

TASK & FINISH GROUP
OF THE
MERSEYSIDE FIRE AND RESCUE AUTHORITY
15TH JANUARY 2013
“REVIEW OF SICKNESS ABSENCE”
MINUTES

PRESENT: Councillors: Steve Niblock (Chair of Group) and Roy Gladden

ALSO PRESENT: Janet Henshaw – Clerk To The Authority and Director of Legal, Procurement & Democratic Services
Nick Mernock – Director Of People & Organisational Development
Paul Blanchard-Flett – Occupational Health Manager
Kelly Johnson – Minute Taker

Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Tony Newman

1. Reason For Task & Finish Group

The Group were reminded of the reason behind the establishment of this Task & Finish Group, which was requested by the Performance & Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 6th December 2012.

The Committee requested that:

“A Task & Finish Group be established to review the Authority’s policies and procedures in relation to sickness absence and the outcomes be reported back to a future meeting of this Committee”

2. Terms of Reference

The Group considered and approved the proposed Terms of Reference for this Task & Finish Group, with the following minor amendment:

- 5 – Short Term Sickness: Grey Book staff to be changed to Support staff

3. Consideration of Presentation

The Group considered the presentation provided by Nick Mernock – Director of People & Organisational Development.

The presentation provided Members with a historical overview of sickness absence within Merseyside Fire & Rescue Authority and highlighted:

- what the problem was initially in terms of sickness absence.
- what MFRA's initial response was to the problem.
- what further initiatives were introduced in an effort to reduce sickness absence.
- The support and services available for employees through Occupational Health.
- How sickness absence figures reached a plateau and indeed, started to rise again.

The presentation also highlighted some possible options for the Group to consider, in terms of managing sickness absence levels, moving forward.

Members were provided with a hard copy of the presentation for reference and following consideration of the presentation, requested that they be provided with the following further documentation to consider as part of this review:

- Comparative sickness statistics with other Fire & Rescue Authorities
- Current Policy and Procedure on sickness absence
- Current Mental Health Policy/ Procedure
- Current Disciplinary Procedure
- Draft Capability Procedure
- Current "Other Duties" Procedure
- Current Case Audit Processes
- Current Ill Health Retirement Policy/ Procedure
- Current Medical Discharge Policy/ Procedure

The Group Resolved that:

- (a) Members of the Group be provided electronically with a copy of the documents listed above.
- (b) A further meeting of the Group be arranged, allowing sufficient time for Members to consider the documentation provided.

(c) Members be provided with contact details for relevant officers to enable them to make contact, should they have any specific questions in relation to the information provided.

4. Determination Of Work Plan/ Actions

The Group decided that a plan of work be agreed at the next meeting of the Group, once Members have had the opportunity to consider and digest the additional information provided to them.

Close

Date of the Next Meeting: T.B.A.