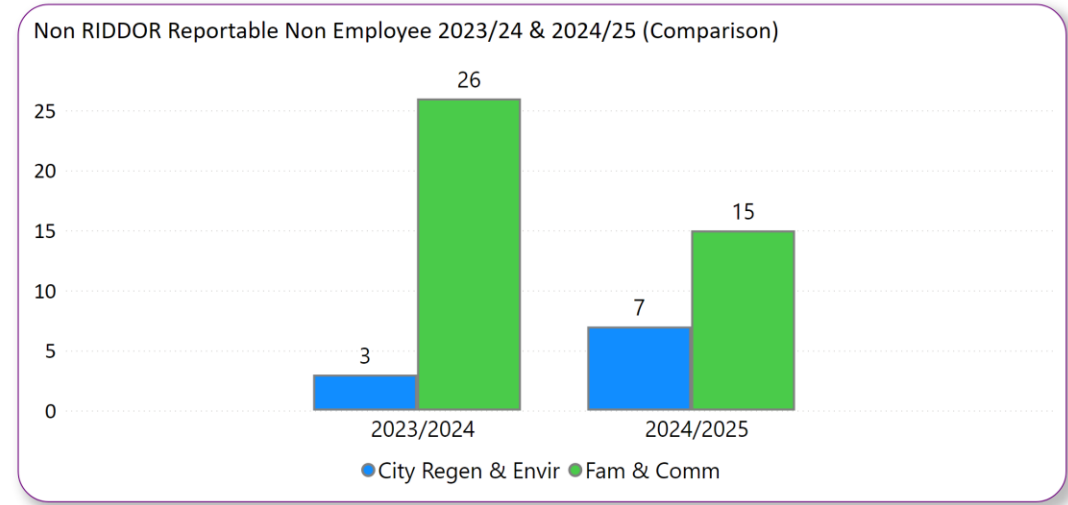
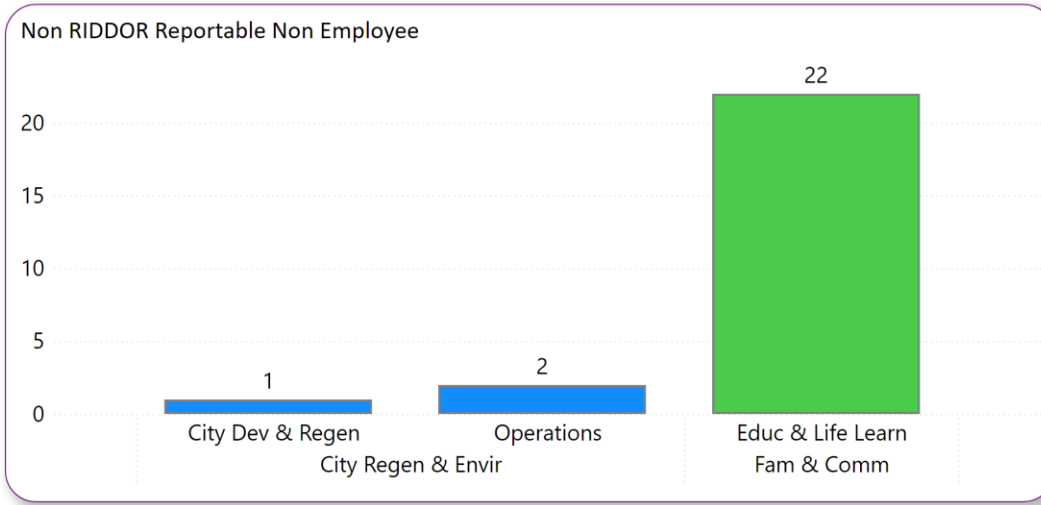
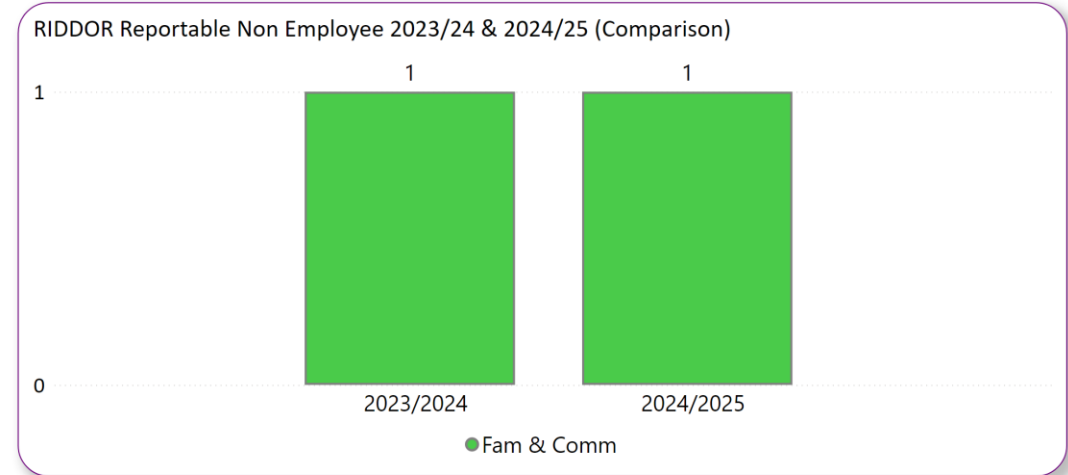
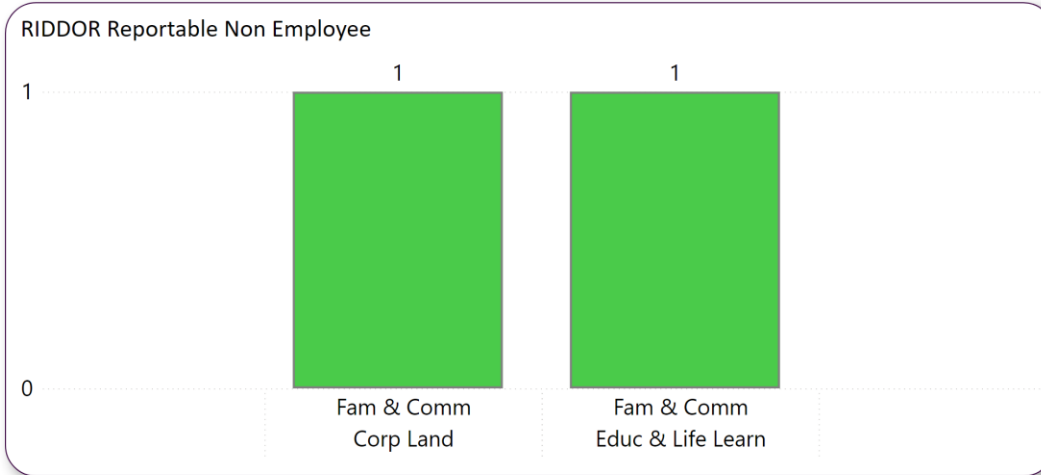


Employee Incident Information

RIDDOR reportable incidents are reduced by 33% this quarter from comparative quarters for the last 2 years. Incident numbers meanwhile have increased by 38% from the previous year with Families and Communities being responsible for the majority of that increase. Poor behaviours still seem to make up the majority of these incidents. The number of incidents reported within the first 6 months is slightly less pro rata than the total for the 24/25 year.

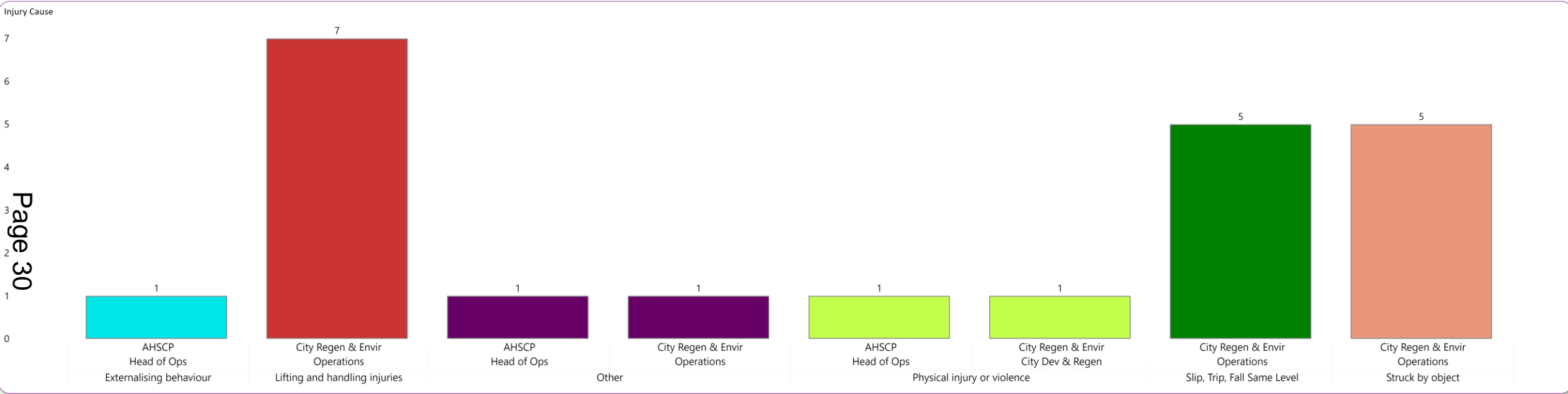
Reported H&S Incidents (Third Party) Between Jul to Sep 2025

The tables below give information on those non-employee incidents which happened across all Functions and Clusters. Again the tables on the left show the current period for each Cluster, with those tables on the right giving a quarter 2 comparison for each function from 2023/24 to 2024/25 where applicable.



H&S Incident Causation
Reported between Jul to Sep 2025

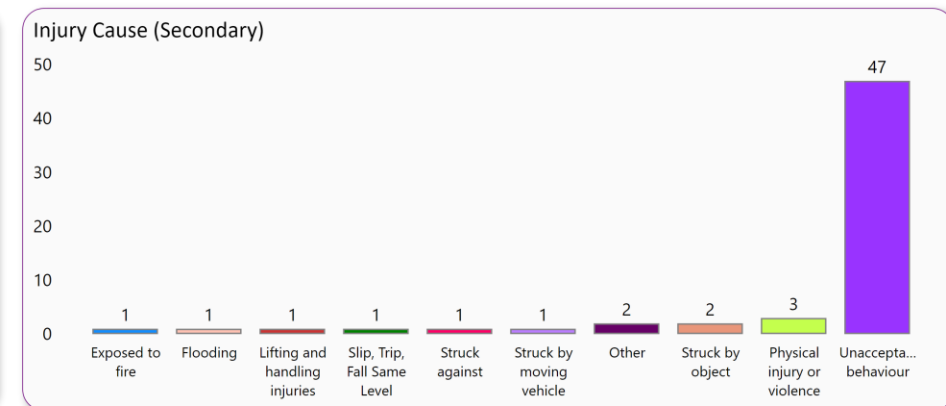
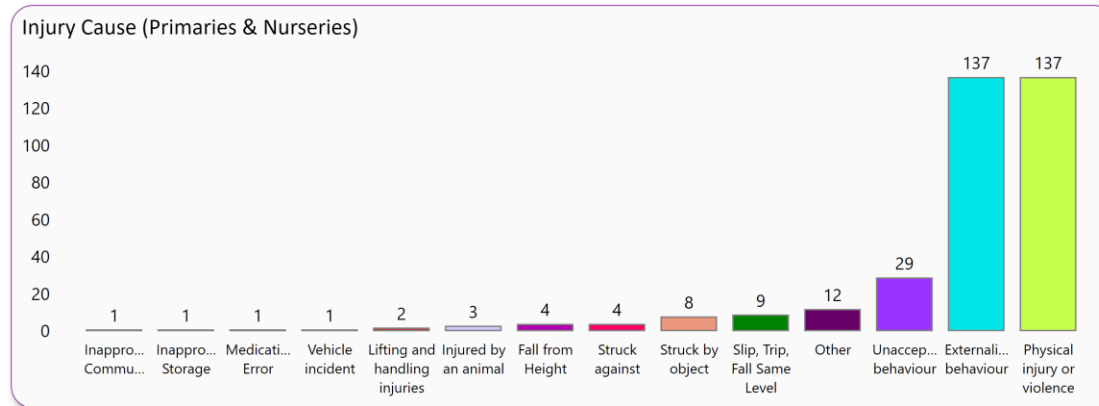
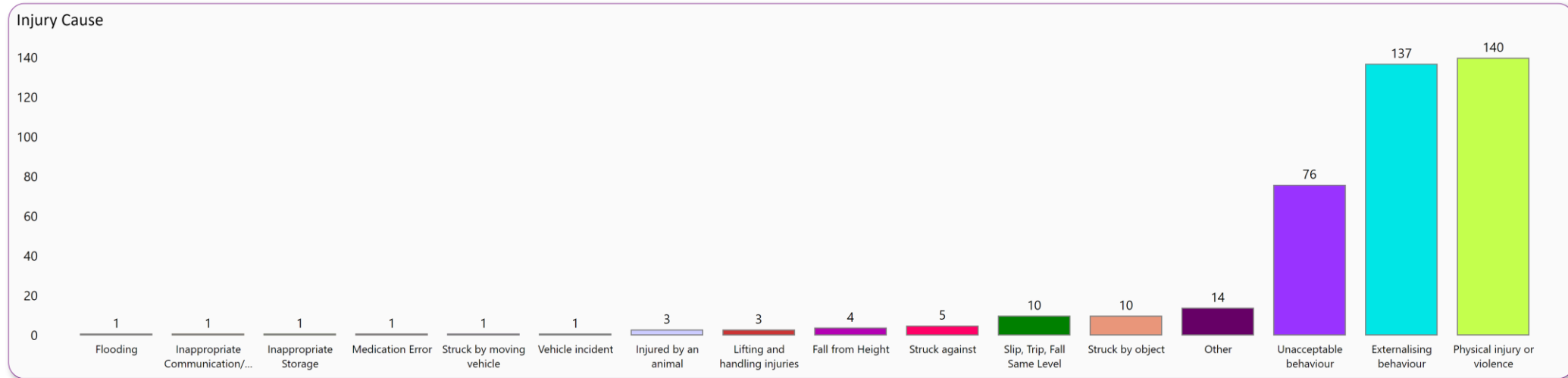
The table shows incident causation for each Cluster for this reporting period apart from Families & Communities, which is covered in the next page.



Injury Cause							
	Externalising behaviour	Lifting and handling injuries	Other	Physical injury or violence	Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level	Struck by object	Total
	1	7	2	2	5	5	22

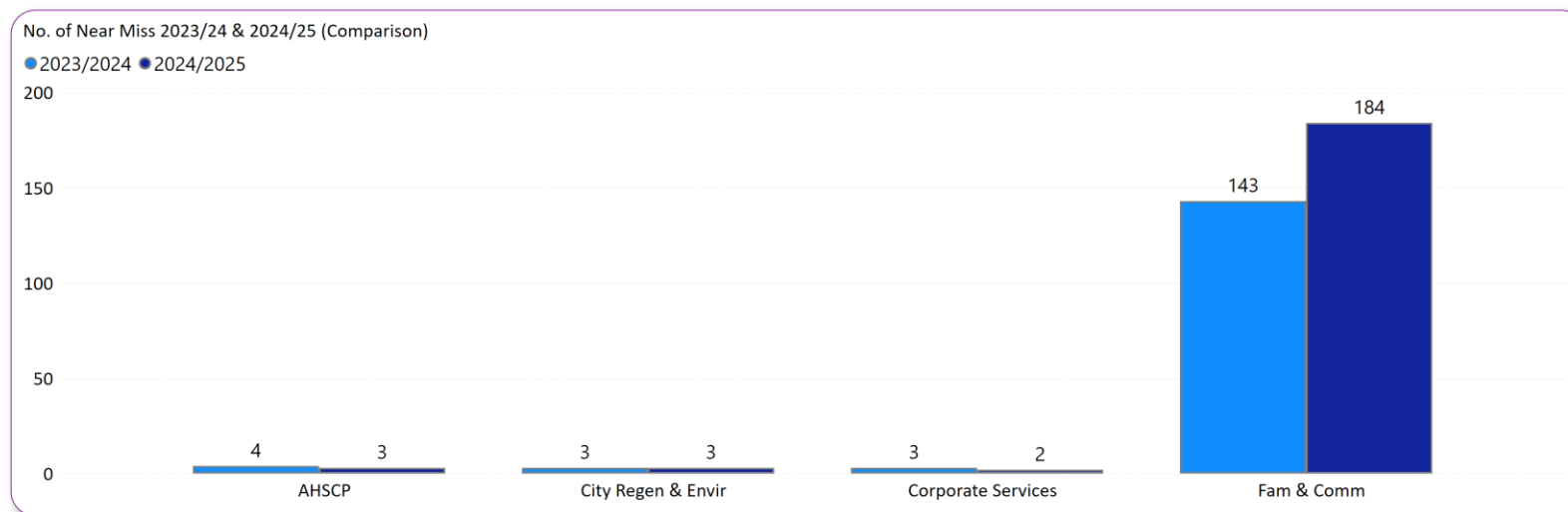
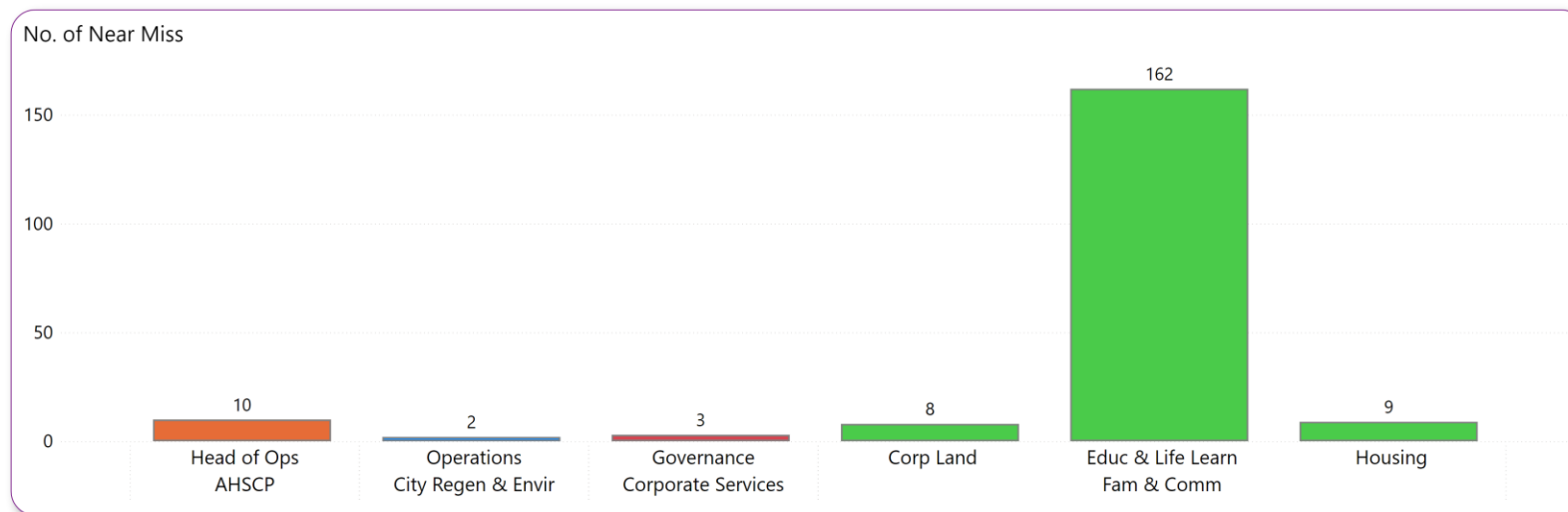
Families & Communities reported H&S Incidents Between Jul to Sep 2025

The following tables give a breakdown of Families & Communities Incidents.



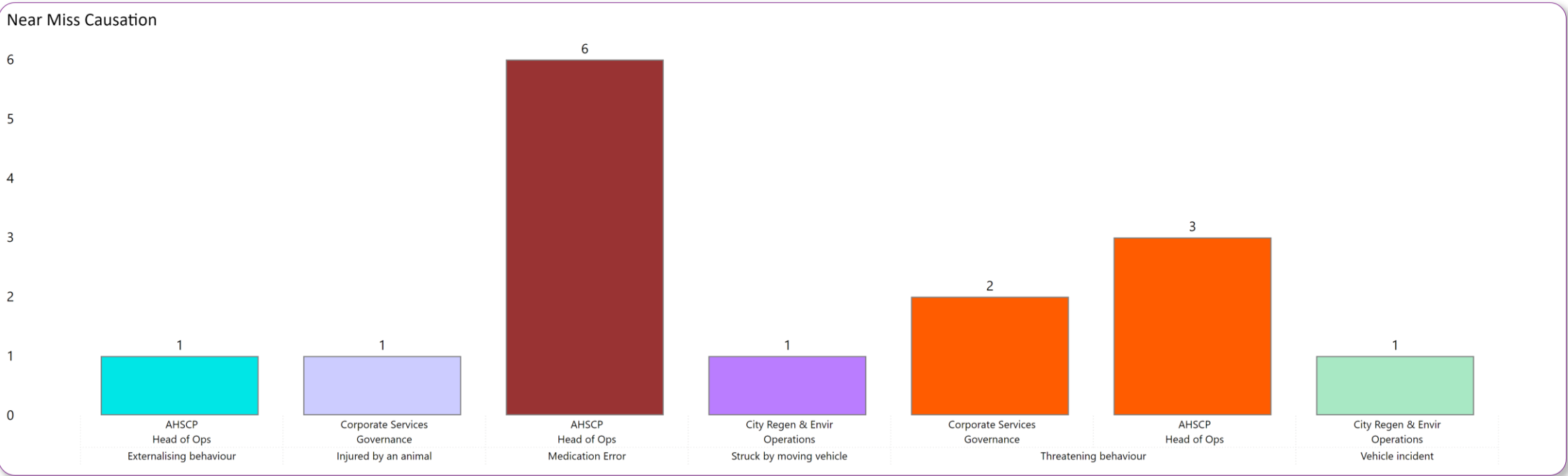
Injury Cause																
Flooding	Inappropriate Communication/abuse	Inappropriate Storage	Medication Error	Struck by moving vehicle	Vehicle incident	Injured by an animal	Lifting and handling injuries	Fall from Height	Struck against	Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level	Struck by object	Other	Unacceptable behaviour	Externalising behaviour	Physical injury or violence	Total
1	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	4	5	10	10	14	76	137	140	408

The tables below show information in relation to employee and non-employee Near Misses.
Top table: Total Near Misses for this reporting period for each Cluster. Bottom tables: quarter 2 comparison of Near Misses for each Function from 2023/24 to 2024/25.



Reported H&S Near Miss (Causation)
Between Jul to Sep 2025

The table below shows information to a Function and Cluster level for employee and non-employee Near Misses apart from Families & Communities, which is covered in the next page.



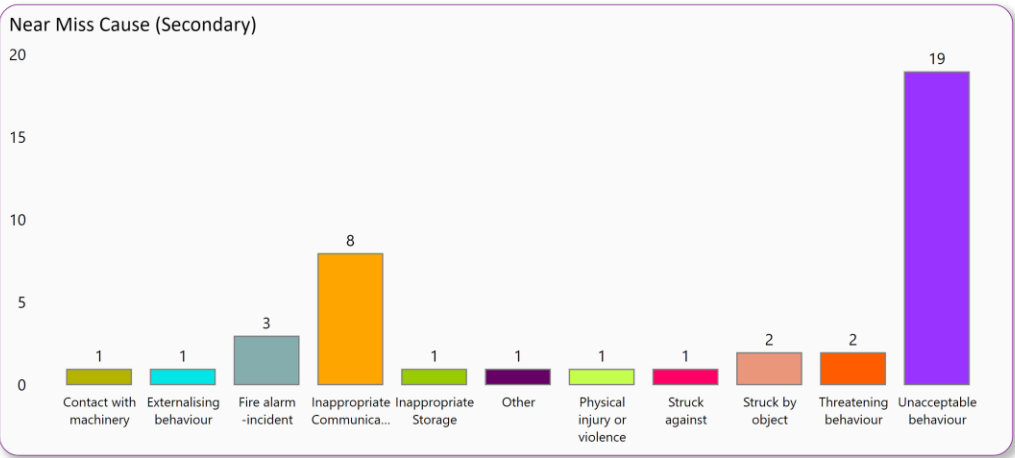
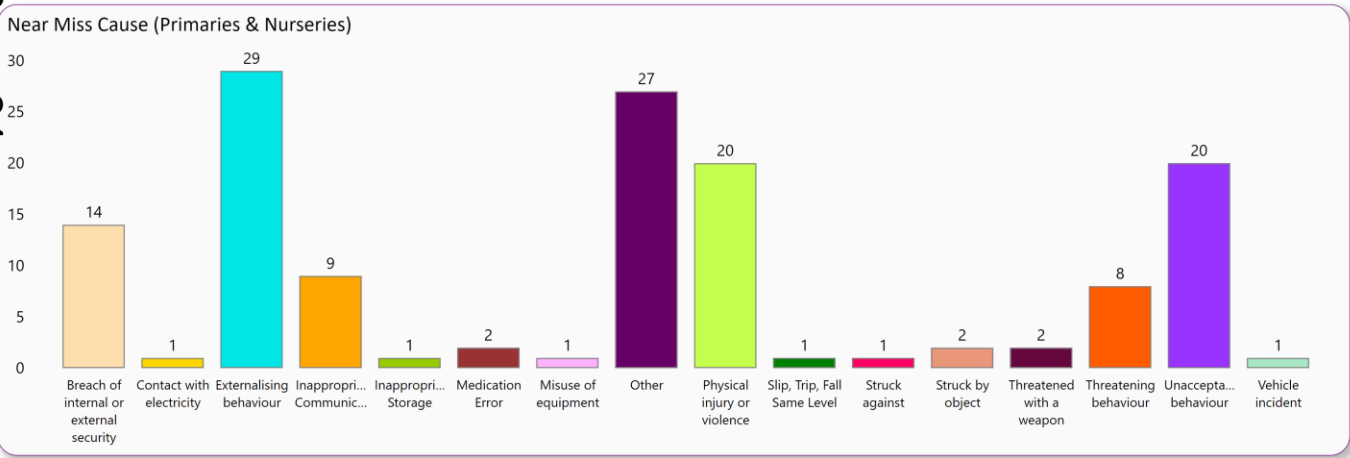
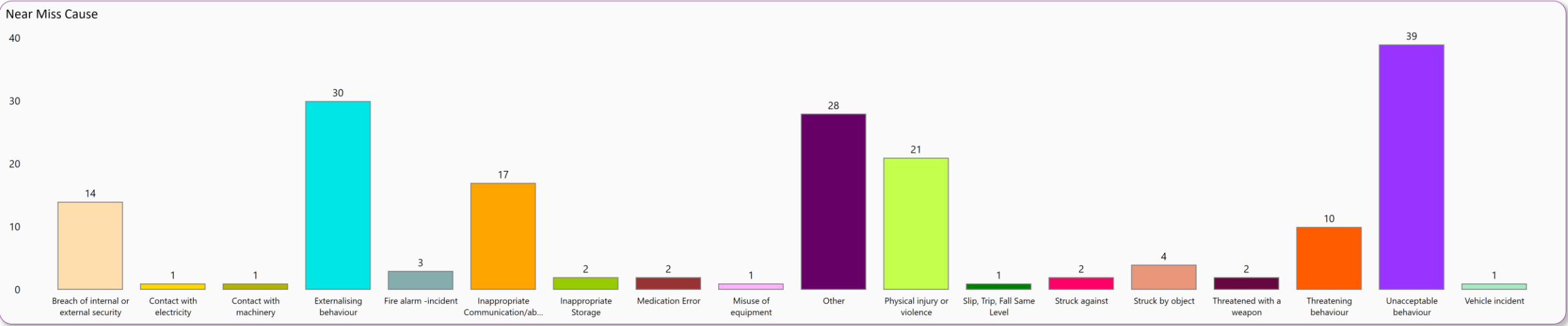
Near Miss Cause						
Externalising behaviour	Injured by an animal	Medication Error	Struck by moving vehicle	Threatening behaviour	Vehicle incident	Total
1	1	6	1	5	1	15

Near Miss

The number of near misses for this year is almost the same as the corresponding quarter last year. These again are mainly within the Education sector. However the number of reported near misses for the first 6 months of this reporting period is 35% of the total number reported for the last reporting year (25/25). There have been 6 medication errors within the last 3 months which were all within AHSCP

Families & Communities reported H&S Near Miss
Between Jul to Sep 2025

The following tables give a breakdown of Families & Communities Near Miss.

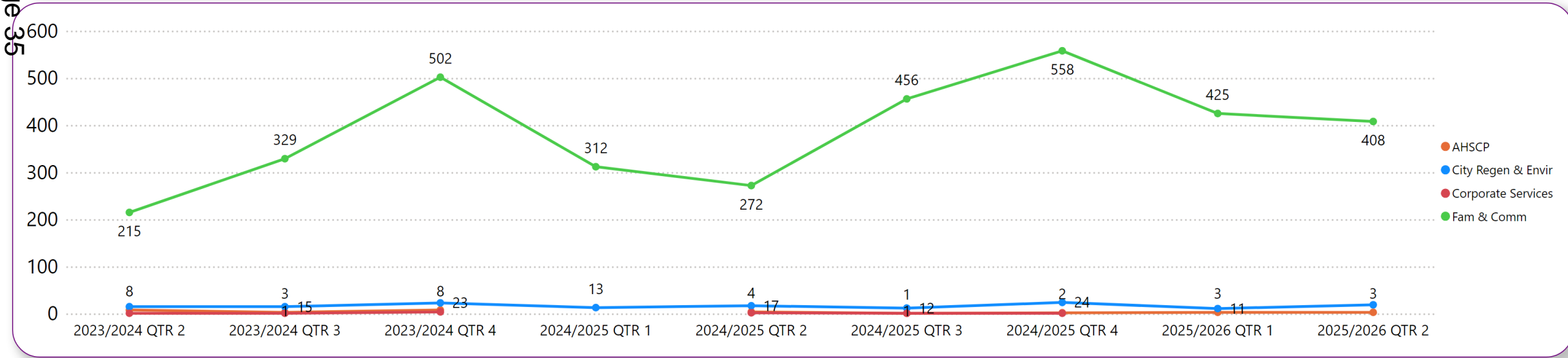
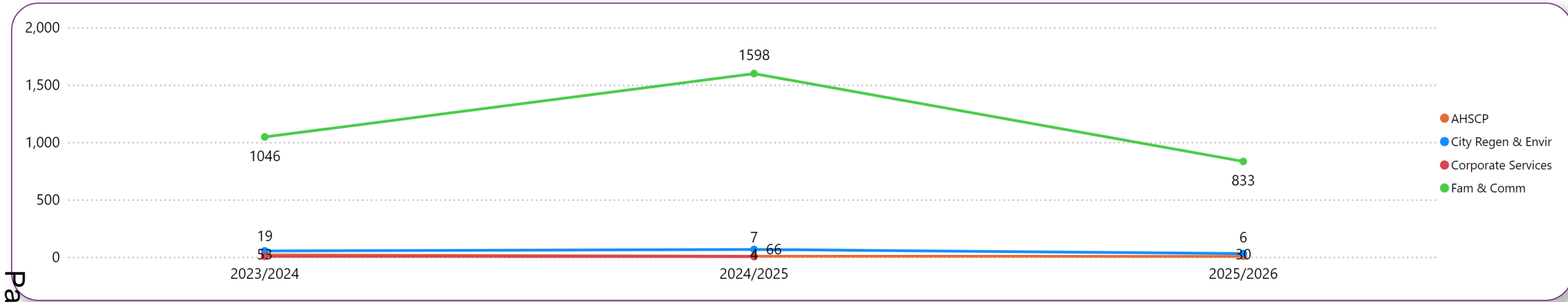


Near Miss Cause																		Total
Breach of internal or external security	Contact with electricity	Contact with machinery	Externalising behaviour	Fire alarm - incident	Inappropriate Communication/abuse	Inappropriate Storage	Medication Error	Misuse of equipment	Other	Physical injury or violence	Slip, Trip, Fall Same Level	Struck against	Struck by object	Threatened with a weapon	Threatening behaviour	Unacceptable behaviour	Vehicle incident	
14	1	1	30	3	17	2	2	1	28	21	1	2	4	2	10	39	1	179

Reported Incidents

From Q2 2023/24 to Q2 2025/26

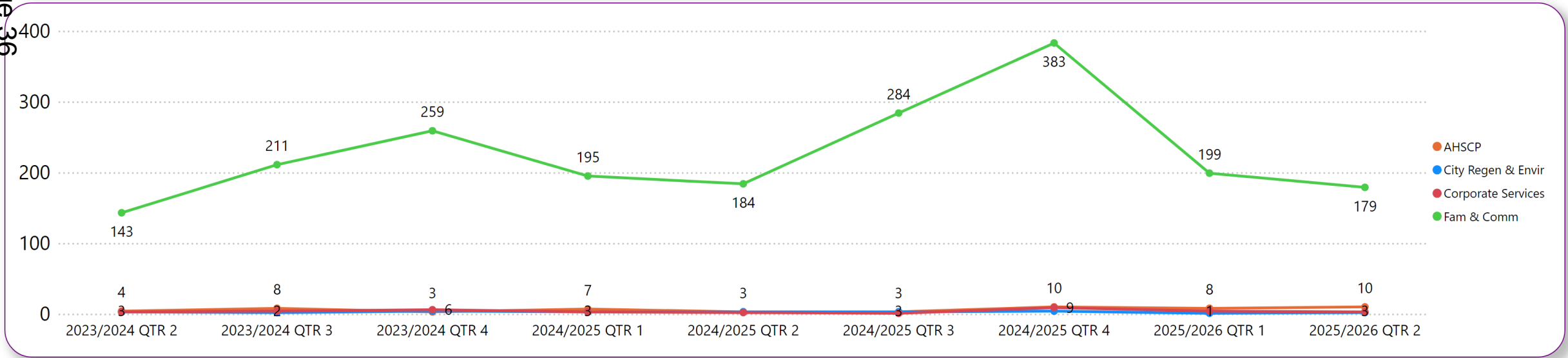
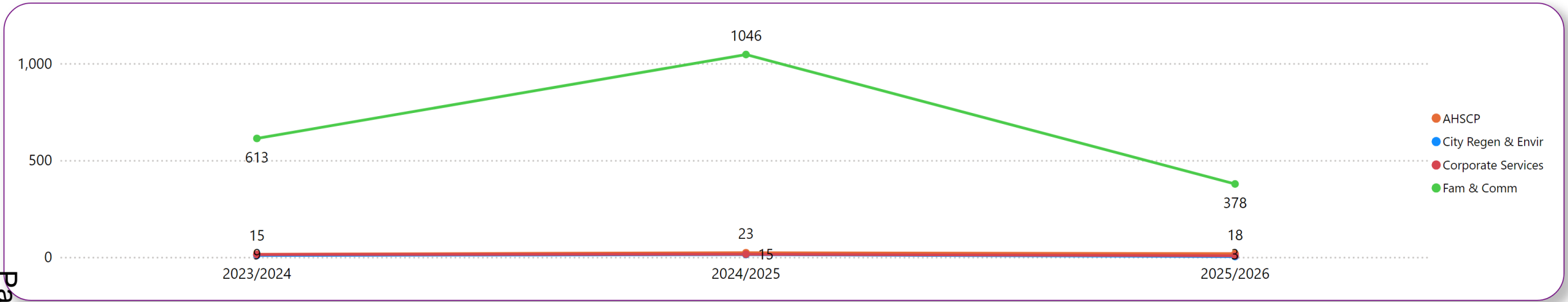
The tables provides information on the **total number** of incidents from 2023/24 to 2025/26 to Function level.



Reported Near Miss
From Q2 2023/24 to Q2 2025/26

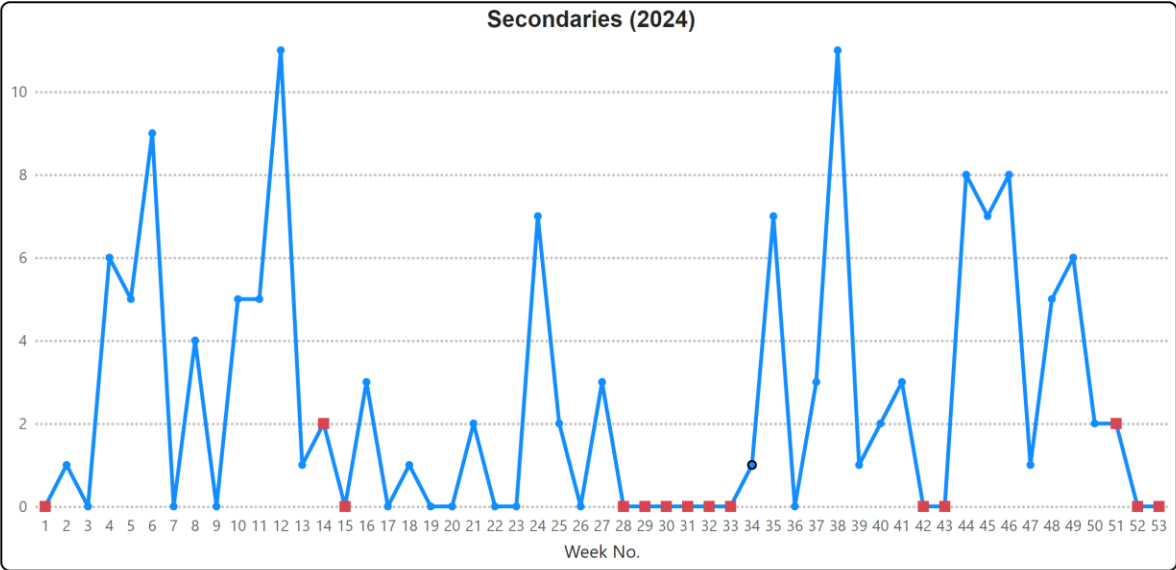
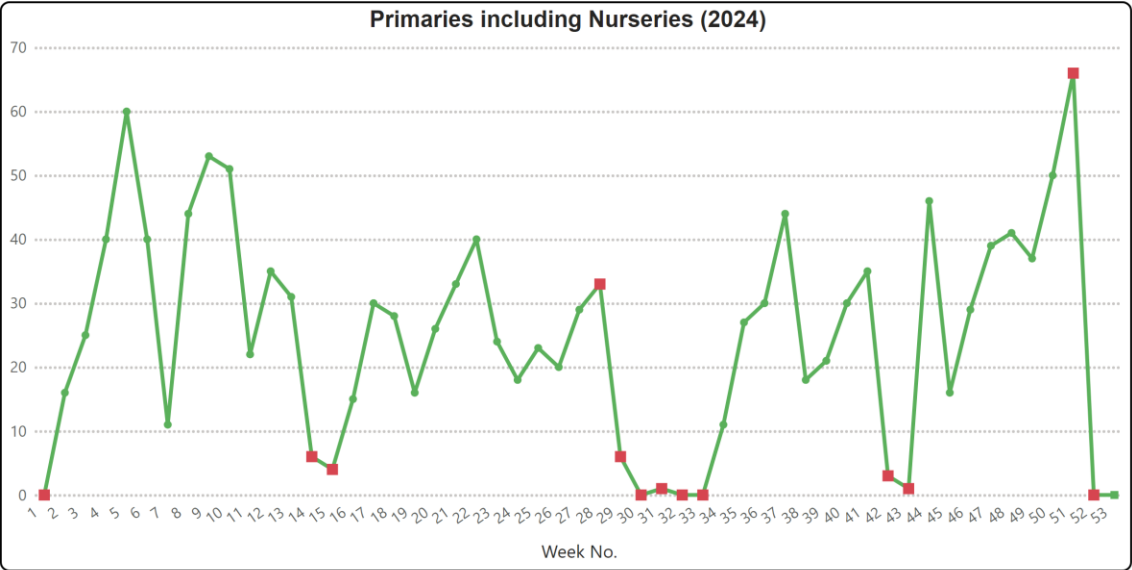
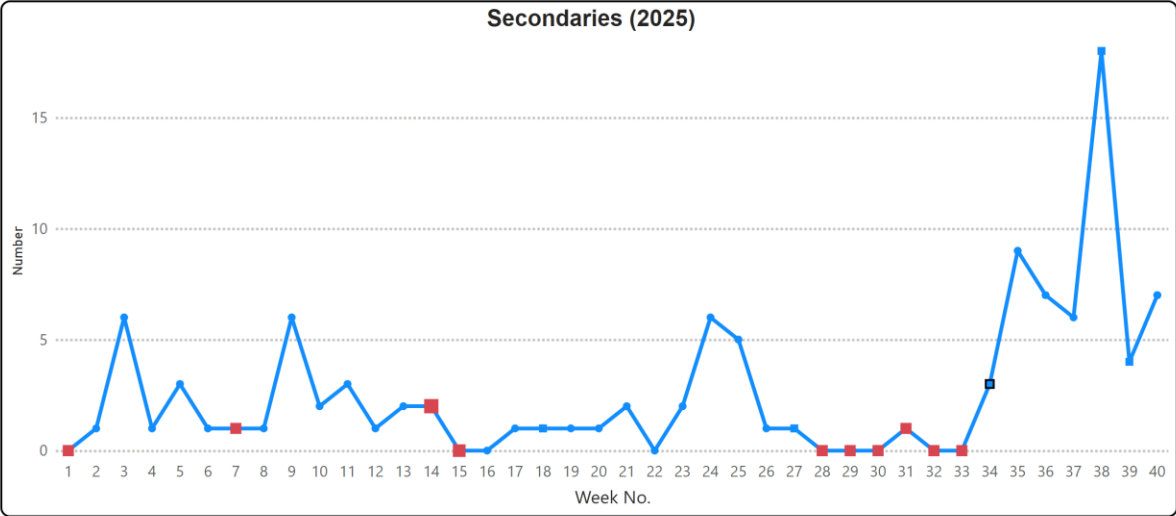
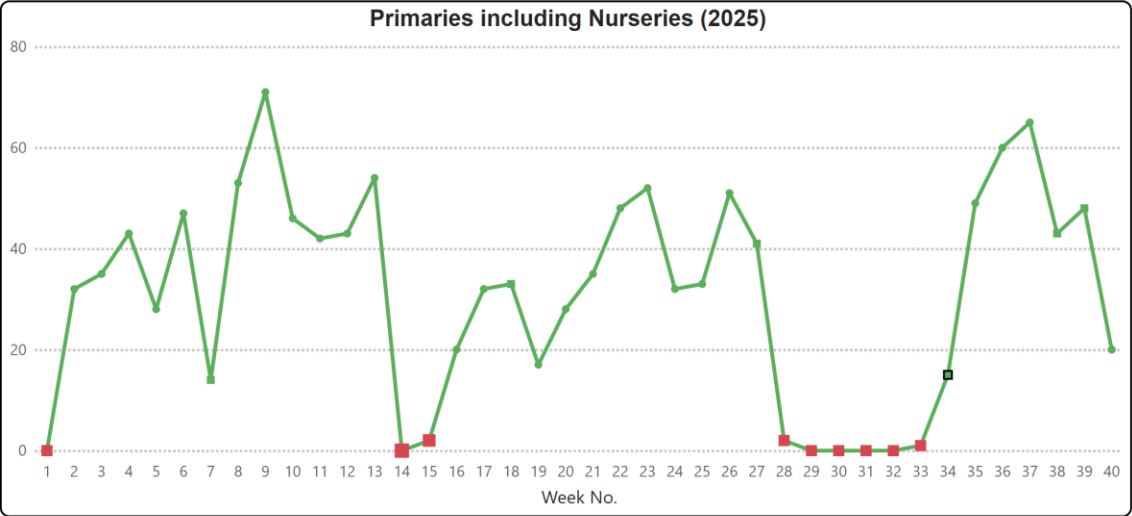
The tables provides information on the **total number** of near misses from 2023/24 to 2025/26 to Function level.

Page 36



Reported Incidents in Schools
(2024 & 2025)

The tables below provide information on the number of reported incidents in Schools each week during 2024 and 2025. Those weeks with red markers represent incidents (if any), noted during the Easter, Summer, October and Christmas holidays.



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ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance
DATE	3 November 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Policies for People Update
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/251
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald, Executive Director – Corporate Services
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe, Chief Officer – People & Citizen Services
REPORT AUTHOR	Sharon Robb, Employee Relations Casework Lead
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.5, 2.7

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This report follows from a report to Staff Governance Committee in June 2023 (CUS/23/186), where it was agreed that a report would be brought to Committee on an annual basis on the application of the Managing Discipline, Managing Grievances and Dignity and Respect at Work policies.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:-

- 2.1 Notes the updated data provided regarding the usage and application of the policies; and
- 2.2 Notes the improvement actions planned to improve progress on timescales for employee relations casework across the organisation within a joint action plan.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1 The revised [Managing Discipline Policy](#) was approved by Committee on 7 June 2021, with the revised [Managing Grievances](#) and the [Dignity and Respect at Work](#) Policies approved by Committee on 28 September 2021.
- 3.2 The key aims of the policies are to:
- 1 Increase the use of informal methods of resolution and seek to deal with issues at the lowest level to avoid unnecessary escalation to the hearing stage of policies and

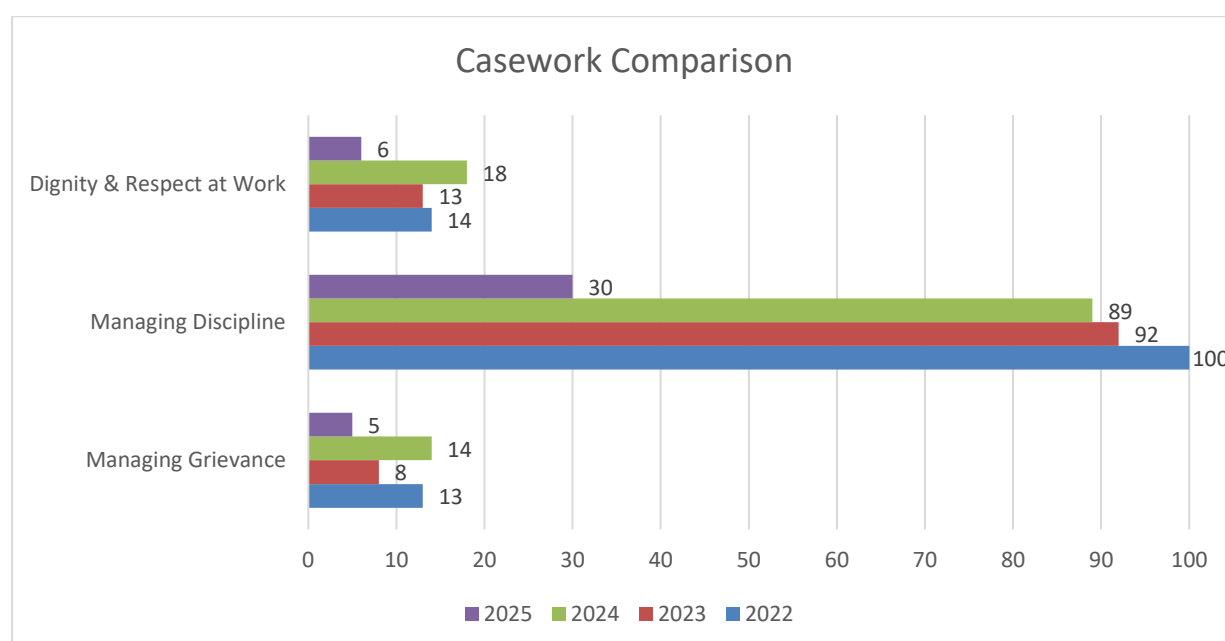
2 To introduce a single investigation process which applies to all 3 policies.

3.3 An [annual update](#) on the application of these policies was most recently presented to the Staff Governance Committee on 9 September 2024.

Data

3.4 For the purposes of comparison, the data for 2022 and 2023 from previous annual updates has been included. This has been compared against the period January to December 2024 and January to June 2025.

3.5 The graph below shows a breakdown of the type of cases progressed in 2024 and the first half of 2025. For clarity, the 2024/25 data includes only cases which were opened in that period.

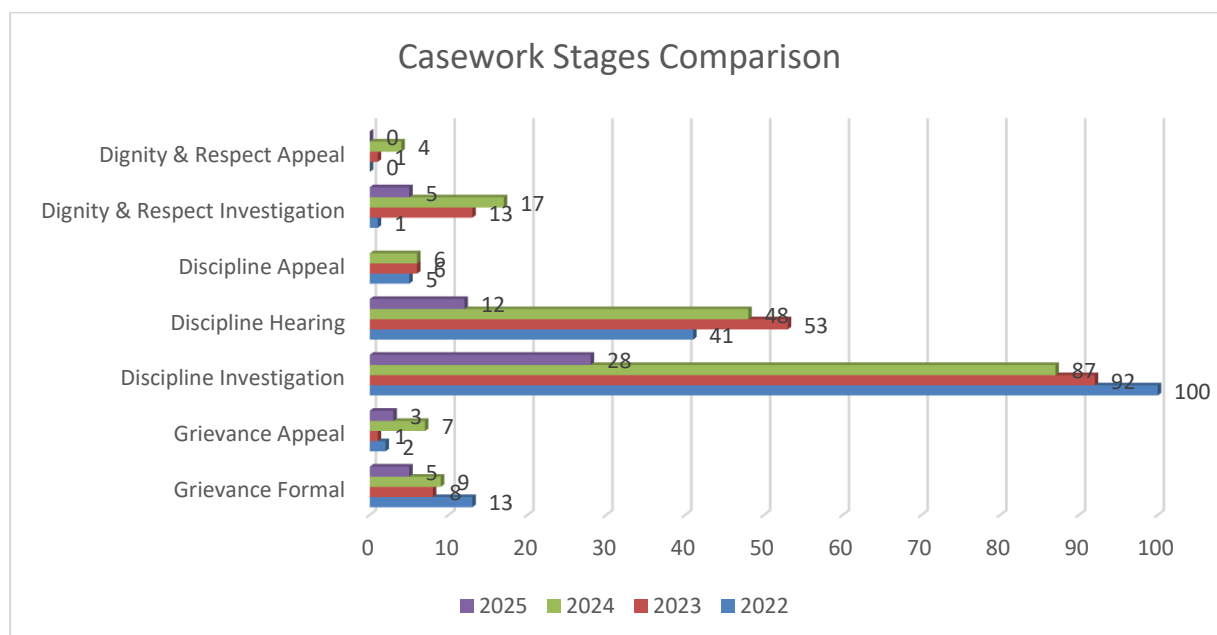


3.6 There is a degree of consistency in the numbers of cases opened in 2024 when compared to 2022 and 2023. For Managing Discipline cases, there was an improvement in the number of new cases, with a small decrease from 92 in 2023 to 89 cases in 2024. The 2025 data shows that up to June 2025, 30 new cases have been opened, therefore a further reduction is projected. The full year figures will be reported to Committee next year.

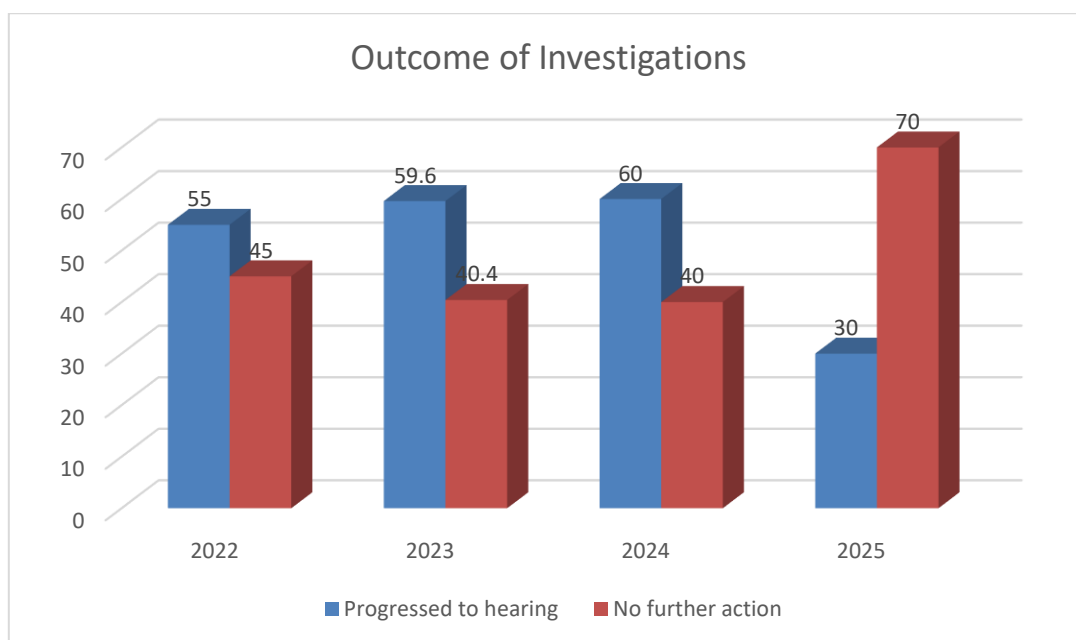
3.7 For Managing Grievance, there has been a slight increase in the number of cases from 8 in 2023 to 14 in 2024, similar to the number of cases in 2022. The 2025 data shows that up to June 2025, 5 new cases have been opened.

3.8 For Dignity and Respect cases, this again has shown a slight increase in the number of cases from 13 in 2023 to 18 in 2024. The 2025 data shows that up to June 2025, 6 new cases were opened.

- 3.9 The graph below shows a breakdown of the stages within each case type. As above, the 2024/25 data includes only cases which were opened in that period (and therefore some cases may not yet have concluded).



- 3.10 Informal grievances are not included in the figures above as these are not routinely recorded centrally by the employee relations team; these are often dealt with by managers at service level, and only where these cannot be resolved, are they escalated. Whilst there were similar numbers of grievances heard each year, there is a proportionate increase in the number of grievance appeals.
- 3.11 Whilst there was an increase in the number of disciplinary hearings from 2022 to 2023, the number of hearings in 2024 has decreased, with this decrease looking likely to continue in 2025 (whilst noting that not all disciplinary cases started in 2025 will have concluded). The number of appeals from cases commenced in 2023 to those commenced in 2024 has remained the same, with 0 appeals from cases commenced in 2025 to date (whilst again noting that not all cases will have concluded).
- 3.12 There has been an increase between 2023 and 2024 for investigations under the Dignity and Respect at Work policy, which has increased from 13 to 17. There were 4 Dignity and Respect at Work appeals in 2024. It should be noted that cases under the Dignity and Respect at Work Policy may involve multiple complainants/subjects of complaint, which would be recorded separately and may impact the figures.
- 3.13 The chart below shows that in 2022, 55% of formal investigations progressed to a disciplinary hearing, increasing to 60% in 2023, and remaining at the same level in 2024. For 2025 (to 30 June 2025) (although noting that not all will have concluded) 30% of investigations have progressed to a disciplinary hearing.



3.14 The data shows that, whilst timescales for the stages of the procedures are a matter of guidance rather than policy, the organisation's average timescales are not currently aligned with the timescales currently set out in the guidance, as detailed in the table below:

Policy Stage	Days in Guidance	Average Days 2023*	Average Days 2024*	Average Days 2025 (to date)*
Disciplinary Investigation	28 (20 working days)	85	97	51.3
Disciplinary Hearing	14 (10 working days)	32	38	25.8
Disciplinary Appeal	14/84** (10/60 working days)	56	65	-
Grievance Hearing	14 (10 working days)	54	105	43.5
Grievance Appeal	14 (10 working days)	41	45.6	-

* Please note that the timescales are calculated using only stages that have been completed and will not include any which are still ongoing. Therefore these figures may change in subsequent reports.

**Appeals Sub Committee timescales are 12 weeks or 84 working days

3.15 Whilst each case is individual and has unique challenges, the most common reasons for delays were as follows:

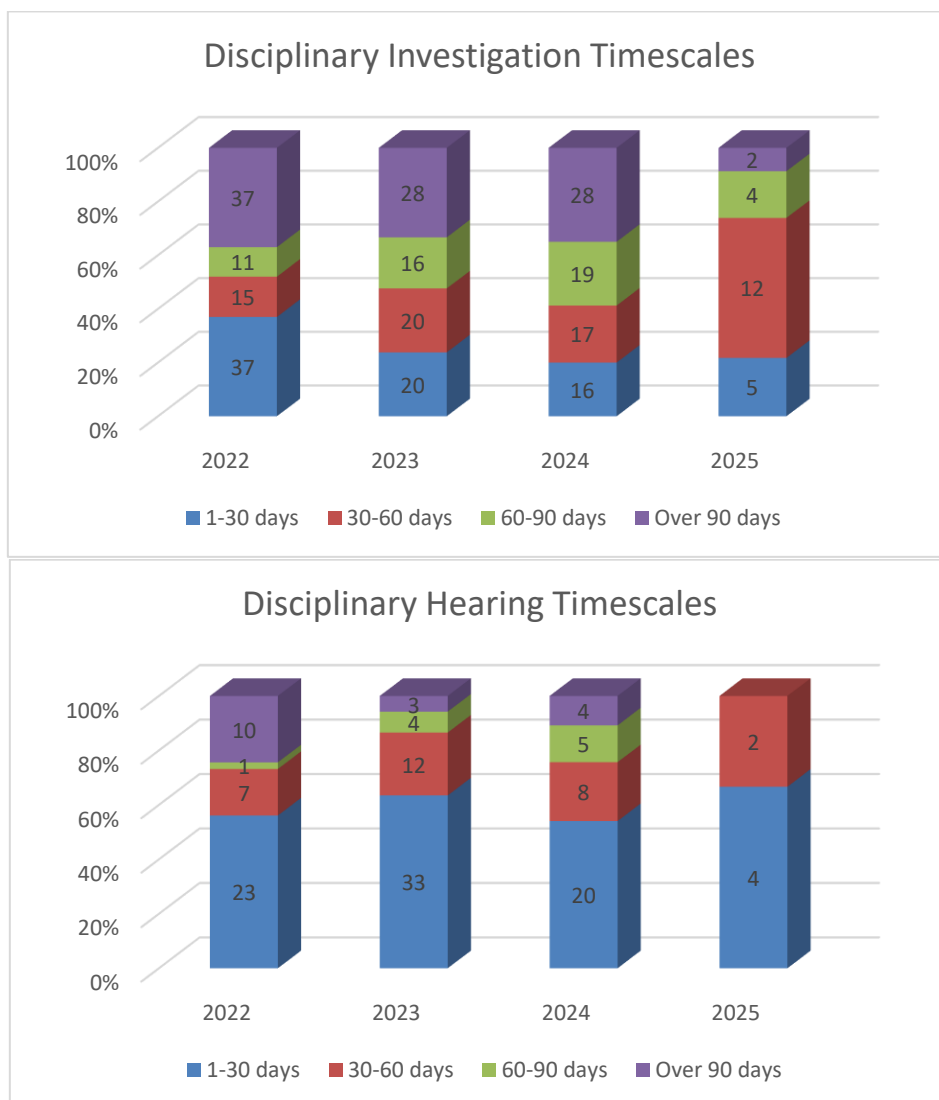
- Sickness absence/annual leave during the process (either employee, trade union representative, People & OD Adviser, Investigating Officer or Disciplinary Hearing Chair; or a combination)
- School holiday periods during investigations for school based employees
- Availability/capacity of investigating officer or disciplinary hearing chair
- Complexity of some cases, such as those involving police investigations or requiring numerous witnesses to be interviewed.

- Hearing/appeal date being varied by mutual consent.

3.16 It is also important to note that the length of each stage is measured as the time to reach a conclusion. The timescales outlined in the guidance for hearings and appeals relate to when the case should be heard by (i.e. the original hearing date). In many cases there may be adjournments to seek further information, to consider all the information presented or it may take several meetings to hear the entirety of a case. Further the case is not considered concluded until an outcome letter has been issued and the guidance allows a further 5 working days for this to be issued following the case being heard.

3.17 Appeals to the Appeals Sub Committee by necessity have a longer lead in time than officer appeals and in line with the Appeals Sub Committee procedure, these are heard within 12 weeks of a letter of appeal being submitted.

3.18 The table below shows a further breakdown of the timescales for the investigation and disciplinary hearings from 2022-25 by number of days taken to complete:



- 3.19 There will always be some cases which will exceed the length of time set out within the guidance for a number of reasons, as explained above, however the data shows that there is room for improvement.
- 3.20 In order to address some of the issues with timescales within our people processes and concerns raised by our trade union colleagues, an improvement action plan has been developed jointly, with trade union colleagues, and with feedback from managers, chief officers and investigating officers.
- 3.21 Appendix 1 sets out the initial actions included within the plan, with an update provided.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 There are no direct financial implications arising from this report.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Dealing with disciplinary and grievance issues as promptly as possible and without unreasonable delay contributes to a fair procedure for employment law purposes.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 There are no direct environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) <small>*taking into account controls/control actions</small>	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	No significant risks identified			Yes
Compliance	Non-compliance with our policies presents a legal risk of successful tribunal claims.	Functions acting on utilisation, trend and root cause information to develop and implement controls to ensure policy compliance. Provision of robust training in understanding/	M	Yes

		applying corporate policies. Provision of specialist support / advice.		
Operational	Risk to service delivery and standards if staff performance is impacted by ongoing/protracted casework	Provision of information, instruction and training as identified in Job Profiles, skills and training matrices. Open and clear two-way communication at all levels within the organisation.	M	Yes
Financial	If corporate policies are not complied with, then the organisation may incur both direct (as a result of tribunal claims) and indirect (due to loss of productivity) costs	Functions acting on utilisation, trend and root cause information to develop and implement controls to ensure policy compliance. Provision of robust training in understanding/ applying corporate policies. Provision of specialist support / advice.	M	Yes
Reputational	If corporate policies are not consistently and fairly applied, there is a risk of the organisation not being seen as an employer of choice and having recruitment and retention issues	Provision of information, instruction and training as identified in Job Profiles, skills and training matrices. Open and clear two-way communication at all levels within the organisation.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	No significant risks identified			Yes

8. OUTCOMES

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26	
Prosperous Economy Stretch Outcomes	The Prosperous Economy theme in the LOIP makes mention of the importance of retaining talent and expertise in City organisations. This would include the Council. Ensuring that people policies are in place and applied appropriately and consistently should assist with employee relations in the organisation and with the retention of trained and valued employees. This would mean that they can continue in post and contribute to delivering effective services to citizens and businesses, indirectly contributing to the City's economy.
Prosperous People Stretch Outcomes	The Prosperous People theme in the LOIP indicates that all people in the City are entitled to feel safe, protected from harm and supported where necessary, which would include employees of the Council. Ensuring that people policies are in place and applied appropriately and consistently should assist with employee relations in the organisation, ensuring that conduct issues are efficiently addressed and that employees are supported when undergoing the procedure. This should indirectly assist with employee mental health and wellbeing allowing them to function both in employment and at home.
Regional and City Strategies	<p>This report links directly with the Council's Workforce Delivery Plan - setting up our Council in a way that supports our aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy review principles are in place that embed early intervention and prevention • Industrial relations are based on positive working relationships with our recognized Trade Unions and have mutual respect at their core

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	No assessment required. I confirm this has been discussed and agreed with Isla Newcombe, Chief Officer People & Citizen Services on 1/10/25.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not required
Other	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Policies for People Update – CUS/24/259](#)
- 10.2 [Policies for People Update – CUS/23/186](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Improvement Action Plan

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

Name	Sharon Robb
Title	Employee Relations Casework Lead
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Improvement Action	Why this is important?	Update
General		
Engagement with chief officers to support them to emphasise to managers about the importance of adherence to people policies and guidance.	The application of these policies within ACC is the responsibility of Chief Officers and feedback from Trade Unions is that visibility and involvement, where appropriate, of Chief Officers for cases in their respective areas could be improved. Feedback from Investigating Officers and Chairs also suggests that operational work is a barrier in terms of meeting timescales and support from Chief Officers in managing priorities would be of benefit.	Continuing to engage with Chief Officers exploring options for reporting based on new HR system.
Undertake a feedback session with Investigating Officers/ Hearing Chairs	To gain their input and insight into how the policies and processes are working in practice, understand any barriers and to make any resultant changes to improve the process.	Feedback sessions held and have contributed to actions within this plan
Review current methods of recording casework information	Reviewing our existing casework register will help ensure data is accurate and up to date for the purposes of tracking cases and reporting.	Review has been completed and casework register updated. People Services are currently developing and implementing Dynamics 365 as a case management system with expected implementation in 2026. This is expected to allow further improvement in data management and reporting.
Investigations		

Improvement Action	Why this is important?	Update
Review and consider options on current approach to allocating Investigating Officers to cases	Feedback from People & OD Advisors and managers indicates delays in the current process for allocating Investigating Officers, as well as delays associated with IOs managing their investigations in addition to business as usual priorities. Alternative models have been considered, including the potential to establish dedicated IO roles, as a test of change. The remit would be solely to undertake investigations with the intention of increasing organisational capacity to complete investigations in accordance with our set timescales. A benchmarking exercise has shown that this has been trialled within other organisations with successful outcomes. It is hoped this initiative will avoid/reduce delays and improve timescales	As part of the People Services redesign, 2 dedicated Investigating Officer posts are proposed to be established on the structure, on a fixed term basis, to trial this approach. It is anticipated this will be effective in early 2026
Review Investigations Training	Currently training is online and procedural in nature; feedback from investigating officers (IOs) suggests that this does not always sufficiently equip them to undertake investigations. A face to face course will be developed and implemented with a focus on improving the timescales whilst ensuring robustness around cases. It is hoped that this will also increase the pool of sufficiently trained IOs and allow cases to be allocated more quickly.	In progress
Review guidance around current timescales	The data within this report indicates that it is not always achievable to meet the timescales. By reviewing the timescales and associated guidance, this will ensure timescales are realistic and also provide clarity on actions that should be taken where achieving these is not possible.	Ongoing
Review training provision on People Policies for all managers	Review the current training provision for managers on key people policies and procedures including the importance of considering resolution at informal stage, where this is possible and undertaking 'preliminary investigations or fact finding', with the aim of reducing the number of formal cases.	In progress Briefing sessions held with Head Teachers and as part of the Aspiring Leaders Programme. Currently reviewing Manager Induction to ensure a session is included to cover this.

Improvement Action	Why this is important?	Update
Increase visibility of case work data for Chief Officers / Service Managers	Greater visibility of data allows for early intervention in cases, particularly where timescales are identified as exceeding those in the guidance.	People Services are currently implementing Dynamics 365 as a case management system with expected implementation in early 2026. This is expected to allow further improvement in visibility of data management and reporting.
Hearings		
Develop training/briefing for Disciplinary Hearing Chairs	Especially useful for managers new to the Disciplinary Hearing Chair role. Training purpose to increase confidence and expertise, as well as a focus on ensuring robustness around cases. Aim to reduce delays in arranging hearings and will place an emphasis on the need to improve timescales on case completion.	In progress
Appeals		
Record and report management and Appeals Sub-committee separately	Management appeals (14 days) and Committee appeals (12 weeks) have differing timescales, with committee appeals by necessity having a longer lead in time. Reporting these timescales separately will give a better indication of where improvements can be made	New action to be undertaken for next annual report.

ABERDEEN CITY COUNCIL

COMMITTEE	Staff Governance
DATE	3 November 2025
EXEMPT	No
CONFIDENTIAL	No
REPORT TITLE	Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy
REPORT NUMBER	CORS/25/198
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	Andy MacDonald – Executive Director – Corporate Services
CHIEF OFFICER	Isla Newcombe – Chief Officer People and Citizen Services
REPORT AUTHOR	Sharon Robb – Employee Relations Casework Lead
TERMS OF REFERENCE	2.5

1. PURPOSE OF REPORT

- 1.1 This purpose of this report is to seek approval for a revised Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy to replace the current Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy, which was last approved in 2018.

2. RECOMMENDATION

That Committee

- 2.1 Approves the updated Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy in the Appendix to replace the current version of the policy, which was approved in 2018, with an implementation date of 1 February 2026 to allow for necessary training to be arranged, communications to be undertaken and other administrative arrangements to be completed.

3. CURRENT SITUATION

Background

- 3.1 Aberdeen City Council's vision is for Aberdeen as a place where all people can prosper. This means all people being able to access our services, regardless of their background and circumstances, so that we help all people, families, businesses and communities to do well, succeed and flourish in every aspect.
- 3.2 The Council's Workforce strategy and Delivery Plan aims to:
- enable employees to thrive personally and professionally with a key strategic objective which states that Aberdeen City Council is a supportive, caring employer that provides a range of mental health and wellbeing interventions and support; supports staff through the cost of living crisis; recognises and supports work/life balance and enables individuals to remain in work or return to work effectively.

- provide support to managers and employees, to reduce absence levels across the organisation and ensure employees are supported through a range of resources and interventions to remain in work whenever possible where that is beneficial to them; and allow support to be targeted to the areas of highest need

The Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy links to these aims as a component which seeks to enable these objectives.

- 3.3 The existing Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy was approved at Staff Governance Committee in November 2018 ([Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy.pdf \(acc.gov.uk\)](#)) and implemented from 1 January 2019 applying to all employees of the Council.
- 3.4 An Absence Improvement Project, reporting to the Performance Board, used a targeted approach to managing absence cases within a specific test area. The main impact on sickness absence levels is long term absence, where there is opportunity with early intervention to support employees back to work at the earliest possible stage. The project aimed to reduce the total number of days lost as a result of long term absence (over 30 calendar days) within Building Services in the Operations cluster by 20% by August 2025 (initially at 2235 days, 25% reduction would be 1676 days). A 20% reduction was achieved by December 2024 and therefore this progress has showed that a targeted approach to long term sickness can reduce the number of people off long term sick and also the length of individual absences.

Data

- 3.5 Since the policy was last reviewed, the Council's overall absence record has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and the post-pandemic climate, as most recently presented as part of the [Sickness Absence for Environmental, Roads and Waste Services \(acc.gov.uk\)](#) report at Staff Governance Committee in June 2024, and as part of regular absence reporting to Committee. The most recent update in April 2025 ([EAS Annual Progress Update – Occupational Health and Absence Annual Update January– December 2024](#)) showed a steady increase after the pandemic, peaking in the 3rd quarter of 2023 (Figure 1). Since this time, the Council's overall absence rate has shown a steady decrease throughout 2024, levelling off in 2025 (Figure 2), which has been a result of the targeted approach from the Absence Improvement Project being implemented more widely, work undertaken to cleanse absence data, and also mirrors National absence trends in the post-covid climate. The reasons for absence remain largely the same. (Figure 3).

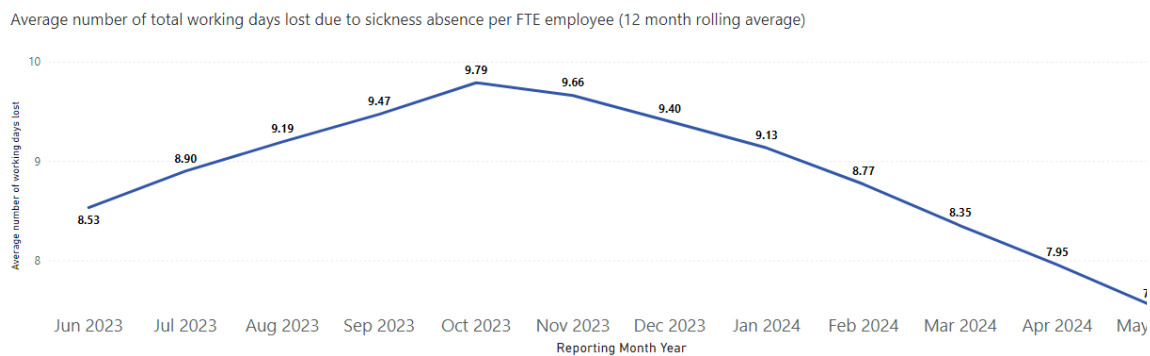


Figure 1

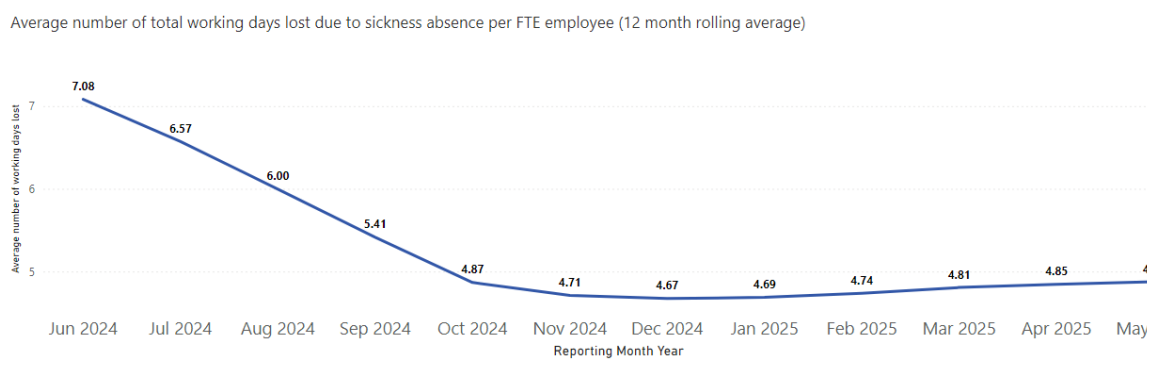


Figure 2

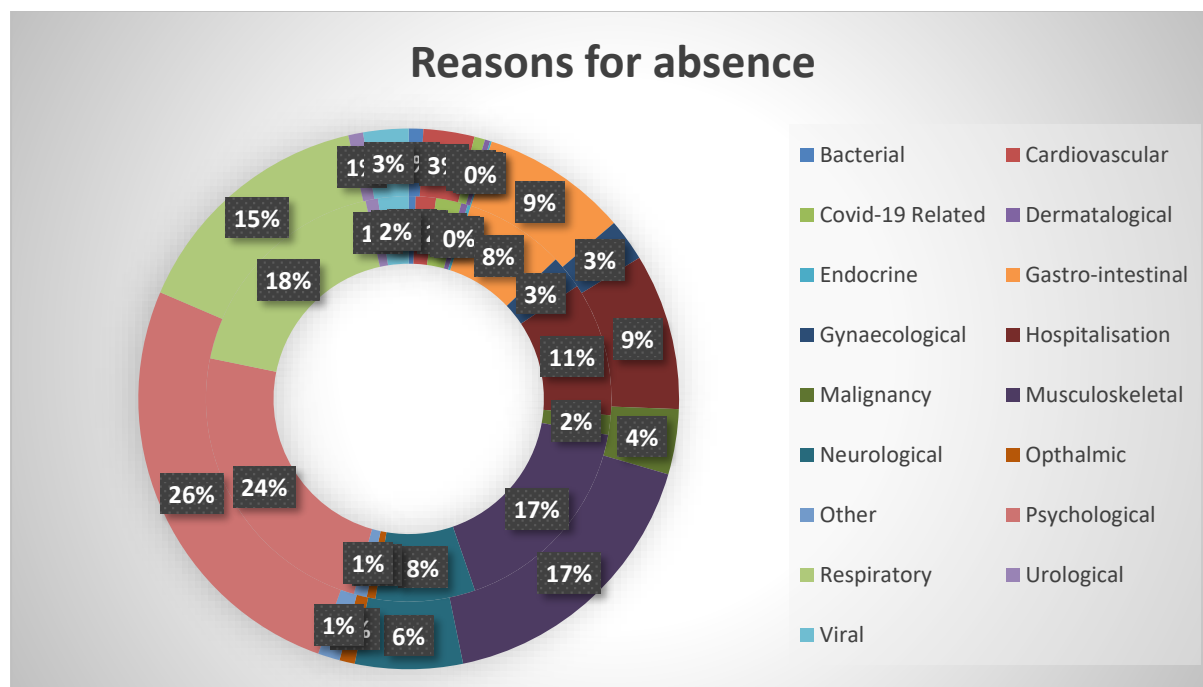
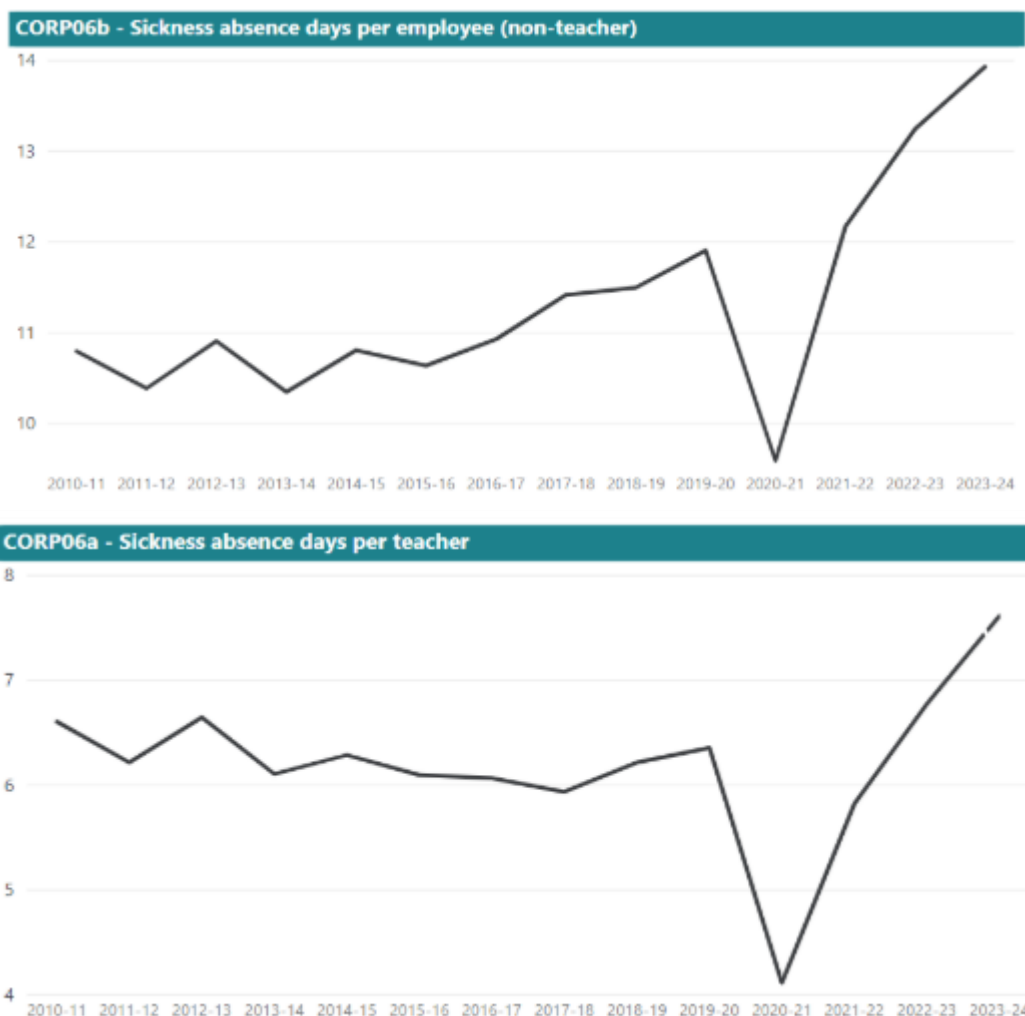


Figure 3 – The outer circle represents February 2025, whilst the inner circle represents February 2024

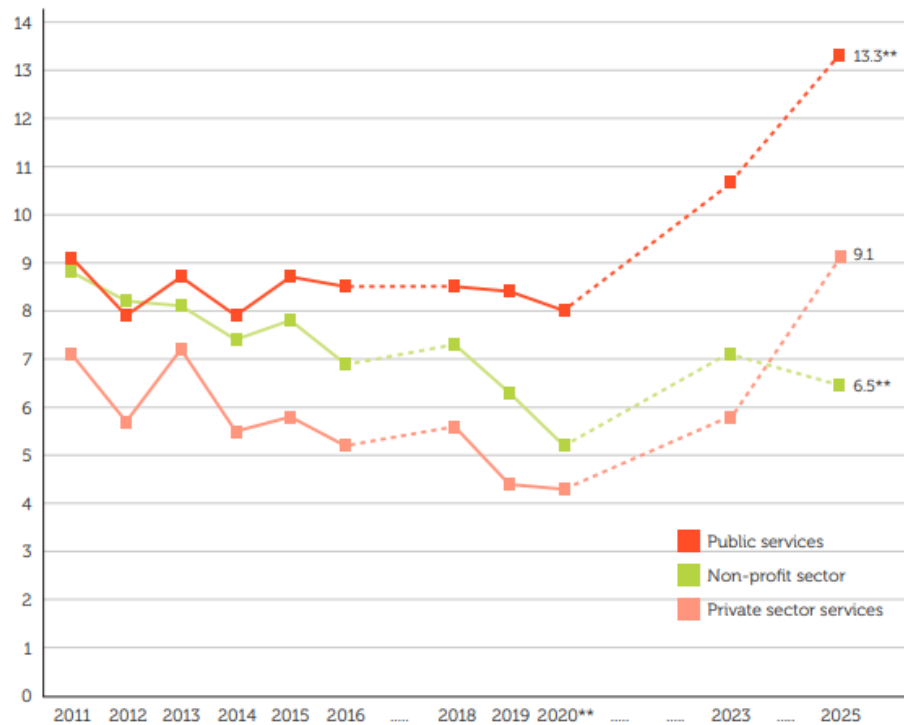
3.6 The Council's overall absence trend has mirrored national trends which have also shown an increase in absence rates up to 2023. Data from the Local

Government Benchmarking Forum below shows an increase in absence rates across Councils between 2020 and 2024 for both teaching and non-teaching staff.



- 3.7 A review of the CIPD's [Health and wellbeing at work \(cipd.org\) report](https://www.cipd.org/uk/research-and-insights/articles-and-reports/health-and-wellbeing-at-work), published in September 2025, reported an increase in sickness absence across all sectors from 2023 and in fact they reported the highest level of absence in more than 15 years and noted that the causes of absence more widely remain largely unchanged (see figures below).

Figure 2: Average number of days lost per employee per year, by sector*

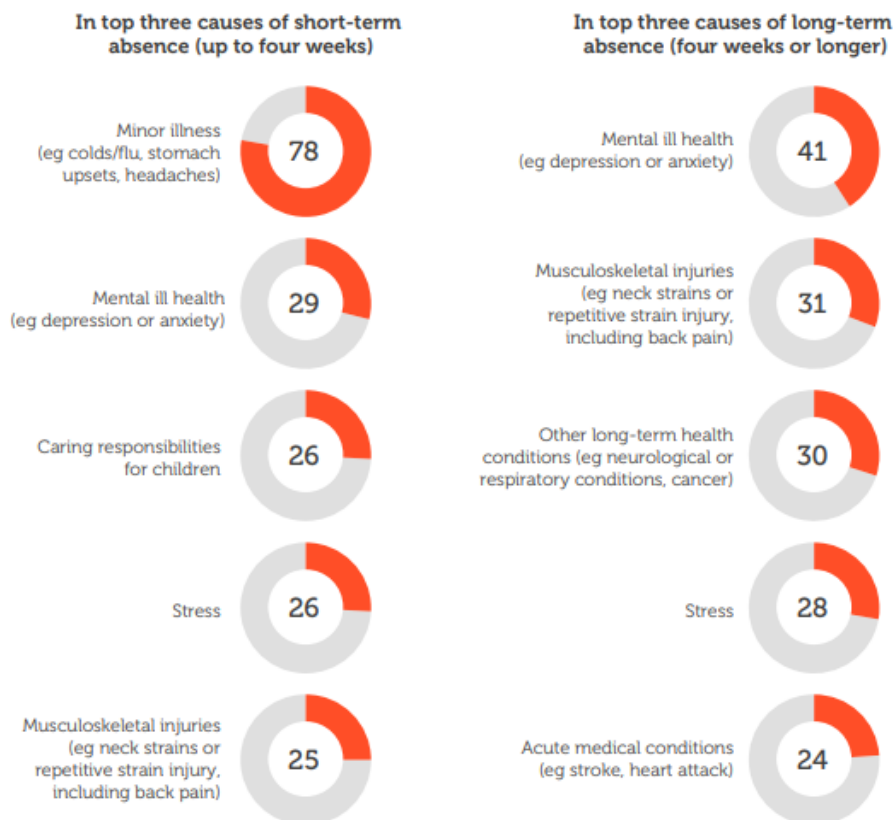


*5% trimmed mean

**small sample sizes so should be treated with caution

Base: private sector: n=247; public services: n=33; non-profit: n=25.

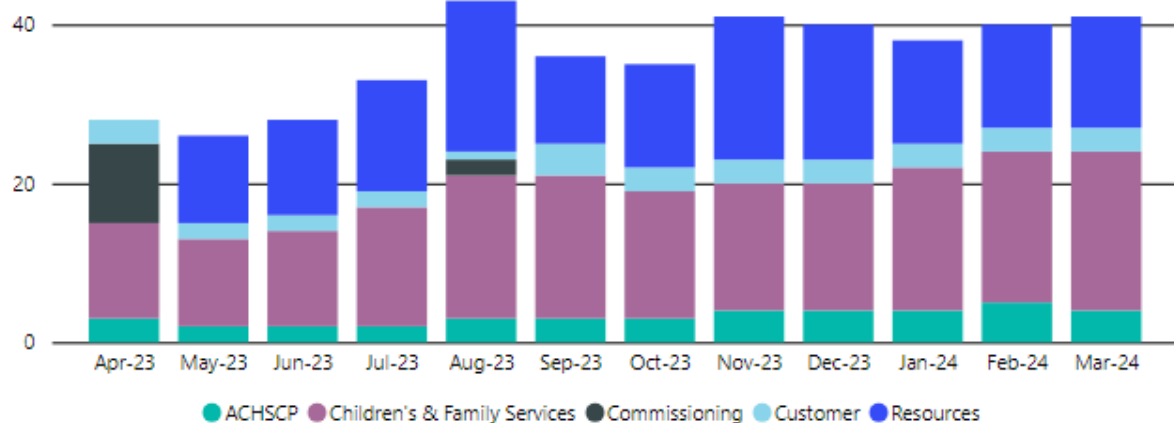
Figure 4: The most common causes of absence (% of respondents who include in their top three causes)



Base: n=1,101 (all respondents).

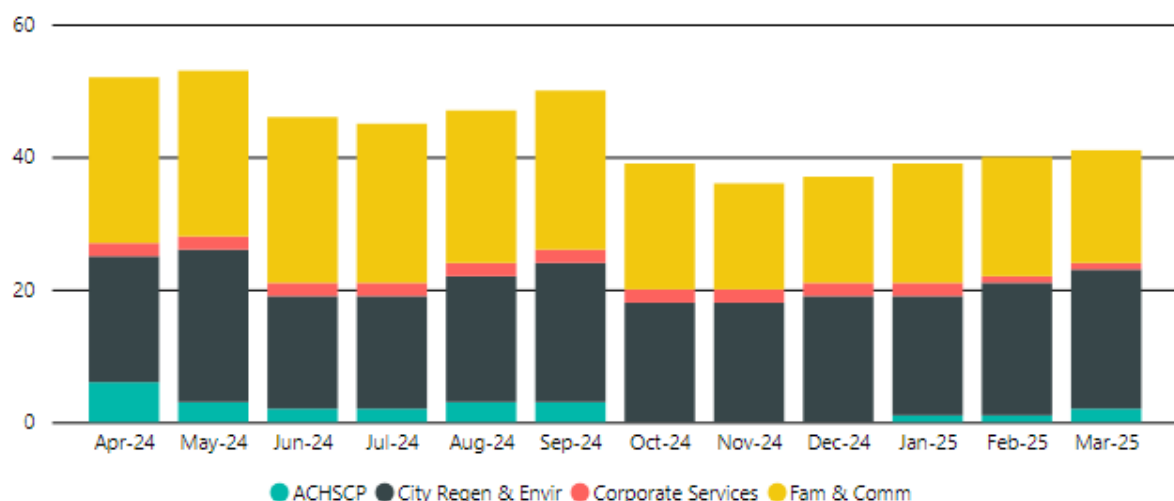
- 3.8 The number of Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing cases across the last 2 financial years is shown below. The data is not truly reflective of the fuller usage of the policy as earlier stages of the policy (Return to Work meetings, Stage 1 and Stage 2 attendance meetings) do not require the involvement of People Services, and so are not recorded on our HR system.

Supporting Attendance & Wellbeing (Ongoing) - 2023/24



Please note that supporting attendance cases are recorded against the function at the start of the case so may not fully take into account any restructuring in that period.

Supporting Attendance & Wellbeing (Ongoing) - 2024/25



Please also note that the colour coding for each graph is unique to that year; the same colour may represent different functions in different years.

- 3.9 Given the period of time since the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy was last reviewed, and the changing landscape which has affected absent rates both locally and nationally, a fuller review of the policy was conducted to ensure it is fit for purpose and meeting the needs of the Council in a changed and modern operating environment.
- 3.10 In addition, a full review of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy has allowed the accompanying guidance to take account of any new or amended processes, for example, the use of Reasonable Adjustment passports; learning from the Absence Improvement Project; and aligning with processes for the Council's new Occupational Health contract, which took effect from September 2024.
- 3.11 The policy is applicable to all employees, including teachers. The policy was presented at the Local Negotiating Committee for Teachers (LNCT) for consideration and approval on 30 September 2025 and was ratified on xx.

How the review was conducted

- 3.12 A project team was formed and a project plan developed to fully review and develop the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy, accompanying guidance and any required templates to:
- ensure employees are appropriately supported during any periods of absence and enabled to return to work at the earliest opportunity.
 - provide clarity for managers in applying the guidance to support employees accordingly.
 - ensure they are reflective of ACAS guidelines, CIPD best practice guidance, and any current or upcoming legislation.
 - Consider any learning obtained from the Absence Improvement Project and look to replicate any successes into the development of the new policy.
- 3.13 Benchmarking and research was undertaken with other local authorities, partner organisations as well as with other private and third-sector organisations to identify best-practice examples of sickness absence policies and provisions.
- 3.14 Data on sickness absence and usage of the current policy (as shown above) was gathered and analysed to understand the current usage and highlight any gaps in current practice. This showed a steady increase in formal Supporting Attendance cases since 2023, which highlighted the need for a policy review to ensure that the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy remains effective, relevant, and adequately addresses the underlying issues contributing to sickness absence.
- 3.15 Trade Unions, managers and other groups have been engaged throughout to establish what has worked well and not worked so well, to capture any concerns and so that they are co-designing improvements to the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy, guidance documents and working practices.
- 3.16 Job Families have been considered so that information is accessible in a way that suits the needs of different employee groups.

- 3.17 The policy has been cross-reviewed against other policies, including those which are currently being reviewed in line with the Workforce Delivery Plan, such as the Flexible Working Policy, to ensure these provide consistency and clarity and also to align with the current [Mental Health Action Plan](#).

Policy Changes

- 3.18 Taking all the feedback into account, a revised Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy has been developed. The table below sets out a summary of the areas where there are proposed changes.

Area	Current Policy	Revised Policy	Rationale
Overall approach	Single Policy, procedure and guidance document	A separate policy, with accompanying procedure/guidance document.	<p>Alignment with corporate template and governance arrangements.</p> <p>Aligns with our approach for other key people policies such as Managing Discipline, Managing Grievances, Dignity and Respect at Work and Flexible Working</p> <p>Feedback from managers and Trade Unions that support options in the current policy were not clear and further guidance on these would be welcome</p>
Short term Absences	No distinction between how short and long term absence is managed.	<p>Short term procedure remains the same for managing absences of;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 occasions, or • 10 days 	<p>Benchmarking showed that all other local authorities distinguish between short and long term absence. The Council's current 'triggers' for initiating the policy were in line with other benchmarked local authorities.</p> <p>Feedback from managers is that the policy is effective for managing short term absence.</p>
Long term absences	No distinction between how short and long term absence is managed.	Introduction of a long term procedure as part of the policy for managing absences for durations of 28 or more calendar days.	<p>Benchmarking showed that all other local authorities distinguish between short and long term absence.</p> <p>Feedback from managers and trade unions supported this. The introduction of a long term procedure allows for more structured, tailored and dedicated support; clarity for managers with less ambiguity in decision making; fair and consistent application of the policy; increased confidence in</p>

			handling more complex or sensitive cases
Support Plan	N/A	Introduction of a structured 'support plan' for employees with long term absences, with review dates (which can also be used for those with short term absences which are due to an underlying medical condition).	<p>Feedback from Trade Unions was that support should be improved for those with underlying conditions – both TUs and managers were positive about the concept of using a support plan.</p> <p>Learning from the Absence Improvement Project was that a clearer, structured process for managing long term absence would be beneficial.</p>
Trigger levels	Current policy uses the terminology 'Trigger Levels' for the number of days/occasions of absence that result in an employee's absence levels being managed under the policy.	Terminology has been changed to 'review levels'.	Feedback from Trade Unions, employee groups and managers was that the terminology was not supportive and felt punitive, negative, and was unhelpful in managing absences under the policy
Support and Wellbeing	Policy contains minimal and outdated signposting and guidance on support options	<p>More comprehensive section around areas of support will be included in the guidance.</p> <p>Signposting and descriptions of available support including to EAP (Employee Assistance Programme), Occupational Health, Reasonable Adjustment Passports, Wellbeing action plans, stress risk assessments will be detailed in the guidance.</p>	Feedback from both managers and Trade Unions was that support options in the current policy were not clear and further guidance on these would be welcome

Other absence related considerations	Policy contains minimal and outdated signposting and guidance on support options	More comprehensive section with areas which require special consideration will be included in the guidance. Examples include pregnancy absence, industrial injury, disability, stress, menopause, mental health	Feedback from both managers and Trade Unions was that support options in the current policy were not clear and further guidance on these would be welcome
Review of the Policy	Every 3 years (noting the last review was in 2018)	Biennially	In line with corporate policy governance.

Next Steps

3.19 To ensure the successful implementation of the revised Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy by 1 February 2026, should the policy be approved, the following actions will be taken:

- Comprehensive training will be developed and rolled out for all line managers, which will include:
 - An online managers' mandatory training module on ACC Learn
 - Practical guidance on applying the new short and long-term absence procedures.
 - Practical guidance on the use of support plans and options, such as reasonable adjustment passports, stress risk assessments and Wellness Action Plans.
 - Signposting to linked training around managing difficult conversations, and guidance on making referrals to Occupational Health.
 - Training will be delivered through a mix of e-learning modules, and recorded webinars to ensure accessibility across job families and shift patterns.
 - Further support will be provided through in-person support sessions.
- A central SharePoint hub on People Anytime will be launched to host:
 - The full policy and accompanying guidance.
 - Templates, FAQs, and flowcharts for quick reference.
 - Links to related guidance (e.g. Phased Return, Ill Health retirement).
 - Links to further detail on useful support options such as Reasonable Adjustment Passports, Wellness Action Plans and tools for supporting Mental Health
 - Contact details for further support, such as from People Services or Occupational Health.

- The hub will be regularly updated and promoted through internal communications.
 - A wide-reaching internal communication campaign will be launched to raise awareness of the policy changes and support available. This will include:
 - Briefings for senior leaders and service managers to cascade key messages.
 - Targeted communications for frontline staff using posters and toolbox talks.
 - Updates via the Leadership Forum.
 - Trade Unions and employee networks will be engaged to support messaging and encourage feedback.
 - A feedback mechanism will be built into the SharePoint page to capture questions and suggestions from employees and managers.
 - Usage and impact of the policy will be monitored through Employee Relations case data, absence trends, and feedback from training.
- 3.20 Building on the improvement lessons learned from the Absence Improvement Project, a further iteration is being planned, focussing on improvement options around Return to Work meetings, specifically ensuring these are completed and recorded. It is hoped that improvement in this area will lead to increased reassurance and support for employees and increased compliance with the policy, which may in turn further improve sickness absence levels within the Council.

4. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 Financial implications of sickness absence rates include costs incurred for salary or sick pay for absent employees and additional costs incurred for temporary cover. Financial impact will reduce as a result of decreasing long term sickness cases.
- 4.2 Failure to comply with legislation in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace has the potential to result in enforcement action by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Changes in the Sentencing and Fines Guidance for health and safety non-compliances are resulting in increased financial penalties.

5. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Failure to comply with legislation in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace has the potential to result in enforcement action by the Health and Safety Executive (HSE). Such intervention can result in potential prosecution (criminal), equally, employees (civil claims) are more likely to succeed following a successful HSE prosecution. Changes in the Sentencing and Fines Guidance for health and safety non-compliances are resulting in increased financial penalties. Fine starting points are based on an organisation's turnover. As Local Authorities do not have turnover; Annual Revenue Budget is deemed to be the equivalent. This amount is then altered depending on the culpability of the organisation and harm factors to employees and members of the public.

5.2 Under the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and Management of Health and Safety at Work Regulations 1999 there is a legal requirement to ensure the health safety and welfare at work of our employees. This includes minimising the risk of stress-related illness or injury to employees.

5.3 Attendance issues may be due to underlying health conditions which are considered a disability under the Equalities Act 2010. The existence of a policy framework under which attendance can be managed and support provided to the employee is a key component in the Council complying with legislation and discharging its duty of care.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL IMPLICATIONS

6.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this report.

7. RISK

Category	Risks	Primary Controls/Control Actions to achieve Target Risk Level	*Target Risk Level (L, M or H) *taking into account controls/control actions	*Does Target Risk Level Match Appetite Set?
Strategic Risk	Failure of the Council to achieve its strategic goals if absence levels are high.	Management of absences using the Supporting Attendance Policy and supporting health and wellbeing of staff. Data capture and reporting to monitor trends and improvements.	L	Yes
Compliance	Failure to meet statutory duties if absence levels are high. Failure to comply with H&S legislation can lead to enforcement by HSE.	Management of absences using the Supporting Attendance Policy and supporting health and wellbeing of staff. Data capture and reporting to monitor trends and improvements.	M	Yes
Operational	Service disruption or failure if	Management of absences using the Supporting Attendance Policy and supporting	L	Yes

	absence levels are high.	health and wellbeing of staff. Data capture and reporting to monitor trends and improvements.		
Financial	Costs incurred for salary or sick pay for absent workers and additional costs for temporary cover. Failure to comply with H&S legislation can lead to enforcement by HSE.	Management of absences using the Supporting Attendance Policy and supporting health and wellbeing of staff. Data capture and reporting to monitor trends and improvements.	M	Yes
Reputational	Failure to deliver service standards.	Management of absences using the Supporting Attendance Policy and supporting health and wellbeing of staff. Data capture and reporting to monitor trends and improvements.	L	Yes
Environment / Climate	Failure of the Council to achieve its strategic aims if absence levels are high.	Management of absences using the Supporting Attendance Policy and supporting health and wellbeing of staff. Data capture and reporting to monitor trends and improvements.	L	Yes

8. OUTCOMES

<u>COUNCIL DELIVERY PLAN</u>	
	Impact of Report
Aberdeen City Council Policy Statement <u>Working in Partnership for Aberdeen</u>	The provisions within this report support the delivery of the Policy Statement through ensuring that sufficient resources are available to deliver the Council services which will achieve the policy priorities.

Aberdeen City Local Outcome Improvement Plan 2016-26			
Prosperous People Outcomes	Stretch	The Prosperous People theme in the LOIP indicates that all people in the City are entitled to live within our community in a manner in which they feel empowered, resilient and safe, which would include employees of the Council. Adopting the approach outlined in the report will support the workforce.	
Prosperous Economy Outcomes	Stretch	The Prosperous Economy theme in the LOIP recognises the link between a healthy economy and a healthy population and aims for everyone in Aberdeen to benefit from a healthy economy and to have equal opportunities to be economically active. This would include the Council. Ensuring that people policies are in place and applied appropriately and consistently should assist with employee relations in the organisation and with the retention of trained and valued employees. This would mean that they can continue in post and contribute to delivering effective services to citizens and businesses, indirectly contributing to the City's economy.	
Regional and City Strategies		<p>This report links directly with the Council's Workforce Delivery Plan - setting up our council in a way that supports our aspirations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy review principles are in place that embed early intervention and prevention • Governance systems are in place that mean people are not impeded by hierarchy and are empowered within our structures to take decisions at the lowest appropriate level 	

9. IMPACT ASSESSMENTS

Assessment	Outcome
Integrated Impact Assessment	An integrated impact assessment has been completed for this policy.
Data Protection Impact Assessment	Not Required.
Other	Not required

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 10.1 [Report to Staff Governance Committee 1 November 2018 – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy](#)

- 10.2 [Report to Staff Governance Committee 24 June 2024 - Sickness Absence for Environmental, Roads and Waste Services \(acc.gov.uk\)](#)
- 10.3 [Report to Staff Governance Committee 21 April 2025 - EAS Annual Progress Update – Occupational Health and Absence Annual Update January–December 2024](#)
- 10.4 Report to Staff Governance Committee 16 June 2025 – [Mental Health Action Plan Annual Progress Update](#)
- 10.4 [Health and wellbeing at work \(cipd.org\) report](#)

11. APPENDICES

- 11.1 Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy
- 11.2 Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Guidance

12. REPORT AUTHOR CONTACT DETAILS

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Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy

Approved by Committee XXX
with an implementation date XXX

Document Control

Approval Date	
Implementation Date	
Policy Number	POL-CS-0022
Policy Author(s) and Owner	Vikki Lawrie – People and Organisational Development Advisor (Policy Author) Isla Newcombe – Chief Officer People and Citizen Services (Policy Owner)
Approval Authority	Staff Governance Committee
Scheduled Review	Biennial
Changes	This is a new Policy to replace existing Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy and Procedure

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1. Why Does the Council need this Policy

Aberdeen City Council values its employees and recognises the importance of their wellbeing and attendance at work. This policy aims to promote a fair, supportive, and transparent approach to managing sickness absence.

The Council values the contribution made by its employees and recognises that high levels of attendance at work are key to supporting the achievement of the Council's objectives and priorities. It is committed to high levels of attendance at work, whilst ensuring employees are treated fairly, consistently and are well supported.

2. Application and Scope Statement

2.1 This policy applies to all employees of the Council, including Chief Officers and Teachers/SNCT employees. It does not apply to casual or agency workers.

Teachers/employees whose terms and conditions are governed by the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) are subject to the nationally negotiated SNCT Handbook of Conditions of Service. The provisions of this policy do not override or replace any aspect of the SNCT Handbook. Where there is any conflict or difference between this policy and the SNCT Handbook, the SNCT Handbook shall take precedence. A summary of these provisions can be found at appendix 1 and further details of SNCT terms and conditions can be found at www.snct.org.uk.

2.2 The policy covers any sickness absence, regardless of the reason, and outlines procedures for addressing both short-term and long-term absences, ensuring consistency and clarity in application.

2.3 The main aims of this policy are to:

- ensure employees are supported during periods of absence from work due to sickness for mental or physical health reasons
- provide clear processes for managing sickness absences, in a fair and transparent manner, to help avoid or reduce the possibility for uncertainty and stress
- reduce sickness absence levels and support employees to return to work at the earliest opportunity, should they be able to
- maintain a productive and healthy work environment

2.4 In using this policy, reasonable adjustments should be made for those with a disability in accordance with the Equality Act 2010. The same applies to those whose first language is not English or who have difficulty expressing themselves.

2.5 This policy and accompanying procedure are in line with [ACAS guidance on Managing Sickness Absence](#).

3. Responsibilities

- 3.1 In managing absence and supporting attendance the Council will follow a fair process and comply with duties arising under the Equality Act 2010. This includes ensuring that reasonable adjustments are made for those employees with a disability. It also includes ensuring that employees are not treated unfavourably due to any pregnancy related absence.
- 3.2 Chief Officers are responsible for overseeing the application of this policy and accompanying procedure within their cluster area. They are also responsible for promoting a positive and supportive culture around health and wellbeing and leading initiatives that aim to improve attendance.

Chief Officers are also responsible for identifying a suitable manager to chair any formal meeting under this policy, where termination of employment is being considered (either under conduct or capability), and for any appeal against termination of employment.

- 3.3 Line Managers have responsibility for applying this policy and monitoring sickness absence across their team(s). Line Managers should also:
- Ensure that sickness absence is recorded promptly and accurately, both at the start of an employee's absence and on their return to work.
 - Agreeing and maintaining the frequency and method of contact with employees while they are absent from work.
 - Maintain confidentiality and sensitivity around the reasons for absence and the application of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy.
 - Take a supportive approach to managing sickness absence with the aim of supporting employee attendance and return to work.
 - Take a balanced approach between improving attendance at work and supporting employees while sick.
 - Take an individual employee's particular medical circumstances into consideration when applying the policy, including medical advice where appropriate, in consultation with People Services.
 - Ensure that employees are treated fairly throughout the process.
 - Create an environment where employees are aware of this policy, its expectations and the consequences of not meeting required standards of attendance.
 - Consider whether reasonable adjustments could be made that will provide support and/or assist a return to work for persons who have a disability, as defined under the Equality Act 2010.
- 3.4 Employees have a responsibility to:
- Maintain their attendance at work in line with their contractual responsibility.
 - Familiarise themselves with the contents of this policy and accompanying guidance.
 - Co-operate with the requirements of this policy, procedure and guidance, including

- Complying with the notification and certification requirements when unable to attend work
- Attending meetings under the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy when requested and medically fit to do so
- Attending Occupational Health appointments
- Maintaining contact with their line manager for the duration of their absence from work
- Maintain their own general health and wellbeing and seek advice, where appropriate, to improve attendance at work or to facilitate their return to work from a period of sickness absence.

3.5 Non-compliance with this policy should be reported to the employee's line manager, or People Services.

3.6 Any feedback on the policy or suggestions for improvement should be communicated to the policy author or owner in the first instance.

4. Supporting Procedures & Documentation

4.1 Accompanying guidance on Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing has been developed to support adherence to this policy. The procedure for dealing with absence matters is detailed within the accompanying guidance.

4.2 This policy also links to:

- [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#)
- [The Council's Guiding Principles](#)
- Managing Discipline [Policy](#) and [Guidance](#)
- Managing Grievances [Policy](#) and [Guidance](#)
- Dignity and Respect at Work [Policy](#) and [Guidance](#)
- [Managing Substance Misuse Policy](#)
- [Ill Health Retirement Guidance](#)
- [Extension of Occupational Sick Pay Guidance](#)
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace Policy](#)
- [Management of Stress Procedure](#)
- [Phased Return Guidance](#)
- [Reasonable Adjustment Passports](#)
- Flexible Working [Policy](#) and [Guidance](#)
- [Redeployment Procedure](#)
- [Special Leave Policy](#)
- Disability Guidance
- Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) Handbook of Conditions of Service. www.snct.org.uk.

5. About this Policy

Policy Statement and Core Principles

- 5.1 The policy is not creating any specific regulations or requirements other than what is stated under section 3 above.
- 5.2 The purpose of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy is to ensure employees are supported during periods of sickness absence and assist them in returning to work.
- 5.3 Early intervention is key to providing support to employees who are experiencing difficulties in maintaining attendance levels.
- 5.4 Where an employee has a disability as defined by the Equality Act 2010, managers should ensure reasonable adjustments are put in place to support employees to attend and remain in work.
- 5.5 Employees are expected to follow the notification and certification (Fit note) requirements as outlined in the guidance.
- 5.6 Line managers must record all sickness absences on the Council's HR/Payroll system to ensure employees are paid correctly.
- 5.7 A return to work meeting must be held after every period of sickness absence, unless there are extenuating circumstances which prevent this.

Review Levels

- 5.8 In order to manage absence, there are review levels that, if met, place the employee into the formal Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing procedure. The levels are as follows:

Short Term

- 10 calendar days or more of absence in a 12-month period
- 3 occasions or more of absence in a 12-month period

The formal Short Term procedure will apply if either level is met (i.e. number of days or number of occasions)

Long Term

- 28 calendar days or longer

The formal Long Term procedure will apply if this level is met.

Formal Stages

- 5.9 At any meeting held as part of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing procedure an employee should be given the opportunity to be accompanied by a trade union

representative or a work colleague. Employees are not entitled to be accompanied by a family member or a legal representative.

- 5.10 All reasonable efforts will be made to identify solutions and suitable alternatives where employees are unable to fulfil their role due to an underlying health condition. Whilst the Council will make all reasonable efforts to assist the employee, it cannot guarantee to maintain employment in cases where the employee is unable to sustain the attendance standards required.
- 5.11 No decision to terminate an employee's contract of employment will be taken until all reasonable alternatives, adjustments and support options have been considered. Any termination of employment under this policy will be with contractual notice.
- 5.12 Where the decision is made to terminate an employee's contract of employment, either due to conduct or capability, the employee will be advised in writing of the reasons for the decision and of their right of appeal against the decision.
- 5.13 Employees have the right to appeal against any dismissal undertaken under this policy. Employees who have been dismissed under this policy may choose to have their appeal heard by Management or by Appeals Sub-Committee.
- 5.14 An appeal heard by Management will not be heard by the same Officer who took the decision to dismiss.
- 5.15 All matters will be dealt with promptly and in confidence.

6. Risk

- 6.1 The policy is designed to reduce compliance, operational, financial, and reputational risks.
 - **Compliance** – having this policy in place mitigates the risk of non-compliance with legislative requirements, including those within the Equality Act 2010.
 - **Operational** – having this policy in place mitigates the risk of disruption to Council services and service users by ensuring that sickness absence is reduced and ensuring sufficient resource available to meet service demands.
 - **Financial** – having this policy in place mitigates against and minimises costs to the Council due to sickness absence.
 - **Reputational** – having this policy in place mitigates against reputational risks to the Council by demonstrating our commitment to addressing issues of sickness absence and to supporting employees during times of sickness absence.
- 6.2 There have been no unintended effects, consequences and risks identified resulting from the introduction of the policy.

- 6.3 The risks identified will be managed and mitigated through application of the policy across the Council. This will be undertaken by ensuring the policy is readily available to managers and employees and that support is provided from People and Citizen Services in the interpretation of the policy, where required.

7. Environmental Implications

- 7.1 There are no environmental implications arising from this policy.

8. Policy Performance

- 8.1 The main factors determining the effectiveness of the policy and whether it adds the value intended is the usage of the policy to address absence from work, the consistency in its application by managers and the improvement in employees' attendance..
- 8.2 The effectiveness of the policy will be measured through analysing data on recorded sickness absence and the number of formal Supporting Attendance cases and their outcomes, and through collecting feedback from users of the policy.
- 8.3 The Chief Officer – People and Citizen Services will decide where and when data is reported on the effectiveness of the policy, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained.

9. Design and Delivery

- 9.1 The policy links to the 'Workforce' strategic outcome of the Target Operating Model 1.2 (TOM 1.2) in that it is concerned with organisational culture and promotion of equality in the workplace. The application of the policy and procedure on a fair and consistent basis should help ensure alignment with this principle. It also links to the Council's Guiding Principles, particularly in relation to the commitment to valuing and supporting staff.
- 9.2 The policy also links to the 'Prosperous People' theme in the Local Outcome Improvement Plan (LOIP) which indicates that all people in the City are entitled to live in a manner in which they feel safe and protected from harm and supported where necessary. All citizens are equally entitled to enjoy these aspirations, including employees of the Council. Having an effective policy and procedure in place to address absence and support attendance at work should assist in ensuring a safe and healthy workplace for staff.

10. Housekeeping and Maintenance

- 10.1 The Policy will be reviewed biennially, and any necessary updates made to it and the accompanying guidance document.

11. Communication and Distribution

- 11.1 The policy and accompanying guidance will be communicated through the Council's Intranet, Leadership Forum and any other relevant measures to ensure that all relevant parties are aware of its content.

12. Information Management

- 12.1 Information generated by the application of this policy will be managed in accordance with the Council's Corporate Information Policy and Supporting Procedures.

13. Definitions and Understanding this Policy

- 13.1 Long Term absences are defined as those lasting 28 calendar days or longer. Absences of less than 28 calendar days are defined as short term.
- 13.2 Disability is defined in the Equality Act 2010 as a physical or mental impairment that has a 'substantial' and 'long-term' negative effect on a persons ability to do normal daily activities.
- 13.3 Termination of contract due to capability is where absence levels are due to an underlying health condition.
- 13.4 Termination of contract due to conduct is where absence levels are not due to any underlying medical condition.
- 13.5 Reasonable adjustments are changes an employer makes to remove or reduce a disadvantage related to someone's disability.
- 13.6 The procedure for Supporting Attendance can be found in the accompanying Guidance.

Application of Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy to Teachers (SNCT and LNCT Provisions)

This appendix sets out how the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy must be applied to teachers, to ensure consistency with the SNCT Handbook and Aberdeen City Council LNCT agreements. Where there is any conflict between this Policy and the SNCT/LNCT frameworks, the latter shall take precedence.

1. Notification of Absence

Teachers may notify absence directly to their school, normally to the Head Teacher or line manager.

This reflects school-based management responsibility and ensures alignment with SNCT practice. Notification will normally be given personally by the teacher. However, where this is not possible (e.g. serious illness, accident, hospitalisation), a representative can notify on their behalf. The school must accept third-party notification to avoid discrimination against teachers with disabilities or sudden serious illness.

2. Phased Return to Work

Teachers are entitled to a phased return on full pay following long-term sickness absence. In line with SNCT and Aberdeen LNCT Agreement, this entitlement is normally 4–6 weeks, with extensions considered locally where appropriate. Managers must record and support phased return arrangements as part of the employee's Support Plan.

3. Industrial Injury Absence

Where absence relates to an industrial accident, teachers must be managed with reference to SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Section 6 (Absence Due to Accident at Work). Such absences must not be counted towards absence triggers under this policy.

4. Assault in the Course of Employment

In line with SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Section 6, absences resulting from assault in the course of employment shall not be treated as sickness absence and shall not count against sick pay entitlement.

Such absences will be treated independently as paid leave, normally up to 6 months full pay and 6 months half pay, on the production of a fit note.

The employer must ensure the incident is reported under the appropriate violent incident and accident reporting procedures.

Absence must be kept under medical review, and reasonable adjustments must be provided to support return to work.

If the absence ceases to relate to the assault but continues due to another reason, it will then revert to sickness absence provisions under SNCT Part 2, Section 6.

5. Infectious Diseases

In line with SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Section 6, an employee who is prevented from attending work because of contact with notifiable infectious diseases shall advise the Council immediately and shall be entitled to full pay during absence.

Any such absence will be recorded as Special Leave and not count against the teacher's sickness allowance.

6. Respiratory Tuberculosis

In line with SNCT Handbook, Part 2, Section 6, where a teacher is absent due to respiratory tuberculosis and supported by a doctor's statement, the teacher shall be entitled to full salary for up to 12 months and half salary for up to a further 6 months.

The teacher shall not return to duty until certified fit to resume work.

7. Ill-Health Retirement

Teachers' ill-health retirement is governed by the Scottish Teachers' Pension Scheme (SPPA) under SNCT provisions, not the Local Government Pension Scheme.

Managers must ensure the correct process is followed and that teachers are referred under SPPA arrangements.

8. Disability-Related Absence

Disability-related absence must be managed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010 and SNCT provisions.

Before escalation through absence triggers, managers must:

- Explore and implement all reasonable adjustments (including Reasonable Adjustment Passports where applicable).
- Record adjustments and support measures in the Support Plan.
- Ensure absences are treated in a supportive manner and not automatically escalated.

9. Pregnancy-Related Absence

Absences relating to pregnancy or maternity must be managed in accordance with the Equality Act 2010, the SNCT Handbook (Part 2, Section 6 – Sick Leave and Pay), and relevant LNCT agreements. Specifically:

- Pregnancy-related absences must not be used as a trigger for progression through absence review stages under this Policy.
- Pregnancy-related absences should remain at Level 1 supportive monitoring only, with no escalation to formal review levels.

Managers must ensure that pregnancy-related absence is recorded separately from sickness absence and handled in a supportive and non-discriminatory manner.

10. Competence and Capability

In line with SNCT:

- Health or disability-related absence must not be confused with competence or performance issues.

- Where absence due to a health condition impacts attendance, the matter must be addressed under capability, not conduct.

11. Progression to Level 3

Teachers must not be moved directly to a Level 3 Capability Meeting unless:

- Medical evidence confirms that a return to work is not anticipated within a reasonable timeframe;
- All reasonable adjustments, phased return options, redeployment, and ill-health retirement routes (SPPA) have been considered and documented;
- Advice has been sought from People Services.

This safeguard ensures Stage 1 and Stage 2 remain meaningful supportive stages.

12. Appeals

Teachers retain the right to appeal dismissal decisions to either:

- A Director who has had no prior involvement in the case, or
- The Appeals Sub-Committee.

This maintains alignment with SNCT provisions for independent review.

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Supporting Attendance & Wellbeing

Guidance for Managers and Employees

Document Control

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SECTION 1: INTRODUCTION

Purpose

This guidance is designed to help managers and employees understand and apply the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy in a fair, timely, and consistent way. It outlines the steps to take when managing both short and long-term sickness absence, explains roles and responsibilities, and provides tools such as return-to-work discussion templates, support plans, and reasonable adjustment passports.

The guidance ensures:

- Employees are treated with empathy and respect during periods of absence.
- Managers have the confidence and clarity to apply procedures correctly.
- Support measures are in place to promote wellbeing and successful returns to work.
- Legal and policy requirements are met, including those related to disability, pregnancy, and mental health.

It applies to all Council employees (excluding casual and agency workers) and is supported by training, templates, and links to related policies.

Guiding Principles

As Council employees, we are all expected to behave in a way that is aligned with the Council's Guiding Principles and we should lead by example by demonstrating these principles.

The Guiding Principles are:

- We care about our purpose, our city and our people.
- We take pride in what we do and work to make things better.
- One team, one Council, one city.
- We trust each other and take responsibility.
- We value each other and recognise a job well done.

These principles serve as a foundation for upholding positive and constructive working relationships among employees and managers around periods of sickness absence. This applies to all interactions—whether between colleagues, managers and those they supervise, or other Council Officers. Each individual is responsible for setting a positive example through their attendance at work, including how sickness and related absences are managed and communicated.

Behaviour that does not align with these guiding principles—such as inappropriate communication, lack of support, or disregard for absence procedures—may be considered unacceptable or inappropriate and may result in action under the organisation's disciplinary policy and procedure.

Who is responsible for managing attendance?

Line managers play a key role in attendance management. As a line manager, you should:

- Monitor attendance in your team and record any sickness absence accurately and as soon as possible on the Council's HR/Payroll system.
- Keep the absence record updated when fit notes are received and close the absence as quickly as possible when the employee returns.
- Keep in contact with any employee who is absent from work and agree the frequency and method of contact if the absence continues.
- Carry out return-to-work interviews to understand reasons for absence and offer support when the employee returns from any period of sickness absence.
- Ensure that the reporting procedure, the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy, and expectations are clearly understood by everyone in your team.
- Identify patterns of absence and address any ongoing issues.
- Support employees to return to work when they are well enough to return.
- Be fair and consistent in how absence is managed across all team members.
- Respect the need for confidentiality and sensitivity when discussing absence.

Employees also have their own responsibilities when it comes to managing their attendance. If you are unable to attend work due to sickness, you should:

- Notify your manager as soon as possible if you are unable to attend work, following the guidance set out below.
- Provide any required documentation, such as a fit note or self-certification, in a reasonable timescale.
- Maintain regular contact with your manager, in line with any agreement made with them, or following the guidance set out below during periods of absence.
- Engage with support offered to you, such as occupational health referrals.
- Participate in return-to-work meetings on your return to work.

Right to be accompanied

Employees may be accompanied at all meetings within the absence procedure by a work colleague, trade union representative or official employed by a trade union, but not by a spouse or partner or legal practitioner. The companion should be allowed to ask questions and participate as fully as possible during the meetings, and where required be allowed a reasonable amount of time to confer privately with the employee.

Where the employee has a disability, an alternative companion, such as a support worker or carer, could be agreed as a reasonable adjustment.

Whilst employees may be accompanied to a return to work meeting, it is important that these meetings take place as soon as possible after the employee returns to work, ideally the same day, so it should not be delayed due to a companion being unavailable unless there are extenuating circumstances.

At any formal meeting where dismissal may be considered (i.e. at Level 3 of the procedure), the employee has a **legal right** to be accompanied. The employee's companion has a legal right to address the meeting but does not have a right to answer questions on behalf of the employee.

If the employee's companion is an employee of Aberdeen City Council (whether they be a work colleague or a trade union representative), they should be allowed reasonable paid time off to prepare for and attend the meeting. This includes time for the companion to familiarise themselves with the detail and confer with the employee before and after the formal meeting.

In advance of the meetings, the employee is required to inform the person conducting the meeting who their chosen companion is. For any formal meeting (i.e. not including return to work meetings), if the employee's companion is unable to attend on the proposed date, the employee can suggest another date although it must suit everybody involved and be no more than 5 working days after the original date. Otherwise, the employee will need to select another companion to accompany them at the meeting or attend the meeting unaccompanied. Should the trade union be unable to provide representation within 5 working days of the original date, you should not allow this to delay the process. The Chair can insist that the pre-arranged meeting goes ahead as planned.

Employees Wellbeing

Throughout the Supporting Attendance process, the health and wellbeing of employees should remain a central focus. Careful consideration should be given to any potential impact that the actions you take as a manager could have. Approach each situation with empathy and compassion, ensuring that appropriate support and resources are available when needed.

Understandably, being absent from work can also be a difficult period for employees. If it is needed employees can seek support and advice from:

- Your line manager (or another manager if this more appropriate)
- [Trade Unions](#)
- Citizens Advice Bureau - www.cas.org.uk
- ACAS Point - www.acas.org.uk
- [Employee Relations and Wellbeing Team](#) for procedural advice
- [Mental Health and Wellbeing Pages](#): these are available on People Anytime and provide a variety of support resources, skills/training

information and details about the Councils Mental Health First Aiders Network.

- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP): The Council provides a free, confidential 24-hour EAP (counselling) service. The service offers a helpline for general advice and guidance, psychological guidance and emotional support and/or individual counselling either face to face or over the phone and has no role in the consideration of any complaints by Council officers/management. Further details can be accessed on [People Anytime](#) or you can access the service by telephone on 0800 023 9324.

In addition to the telephone service there is a wide offering of resources available which includes downloadable self-help workbooks, debt advice, a mental health app and more. You can sign in to the full site here https://accmybenefits.vivup.co.uk/users/sign_in..

Keeping records

Managers have a responsibility throughout the attendance management process, to maintain accurate and confidential records. All communications with the employee in relation to the policy should be thoroughly documented. These records should include the dates and nature of contact, details of what was discussed, any support or resources offered, and the employee's responses or concerns. Templates are provided as appendices to this guidance to help you do this in a consistent way.

Any documentation should be kept confidential and retained in the employee's personal file.

SECTION 2: REPORTING AND RECORDING SICKNESS ABSENCE

This section applies to ALL instances of absence from work due to sickness.

Employees should read this carefully and understand the procedure, should they become unwell and be unable to attend work.

Managers should ensure all employees in their teams are aware of the procedure, and/or any individual local arrangements they have for reporting, such as who to contact and ensure your team have the correct contact numbers for you.

Reporting Sickness Absence

Employees must notify their line manager, as soon as possible, generally within one hour of their normal start time. If they work to rotas and/or with early or late shifts, contact should be made before the beginning of their shift and they should not wait until the next scheduled work day to inform their manager of sickness absence.

Employees should contact their manager by phone where possible, but other methods may be used if agreed between the manager and employee. If their own line manager is unavailable, they should contact another manager in the service or the next manager in the reporting line.

Services may have their own agreed local procedures for reporting absences (for example a central number to call), and managers should ensure employees are aware of any service-specific arrangements and have necessary contact information ahead of any requirement to report sickness absence. Any service-specific arrangements should include details of next steps, e.g. if the employee should expect to be called later that day.

In some circumstances, it may be appropriate for someone else to call and report absence on an employee's behalf, where there are circumstances which prevent them doing so, for example an emergency admittance to hospital. Alternatively, managers may agree this in advance with employees as a reasonable adjustment where the employee has a disability.

Certification Requirements

If the employee will be absent for more than 7 calendar days, they must provide a Fit Note. This would normally be issued by their GP, or alternatively a fit note can be issued following a health and work assessment by other healthcare professionals - either a doctor, nurse, occupational therapist, pharmacist, or physiotherapist. They must send the Fit Note to their line manager on the 8th day of absence or as soon as possible after this. They must also send copies of any subsequent Fit Notes to their line manager and these must cover the entire sickness period (i.e. with no gaps between dates).

Managers should take into account that it can take time for employees to get appointments with their GP and should accommodate these timescales.

Recording Absences

Line managers must record every absence on the HR/Payroll system with the start date and sickness reason as soon as they are informed of an employee's absence. If the employee's normal line manager is not available when the employee returns to work, the absence should be closed by another manager in the service as soon as possible, assistance can be sought from AskHR to access the absence if required.

Line managers must record and upload all Fit Notes on the HR/Payroll system and follow up on missing fit notes with their employees. Non-compliance with absence reporting or certification procedures could result in disciplinary action and employees will not normally be paid for periods of unauthorised absence.

It is extremely important that absences are opened and closed on the HR/payroll system accurately and promptly as failure to do so may result in the employee not being paid correctly. It is the manager's responsibility to ensure this is done.

Contact Arrangements

The manager and employee should agree any further reporting/update arrangements, particularly when the employee does not know how long they will be absent for or are likely to be absent for a prolonged period. The contact record at appendix 1 can be used for this purpose.

To support employee wellbeing and maintain clear communication, unless an alternative arrangement is mutually agreed with the employee, managers must ensure that the following minimum contact requirements are met during any period of absence.

- Contact on the 4th Day of Absence:

Managers should initiate communication with the employee on the fourth consecutive day of absence. This contact serves several purposes: it allows the manager to offer appropriate support, confirm any assistance the employee might require, and remind them of the certification requirements for continued absence. This early intervention helps to prevent misunderstandings and ensures both parties are aware of the process going forward.

- Contact on the 7th Day and Weekly Thereafter (First 28 Days):

On the seventh day of absence (or next working day), managers should make further contact. Thereafter, if the employee's absence continues, regular weekly check-ins are required for the remainder of the first 28 days. These weekly communications should provide an opportunity to discuss the

employee's progress, any evolving support needs, and to keep them informed about any workplace updates. The aim is to foster a supportive environment, maintain a sense of connection, and ensure that any barriers to return are identified early.

- **Contact After 28 Days of Absence:**

If the absence extends beyond 28 days, the manager and employee should together agree upon a regular contact schedule that suits both parties. This schedule must be documented and may take the form of phone calls, emails, or meetings, depending on the circumstances and the preferences of the employee. The agreed pattern of contact should be consistent and maintained throughout the extended absence, ensuring the employee feels supported and retains a link with their workplace. Managers should keep records of all contact made, including the dates and key points discussed, to provide clarity and continuity.

Throughout all periods of absence, it is essential that communication remains empathetic, transparent, and tailored to the individual's needs. Managers should be proactive in signposting employees to relevant support services, such as occupational health or wellness action plans, and should be mindful of any reasonable adjustments that may assist with the employee's eventual return to work. Maintaining a robust line of communication not only upholds organisational responsibility but also helps employees feel valued and supported during challenging times.

Where an absence continues, the line manager and employee should agree how often contact will be, who will instigate contact and what method you will use (i.e. by phone, MS Teams, etc). This should be regular and it is important for both parties to keep to these arrangements as much as possible.

If the employee fails to maintain contact and engage with their manager during their absence, managers will understandably be concerned and may need to take further steps to be reassured about the employee's wellbeing. Advice should be sought from Employee Relations should this happen.

Return to Work Discussion

Once an employee returns to work following a sickness absence, their line manager must arrange to discuss that absence with them. This should be held after each instance of sickness absence.

The discussion should ideally be undertaken either face to face or using MS Teams, but can be done by telephone if necessary. The return to work discussion form provides guidance on carrying out the discussion and must be completed by the line manager and recorded on the HR/Payroll system against the relevant absence. If they have not already done so, the manager must close the absence on the HR/Payroll system.

Return to work discussions are used to welcome and support an employee back to the workplace and should aim to do the following:

- Establish the reason for the employee's absence and ensure that they are fit to resume work
- Discuss any underlying causes that contribute to the absence
- Update the employee on any workplace developments that took place while they were absent
- Ensure there are no gaps in notification and certification requirements and if so, decide what action needs to be taken
- Determine if there is any need for a referral for support, such as Occupational Health or the EAP service.
- If applicable, ensure any support plan in place or phased return plan agreed in advance is still fit for purpose
- Find out if there are any work-related factors affecting attendance
- Identify support or adjustments to prevent future absences
- Review flexible working options, where appropriate
- Confirm the absence review levels and ensure that the employee understands how the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy applies to them.

Whilst employees may be accompanied to a return to work meeting, it is important that these meetings take place as soon as possible after the employee returns to work, ideally the same day, so it should not be delayed due to a companion being unavailable, unless there are extenuating circumstances.

SECTION 3: THE FORMAL PROCEDURE

Overview of the Procedure

This procedure applies in relation to managing all absences including intermittent absences and/or continuous long-term absences. At each Level the line manager must make sure that the employee is made aware of the procedure, the next steps of the process and the consequences of further absences.

Where an employee is absent from work, managers should continue to keep in touch regularly as well as holding the formal meetings at each Level of the procedure; having both informal and formal conversations is key to a successful return to work.

Employees are permitted to request a manager of the same gender to undertake the formal Levels of this procedure, and this will be granted where practical.

Once a review level is met, all employees will commence the first formal Level of the process, Level 1. The manager should invite the employee to the Level 1 Attendance Review Meeting. This meeting should be arranged for a date as soon as possible after the review level is met.

The format of the meeting can be either :

- Face to face meeting or
- Virtual meeting using MS Teams

If the employee is unfit to attend any supporting attendance meeting under the formal procedure, and is unlikely to be fit within a reasonable timescale (normally 5 working days), they can be given the alternative options:

- a) Being represented by TU representative or work colleague at the meeting
- b) Submitting written information regarding their absence(s) to be considered by their manager.

If either alternative options a) & b) are not utilised by the date of the meeting, the manager will normally proceed in employee's absence with the appropriate detail confirmed in writing to the employee.

Managers should ensure that reasonable adjustments are made for employees with disabilities within the procedure, such as extending review periods.

SHORT TERM ABSENCE PROCEDURE

Short Term Absence Review Levels

Short-term absences will be reviewed under the short term procedure of the policy if either of the following are met:

- 3 or more instances of absence within a rolling 12-month period.
- A total of 10 or more days of absence within a rolling 12-month period.

When an employee experiences short term absence that are related to an underlying medical condition, this should be assessed to determine whether a referral to occupational health or a support plan is needed. Support plans may address workplace adjustments, or additional resources tailored to individual needs.

Managers are encouraged to maintain open communication with an affected employee and regularly review any support plan or reasonable adjustments to ensure ongoing suitability.

Attendance Review Meetings

Level 1 Attendance Review Meeting:

At the Level 1 Attendance Review Meeting the manager must discuss with the employee the reason(s) for absence and for reaching the absence review level and agree an attendance improvement plan. The manager will set a review period during which absence will be monitored and improvements in attendance sought. It is recommended that the review period is no longer than 12 weeks, allowing for any delays that may have occurred.

Level 1 Outcome Meeting:

At the end of the review period, or at an earlier date if it is evident that the improvement required will not be met, the manager and the employee will meet to discuss attendance during the Level 1 review period. Possible outcomes are:

1. end of monitoring period if the required improvements are made
2. extending the review period if some improvement is made, but doesn't quite yet meet the required standard; where annual or special leave has impacted the review period; where further medical information is required
3. progressing to Level 2 if attendance has not improved.

Level 2 Attendance Review Meeting:

The Level 2 Attendance Review Meeting would normally take place immediately following the Level 1 Outcome Meeting. The manager must discuss with the employee the reason(s) for absence and for reaching the absence review level and

may agree an amended attendance improvement plan. The manager will set a review period during which absence will be monitored and improvements in attendance sought. It is recommended that the review period is no longer than 12 weeks, allowing for any delays that may have occurred.

Level 2 Outcome Meeting:

Possible outcomes include:

- end of monitoring period if the required improvements are made
- extending the review period if some improvement is made, but doesn't quite yet meet the required standard; where annual or special leave has impacted the review period; where further medical information is required
- progressing to Level 3 if attendance has not improved

Level 3 Attendance Review Meeting:

The Level 3 Attendance Review Meeting would normally take place immediately following the Level 2 Outcome Meeting. During the Level 3 review period, the manager may again, assess and amend any support plan, with a capability or conduct report prepared to evaluate the employee's attendance over the Level 1, 2 and 3 review periods.

- Capability applies where the absences are attributable to an underlying health condition.
- Conduct applies where the absences are not attributable to any underlying health condition.

Level 3 Capability/Conduct Assessment Meeting:

This meeting determines whether attendance has improved and considers options such as extending the review period to allow for further support, adjustments or monitoring to be in place, or whether termination of employment based on attendance is appropriate.

The employee should be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting in writing and a copy of the manager's report.

The manager's report, relevant Supporting Attendance process paperwork, all occupational health (OH) reports and any support plan(s) must be available for the Level 3 assessment meeting.

The meeting will be attended by;

- The Chair of the meeting who must be an independent manager at least at Third Tier level or above (for teachers/SNCT employees the Chair will be the Chief Officer – Education & Life Long learning)
- The line manager who has managed the absence(s) to date
- The employee

- The employee's trade union representative or work colleague (if applicable)
- A People Services Advisor

The purpose of the meeting is to consider whether the required improvement in attendance has been achieved, up to and including the Level 3 review period and to carefully examine all options, including the likelihood of improved attendance or dismissal on the grounds of lack of capability due to ill health or misconduct due to sustained poor attendance (whichever applies).

At the meeting the employee's manager will present their report on the employee's absence, highlighting the measures taken to assist the employee to improve their attendance. The reasons for the absence levels will be discussed as well as the content of the latest medical report (where applicable) and any support that has been put in place. The employee will be given the opportunity to provide a full response at the meeting.

If the employee is deemed medically unfit to attend the meeting, they can utilise the alternative options outlined in the Overview of the Procedure.

There are three potential outcomes to the Level 3 Capability / Conduct Assessment Meeting;

1. End of monitoring period

Where the required improvement in attendance has been achieved during the Level 3 review period, the employee will be informed that their attendance will no longer be subject to regular reviews under the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy.

2. Extend the Review Period

The chair of the Capability/Conduct Assessment Meeting has the discretion to extend the review period if additional information or monitoring is required to inform a decision, or where further support still needs to be considered. The review period can be for up to 12 months.

3. Termination of Employment

Where the Chair decides, after considering all available information, to terminate employment, the employee will, if possible, be informed of this at the meeting, with the decision confirmed in writing along with details of their right of appeal.

The reason(s) for termination of employment must be clearly communicated to the employee. Where absence relates to an underlying medical condition (Capability Assessment Meeting) employment will be terminated on grounds of lack of capability due to ill health. Where absence does not relate to an underlying medical condition (Conduct Assessment Meeting) employment

will be terminated on the grounds of misconduct relating to failure to fulfil contractual responsibilities due to poor attendance.

End of monitoring period

It should be noted that where an employee is unable to sustain their attendance at any point in the next 12 months after the end of the monitoring period, the manager has the option to move the employee back into the procedure at the point at which they left. For example, if at the Level 1 outcome meeting, the monitoring period ends, but within 12 months they have further absences which are unsustainable, they can return to the Level 1 outcome meeting and could then move directly to Level 2.

Alternatively the manager has the discretion to recommence at an earlier point in the procedure, where this is more appropriate.

LONG TERM ABSENCE PROCEDURE

Long Term Absence Review Levels

Long-term absences will be reviewed under the long term procedure of the policy where the following applies:

- An absence lasting 28 calendar days or longer.

Overview of Long Term Absence Procedure

Where an employee has been absent continuously for 28 calendar days, the Long Term procedure applies.

It is particularly important to keep in touch with employees regularly throughout the procedure, following the schedule and method agreed with the employee, which may include phone calls, email updates, and/or meetings (whether in person or virtually) to share workplace news, check on employee wellbeing, and discuss any changes in their circumstances. The contact record at appendix 1 can be used for this purpose.

Regular communication also ensures that employees feel supported and informed, making their transition back to work smoother when they are well enough to return.

COMPLETING A SUPPORT PLAN

In all cases under the Long Term Procedure, a support plan should be completed. It can also be useful under the Short-Term procedure where this is appropriate, for example where the employee has an underlying medical condition. A well structured

support plan supports the employee during their absence, facilitates a safe and confident return, and ensures that their reintegration is both smooth and sustainable.

The support plan should be used to record any specific support identified to assist the employee to return to work and should be done in collaboration with the employee. The support plan template can be found at appendix 2, with a guide to completing the support plan found at appendix 3.

It is essential that the support plan is completed jointly, with active input from the employee. This collaborative approach ensures that the plan accurately reflects the employee's individual circumstances, needs, and any adjustments that may facilitate their return to work.

Long Term Absence Review Meetings

The purpose of Absence Review Meetings under the procedure meetings is to:

- Discuss the employee's prognosis and any updates on their condition
- Explore options for returning to work or alternative arrangements
- Consider the implications of continued absence on the workplace
- Discuss any medical advice available, such as occupational health reports, or consider whether a referral to occupational health is required
- Complete a structured support plan with the aim of facilitating the employee's return to work.

Level 1 Absence Review Meeting

At the Level 1 Absence Review Meeting the manager will discuss with the employee the reason(s) for reaching the absence review level and complete a structured support plan. The manager will set a review period during which absence will be monitored and any arrangements identified as part of the support plan will be put in place with a view to enabling the employee to return to/sustain their attendance at work. It is recommended that the review period is no longer than 12 weeks.

Level 1 Outcome Meeting

At the end of the review period, the manager and the employee will discuss attendance during the Level 1 review period

There are three potential outcomes to Level 1:

- end of monitoring period where a full return to work has been achieved and sustained

- extend the review period where annual leave or special leave has occurred during a Level 1 review period; where medical information is not immediately available to inform a decision; or where a return to work is underway or imminent, but not sufficiently progressed to justify ending the monitoring period
- progressing to Level 2 where there has been a further episode(s) of absence, or the employee has failed to fully return to work from a continuous absence during the review period and no return to work is likely in the immediate future.

Level 2 Attendance Review Meeting

If a decision is made to progress to Level 2, the Level 2 Attendance Review Meeting normally immediately follows the Level 1 outcome meeting. The manager must review and, if necessary, amend the attendance support plan and will set a review period at Level 2 during which absence will continue to be monitored with a view to enabling the employee to return to/sustain their attendance at work. It is recommended that the review period is no longer than 12 weeks.

Level 2 Outcome Meeting

At the end of the review period, the manager and the employee will normally meet to discuss attendance during the Level 2 review period.

There are three potential outcomes to Level 2

- end of monitoring period where a full return to work has been achieved and sustained
- extend the review period where annual leave or special leave has occurred during a Level 2 review period; where medical information is not immediately available to inform a decision; or where a return to work is underway or imminent, but not sufficiently progressed to justify ending the monitoring period
- progressing to Level 3 where there has been a further episode(s) of absence, or the employee has failed to fully return to work from a continuous absence during the review period and no return to work is likely in the immediate future.

Level 3 Attendance Review Meeting

If a decision is made to progress to Level 3, the Level 3 Attendance Review Meeting normally immediately follows the Level 2 outcome meeting. The manager must review and, if necessary, amend the attendance support plan and will set a further period of review at Level 3. The duration of this further review is at the manager's discretion; however, it is recommended that this is no more than 12 weeks and can

be for a shorter period where the medical evidence suggests that the employee is unlikely to be able to improve their attendance within a reasonable timescale.

At the end of the Level 3 review period, a capability report will be prepared by the manager who has managed the employee's absence(s). The management report should also include evidence of the contact with the employee regarding their attendance and any support provided to the employee to improve their attendance, including a copy of the Support Plan. The manager should forward the completed report to their Service Manager or Chief Officer, to arrange a Capability Assessment Meeting.

The employee will be invited to a Capability Assessment Meeting at the end of the Level 3 review period.

Level 3 Capability Assessment Meeting

The employee should be given at least 5 working days' notice of the meeting in writing and a copy of the manager's report.

The meeting will be attended by;

- The Chair of the meeting who must be an independent manager at least Third Tier level or above (for teachers/SNCT employees the Chair will be the Chief Officer – Education & Life Long learning)
- The line manager who has managed the absence(s) to date
- The employee
- The employee's trade union representative or work colleague (if applicable)
- A People Services Advisor

The purpose of the meeting is to consider whether the required improvement in attendance has been achieved, up to and including the Level 3 review period and to carefully examine all options. These include the likelihood of a sustained return to work in the foreseeable future or improved attendance, whether further support/reasonable adjustments need to be provided to enable the employee to improve attendance, whether alternatives such as ill health retirement or redeployment should be considered, or whether dismissal on the grounds of lack of capability due to ill health is appropriate.

At the meeting, the employee's manager will present their report on the employee's absence, highlighting the measures taken to assist the employee to return to work or improve their attendance. The reasons for the absence levels will be discussed as well as the content of the latest medical report (where available). The employee will be given the opportunity to provide a full response at the meeting.

If the employee is deemed medically unfit to attend the meeting, they can utilise the alternative options outlined in the Overview of the Procedure.

There are three potential outcomes to the Level 3 Capability Assessment Meeting;

1. End of monitoring period

Where a full return to work has been achieved and sustained.

2. Extend the review period

It may be applicable to extend the review period where annual leave or special leave has occurred during a Level 3 review period; where further medical information is required to inform a decision, or where a return to work is underway or imminent, but not sufficiently progressed to justify ending the monitoring period. The review period may also be extended where any reasonable adjustments still need to be put in place, trialed or further time is required to assess their effectiveness.

3. Termination of Employment

Where the Chair decides, after considering all available information, to terminate employment, if possible, the employee will be informed of this at the meeting (where they are in attendance), with the decision confirmed in writing along with details of their right of appeal.

The reason for termination of employment must be clearly communicated to the employee. As any long term absence will relate to an underlying medical condition employment will be terminated on grounds of lack of capability due to ill health.

In extenuating circumstances, an employee may proceed directly to a Level 3 Capability Meeting if it has been clearly established that a return to work is not anticipated within a reasonable timeframe, and all avenues of support and reasonable adjustment have been fully explored and documented. In all instances, both ill health retirement and redeployment must have been considered, with advice sought from Employee Relations.

This should be undertaken with the employee's full agreement whenever possible, or with sufficient and justifiable reasons if earlier levels of the procedure have not been possible. The primary focus throughout should remain on supporting the employee to improve their attendance and overall wellbeing wherever any opportunity exists.

APPEALS

The employee has the right of appeal against dismissal under either the Short or Long Term procedure due to capability or conduct **within 10 working days of receipt of written notification** of the decision. Any appeal must be lodged in writing, with the grounds clearly stated. A non-teaching employee can choose to have their appeal heard by a senior manager at Chief Officer level or above, who has had no prior involvement in the case, or through the Appeals Sub Committee. A

teaching/SNCT employee can choose to have their appeal heard by a Director, who has had no prior involvement in the case, or through the Appeals Sub Committee.

Arranging the Appeal

The chairperson is responsible for writing to the employee with the appeal arrangements. This should outline the right to be accompanied at the hearing and confirm who will be attendance. The appeal should be held within 10 working days of receipt (except in cases where appeal is to Appeals Sub-Committee). If for some good and sufficient reason it is not practicable to hold the appeal within this timescale then the employee must be informed as soon as this becomes apparent, provided with an explanation for the delay and advised of the date the appeal is expected to take place.

The chairperson must ensure the following are invited to attend the hearing:

- A People Services Advisor to provide the chair with procedural advice and guidance
- The manager who took the decision at the Level 3 Capability or Conduct Assessment Meeting
- The employee
- The employee's companion, if they wish to be accompanied

Where necessary, make appropriate arrangements to cater for any disability the employee or their companion may have. Similarly, where English is not the employee's first language translation facilities may need to be provided.

Conducting the Appeal

It is important that any written statement of appeal and any evidence that has been submitted is reviewed in full in advance of the Appeal. Where necessary, adjournments should be accommodated. The chairperson should keep a record of the key discussion points.

The chairperson must decide whether there are sufficient and reasonable grounds to either:

- uphold the appeal in full, in which case the decision to terminate employment is overturned and the employee would be reinstated to their post; in some cases further medical evidence or consideration of alternatives such as redeployment or ill health retirement may also be recommended
- reject the appeal, in which case the decision to terminate employment would stand

In arriving at a fair and reasonable decision, the chairperson should:

- listen carefully to both sides of the case and make a judgement as objectively as possible
- be prepared to overturn a previous decision if it becomes apparent that it was

- not soundly based and/or did not take account of all available evidence
- satisfy themselves that no unfair bias or prejudice affected the original decision
- consider whether sufficient medical evidence was available or new information/evidence has come to light
- consider whether any procedural deficiencies may have unfairly affected the outcome and disadvantaged the employee (if this is the case made by the appellant)
- consider whether all alternative options, such as redeployment, reasonable adjustments and/or ill health retirement have been given full and sufficient consideration

The employee should be notified of the decision and the reasons for it at the appeal. This should be confirmed in writing to the employee within 5 working days of the appeal, and it made clear that this decision is final. If exceptional circumstances exist whereby it is not possible to respond by this deadline then the employee must be given an explanation for the delay and told when a response can be expected.

SECTION 4: SUPPORT MEASURES

Aberdeen City Council is committed to providing support and assistance to our employees to help maintain attendance and promote positive wellbeing.

Support measures may include:

- Occupational health referrals to assess and address health issues.
- Flexible working arrangements to accommodate health needs.
- Access to counselling or mental health services.
- Adjustments to duties or working conditions where reasonable.
- Use of wellness action plans and stress risk assessments to identify and reduce triggers
- Access to workplace wellbeing initiatives

Creating an Open, Supportive Culture

Managers are central to promoting a culture that values wellbeing and encourages attendance. Ways in which managers can demonstrate this are to:

- Have regular conversations, such as during one-to-one meetings, and discuss wellbeing, workload, and attendance in a supportive and confidential manner.
- Encourage staff to raise concerns early and ensure they know how to access support where required.
- Model healthy and safe work behaviours, such as taking regular breaks, using any equipment provided in line with procedures, and managing workload effectively.
- Challenge any stigma around health conditions and encourage openness.

Employee Assistance Programme

The Council provides a free, confidential 24-hour EAP (counselling) service. The service offers a helpline for general advice and guidance, psychological guidance and emotional support and/or individual counselling either face to face or over the phone and has no role in the consideration of any complaints by Council officers/management. Further details can be accessed on [People Anytime](#) or you can access the service by telephone on 0800 023 9324.

In addition to the telephone service there is a wide offering of resources available which includes downloadable self-help workbooks, debt advice, a mental health app and more. You can sign in to the full site here https://accmybenefits.vivup.co.uk/users/sign_in..

Stress Risk Assessment

Before the employee returns, it may be necessary to conduct a stress risk assessment, taking account of any recommendations from occupational health professionals. This aims to identify and mitigate any workplace risks related to stress at work that could harm employee health and wellbeing. By assessing these risks, we can implement preventative measures, ensure legal compliance, improve employee morale and productivity, and reduce costs associated with stress-related issues like absenteeism and staff turnover.

Templates for conducting a Stress Risk Assessment can be found on our [Stress Risk Assessment SharePoint](#) page along with detailed guidance on how to conduct these.

Reasonable Adjustments

Under the Equality Act 2010 and Council policy, managers have a duty to consider reasonable adjustments for employees whose attendance is affected by disability, long-term health conditions, or caring responsibilities.

See Absence Related To Disability and Reasonable Adjustment Passports sections below.

Reasonable Adjustment Passports

Reasonable Adjustment Passports can be used by employees who require reasonable adjustments to be in place to be able to undertake their role

Once completed, the passport will be stored securely on the Council's HR/Payroll system and will be accessible to the employee and their line manager. The passport will "travel" with the employee and be able to be used when they change role, or manager, or where their role changes through redesign etc. Having a passport in place will ensure that the employee does not require to go through their requirements, and details of their disability multiple times. The passport can also help when reviewing existing adjustments and when there is a change in requirement.

As the passport is stored within the Council's HR/Payroll system, where an employee changes role or manager, their new manager will be able to see the passport and adjustments which are already in place, without the employee having to go through their disability history. The reasonable adjustment passport will help employees by putting in place a workplace process that is supportive and helps to eliminate barriers to full workplace participation.

Wellness Action Plans

Developing a Wellness Action Plan can help employees support their own mental health by reflecting on the causes of stress and poor mental health, and by taking ownership it can assist employees and managers to take practical steps to help address any triggers.

More information on [Wellness Action Plans](#) is available on the Intranet.

SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES IN SPECIFIC CIRCUMSTANCES

Absence Related To Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines disability as “A physical or mental impairment which has a substantial and long term adverse effect on an individual’s ability to carry out normal day to day activities”.

Where disability has been confirmed as the cause of absence(s), reasonable adjustments will be discussed at the earliest opportunity in relation to the duties of the job, aspects of the working arrangements and/or the premises. In such circumstances, there is a duty to make reasonable adjustments in an effort to accommodate a person with a disability, so that they are not placed at a substantial disadvantage when compared to non-disabled employees. Some examples of these may be:

- making adjustments to premises, buying or modifying equipment
- reallocating some of the employee’s duties
- redeployment
- flexibility in working hours
- allowing time off during working hours for rehabilitation, assessment or treatment
- providing training
- phased return to work

Managers should also be aware of the Access to Work Scheme. This is a scheme operated by Job Centre Plus that can provide eligible employers with partial funding to purchase equipment to assist an employee with a disability to undertake their job. Further details on the Access to Work Scheme are available on the intranet or from line managers.

Disability-related sickness absence should be managed under the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy. If an employee meets one of the review levels in the procedure due to disability-related absence, then the absence should be managed in a supportive manner with focus on identifying measures that can be taken to assist the employee to improve their attendance or return to work.

Managers are expected to think creatively about any adjustments at each level of the procedure and use discretion around what is a reasonable level of absence. If, after

all attempts to make reasonable adjustments have been made, the employee is still unable to return to work, or maintain an acceptable level of attendance, then this should be managed using the procedure.

Absence Related To Pregnancy

Absence related to pregnancy is defined as 'any absence linked to an employee's pregnancy either before or after the birth of the baby'. It is important to establish and record whether an absence is pregnancy related at each return to work discussion as this will determine how a case is managed where an absence review level is reached.

Where an employee meets one of the review levels in the policy due to absence related to pregnancy they will be required to attend a Level 1 Attendance Review Meeting. The nature of this meeting will be wholly supportive and will focus on identifying measures that can be taken to assist the employee to improve their attendance, with concern shown for their health and wellbeing at all times.

In contrast to non-pregnancy related sickness absence, the case will not progress to Level 2 of the procedure if there has been no improvement in attendance levels. Instead, the employee will continue to be considered at Level 1 of the procedure with the focus of the follow up meeting(s) continuing to be supportive and with the manager exploring any further measures to improve the employee's attendance. This approach would continue until the employee's attendance had improved sufficiently or their maternity leave supersedes the review period, at which point they would move out of the procedure and monitoring would end.

It should be noted that if an employee goes off sick for any reason connected to their pregnancy within the four weeks before the baby is due (as stated on MatB1), the maternity leave will start immediately on the first day after their absence starts (even if they are subsequently fit to come back to work). Refer to the Maternity Guidance for full details, available on the intranet or from line managers.

Industrial Injury/Disease

Where an industrial injury has been recorded in the corporate system and where an employee meets one of the review levels in the procedure due to absence related to an injury at work or due to an industrial disease, then as with any other employee, they will be required to attend a Level 1 Attendance Review Meeting (for teachers/SNCT employees reference should be made to the SNCT handbook) under either the Short or Long Term procedure, whichever is most appropriate. The nature of this meeting will be wholly supportive, to identify measures that can be taken to assist the employee to improve their attendance, with concern shown for their health and wellbeing at all times.

Substance Misuse

Where an employee's absence can be reasonably attributed to a substance misuse problem, absence(s) will be managed in line with the Supporting Attendance & Wellbeing Policy. The Managing Substance Misuse Policy is available to support the employee in these circumstances, provided the employee is willing to accept such help and support and follow an identified treatment or support programme. The policy is available on the intranet or from line managers.

Terminal Illness

In the case of a terminally ill employee, managers must consider the circumstances of the employee and their continued employment in as sensitive and compassionate a way as possible. The latest GP and Occupational Health medical reports should be carefully considered. Advice can be sought from People Services on how best to support their continued employment, and from the Pensions Section for details of pension benefits. It is important to consult the employee about their wishes and to be in a position to provide them with all the information they might require on available options before any final decision is made around their employment.

Consideration may also be given to Extension of Occupational Sick Pay (see below)

Absences Related To Mental Health

Mental health conditions should not be a barrier to effective working. Providing employment and maintaining people in work is a positive way of supporting individuals who have, or are recovering from, mental health conditions. A positive working environment and appropriate support at work has a significant impact on reducing stress related sickness absence and improving long term outcomes for employees.

An employee suffering from a mental health condition may return to work and continue to undergo treatment for their condition. Managers should provide appropriate support to employees in this scenario in conjunction with advice from the Occupational Health Service ensuring that monitoring is undertaken and supervision available. The Council's policy on Mental Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace is available on the Intranet or from line managers. Training is available for managers on ACC Learn and further support is signposted throughout this guidance.

Menopause

As an organisation with over two thirds of the workforce made up of female employees, the Council has a responsibility to consider any potential wellbeing concerns specific to employees affected by menopause. Aberdeen City Council is proud to have signed up to the 'Menopause Pledge' which ensures we will recognise

that the menopause can be an issue in the workplace. By signing the pledge, we have committed to:

- Talk openly, positively and respectfully about the menopause
- Actively support and inform all employees affected by the menopause

Information and resources in relation to the menopause and managing it's symptoms in the workplace can be found on the link below:

<https://aberdeencitycouncil0365.sharepoint.com/sites/PeopleAnytime/SitePages/Menopause.aspx>

SECTION 5: LINKS TO OTHER POLICIES/GUIDANCE

There are a number of other Council policies, procedures and guidance which directly link to the sickness absence.

Redeployment

Where an employee is unable to continue in their current role for medical/disability reasons, but would otherwise be able to undertake alternative work, redeployment may be considered. Redeployment must be recommended by an Occupational Health report.

See [Redeployment](#) for further information

Ill Health Retirement

If an employee meets the qualifying requirements as a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme and where it is appropriate for an ill-health retirement assessment to be requested this should be considered. An ill health retirement assessment is carried out by an Independent Registered Medical Practitioner through an approved occupational health service. The occupational health service will assess the employee against the ill health retirement criteria contained within the Local Government Pension Scheme Regulations and can make one of two assessments, if ill health retirement applies;

1. The employee meets the criteria for a Tier 1 ill health retirement
2. The employee meets the criteria for a Tier 2 ill health retirement

In both cases, the employee should immediately be managed in line with the guidance on ill health retirement (available on the intranet or from line managers.). Where the employee does not meet the criteria for either a Tier 1 or Tier 2 ill health retirement, a Capability Assessment Meeting will be arranged.

If the outcome of a Capability Assessment Meeting is to dismiss an employee who is currently absent, and the medical evidence suggests that they may be unlikely to return to work within a reasonable timescale, a Tier 3 gratuity will be paid if;

- the employee is a current member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), with 2 or more years' service in the Scheme
- an ill-health retirement assessment has been undertaken and it is confirmed by an Independent Registered Medical Practitioner that ill health retirement does not apply

This gratuity is equivalent to one week's pay for each completed year of continuous service up to a maximum of 30 weeks. This payment will be made in addition to any

pay in lieu of notice and only applies to dismissal on grounds of lack of capability due to ill health.

The ill health retirement provisions and process for teachers/SNCT employees are separate and are available from SPPA or from line managers.

<https://pensions.gov.scot/teachers/life-events/i-am-ill>

SPECIAL LEAVE AND EMPLOYEE AIDE

It may be necessary for an employee to be absent from work due to reasons other than illness and it is important that all absence is correctly identified and recorded. Special leave provisions are available to support employees when they require time off for personal reasons. Information about the special leave arrangements are on the intranet (see link below) or available from line managers (teachers/SNCT employees have separate special leave provisions). In addition to these arrangements, Employee Aide is a provision to assist employees to deal with unexpected family, personal or domestic problems and provide managers with more flexibility in dealing with requests for time off when these situations arise.

See [Special Leave Policy](#) for more information

EXTENSION OF OCCUPATIONAL SICK PAY

The Council recognises the difficulties that employees in the terminal phase of an illness may encounter financially if their entitlement to occupational sick pay expires due to their length of absence. A continuation of occupational sick pay can be requested in order to ease the stress of financial commitments placed on employees and their families. [The Extension of Occupational Sick Pay Guidance](#) is available on the intranet or from line managers.

Annual Leave

Those employees who have choice over their holiday periods should be encouraged to use their annual leave proportionately throughout the year to maintain a healthy work life balance which supports their mental and physical wellbeing.

Abatement of Annual Leave (non teaching/SNCT employees only)

If an employee has been absent due to sickness (other than pregnancy related) for 90 days or more (either one period of sickness or an aggregate of more than one period) over a rolling period of the previous 12 months, annual leave will be abated to a period proportionate to the actual service given during the leave year. However, annual leave will **only** be abated to the statutory minimum of 28 days (pro-rated for part-time employees) and inclusive of available public holidays.

Compensatory Leave (teaching/SNCT employees only)

Under the Scottish Negotiating Committee for Teachers (SNCT) conditions of service, compensatory leave is granted to teaching staff who experience sickness absence during periods of annual leave. If a teacher is absent due to illness for eight or more consecutive days during designated annual leave periods, they are entitled to compensatory leave at a rate of two days for every five consecutive days of absence, up to a maximum of eight compensatory days per leave year. For further specifics, please refer to the [SNCT handbook](#).

Flexible Working Arrangements

Aberdeen City Council recognises that enabling employees to balance their personal and professional responsibilities leads to improved attendance, engagement, and productivity. Flexible working may include:

- Flexible start and finish times
- Compressed hours
- Part-time working
- Hybrid working
- Phased return to work after illness or significant life events

Managers should regularly review requests for flexible arrangements, taking into account service delivery needs, team dynamics, and the individual circumstances of employees. Where requests cannot be accommodated, managers must provide clear, compassionate explanations and seek alternative solutions where possible. See [Flexible Working](#) for further information

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The Council promotes equality of opportunity and is committed to having a diverse workforce where everyone is valued and respected. The [Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Policy](#) is available on the intranet or from line managers.

Appendix 1 - Contact Record

Personal Details			
Employee Details		Manager Details	
Name:		Name:	
Job Title:		Job Title:	
Employee No:		Contact Phone Number:	
Employee preferred contact details (phone &/or email)		Contact Email	

The frequency of contact may vary depending on the nature and complexity of the absence.
It is important to agree the method of communication for welfare contact. Some possible methods are: Phone call, Text message, Email, Video call and Face-to-face meeting (if feasible and appropriate)

Frequency and timing (e.g. weekly call on Wednesday afternoons) is completely dependent on the individual’s needs and may change throughout the process. You should also agree this with the employee and review regularly with them

Designated Contact(s)	Frequency of Communication	Preferred Methods	Notes/Agreements
	e.g. Weekly, every Wednesday afternoon (to be reviewed as needed)	Phone call, Email, Video call, Face-to-face (where appropriate)	Both parties agree to review the plan regularly and adjust as required by the employee’s needs.

Date and Time of Contact and Method (phone/email)	Discussion Notes	Any issues that need attention	Next Planned contact

Appendix 2 - Support Plan

Employee Details	
Name:	
Job Title:	
Function/Cluster:	
Line Manager:	

Reason for Support	
Long Term Absence <input type="checkbox"/>	Short Term Absence (requiring additional support) <input type="checkbox"/>
Details if applicable	

List any measures the Council can offer to support safe and sustained improved attendance/return to work: *refer to ‘guidance’ appendix 3.*

Date	Support Measures / Adjustments considered	Any actions required	Timescales /Review dates

***This document can be amended and updated at any time according to discussions taking place.

Signed by Line Manger and employee that they agree the Support Plan

Signed	Date:
(line manager)	
(employee)	

Appendix 3 – Guidance for Support Plan

How to complete a Support Plan

Completing the Support Plan helps employees improve attendance or return to work by allowing managers to identify needs, implement tailored interventions, and track progress. This collaborative process addresses barriers and promotes a supportive environment for ongoing wellbeing. A clear Support Plan sets expectations, reduces misunderstandings, and shows commitment to employee health and success.

When developing the Support Plan, discuss with the employee what their needs are, and any factors impacting their return or attendance. Determine practical steps and set clear, achievable goals with the employee involved in the process.

Record mutually agreed adjustments and measures, any actions that are required, including timelines and scheduled review dates, and ensuring everyone is aware of their responsibilities. Regularly follow up to assess progress and revise the plan as needed to reflect changing circumstances, ensuring strong support and prioritising the employee's wellbeing throughout the process.

Key Resources

Here are some of the key resources to help you when completing the support plan. Managers are encouraged to use or signpost to these resources proactively to ensure that returning employees feel supported and valued, and to address any potential barriers to a successful return to work.

Service/Support	Description	Type of Support
Managers Health and Wellbeing Toolkit	This toolkit covers mental health, physical wellbeing, and best practices for reintegrating staff after absence. It provides guidance on supportive conversations to help managers address sensitive topics empathetically and promote an inclusive workplace. The toolkit includes templates and checklists for return-to-work meetings, as well as links to internal and external resources such as occupational health referrals, employee assistance programs, and specialist helplines.	All
Able Futures	Have more positive days by providing support, advice, and guidance from qualified mental health professionals.	Mental Health & Wellbeing

<u>Bereavement, Grief and Loss Support</u>	Help with coping with the intense emotions and practical challenges following a loss, offering services like counselling, peer support, and helplines to navigate the process of adapting to life after a loss.	Mental Health & Wellbeing
<u>Drug and Alcohol Support</u>	Find advice, information, links to services providing harm reduction interventions and recovery planning.	Substance Misuse
<u>Stress Risk Assessments</u>	A stress risk assessment is a structured process that helps identify potential sources of stress in the workplace, evaluates the risks they pose to employees' health and wellbeing, and determines appropriate measures to manage or reduce these risks. It involves consulting with staff, reviewing work practices, and implementing strategies to create a supportive and healthy working environment.	Mental Health & Wellbeing
<u>Employee Assistance Programme (Counselling)</u>	Impartial, confidential advice from qualified counsellors for many different issues.	Mental Health & Wellbeing
<u>Mediation in the Workplace</u>	Internal mediation service to help resolve workplace conflict and improve relationships.	Workplace Conflict
<u>Men's Health</u>	Topics relating to men's health and wellbeing from Andropause, Mental Health right through to the physical and social aspects of wellbeing including signposting to support organisations specifically for men.	Men's Health and Wellbeing
<u>Menopause</u>	Help for everyone going through or supporting others with the menopause including links to employee peer support groups, training and external professionals to guide and assist the journey.	Women's Health and Wellbeing
<u>Occupational Health</u>	Preventing work-related ill-health and injuries, supporting employees with health conditions to remain in work,	General

	and ensuring workplaces are safe and conducive to good health.	
<u>Reasonable Adjustment Passports</u>	To facilitate constructive conversations between employees and their managers and to ensure that necessary support is provided, creating a consistent record that can be passed on if the employee changes roles or managers, reducing the need to repeatedly negotiate adjustments.	Health and Wellbeing
<u>Returning to Work Anxiety</u>	Tools and services to support employees returning to work after periods of absence.	Mental Health & Wellbeing
<u>Supporting Colleagues after Traumatic Events</u>	Promoting their immediate and long-term psychological well-being and recovery by providing comfort, reassurance, practical help, and a sense of safety and belonging within the workplace.	Mental Health & Wellbeing
<u>Wellness Action Plans</u>	A personalised, practical tool to proactively support individual mental health and wellbeing at work, helping individuals identify triggers and warning signs of stress or poor mental health and communicate their needs for support to managers.	Mental Health & Wellbeing

In addition to the above supports, there are several other ways to help employees return to or remain in work following periods of absence. Reasonable adjustments and alternative temporary duties play a key role in supporting individuals during this transition. For example, a phased return to work enables employees to gradually increase their working hours or responsibilities over a set period, allowing them to readjust at a manageable pace.

All support measures should be discussed and agreed with the employee, ensuring they are tailored to their individual circumstances and needs.

Support Measure	Description
Reasonable adjustments	Key role in supporting individuals during transition back to work
Alternative temporary duties	Support individuals during transition
Phased return to work	Gradually increase working hours or responsibilities over a set period
Important Dates and Required Support	Documenting key dates for an employee's support needs, such as counselling sessions or medical appointments, helps to coordinate

	and agree on arrangements in advance, supporting their attendance and wellbeing.
Change of location	Option to work from a different site or office, providing a quieter or more accessible environment
Flexible working	Adjusting working hours or patterns, such as part-time work, staggered start and finish times, or compressed hours
DSE assessment	Ergonomic assessment of workstation, providing necessary equipment or adjustments
Counselling	Access to professional counselling services, Employee Assistance Programme or external support
Buddy system	Assigning a colleague as a 'buddy' or mentor to support reintegration and guidance
Temporary adjustments to duties	Modifying tasks or responsibilities, reducing workload or reallocating duties
Authorising time off for medical appointments	Allowing flexibility to attend medical or therapeutic appointments
Support with travel arrangements	Assistance or adjustments to manage commute, such as flexible start times or access to parking
Discussion and agreement	All support measures should be discussed and agreed with the employee, tailored to individual circumstances and needs

Training on ACC Learn to Support Wellbeing in the Workplace:

[Alcohol and Drugs in the Workplace](#)

[Ask, Tell - Save A Life: Every Life Matters](#)

[Domestic Abuse Awareness](#)

[Domestic Abuse Awareness Raising Tool](#)

[Dying Matters & Grief Kind](#)

[Emotional Accountability](#)

[Living with Endometriosis](#)

[Managing ADHD at Work](#)

[Men's Health](#)

[Menopause Awareness](#)

[Mental Health Anti-Stigma and Discrimination](#)

[Mental Health Awareness Tools for Managers](#) - virtual

[Mental Health First Aid \(2 day course\)](#) – face to face

[Mental Health First Aid Refresher](#)

[Toxic Positivity](#)

[Understanding Sleep](#)

How Do I Report my Sickness Absence?

If you become unwell and are unable to come to work, you must notify your line manager as soon as possible, generally within one hour of your normal start time. If you work to rotas and/or with early or late shifts, contact should be made before the beginning of your shift. You should not wait until your next scheduled work day to inform your manager of sickness absence. Normally, you should phone where possible, but other methods may be used if agreed by your manager. If your own line manager is unavailable, you should contact another manager in your area or your own manager's line manager.

Please note that your service may have their own agreed local procedures for reporting absences (for example a central number to call), and you should ensure you follow the arrangements relevant to your service area. Your manager will inform you of any service-specific arrangements.

It is not normally acceptable for someone else to call and report your absence, unless there are exceptional circumstances, for example an emergency admittance to hospital, or where this has been agreed in advance with your manager as a reasonable adjustment where you have a disability.

You should tell the manager the reason that you are sick and how long you expect to be absent for (if known). You should also let them know about any work that may need to be covered while you are absent, but only if you are well enough to do this.

Depending on how long you are likely to be absent for, you should also agree with your manager when and how you will update them on your absence.

When do I need a Fit Note?

If you will be absent for more than 7 calendar days, you must provide a Fit Note from your GP or a registered medical professional. You must send the Fit Note to your line manager on the 8th day of absence or as soon as possible after this.

You must also send copies of any subsequent Fit Notes to your line manager and these must cover the entire sickness period (i.e. with no gaps between dates).

If I am absent long term, how often should I / my manager make contact?

You should agree with your manager how often contact will be, who will instigate contact and what method you will use (i.e. by phone, MS Teams, etc). It is important to keep to these arrangements as much as possible as your manager will understandably be concerned if they are unable to contact you and may need to take further steps to be reassured about your wellbeing.

What do I do if I am ready to return to work?

You should let your manager know what your planned return to work date is and if you require any support to return. If you have been off long term, this may require further discussion and a planned approach, with support arrangements in place, either temporarily or permanently.

Regardless of how long you have been off work, you will be asked to attend a return to work meeting, either on your first day back or soon after, to discuss your absence, any support required and any next steps under the policy.

Appendix 5 - Return to Work Discussion Form

A Return to Work Discussion (RTW) must:

- take place between the employee and their line manager **for every occasion** of sickness absence, regardless of the reason or duration
- take place on the first day back at work, or as soon as practical

What to discuss

- The reason for the employee's absence and ensure that the employee is well enough work.
- Offer support around the welfare of the employee.
- Check all notification and certification requirements have been met.
- Discuss any work-related factors affecting attendance.
- Confirm the absence review levels and ensure the employee understands the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy.

Short Term Review Levels	3 or more instances of absence within a rolling 12-month period.
	A total of 10 or more days of absence within a rolling 12-month period.
Long Term Review Level	An absence lasting 28 calendar days or longer.

1. Employee details			
First Name:		Surname:	
Job Title:		Employee No:	
Team:		Cluster/Function:	
2. Sickness absence details			
Start date of absence:			
End date of absence:			
Reason for absence:			
Absence reported in line with procedure?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Fit Note provided?	Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/>	Not required <input type="checkbox"/> (absence less than 8 days)	
If NO what action was taken?			
Has employee met an review level? (see above)		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Has employee's absence been closed on the HR/Payroll system?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>

3. Discussion with employee			
Was absence related to an industrial injury/industrial disease?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Was absence related to pregnancy?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Any issues/requirements raised by the employee during the RTW discussion?			
Is a Support Plan required?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Is a referral to occupational health required?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Does the employee understand that future sickness absence may start the formal procedure?		Yes <input type="checkbox"/>	No <input type="checkbox"/>
Line Manager		Employee	
Signature		Signature (where practical)	
Date		Date	
4. Next steps			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide employee with a signed copy of the form 2. On the HR/Payroll System – go to the relevant period of absence and: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Close the absence (if not done already) ○ Attach a copy of the form ○ Click “Interview Completed” and complete RTWI date 			

Appendix 6 - Level 1 – Invite To Attendance Review Meeting

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets. Optional paragraphs are highlighted

Dear [name],

Level 1: Attendance Review Meeting – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

I am writing to you as your absence levels have met one of the Absence Review Levels identified in the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy.

You are therefore required to attend a meeting with me on **[DATE]** at **[TIME]** in **[LOCATION]**. If you would prefer a virtual meeting or telephone conversation instead, please let me know and this can be arranged.

The main purpose of the meeting is to discuss the reason(s) for your absence and to consider measures to support you to improve your attendance going forward. We will review the absence(s) which have resulted in this meeting and consider whether it is appropriate for a referral to Occupational Health to be made.

We will also complete a Support Plan to identify any supportive measures that can assist you. [Required for long term absence]

You may be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague. Please confirm you can attend this meeting and let me know if you wish to be accompanied and if so, by whom. If for any reason you are unable to attend the meeting, I should be grateful if you would contact me as soon as possible in order to arrange an alternative date/time.

If you are medically unfit and therefore unable to attend the Attendance Review Meeting, you may wish to submit written information regarding your reasons for absence and any supportive measures you wish to have considered to assist you.

I enclose a copy of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy for your information. I trust this letter explains the purpose of the meeting and how it will be conducted, but if you have any questions please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[NAME]
[JOB TITLE]

Cc HR Service Centre – for employee's personal file

Appendix 7 - Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Record

Personal Details			
Employee Details		Manager Details	
Name:		Name:	
Job Title:		Job Title:	
Employee No:		Contact Phone Number:	
Employee preferred contact details (phone number &/or email)		Contact Email	

Sickness Absence Details (add lines as required)		
Start Date:	End Date:	Reason:
Absences During Level 1 Review Period		
Start Date:	End Date:	Reason:
Absences During Level 2 Review Period		
Start Date:	End Date:	Reason:

Discussion Points	Details
Open conversation	Talk through their absence in an understanding way
Fair and consistent	Absence handled fairly and consistently across the organisation
Support and guidance	Offer support, guidance, and reassurance
Medical support	Discuss any medical reports or existing professional help
Policy levels	Explain Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy levels and next steps
Employee Assistance (Counselling) Service	Remind about confidential counselling service, provide details or People Anytime leaflet,
Annual leave and sick pay	Discuss effects on annual leave or sick pay, options for using annual leave where on reduced sick pay
Support Plan	Where applicable fill out plan together, discuss steps for improvement, support required, reasonable adjustments

<p>ATTENDANCE IMPROVED AND MONITORING PERIOD HAS ENDED</p> <p>Important information for the employee;</p> <p>It is important that you make every effort to sustain this improved level of attendance. If, at any point during the next 12 months (from the end of the review period), your attendance returns to an unsatisfactory level, I have the option, as your manager, to move you back into the formal procedure, to the same Level where you left. In that event, you may be progressed to Level 2 of the procedure.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>EXTENSION TO REVIEW PERIOD</p> <p>Reason for Extension:</p> <p>Duration of Extension: _____ weeks</p> <p>Next Outcome Meeting:</p> <p>Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____</p> <p>If there is insufficient improvement in your attendance/no foreseeable return to work during the extension to the review period, you will be moved to Level 2 of the procedure. Please note that this meeting may be brought forward if required.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>ATTENDANCE HAS NOT IMPROVED</p> <p>The employee has moved to Level 2. The Level 2 Attendance Review Meeting would normally be commenced immediately.</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Employee Signature:</p>	
<p>Manager Signature:</p>	

Level 2 Review Discussion	
Date of Meeting	_____
Summary of discussion:	
<p>Target date for return to work (if still absent): _____</p> <p>Is an Occupational Health Referral Required? *</p> <p>Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>*If required, complete the referral with the employee so that they are aware of the content prior to being contacted by Occupational Health with an appointment date and time.</p>	
Length of Review Period: * Normally 12 weeks	Duration of Level 2 Review: _____ weeks
Employee Signature:	
Manager Signature:	

Outcome of Level 2	
Date of Outcome Meeting	_____
Brief summary of the discussion and then tick the appropriate outcome below:	
<p>OUTCOME: <i>Important information for the employee to be aware of is highlighted below each outcome. (Tick as appropriate)</i></p>	
<p>ATTENDANCE IMPROVED AND MONITORING PERIOD HAS ENDED</p> <p>Important information for the employee;</p> <p>It is important that you make every effort to sustain this improved level of attendance. If, at any point during the next 12 months (from the end of the review period), your attendance returns to an unsatisfactory level, I have the option, as your manager, to</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>

move you back into the formal procedure, to the same Level where you left. In that event, you may be progressed to Level 3 of the procedure.		
EXTENSION TO REVIEW PERIOD Reason for Extension: Duration of Extension: _____ weeks Next Outcome Meeting: Date: _____ Time: _____ Location: _____ If there is insufficient improvement in your attendance/no foreseeable return to work during the extension to the review period, you will be moved to Level 2 of the procedure. Please note that this meeting may be brought forward if required.		<input type="checkbox"/>
ATTENDANCE HAS NOT IMPROVED The employee has moved to Level 3. The Level 3 Attendance Review Meeting would normally be commenced immediately.		<input type="checkbox"/>
Employee Signature:		
Manager Signature:		

Level 3 Review Discussion	
Date of Meeting	_____
Summary of discussion:	
<p>Target date for return to work (if still absent): _____</p> <p>Is an Occupational Health Referral Required? * Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>*If required, complete the referral with the employee so that they are aware of the content prior to being contacted by Occupational Health with an appointment date and time.</p> <p>Does the employee have an underlying medical condition(s)? Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>If yes, a Capability Assessment Meeting will take place at the end of the Level 3 review period. The Manager will prepare a Capability Summary Report and pass it to the Chair in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>If No, a Conduct Assessment Meeting will take place at the end of the Level 3 review period. The Manager will prepare a Conduct Summary Report and pass it to the Chair in advance of the meeting.</p> <p>Should Redeployment be considered (If no provide reason) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p> <p>Should Ill Health retirement be considered (If no provide reason) Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
Length of Review Period: * Normally 12 weeks	Duration of Level 3 Review: _____ weeks
A Capability Assessment Meeting will take place at the end of the Level 3 review period.	<input type="checkbox"/>
A Conduct Assessment Meeting will take place at the end of the Level 3 review.	<input type="checkbox"/>

Employee Signature:	
Manager Signature:	

Appendix 8 - Invite to Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Outcome Meeting (following review period at level 1 & 2)

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets. Optional sections are highlighted

Dear [Employee Name],

I am writing to invite you to a Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Outcome Meeting, which will take place following the completion of your [number of weeks] week review period. The purpose of this meeting is to review your attendance record and wellbeing, and to discuss the progress made during this time. We are committed to supporting you in achieving and maintaining the expected standards of attendance and overall wellbeing at work.

During the meeting, we will review your attendance over the review period, discuss any support you may require, and consider any medical or personal circumstances that may have impacted your attendance. We will also outline the possible next steps, which include:

- End the monitoring period, if the required improvements in attendance have been made during the review period.
- Extending the review period, should some improvement have been made but the required standard has not yet been fully met; this may also be considered if annual or special leave has affected the review period, or if further medical information is required to make a decision.
- Progressing to Level [2/3] of the Supporting attendance and Wellbeing Policy if the necessary improvements have not been achieved.

You are therefore asked to attend a meeting with me on [DATE] at [TIME] in [LOCATION]. If you would prefer a virtual meeting or telephone conversation instead, please let me know and this can be arranged.

You may be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague. Please confirm you can attend this meeting and let me know if you wish to be accompanied and if so, by whom. If for any reason you are unable to attend the meeting, I should be grateful if you would contact me as soon as possible in order to arrange an alternative date/time.

If you are medically unfit and therefore unable to attend the above review meeting, you may wish to submit written information to your manager regarding your reasons for absence and any supportive measures you wish to have considered to assist you in improving your attendance.

Yours sincerely,
[Manager Name]
[Manager Job Title]

Appendix 9 – Level 3 Review Period

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

To be issued following Level 3 Attendance Review Meeting

***where there is no underlying medical condition to explain the level of absence the employee is invited to a Conduct Assessment Meeting. Where absences are related to an underlying medical condition the employee is invited to attend a Capability Assessment Meeting.**

Dear [Name]

Level 3 Review Period - Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

Thank you for meeting with me on **[insert date]**.

At the meeting I discussed the improvement required in your attendance and we explored whether any further steps could be taken to support you to improve your future attendance.

I informed you that your attendance will now be monitored during a Level 3 review period of **[number of weeks]** weeks.

At the end of the Level 3 review period you will be requested to attend a **[Capability or Conduct (delete one)]** Assessment Meeting. You should be aware that termination of employment is a possible outcome of that meeting, although other reasonable alternatives will also be considered.

The meeting will be chaired by a Senior Manager who will write to you separately to inform you of the date, time and location of the meeting. You should also be aware that the Assessment Meeting may be brought forward prior to the end of the review date, should this become necessary due to the level of absence becoming unsustainable.

I trust this explains how matters will be taken forward but please contact me if you have any questions on the content of this letter.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME]

[JOB TITLE]

Cc HR Service Centre – for employee's personal file

Appendix 10 – Summary Capability/Conduct Report

CAPABILITY / CONDUCT <i>(delete one)</i> SUMMARY REPORT			
1. Employee Details			
Name:		Employee No:	
Job Title:		Cluster/Function:	
Team		Location:	
Level Meeting	Date Held	Review Period (Weeks)	Extension Information if applicable
Level 1 Attendance Review Meeting	_____		
Level 1 Outcome Meeting	_____		
Level 2 Attendance Review Meeting	_____		
Level 2 Outcome Meeting	_____		
Level 3 Assessment Meeting	_____		
Note any additional information regarding Level Meetings: <i>For example, changes to job/line manager</i>			
2. Sickness absence details			
List sickness absences that resulted in the employee meeting one of the review points as well as any absences which occurred during the Level 1, 2 and 3 review periods. <i>Alternatively include a list as an appendix</i>			
3. Occupational Health and medical reports (copies attached)			
Please state the dates when Occupational Health reports were provided and extract the main points from relevant medical reports, in particular from the latest report.			

4. Record of meetings at Level 1, 2 and 3 and Support Plan (copies attached)

Include details of the meetings at Level 1, 2 and 3 of the procedure and any other communications you have had with the employee outwith formal meetings and outline the main points of your discussions. Also include the Support Plan if applicable.

This should include information on any measures the Council has taken or offered to help the employee to improve their sickness absence record, including any reasonable adjustments in relation to a disability where the Equality Act applies.

5. Employee Response

Please outline:

- what the employee's response has been to their ongoing absence(s)
- the reasons for their continued absence(s)
- why there has been no improvement
- barriers to them improving attendance
- relevant medical information etc.

Include also:

- the employee's response to measures suggested by the Council to help improve their attendance
- any other suggestions the employee has put forward

6. Other

Please include any other relevant information

7. Summary

Please provide a brief summary of how the case has reached Level 3 of the procedure, where a Capability / Conduct **(delete one)** Assessment Meeting is now necessary to consider whether dismissal on grounds of capability / conduct **(delete as appropriate)** is appropriate, i.e. the key factors that have resulted in this.

8. List of appendices

Please list all relevant documents (Level 1, 2 and 3 records, Support Plan, OH reports and any other relevant documents) which are included.

9. Line Manager Details**Name:****Job Title:****Cluster/ Function:****Signature:****Date:**

Appendix 11 - Level 3 - Invite To Capability/Conduct Assessment Meeting

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Employee Name],

Level 3: [Insert Capability OR Conduct] Assessment Meeting – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

I refer to the meeting held at Level 3 of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy on **[insert date]**, concerning your sickness absence(s). At that meeting your line manager set a review period to enable you a further opportunity to achieve an improvement in your attendance.

Now that the review period has ended, it is necessary for you to attend the above meeting to consider whether the required improvement in attendance has been achieved during the Level 3 review period. The meeting has been arranged for **[TIME]** on **[DATE]** in **[LOCATION]**.

You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague. I will chair the meeting and will be accompanied by a People Services Adviser. Your line manager will also attend to present a report on:

- Your sickness absence record
- The management of your absence(s) up to and including the Level 3 review period
- Any measures that have been taken to assist you to improve your level of attendance, **including details of any consideration or implementation of reasonable adjustments to duties, work practices or premises required under the Equality Act** (*omit these words if not applicable*)

The possible outcomes to the meeting are as follows:

- where you have achieved the required improvement, monitoring of your attendance will end
- a further review period may be set where further information or monitoring is considered necessary
- where your attendance has not improved during the Level 3 review period, it will be necessary to consider whether it is appropriate to terminate your employment, due to you being unable to fulfil your contractual responsibilities as a result of sickness absence. However, I would emphasise that if this outcome is being contemplated other reasonable options will be considered at

the meeting, as an alternative to termination of employment, before any final decision is made.

Details of any conditions in relation to the above outcomes will be contained in the outcome letter following the meeting and will be in accordance with the procedure.

I intend to conduct the meeting using the following procedure:

1. Firstly, I will explain the purpose and format of the meeting and deal with any procedural issues that may arise.
2. I will then ask the manager who conducted the absence management meetings to present a report on your sickness absence record and on how your absence has been managed to date, including any measures taken to assist you to improve your attendance record. The manager will confirm whether the required improvement in attendance was achieved during the Level 3 review period.
3. I will also refer to the content of the latest occupational health medical report and/or any other relevant previous reports **[OPTIONAL delete if not required - I can confirm that the Council's occupational health provider has established that you do not meet the eligibility criteria for ill health retirement]**.
4. You and / or your companion will then have the opportunity to ask any questions of the manager.
5. I will then give you the opportunity to respond and to present your case, indicating whether you have any suggestions to put forward as an alternative to termination of employment and whether you have any evidence, **including contrary medical evidence (omit these words if not applicable)**, you wish to present and be taken into account.
6. Where applicable, I will consider any suggestions you put forward and any other information you present, **including any contrary medical evidence (omit these words if not applicable)** (an adjournment may be required at this point).
7. My colleague and I will then ask any questions of you and the manager and there will be an opportunity for a general discussion during which both you and the manager can raise relevant issues not covered earlier.
8. You will be given the opportunity to conclude your response by highlighting any aspects you consider to be particularly relevant or anything further in support of your case.
9. I will allow adjournments during the course of the meeting where I deem they are necessary.

10. At the end of the meeting an adjournment will occur. During the adjournment, I will consider all relevant issues that emerge from the meeting. I will then decide on the outcome of the assessment meeting.
11. I will notify you of my decision in person whenever possible and confirm it in writing, along with the reasons for arriving at that decision. I would hope to reach a decision within 24 hours of the meeting although the length of the adjournment will of course depend on the type and extent of the range of issues that I need to consider.

You are expected to take all reasonable steps to attend the meeting as arranged. I have to advise you that should you, in my view, fail to attend the meeting without good and sufficient reason; it is likely that it will proceed, and a decision will be taken in your absence.

If the companion you select is unable to attend on the above date you have the opportunity to suggest another date. However, this alternative date must suit everyone involved and be no more than 5 working days after the original date – otherwise you will need to select another companion to accompany you or attend the meeting unaccompanied.

I have enclosed a copy of the report prepared by your manager which includes any additional evidence to which they will be referring at the meeting. If you would like to submit any further information in support of your case, then you should forward this to me at least 24 hours in advance of the meeting.

Please telephone me as soon as possible to confirm that the above date and time for the meeting is suitable and whether you will be accompanied and, if so, by whom.

I trust this satisfactorily explains the Level you are at in the procedure and how the meeting will proceed but please contact me if you have any questions.

Yours sincerely

NAME OF MANAGER CONDUCTING MEETING
JOB TITLE

Cc HR Service Centre – for employee's personal file
People Services Advisor

Appendix 12 - Outcome Of Level 3 – Normal Monitoring Or Extended Review Period

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Name],

Outcome of [Capability OR Conduct] Assessment Meeting – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

Thank you for attending the above meeting on [insert date]. I write to confirm that following the [number of weeks] week review of your attendance levels...

Please choose the relevant paragraphs depending on decision

Attendance improved

I am satisfied that your level of attendance has sufficiently improved. You will therefore move out the procedure and the monitoring period has ended.

As I have made you aware, it is important that you make every effort to sustain this improved level of attendance. If, at any point during the next 12 months (from the end of the last review period), your attendance returns to an unsatisfactory level, you may return to the formal Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy, to the same Level where you left. In that event, you may be invited to attend a [Capability OR Conduct] Assessment Meeting at Level 3 of the Policy.

OR

Review Period Extended

I have decided to extend the Level 3 review period for a further [number of months] months to [insert reason e.g. give you a further opportunity to demonstrate the required improvement /seek additional medical information]. This is due to [insert reason].

We will therefore meet again on [date/time/location] to discuss your attendance levels. My letter of [insert date of invite to assessment meeting] sets out how his meeting will be conducted and outlines the potential outcomes of the meeting. However, if you have any questions regarding this then please do not hesitate to contact me.

You have the right to be accompanied at the meeting by a trade union representative or work colleague. I will chair the meeting and will be accompanied by a People Services Adviser. Your line manager will provide updated information on your sickness absence, the management of your absence and any further measures that have been taken to assist you to improve your attendance.

Please telephone me as soon as possible to confirm that the above date and time for the meeting is suitable and whether you will be accompanied and, if so, by whom.

If you have any queries on the content of this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

NAME OF MANAGER CONDUCTING MEETING
JOB TITLE

Cc HR Service Centre - for employee's personal file

Appendix 13 - Outcome Of Level 3 – Termination Of Employment

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Name],

Outcome of [Capability OR Conduct] Assessment Meeting – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

I refer to the above meeting held on [insert date] in the presence of [insert names and job titles].

The purpose of the meeting was to consider whether the required improvement in your attendance was achieved during the Level 3 review period, with three possible outcomes of the meeting indicated to you, depending on what occurred during the review period. It was also to consider what occurred during earlier Levels of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing procedure.

At the meeting your line manager was asked to present a report on what occurred during the Level 3 review period as well as on your sickness absence record and the content of the Attendance Review meetings, including any measures taken to assist you to improve your level of sickness absence. The content of the latest occupational health medical report was also discussed. (omit this sentence if not applicable)

The main issues covered by your line manager were as follows:

1. (insert issues covered by Manager) e.g. During the Level 3 review period your sickness absence record remained unacceptable with you having)
- 2.
- 3.

You were then given the opportunity to provide a full response as to why you had been unable to achieve and maintain an acceptable level of attendance at work during the Level 3 review period and also during Levels 1 and 2 of the procedure. You were also given the opportunity to put forward any suggestions as an alternative to termination of employment and to present any evidence, including contrary medical evidence to that contained in the latest medical report. (omit these words if not applicable)

A summary of your response was as follows:

1. (To insert a summary of the employee's response)
- 2.
- 3.

Decision to terminate employment

I have given full consideration to the issues raised during the course of the meeting, from both you and your line manager, and decided on the basis of the information presented, that termination of your employment was the most appropriate outcome.

I am writing therefore to confirm my decision that your employment will be terminated on grounds of **[lack of capability due to ill health OR misconduct relating to your failure to fulfil your contractual responsibilities as a result of the extent of your sickness absence]** with effect from **[insert date]**.

Reasons for decision to terminate employment

My reasons for arriving at this decision and the main factors I took into account were as follows:

[To include some or all of the following plus any other relevant issues (only the applicable bullets):]

- You did not achieve the required improvement in your sickness absence record during the Level 3 review period, having also had an unacceptable record at the earlier Levels of the procedure.*
- The extent of your sickness absence has been a concern now for some considerable period of time. This has comprised ___ days in the last ___ months and is causing significant operational difficulties for the team.*
- Due to your level of sickness absence you have been unable to satisfactorily comply with your contractual responsibilities and it is no longer possible to continue with this situation.*
- There is no underlying medical condition associated with your absences.*
- The latest medical report indicates that there is not likely to be any improvement in your level of attendance in the foreseeable future, due to your underlying medical condition.*
- There are no further reasonable adjustments to duties, work practices or premises that can be considered or implemented to assist you to improve your future attendance. The reasonable adjustments and support that have already been put in place as part of your Support Plan have not resulted in the required improvement in your level of attendance.*
- Identifying suitable alternative employment and / or retraining have been considered and are not options that can be pursued due to _____.*

- *The Council's occupational health provider has confirmed that you do not meet the eligibility criteria for ill health retirement.*

I would emphasise that this decision in no way reflects on the way in which you carried out your duties when you were attending work and I hope that you understand the reason why I have reached this difficult decision at this point in time.

Date of termination of employment and notice entitlement

Delete one option- I therefore confirm your last day of service with Aberdeen City Council as **[insert date]**. You will receive [up to 12] weeks' pay in lieu of the amount of notice to which you are contractually entitled. **OR** You are contractually entitled to [up to 12] weeks' notice of termination of employment and you will be required to work during this period of notice with your last day of service with the Council being **[insert date]**.

OPTIONAL PARAGRAPH ONLY APPLIES IF IHR ASSESSMENT COMPLETED BY IRMP - As you are a current member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS), with 2 or more years' service in the scheme and following an ill-health retirement assessment it has been confirmed by an Independent Registered Medical Practitioner that you do not meet the criteria for ill health retirement, a **Tier 3 ill health gratuity** will also apply. This gratuity is equivalent to one week's pay for each completed year of continuous service and in your case this amounts to [up to maximum of 30] weeks' pay. This payment will be made in addition to any pay in lieu of notice. *(delete para if not applicable)*

Payment for any outstanding monies will be made to you as soon as possible and you are required to return the following items issued to you by the Council (list any such items, e.g. ID badge, keys, protective clothing, etc.).

Your right of appeal

You have the right to appeal against this decision if you consider that the outcome of the Assessment Meeting was in some way unfair or incorrect or where new and relevant matters have emerged that may affect the decision or where there have been significant defects in the procedure that have disadvantaged you.

Should you consider you have grounds to appeal against the decision you can choose to have your appeal heard by either a senior manager or by the Appeals Sub Committee.

If you wish to have your appeal heard by a senior manager, then you must register your appeal in writing to [Name of Executive Director], Executive Director - (*Function and address/email*) within **10 working days** of receipt of this letter. If you choose to have your appeal heard by the Appeals Sub Committee then you must register your appeal in writing to the Clerk to the Appeals Sub Committee, Aberdeen City Council, Governance, 1st Floor, Old Town House, Broad Street, Aberdeen, AB10 1AQ, or email appealscommittee@aberdeencity.gov.uk within **10 working days** of receipt of this letter.

In both cases, your notice of appeal must state the grounds on which your appeal will be based so must set out in sufficient detail:

- Why you consider the decision to terminate your employment to be unfair or incorrect
- Any new and relevant matters that have come to light that were previously not known
- Why you consider that the policy/procedure was not used correctly and how you were unfairly disadvantaged because of this

You have a right to be accompanied at any such appeal hearing.

Yours sincerely,

NAME OF MANAGER CONDUCTING MEETING
JOB TITLE

Cc HR Service Centre – For employee Personal File
People Services Advisor

Appendix 14 - Notice Of Appeal Hearing

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Name],

Notice of Appeal – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

You have appealed against the decision to terminate your employment on grounds of [lack of capability due to ill health OR misconduct relating to your failure to fulfil your contractual responsibilities as a result of the extent of your sickness absence (*delete one*)]. I have been nominated to hear the appeal.

Date and time of appeal

The appeal hearing has been arranged for [TIME] on [DATE] in [LOCATION].

Format of the appeal

I intend to conduct the appeal using the following procedure:

1. Firstly, I will explain the purpose and format of the hearing and deal with any procedural issues that may arise.
2. I will then ask you to state your grounds and reasons for the appeal, highlighting whether any new matters or evidence have come to light that are relevant to the case.
3. I will then ask the officer who took the decision to terminate your employment to respond.
4. I will question both the manager who took the decision and yourself. My assisting colleague(s) may do so also as a means of clarifying matters.
5. I will give both parties the opportunity to make a closing statement, firstly the officer who took the decision, then yourself.
6. I will allow adjournments during the course of the hearing where they are necessary.
7. At the end of the hearing, I will adjourn the meeting.
8. During this adjournment, I will consider all of the relevant issues that have emerged from the hearing and make my decision.
9. I will then reconvene the meeting and confirm my decision, along with the reasons for arriving at that decision. I will thereafter confirm my decision in writing.

Potential outcome of the hearing

I will carefully consider your grounds for appeal, and the response made by the manager who took the decision to terminate your employment, and then decide whether there are sufficient and reasonable grounds to either:

- Uphold the appeal in full, in which case you would be reinstated to your post
- Reject the appeal, in which case the decision to terminate your employment would stand

Your right to be accompanied

You have the right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague if you so wish. Please note however that the procedure does not allow you to be accompanied by your partner, a spouse or a legal practitioner.

I will be accompanied by *(name of People Services Adviser)*.

The decision of this appeal hearing is final and there is no further right of appeal.

Confirming your attendance

Please telephone me as soon as possible to confirm that the above date and time for the hearing is suitable and whether you will be accompanied and, if so, by whom.

Yours sincerely

[NAME OF MANAGER CONDUCTING MEETING]

[JOB TITLE]

Cc HR Service Centre – For employee Personal File
 People Services Advisor

Appendix 15 - Outcome Of Appeal

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Name],

Confirmation of Outcome of Appeal – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

On [insert date of letter], you appealed against the decision of the [Capability OR Conduct (delete one)] Assessment Meeting that your employment be terminated on grounds of [lack of capability due to ill health OR misconduct relating to your failure to fulfil your contractual responsibilities as a result of the extent of your sickness absence (delete one)].

I heard the appeal on [insert date] in the presence of [insert names, including companions if applicable]. This letter confirms my decision.

Outcome of Appeal

Having given full consideration to the issues that emerged during the course of the appeal hearing, I am writing to confirm my decision, namely that the decision to terminate your employment *stands* / is revoked** (specify if no action is to be taken or what the alternative action is if that is to apply) .

Reasons for my decision

My reasons for arriving at this decision are, and the factors that I considered relevant were:

- (To insert reasons and relevant factors)

Optional paragraphs (where employee is reinstated).

Attendance improved

I am satisfied that your level of attendance has sufficiently improved. You will therefore move out the procedure and monitoring will end.

As I have made you aware, it is important that you make every effort to sustain this improved level of attendance. If, at any point during the next 12 months, your attendance returns to an unsatisfactory level, you may return to the formal Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy, to the same level where you left. In that event, you may be invited to attend a [Capability OR Conduct] assessment meeting at Level 3 of the Policy.

I will ask your line manager to contact you directly to make arrangements for your return to work.

OR

Review Period Extended

I have decided to extend the Level 3 review period for a further **[number]** months to **[insert reason e.g. give you a further opportunity to demonstrate the required improvement/seek additional medical information]**. This is due to **[insert reason]**.

You will therefore be invited to re-attend a [Capability **OR** Conduct] Assessment Meeting at Level 3 of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy to discuss your attendance levels. The chair of the meeting will contact you in due course.

I will ask your line manager to contact you directly to make arrangements for your return to work.

You have now exercised your right of appeal under the procedure and the decision is final.

Yours sincerely,

[NAME OF OFFICER CONDUCTING MEETING]
[JOB TITLE]

Cc HR Service Centre – For employee Personal File
People Services Advisor

Appendix 16 - Brought Forward Outcome Of Attendance Review Meeting

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Name],

Outcome of Attendance Review Meeting – Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

I am writing to you regarding your recent sickness absence(s).

At the Level [insert Level] Attendance Review Meeting held on [DATE] the review period set for an improvement to occur in your attendance was due to end on [DATE].

Due to the further occasion(s) of sickness absence which have occurred during this review period, the next Attendance Review meeting has been brought forward and I would now like to meet with you on [DATE] at [TIME] in [LOCATION]. You may, if you wish, be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or work colleague at this meeting.

At the meeting we will discuss your attendance level during the Level [insert Level] review period. At the end of the meeting, I will take a decision as to the outcome of Level [insert Level], in accordance with the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing Policy.

Please confirm you can attend this meeting and let me know if you wish to be accompanied and if so, by whom. If for any reason you are unable to attend the meeting, I should be grateful if you would contact me as soon as possible in order to arrange an alternative time.

Yours sincerely,

NAME OF MANAGER

JOB TITLE

Cc HR Service Centre – for employee's personal file

Appendix 17 - Failure To Sustain Improvement – Employee Returned To Procedure Level

NOTE: Copy and paste to letterhead and include the appropriate details within the brackets

Dear [Name],

Return to Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy

I am writing to you regarding your recent sickness absence(s).

We have previously discussed your attendance resulting in our meeting on **[insert date of previous meeting]**. The outcome of this meeting was that as your attendance had improved, regular review meetings were no longer required. As you were advised at that time, if there were concerns regarding your of sickness absence during the 12-month period following the end of attendance monitoring (the 12 months being from the end of the last review period); you could be returned to the procedure at the Level which you left.

Over the past **[number]** weeks, you have been absent from work on **[number]** occasions for a total of **[number]** days. As you have been unable to sustain improvement in your attendance, I am writing to inform that you will return to the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing procedure at the end of Level **[insert 1, 2 or 3]**.

Please choose the relevant paragraphs depending on Level

Level 1 and 2

You are therefore required to attend a meeting with me to discuss your sickness absence record and identify measures that could be taken to help improve your attendance at work. At the meeting you will be given opportunity to provide a full response as to why the improvement in your attendance has not been sustained and to put forward any other relevant information.

There are two possible outcomes to the meeting, as follows:-

1. A decision may be made to set a further review period at Level **[1 OR 2 (delete as appropriate)]** where further information or monitoring is considered necessary.
2. Where it is evident that you have not sustained an improvement in your attendance you may progress to Level **[2 OR 3(delete as appropriate)]** of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing procedure.

The meeting has been arranged for **[TIME]** on **[DATE]** in **[LOCATION]**. You may be accompanied by a trade union representative or work colleague. Please confirm you can attend this meeting and let me know if you wish to be accompanied and if so, by whom. If for any reason you are unable to attend the meeting, I should be grateful if you would contact me as soon as possible in order to arrange an alternative time.

Level 3

You will be requested to attend a **[Capability or Conduct (delete one*)]** Assessment Meeting. You should be aware that termination of employment could be a possible outcome of that meeting, although other reasonable options will also be considered.

The meeting will be chaired by a senior manager who will write to you separately to inform you of the date, time and location of the meeting.

I enclose a copy of the Supporting Attendance and Wellbeing policy for your information. If you have any questions on this letter, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

[NAME]

[JOB TITLE]

Cc HR Service Centre – for employee's personal file