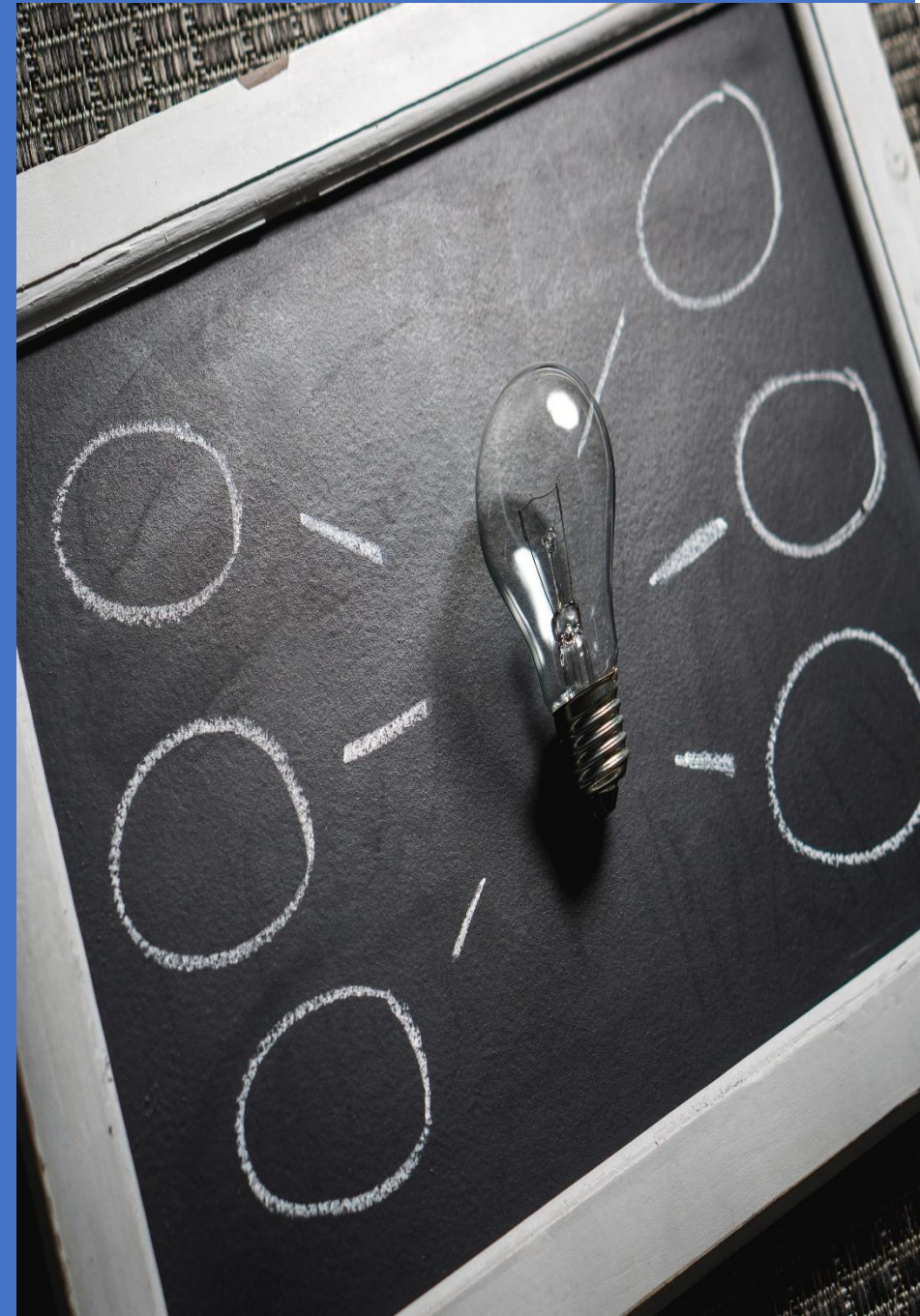# Scrutiny Report
Appendix 3
Absence 2022/2023

Absence in Denbighshire County Council

The last 10 years of published WLGA Benchmarking Absence Data for average days lost by employee for sickness absence, Denbighshire County Council (DCC) is consistently below the average sickness absence rate for Welsh Authorities by an average of 1.79 days per year.

DCC had the lowest absence rate for Welsh authorities in 2019/2020 and were on a downwards trend for absence. In 2020-2021 our sickness rate experienced a considerably decrease which was in line with other Welsh authorities due to social distancing measures. During 2021-2022 sickness levels increased within DCC following the low levels experienced during the pandemic. However, this rise was reflected in all Welsh Authorities' recorded absence, with Denbighshire remaining in the lowest four for recorded absences and again below the Welsh average.

Absence – Denbighshire County Council Total						
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Denbighshire	8.4	8.3	8.1	6.5	9.8	9.56
Wales	10.4	10.5	11.2	8.5	11.8	No Data Available

Absence - Short, Medium, Long Term

Short term absence was on a downward trend Pre-pandemic. In 2019 – 2020, 24% of sickness absence was due to short term absences and this reduced further to 16% in 2020 – 2021. However, following on from the pandemic there has been a rise in short term sickness rates recorded, culminating in the highest levels of short term sickness for 6 years (31%).

Absence – Long Term, Medium Term, Short Term						
	2017-2018	2018-2019	2019-2020	2020-2021	2021-2022	2022-2023
Long Term	50%	50%	59%	62%	55%	48%
Medium Term	23%	24%	17%	22%	22%	20%
Short Term	27%	26%	24%	16%	23%	31%

Long term absence during the Pandemic period of 2020-2021, increased from 59% to 62% of all absences in that period, however the actual days lost during that same period had reduced from 17,634 to 14,515. However, as short term absence rates have increased long term absences have decreased to DCC's lowest recorded level over a 6 year period.

Total days lost have increased by 5450 compared to an increase of 12,307 the previous year

Short term absences are classed as 1 – 7 days, medium term absences are 8 – 27 days and long term absences are 28 days or more.

Scrutiny Report for Absence 2022/2023

Absence – 2019 to 2020

	Days Lost	Percentage
Long Term	17,634	59%
Medium Term	4,903	17%
Short Term	7,166	24%
Total	29,704	100%

Absence – 2020 to 2021

	Days Lost	Percentage
Long Term	14,515	62%
Medium Term	5,013	22%
Short Term	3,709	16%
Total	23,238	100%

Absence – 2021 to 2022

	Days Lost	Percentage
Long Term	19,452	55%
Medium Term	7,344	21%
Short Term	8,749	24%
Total	35,545	100%

Absence – 2022 to 2023

	Days Lost	Percentage
Long Term	17,869	48%
Medium Term	7,428.36	20%
Short Term	11,555.14	31%
Total	36852.31	100%

Absence – Sickness reasons

The following tables show the percentage of absence which is attributed to each reason.

The top 5 reasons for absence have remained consistent over the previous 3 years, however, there has been a notable reduction in the number of absences recorded as Stress – Personal which no longer features as a top 3 reason. Instead, Stomach/Liver/Kidney Digestion as a reason for absence now features, recording 8.78%.

2020-2021	
Reason	% of absence
Depression/Anxiety	17.5%
Other Musculo Skeletal	11.6%
Stress - Personal	11.4%
Surgery	7.4%
Covid-19	5.9%
Stomach / Liver / Kidney	5.8%
Cancer	5.2%
Colds / Flu / Infections	4.7%

2021-2022	
Reason	% of absence
Depression/Anxiety	13.8%
Covid-19	11.4%
Stress - Personal	10.2%
Other Musculo Skeletal	8.8%
Colds / Flu / Infections	7.3%
Stomach / Liver / Kidney	6.3%
Not Known / Other	6.0%

2022-2023	
Reason	% of absence
Depression/Anxiety	13.26%
Infections - to include Colds Flu	10.77%
Covid-19	10.48%
Stomach Liver Kidney Digestion	8.78%
Other Musculo Skeletal	8.68%
Surgery	6.36%
Stress - Personal	5.87%

Stress - Bereavement	4.5%	Cancer	5.8%	Not Known/Other	5.12%
Back / Neck	4.5%	Surgery	4.9%	Stress - Work Related	4.80%
Stress - Work Related	4.1%	Stress - Work Related	4.3%	Chest Respiratory - to Include Chest Infections	4.76%
Not Known / Other	4.0%	Chest / Respiratory	4.3%	Neurological - to include Headaches Migraine	4.31%
Ear / Eye / Sinus / Dental	3.2%	Back / Neck	3.7%	Heart Blood Pressure Circulation	3.28%
Neurological / Headaches / Migraine	3.0%	Stress - Bereavement	2.8%	Cancer	3.21%
Heart / Blood Pressure / Circulation	2.8%	Neurological / Headaches / Migraine	2.8%	Back Neck Problems	3.01%
Chest / Respiratory	2.4%	Ear / Eye / Sinus / Dental	2.7%	Stress - Bereavement	2.61%
Diabetes / Thyroid / Endocrine	1.0%	Heart / Blood Pressure / Circulation	1.8%	Ear Eye Nose Mouth Dental - to include Sinusitis	2.10%
Genito-Urinary / Menstrual Problems	0.9%	Genito-Urinary / Menstrual Problems	1.7%	Pregnancy Related	1.34%
Skin Related Disorders	0.3%	Skin Related Disorders	0.6%	Genito-Urinary - to include Menstrual Problems	0.74%
		Diabetes / Thyroid / Endocrine	0.5%	Disability Related	0.20%

Scrutiny Report for Absence 2022/2023

Absence – Services

Please note due to the restructure of Services in October 2019 we do not have more than 4 full years' comparison for some services.

6 of the 8 Services have experienced an increase in absence rates compared to the previous year and it is expected that this will remain at an increased level due to the ongoing backlog of treatments and surgeries for staff, following the pandemic.

Service	2017/2018	2018/2019	New Service	2019/2020	2020/2021	2021/2022	2022/2023
Business Improvement and Modernisation	8.8	4.34	No Change	6.75	4.47	5.26	7.15
Community Support Services	15.07	13.78	No Change	12.21	10.87	15.50	10.85
Customers, Communications & Marketing	5.13	8.21	Communities & Customers	8.29	8.45	7.44	8.53
Education & Children Services	10.76	10.06	No Change	7.66	9.47	14.06	14.29
Finance	6.14	2.5	Finance & Property	5.79	6.08	7.71	6.98
Highways & Environmental Services	7.39	9.11	Highways, Facilities & Environmental Services	9.97	7.43	10.26	12.6
Legal, HR & Democratic Services	5.45	2.79	No Change	4.34	6.79	5.45	10.84

Planning & Public Protection	7.79	8.59	Planning, Public Protection and Countryside Services	4.37	3.55	7.76	8.16