



Health And Work Policy

Go straight to the section:

• Introduction	Page 2
• Policy statement	Page 2
• Responsibilities and expectations	Page 3
• Supporting employees at work and early intervention	Page 3
• Sickness absence and notification	Page 4
• Return to work discussions	Page 4
• Maintaining contact with absent employees	Page 4
• Training for those managing absence cases	Page 5
• Dealing with short term sickness absence	Page 5
• Dealing with long term sickness absence	Page 6
• Absence review meetings	Page 7
• Role of Occupational Health Service and the provision of an EAP (Employee Assistance Programme)	Page 8
• Consideration given to disability issues	Page 9
• Transform (Redeployment)	Page 9
• Ill-health retirement	Page 9
• Capability hearing	Page 10
• Right of appeal	Page 10
• Related documents	Page 11
• Appendix 1 – Managing short-term absence summary	Page 12
• Appendix 2 – Managing long-term absence summary	Page 13

1.0 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The Council recognises that the attendance at work of all employees is essential in the interests of the effective and efficient operation of the Council's services. This policy sets out a pro-active approach to attendance, which recognises the shared responsibility of all Council employees to optimise attendance at work.
- 1.2 This policy applies to all employees of The Moray Council.

2.0 POLICY STATEMENT

- 2.1 The Moray Council values all of its employees and recognises the importance of maintaining the health and wellbeing of employees. We will provide systems of management, which actively promote and encourage mental and physical wellbeing at work.
- 2.2 The Council will assist employees to remain at work wherever possible, by offering appropriate support. Evidence has shown that it is in the best interests of an absent employee to return to work as early as health permits.
- 2.3 The Council recognises that a healthy workforce and a healthy working environment are essential to achieving low levels of absence and providing high quality services. It is therefore committed to developing occupational health and related services, and to promoting health at work, as measures to improve attendance levels at work.
- 2.4 All employees will be treated in a fair and consistent manner and are encouraged to seek help, at an early stage, with any problems which may result in them not being able to attend work. There is a responsibility upon employees to attend work and it is recognised that absence has a negative impact on service provision and work colleagues.
- 2.5 Levels of absence will be monitored regularly and appropriate management action will be taken within the terms of this policy.
- 2.6 Ill health retiral or termination of employment as a consequence of sickness absence will only be considered once an employee has been provided with all reasonable support and assistance and has been advised that continued absence may result in termination of employment.
- 2.7 The Council will ensure that adequate training and guidance is provided to all levels of management to develop the skills and competencies in respect of their responsibilities and the duty of care to promote fair and consistent practices in relation to absence.
- 2.8 The Council undertakes to ensure that all employees are made aware of their responsibilities under the Health and Work Policy.

3.0 RESPONSIBILITIES AND EXPECTATIONS

3.1 The Council expects the following:

Employees

- To care for their health and to seek medical help whenever appropriate
- To maintain attendance at work in accordance with the terms of this policy
- To keep their Line Manager fully informed of the position if they are unable to attend work
- To be aware of their responsibilities in terms of reporting sickness absence

3.2 **Managers** - Designated managers have direct responsibility for managing health and wellbeing, in accordance with this policy. It is essential, therefore, that they are fully familiar with the Council's procedures for reporting, monitoring and managing sickness absence and for ensuring that their employees are aware of their responsibilities. Whilst the procedure advocates early intervention, there is also a focus on management decisions continuing to be made on a case by case basis taking account of prognosis, individual circumstances and service needs.

3.3 **Senior managers** must ensure that the terms of this policy are fully implemented within their areas of responsibility.

3.4 **Human Resources** will provide advice and support to those involved in the operation of this policy, and lead on the development of best practice and policy revision.

3.5 The **Trade Unions** will be fully consulted on revisions to the terms of this policy and will seek to represent members subject to these procedures. Employees will have the right of representation at all formal stages of these procedures.

3.6 If you require further clarification on the application of this policy, please contact your Line Manager, Human Resources or a Trade Union for further advice.

4.0 SUPPORTING EMPLOYEES WHILST AT WORK AND EARLY INTERVENTION

4.1 A pro-active approach to attendance at work will be taken, advocating the use of early intervention in order to prevent an employee from going off sick. If it is apparent that an employee is having difficulties at work, due to a health or domestic issue, the manager should assist wherever possible to try and support that employee at work for as long as possible. For example, if the employee has raised concerns of a domestic nature then a manager should advise the employee of the counselling service, or perhaps reduce the employee's hours on a temporary basis (during a short period of reduced hours, full pay will be maintained). In the event that relationships at work are considered to be contributing to the employees' difficulties, then it may also be appropriate to consider mediation. The [Positive Steps to Tackle Workplace Problems guide](#) can provide you with more information on the options available.

4.2 Every option to assist the employee in remaining at work must be carefully considered and discussed with the employee. If the employee is unable to perform all of his/her duties then consideration will also be given to assistance with workload to ease the situation on a temporary basis.

- 4.3 There are provisions under the [Special Leave policy](#) and [flexible working](#) arrangements to enable employees to attend preventative medical examinations, without loss of pay. In addition, employees may be permitted to attend emergency dentist and doctor appointments if these fall within their normal working hours, with the prior agreement of their designated manager.
- 4.4 The Council will actively promote [health initiatives](#) including healthy eating and physical activity at work. Employees will be encouraged and supported to attend any events that are held relating to these topics. Information on these topics are available on the Council intranet and include menus and recipes for healthy eating, advice on how to take regular exercise, and information on events relating to the well-being of employees.

5.0 SICKNESS ABSENCE NOTIFICATION AND CERTIFICATION

- 5.1 There are clear responsibilities upon employees absent from work on account of sickness. The requirements for [sickness absence notification and certification](#) are set out in a separate guidance document.
- 5.2 Employees are reminded of the importance of adhering to these requirements, in order that the Council can effectively maintain service provision. Failure to do so may result in the non-payment of Occupational sick pay and management consideration of appropriate action.
- 5.3 Employees should note that their [annual leave entitlement](#) will normally be reduced as a result of absence extending beyond three months, subject to minimum leave requirements set out in employment legislation and national conditions of service.

6.0 RETURN TO WORK DISCUSSIONS

- 6.1 On the first day back at work (or as soon as reasonably practicable) after any period of sickness absence of an employee, the employee's manager will arrange to meet informally with him/her. The discussion could be recorded on the [return-to-work discussion template](#) or in another format, the crux is that this contact takes place as it forms an essential part of sickness absence management and is crucial in supporting the employee and maximising attendance at work.
- 6.2 The discussion should take place face to face, however if service delivery does not allow then alternative methods are sufficient, for example by telephone. They should be conducted sympathetically and discreetly to form a constructive dialogue, demonstrating to the employee an acknowledgement of their return to work as well as an interest in their health and wellbeing. The designated manager may also wish to use this discussion as an opportunity to update the employee on any developments in the workplace. The discussion may also provide an opportunity to identify whether there are any issues that need to be addressed or support that can be provided in order to assist the employee in maximising attendance at work.
- 6.3 A note of such discussions should be kept by managers for future reference.

7.0 MAINTAINING CONTACT WITH ABSENT EMPLOYEES

- 7.1 As part of good management practice, the designated manager will maintain regular contact with absent employees. The initial contact should be made early in the absence period in order to demonstrate the manager's concern for the employee's health and well-being. In addition, this presents the opportunity to discuss the likely duration of the

absence and any support measures that can be put in place to assist a return to work. For longer term absences, it is useful to discuss the arrangements for keeping in touch.

- 7.2 All contact with absent employees should be handled sensitively and with consideration of the individual circumstances. Employees should also be given a minimum of five working days' notice of requests to attend meetings. By agreement, a home visit may also be relevant.
- 7.3 It may be appropriate, in exceptional circumstances, to agree an alternative nominated contact e.g. family member or close friend. Similarly, an alternative management contact may also, in exceptional circumstances, be appropriate.
- 7.4 Records of discussions should be kept by the manager for future reference.

8.0 TRAINING FOR THOSE MANAGING ABSENCE CASES

- 8.1 The Council is committed to providing appropriate training for all those involved in the management of sickness absence. It is essential that the management of absence is handled sensitively and in accordance with the terms of this policy. Advice and support in terms of this policy will be provided by [Human Resources](#).

9.0 DEALING WITH SHORT TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE

- 9.1 It is incumbent upon managers to monitor and actively manage the attendance of all employees within their areas of responsibility.
- 9.2 The procedures set out in this section of the policy will be initiated after an employee has either been absent on **four separate occasions** or for **ten cumulative days** in a twelve month rolling period.
- 9.3 It is hoped that [return to work discussions](#) will already have identified any issues contributing to employee sickness absence. However, where an employee reaches the fourth period of sickness absence or ten cumulative days within twelve months a formal absence review meeting will be convened.
- 9.4 The purpose of this meeting (FARM 1) is to discuss the reason(s) for the absences in more detail through a supportive manner, whilst also making the employee aware that their level of sickness absence is causing concern and is having an impact on service delivery.

At the meeting, the reason(s) for sickness absence will be discussed in more detail to identify whether any support can be provided and/or measures that the employee can take to improve attendance at work. Consideration should also be given to any medical information available and whether a [referral to Occupational Health \(OH\)](#) or access to the [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) may be appropriate. In addition, consideration should also be given as to whether an adjustment to working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work could assist in improving attendance.

- 9.5 Should further absence(s) result in an employee reaching four separate periods of absence or ten cumulative days in any twelve month rolling period a referral to OH will be initiated if not already done. OH are a supportive mechanism whom provide advice and guidance on specific circumstances.
- 9.6 Upon receipt of the medical report a second absence review meeting (FARM 2) will be held with the employee in order to discuss the content therein. A Human Resources Adviser may also attend this meeting. In the event that an underlying medical condition

**Formal
absenc
review
meeting
1**

**Formal
absenc
review**

is identified, it is important that discussions take place in order to agree an acceptable level of attendance at work with due cognisance to the condition in question and the impact on service delivery. For those with confirmed underlying medical conditions, the Council may be prepared to accept a higher level of sickness absence. Due consideration should be given to requirements under [disability](#) legislation. However, the employee in such cases must ensure that they take all possible steps in terms of lifestyle and medical intervention to maximise their attendance at work. It may also be relevant to consider [redeployment](#) if recommended by OH. A summary of these discussions and any agreed action points will be confirmed in writing by the manager following the meeting. A review period will be set in order that progress can be monitored. The further involvement of OH will be determined by the level of attendance at work that is achieved thereafter.

- 9.7 Where the OH report indicates there is no underlying medical condition, then the purpose of the meeting will be to advise the employee that their level of attendance remains unacceptable and consider what measures can be put in place to improve the situation. Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustment to the working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work or duties that could assist in an improvement in attendance.
- 9.8 The employee should be advised that, in the event that further absence/absences result in an employee reaching four separate periods of absence or ten cumulative days in a rolling twelve month period then it will be necessary to consider their continued employment. The employee will be provided with clear guidance in relation to the level of attendance that is expected.
- 9.9 Should further absence/s result in an employee continuing to reach four separate periods of absence or ten cumulative days in a twelve month rolling period, a third absence review meeting (FARM 3) will be held. The purpose of this meeting is to review progress towards acceptable levels of attendance. Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustment to the working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work or duties that could assist in an improvement in attendance. In addition, redeployment, if appropriate, should be fully explored at this point.
- 9.10 Again, the employee should be advised that, in the event that further absence/absences result in an employee reaching five separate absences in a twelve month period, it is likely that their employment will be terminated. The employee will be provided with clear guidance in relation to what level of attendance is expected.
- 9.11 In the event that further absence/absences result in an employee reaching four separate periods of absence or ten cumulative days in a twelve month period a [capability hearing](#) will be convened.
- 9.12 There may be occasions where initial short term sickness turns into long term sickness absence. Whilst the triggers differ, the overall principles of the policy remain the same regardless of whether they are managed under the short or long term process.
- 10.0 DEALING WITH LONG TERM SICKNESS ABSENCE**
- 10.1 Long term absence is regarded as any absence from work due to ill health that lasts four weeks or longer. During this period it is important the manager makes contact with the absent employee. Where an employee is absent for a period of **four weeks** and the fit note does not indicate an imminent return to work the absence should be managed in accordance with the guidance set out in this section of the policy.

- 10.2 It is particularly important to [keep in touch](#) with employees on long term sickness absence and the manager should keep a record of the contact, and any unsuccessful contact that has been made.
- 10.3 An initial absence review meeting (FARM 1) should be held towards the end of the four week period. The purpose of this meeting is to determine a plan for the management of the case including consideration of any medical information; the appropriateness of a [referral to OH](#); and any adjustments to working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work that could assist in an early return. Arrangements for keeping in contact during the absence should be agreed at this meeting.
- 10.4 A summary of the discussions and any agreed action points will be confirmed in writing by the manager following any absence review meeting.
- 10.5 A second absence review meeting (FARM 2) should be held within **three months** of the commencement of the absence. The purpose of this meeting is to consider progress towards a return to work and the content of the OH report and any recommendations therein, if appropriate. Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustments to working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work that could assist in an early return to work, ensuring that appropriate consideration is given to requirements under disability legislation. It may also be relevant to consider [redeployment](#) at this stage if recommended. The employee should be advised that, in the event that the absence is prolonged, and all other options have been fully explored, the Council would be looking to conclude the management of the case upon expiry of sick pay.
- 10.6 The manager will continue to maintain and document regular contact with the absent employee in the period following the meeting. This may include scheduling a further meeting to review progress or any new medical or other relevant information.
- 10.7 In the event that the employee has not returned to work within a **nine month period**, or sooner for those with shorter service, then a third absence review meeting (FARM 3) will be convened. Prior to this meeting a further appointment with OH will take place.
- 10.8 The purpose of this meeting is to review the employee's progress towards a return to work with due consideration to the content of the most recent OH report and any other relevant medical information. Again, it is relevant at this stage to discuss any adaptations to work or assistance that can be provided in order to facilitate a return to work. In addition, if recommended by OH, redeployment should be fully explored, during the next three month period. The possibility of [ill-health retirement](#) should also be fully explored during this period. It is likely that a Human Resources Adviser will also attend this meeting.
- 10.9 It should be made clear to the employee at this meeting that in the event that the absence extends beyond the expiry of sick pay then it is likely that it will be necessary to consider the termination of their employment.
- 10.10 In the event that there is no likely imminent return to work, a [capability hearing](#) will be convened.
- 11.0 ABSENCE REVIEW MEETINGS**
- 11.1 Absence review meetings are a fundamental feature of this policy and will be convened where an employee's attendance at work gives cause for concern.

Formal
absenc
review
meeting
1

Formal
absenc
review
meeting
2

Formal
absenc
review
meeting
3

11.2 Employees will be provided with a minimum of five working days' notice of these meetings, and afforded the right of representation. Any documentation that will be referred to during the meeting should be issued to the employee in advance to allow adequate preparation.

11.3 These meetings should be conducted confidentially and in a sensitive manner. Managers should ensure that an appropriate meeting venue is arranged in advance and consideration is given to the nature of the employee's medical condition where appropriate.

12.0 ROLE OF OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH SERVICE AND PROVISION OF AN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAMME

12.1 The Councils OH service provides managers with advice and support in managing employees with ill health, absence or injury. Specifically their role includes:

- Pre-placement health assessment – to ensure new employees are fit and able to undertake the duties of the post. This is only relevant to certain posts within the Council.
- Medical referral/assessment – advise the Council, as requested, of an employee's fitness to carry out their duties and responsibilities, and whether appropriate support that can be provided to enable employees to undertake their work.
- Health Surveillance – regular screening/checks for employees exposed to potential work related health risks.
- Health Promotion – supporting the Council's health initiatives, which aim to educate employees on how to maintain and/or improve general good health.

12.2 Human Resources will arrange appointments with the OH Service, who will advise the designated manager and the member of staff of the arrangements for the appointment with the OH Adviser.

12.3 The designated manager will provide the OH Adviser with relevant details, using the [OH referral pro-forma](#) including:-

- The employee's personal details – name, date of birth, home address, date of appointment to post.
- A summary of the employee's main duties, a job description can also be useful.
- The employee's sickness absence record with particular reference to the frequency, duration and reasons for absences
- The reason for the referral and the questions they require to be answered
- Any other information relevant to the employee's performance in their duties
- Confirmation that the employee is aware of the reason for the referral.

An additional information sheet can be appended to the form if further information requires to be added. A copy of the referral documents should be forwarded to Human Resources who will arrange for the referral to be made. A copy of this should also be provided to the employee.

12.4 In the event that an employee refuses to attend OH, a discussion with the employee will take place to establish the reasons for refusal, and reassure the employee of the benefits of this process. If necessary, the employee should be advised that there is a contractual obligation for them to attend and that the Council will have to manage their case without the benefit of OH advice if they refuse to attend.

- 12.5 The OH Adviser's report will allow the Manager to determine, in the best interests of the employee and the operational requirements of the service, what further course of action, if any, is appropriate. The employee will also receive a copy of this report.
- 12.6 The Council also aims to support attendance at work through a comprehensive [Employee Assistance Programme \(EAP\)](#) and health promotion activity. The EAP can provide valuable support in the workplace, typically including counselling services, providing advice on issues such as debt reduction and bereavement. The Council also aims to actively promote the concept of wellness at work.

13.0 CONSIDERATION GIVEN TO DISABILITY ISSUES

- 13.1 The Council is committed to ensuring that we meet our responsibilities arising from disability legislation. This includes consideration of reasonable adaptations to work that could assist employees in remaining or returning to work. Dependent upon the circumstances, there are a number of potential adaptations that could be considered either on a permanent or temporary basis, for example:

- adjustments to ways of working
- provision of additional or modified equipment
- adjustments to workplace, hours and/or times of work
- change of duties
- phased return to work etc.

14.0 TRANSFORM (REDEPLOYMENT)

- 14.1 In the event that it becomes clear that an employee is unable to continue in their current role due to a health condition, then the Council's OH provider may recommend that redeployment be explored.
- 14.2 The search for a redeployment opportunity will be based upon what is deemed appropriate in terms of the employee's skills, experience and medical capabilities. The Council is unable to guarantee that a suitable opportunity will be available and will only be able to review vacancies as they arise. It is important that the employee is fully participative in this process in order to maximise the possibility of sourcing a possible redeployment.
- 14.3 In general terms, redeployment will take place through our system Transform, and will be explored for a period up to a maximum of twelve weeks.
- 14.4 Reference should be made to the Council's [Change Management Policy](#), which provides further detail on the process to be followed in these circumstances for all employees except teaching staff.

15.0 ILL HEALTH RETIREMENT

- 15.1 Depending on the circumstances of the absence, it may be appropriate for [ill health retirement](#) to be considered. It should be established whether or not the employee is a member of the Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS) or the Scottish Teachers Superannuation Scheme (STSS).

- 15.2 Members of the STSS can apply for ill health retirement once all other avenues have been explored by completing the relevant forms. Further information can be obtained from www.sppa.gov.uk.
- 15.3 For members of the LGPS, ill health retirement may apply where recommended by the Councils OH provider. Further information can be obtained from www.nespf.org.uk.
- 15.4 If the employee qualifies for retirement on the grounds of ill health, a range of information will be discussed with the employee, for example, likely date of retirement, notice period, annual leave entitlement, pension benefits the employee may be entitled to, if available.

16.0 CAPABILITY HEARING

- 16.1 A capability hearing will be convened following completion of all the stages outlined above and all possible alternative options have been fully explored.
- For long term absences the employee will have exhausted sick pay and there will be no likely imminent return to work.
 - For short term absences it is possible that the sick pay will not have been exhausted but this does not preclude progression to a capability hearing.
- 16.2 The purpose of a capability hearing is to review the employees continued employment. It is therefore important that the employee is fully aware that a likely outcome of the hearing is the termination of their employment with the Council.
- 16.3 A capability hearing will be chaired by a senior officer of the Council who will ensure that full consideration is given to all circumstances of the case and that the employee is provided with adequate opportunity to present relevant information in support of their position. It is the role of the chairperson to ensure that they are satisfied that the Council has met its obligations in terms of gaining comprehensive and current medical advice; fully explored redeployment if deemed appropriate; provided due consideration to disability issues if appropriate; and that absence review meetings have been held as part of the management of the case.
- 16.4 The employee will have the right to representation at the hearing. A Human Resources Adviser will be in attendance, and a representative from Legal Services may also be in attendance. Documentation which will be referred to as part of the process will be issued to the employee at least five working days in advance of the hearing.

17.0 RIGHT OF APPEAL

- 17.1 In the event that an employee wishes to appeal against their capability dismissal, the matter will be considered by the Councils Appeals Committee. The reasons for the appeal should be set out in writing and sent to the Head of Legal and Democratic Services who will make the appropriate arrangements for the appeal to be heard at the earliest opportunity.

18.0 RELATED DOCUMENTS

- [Alcohol and Drug Use Affecting Work Policy](#)
- [Early Retirement due to Ill Health](#)
- [Flexible Working Policy](#)
- [Mental Health Guide](#)
- [Occupational Health management referral form](#)
- [SNCT Handbook: Prolonged Sickness and Annual Leave for Teachers and Music Instructor's Only](#)
- [Promotion of Mental Health and Wellbeing](#)
- [Return to work discussion template](#)
- [Self-certification form](#)
- [Sickness absence notification and certification](#)
- [Specific conditions](#)
- [Special Leave Policy](#)

Template invite letters:

- [Short Term FARM 1 invite letter](#)
- [Short Term FARM 2 invite letter](#)
- [Long Term FARM 1 invite letter](#)
- [Long Term FARM 2 invite letter](#)

APPENDIX 1

MANAGING SHORT TERM ABSENCE – SUMMARY

TRIGGER	ACTION	POSSIBLE OUTCOME
4 separate absences or 10 cumulative days in 12 month period	<p><u>Formal absence review meeting 1</u></p> <p>The purpose is to discuss the reason for the level of absence and determine whether any support can be provided and/or measures the employee can take to improve attendance. Consideration should also be given to any medical information, OH referral, adjustment to working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work that could assist in improving attendance.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to OH – determine whether underlying medical condition. • Change to work place, hours, duties, etc. • Mediation. • Access to EAP.
4 separate absences or 10 cumulative days in 12 month period	<p><u>Formal Absence review meeting 2</u></p> <p>The purpose is to advise the employee that their level of attendance remains unacceptable and consider what measures can be put in place to improve the situation.</p> <p>Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustment to the working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work that could assist in an improvement in attendance.</p> <p>It may also be relevant to consider redeployment if recommended by OH.</p> <p>Where an underlying medical condition is identified the further stages of this process may not apply. Managers must be mindful of legislation related to disability.</p> <p>The employee should be advised that, in the event that absence levels remain at 5 or more absences in 12 month period then it will be necessary to consider their continued employment.</p>	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore redeployment if recommended by OH. • A further meeting at an appropriate point to consider whether further medical information is available or necessary. • Agreement reached on acceptable levels of attendance for those with confirmed underlying medical conditions.
4 separate absences or 10 cumulative days in 12 month period	<p><u>Formal absence review meeting 3</u></p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to review progress towards acceptable levels of attendance. Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustment to working pattern or reasonable adaptation to work that could assist in improving attendance levels. In addition, redeployment if appropriate should be fully explored, at this point.</p> <p>The employee should be advised that, in the event that absence levels remain at 5 or more absences in 12 month period it is likely that their employment will be terminated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changes to work place, hours, duties etc. • Explore redeployment, if appropriate. • Further consideration by OH. • Convene Capability Hearing.
5 separate absences or 11 cumulative days in 12 month period	<p><u>Capability Hearing</u></p> <p>In the event that absence levels remain at 5 or more absences in 12 month period a Capability Hearing will be convened. However it is important to note that employees may have an adjusted trigger level so the agreed level may be more.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improvement in attendance. • Capability dismissal.

Notes:

1. The employee has a right of representation at each of these meetings.
2. A Human Resources Adviser will attend these meetings as appropriate.
3. The employee will be advised of the purpose for each meeting in advance.
4. A summary of the discussions and any agreed action points will be confirmed in writing by the manager following any of the review meetings.

Please refer to the full policy document for further guidance.

APPENDIX 2 MANAGING LONG TERM ABSENCE – SUMMARY

TIMESCALES	ACTION	POSSIBLE OUTCOME
Within 4 weeks	<p><u>Formal absence review meeting 1</u></p> <p>The purpose is to determine a plan for the management of the case, including consideration of any medical information, OH referral, and adjustment to working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work that could assist in an early return to work. Arrangements for keeping in contact during the absence should be agreed at this meeting.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Referral to OH. • Imminent return to work. • Change to work place, hour’s duties, etc. • Mediation. • Access to EAP.
3 months	<p><u>Formal absence review meeting 2</u></p> <p>The purpose is to consider progress towards a return to work and the content of the OH report and any recommendations therein, if appropriate.</p> <p>Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustment to working pattern or reasonable adaptations to work that could assist in an early return to work. Managers must be mindful of legislation related to disability. It may also be relevant to consider redeployment.</p> <p>The employee should be advised that, in the event that the absence is prolonged, the Council would be looking to conclude the management of the case upon the expiry of sick pay.</p>	<p>As above plus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore redeployment if recommended by OH. • A further meeting at an appropriate point to consider any new medical or relevant information.
6 months	Consideration of a further meeting to review progress or any new medical or other relevant information.	
8 months	Further referral to OH following discussion with employee.	
9 months	<p><u>Formal absence review meeting 3</u></p> <p>The purpose of this meeting is to review progress towards a return to work with due consideration to the latest OH report and any other medical information. Again, it is relevant to consider any adjustment to working pattern or reasonable adaptation to work that could assist in an early return to work. In addition, redeployment should be fully explored, if appropriate, during the next 3 months. The possibility of ill-health retirement should also be fully explored during this period.</p> <p>The employee should also be advised that, in the event that they have not returned to work by the expiry of sick pay, it is likely that their employment will be terminated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imminent return to work. • Changes to work place, hours, duties etc. • Explore redeployment, if appropriate. • Ill-health retirement application/ further consideration by OH. • Convene Capability Hearing.
12 months	<p><u>Capability Hearing</u></p> <p>In the event that there is no likely imminent return to work, a Capability Hearing will be convened.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Imminent return to work • IHR pending • Capability dismissal

Notes:

1. The employee has a right of representation at each of these meetings.
2. A Human Resources Adviser will attend these meetings as appropriate.
3. The employee will be advised of the purpose for each meeting in advance.
4. A summary of the discussions and any agreed action points will be confirmed in writing by the manager following any of the review meetings.
5. The manager should maintain contact as agreed with the absent employee between review meetings.

Please refer to the full policy document for further guidance.