

ANGUS COUNCIL

SCRUTINY AND AUDIT COMMITTEE – 10 MARCH 2015

SICKNESS ABSENCE OCTOBER– DECEMBER 2014

REPORT BY SHARON FAULKNER, HEAD OF HR, IT & ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ABSTRACT

This report advises of the level of sickness absence within the council for the period 1 October–31 December 2014.

1. RECOMMENDATION(S)

The committee considers the terms of this report.

2. ALIGNMENT TO THE COUNCIL PLAN

This report contributes to the achievement of the following priority contained within the Council Plan:

Transformational Change

- review our workforce to ensure it is led and managed effectively, is the right size and shape, is motivated and has the skills, knowledge and tools needed.

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 As part of the council's performance management arrangements information on sickness absence levels for directorates and for the council as a whole are reported to this committee on a quarterly basis. This report gives details for the third quarter of 2014/15, 1 October–31 December 2014.

3.2 The figures given below are on a 'whole' council basis. However Appendix 1 gives a breakdown of figures by directorate. This is the first time it has been possible to give a 'by directorate' breakdown on the basis of the council structure adopted on 1 April 2013. This contains the first year on year, like for like, comparisons by directorate.

4. CURRENT POSITION

4.1 The figures in brackets relate to the same period last financial year.

Percentage of days lost against available working days

	2014/15	2013/14
Local Government Employees	5.71	(5.89%)
Teachers	3.42	(3.25%)
Total	5.19	(5.31%)

A breakdown of these figures to each directorate is shown at [Appendix 1](#).

Number of working days lost

	2014/15	2013/14
Local Government Employees	10186	(11062.5)
Teachers	1775	(1730)
Total	11961	(12792.5)

Average days lost per employee

	2014/15	2013/14
Local Government Employees	2.65	(2.63)
Teachers	1.48	(1.41)
Total	2.37	(2.36)

4.2 Comment

For all council employees there was a 2.26% decrease in the percentage of working days lost, when compared with the corresponding quarter in 2013/14.

However, overall the percentage of working days lost has increased this quarter compared to the previous quarter by 10.7%, a continuation of the increase from the last quarter which ended a 15 month period of reducing sickness absence levels.

This increase is a result of an increase in teachers' absence by 4.9%. Local government employees' absence reduced by 3%.

This is despite steps being taken to actively manage this situation to return to favourable levels recorded throughout the whole of 2013/14 and the first quarter of 2014/15.

The current format for reporting sickness absence will continue until the end of 31 March 2015. A new format is currently under development and is likely to start reporting from 1 April 2015. The new format will show enhanced trend information.

4.3 Breakdown of absence figures

Absences of one day accounted for 5% of total days lost, absences of two to five days, 20%, absences of six to 20 days, 23% and absences of more than 20 days, 52%.

A directorate comparison of the respective periods of absence is shown in [Appendix 2](#).

Of the incidences of absence, 33% were one day absences, 45% two to five days, 13% six to 20 days and 9% more than 20 days.

4.4 Cost of Sickness Absence

In the third quarter, October-December 2014, the direct cost of employees' sickness absence – ie the cost of sick pay, was £951,681.

This figure comprises payments of statutory sick pay (SSP) at £156,970 and occupational sick pay (OSP) at £794,712.

The cost of direct sick pay was 3.19% of total salary costs.

4.5 Reasons for Sickness Absence

In the third quarter October-December 2014, the top five reasons for sickness absence were stress related, stomach issues, back problems, lower limb problems, and respiratory/circulatory/heart issues. Fuller information on reasons for absence is given at [Appendix 3](#). Reasons for absence are currently under review as detailed in the annual report for sickness absence in 2014/15.

4.6 *Ill Health Retirals*

During the period two employees were retired on the grounds of ill health.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

5.1 There are no direct financial implications associated with the terms of this report.

6. CONSULTATION

6.1 The Chief Executive, Strategic Director – Resources, Head of Corporate Improvement and Finance and Head of Legal and Democratic Services have been consulted on the terms of this report.

NOTE: No background papers, as detailed by Section 50D of the Local Government (Scotland) Act 1973 (other than any containing confidential or exempt information) were relied on to a material extent in preparing the above report.

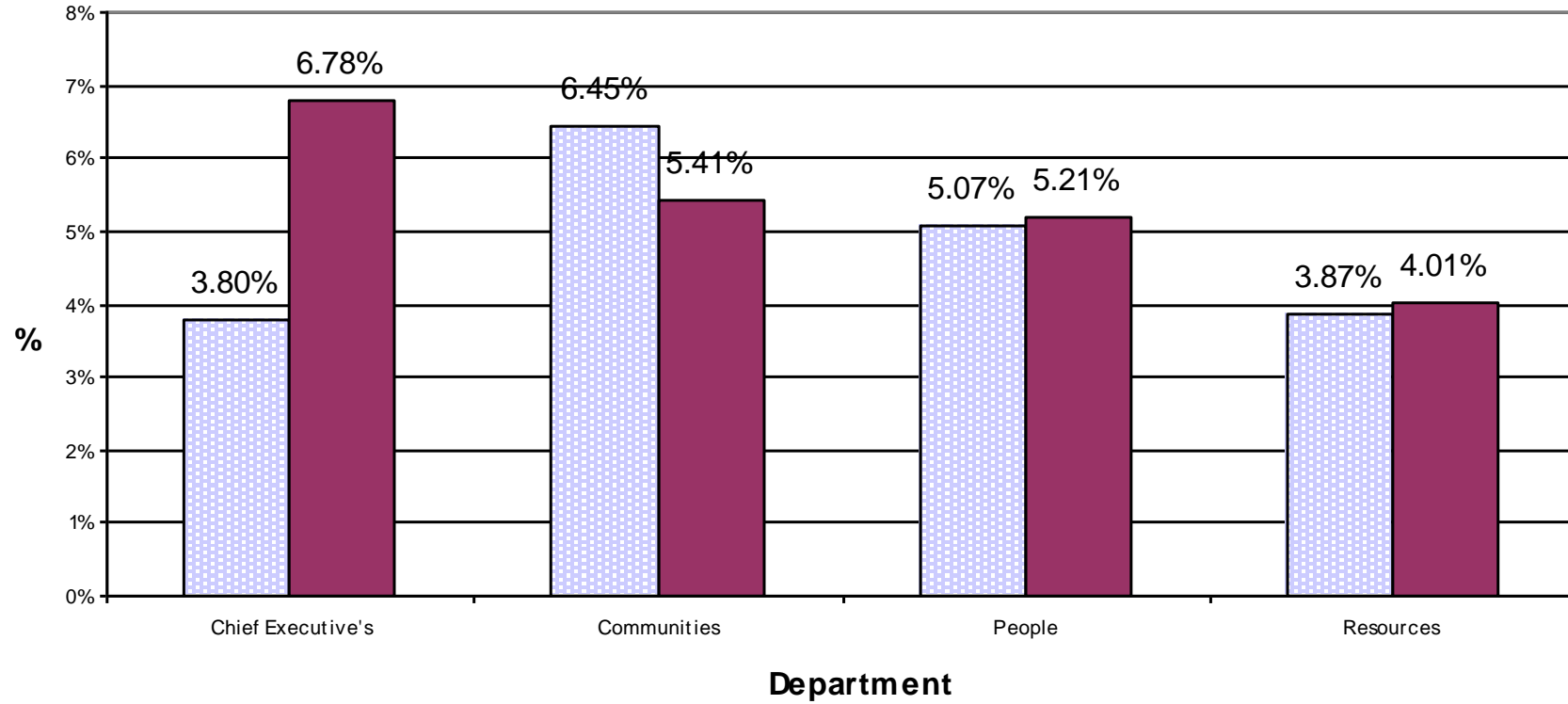
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List of Appendices:

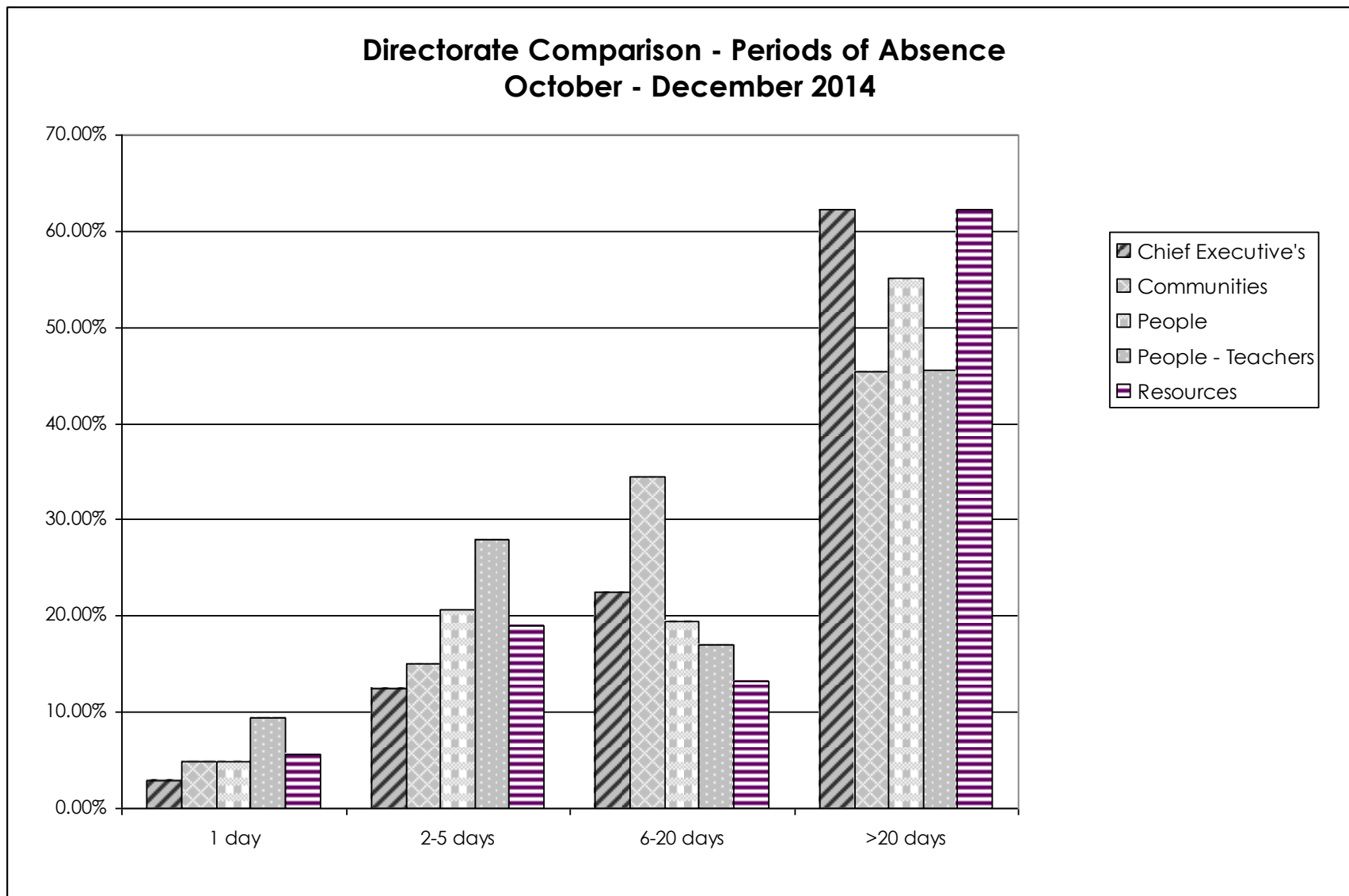
Appendix 1: Directorate Absence: Percentage of Days Lost per Available Working Days
Appendix 2: Directorate Comparison: Periods of Absence – October-December 2014
Appendix 3: Reasons for Sickness Absence

ANGUS COUNCIL
DIRECTORATE ABSENCE
PERCENTAGE OF DAYS LOST PER AVAILABLE WORKING DAYS

□ Oct-Dec 2013/14
■ Oct-Dec 2014/15



Appendix 1



REASONS FOR SICKNESS ABSENCE

October-December 2014

Reason	%
Stress Related	23.48
Stomach	12.49
Back	8.41
Lower Limb	6.92
Respiratory/Circulatory/Heart	6.61
Colds/Flu	5.91
Ear/Nose/Throat	3.67
Upper Limb	2.86
Headache	2.30
Upper Body	1.65
Eye/Face	0.81
Other Medical Reasons	24.78