

HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**Decision Report**

Committee/Panel:	Employment in Hampshire County Council
Date:	8 July 2015
Title:	Recruitment in Hampshire County Council
Decision Reference:	6780
Report From:	Director of Corporate Resources

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1. Executive summary

1.1 This report is produced further to the last EHCC meeting at which the motion to Council regarding recruitment and retention, was discussed. A copy of the Council motion is provided in Appendix 1, alongside the letter from the Health and Adult Social Care Committee, in Appendix 2.

1.2 This report responds to the request from the EHCC committee, to provide information identifying pertinent issues in respect of recruitment and the identification of 'hot spot' service areas so that based upon evidence received, decisions regarding next steps can be taken.

2. Workforce information: age profile, vacancy levels and turnover rates

2.1 The focus within this report is to provide data that is relevant to the issue and informs the understanding of issues.

2.2 A review of vacancy rates against establishment data could provide a misleading picture as, in many cases, services are holding vacancies in order to manage forthcoming budget reductions.

2.3 Appendix 3 provides an example report that could be provided to EHCC on an annual basis, with little additional work or preparation from officers, given that such information is prepared to support operational activity and is available on the intranet. It is proposed that this report is presented in September to align to budget planning and to inform any policy issues for consideration for the year ahead. It is further proposed that this report is supplemented by an annual presentation at members' briefing.

2.4 Turnover data and headcount and full-time equivalent data by grade and age profile information has been provided within this Appendix. Broader workforce information readily available is also provided, including sickness and benchmarking data.

2.5 Much of the information within this example report is readily available to members, managers, staff and local representatives through Hantsnet pages. These pages can be accessed here:
<http://intranet.hants.gov.uk/hr-home/hr/contact-hr/usefulinformation/hr-perf-data.htm> .

3. Recruitment: ‘hotspot’ areas

3.1 Members will be aware that the range of business conducted by the County Council, means that the market circumstances impacting on the recruitment market differ across service areas. The HR Management Team, through the HR Business Partners have been and are continuing to work closely with each directorate to understand the pertinent issues for each service area.

3.2 The circumstances impacting on the recruitment market, across service areas can be brought into three broad categories, with some examples of roles as follows:

<p>Professional roles where there are national shortages:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nurses • Teachers • Headteachers • School improvement professionals • Social Workers (particular teams) • Education Psychologists • Occupational Health Advisers 	<p>Specialist and professional roles where there is significant private sector competition:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engineers • Transport planners • Procurement roles 	<p>Roles where there is competition with other sectors for the available labour (e.g. retail):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Catering roles • Care assistants • Lunchtime Supervisors in schools
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4. Recruitment: Contributing factors

4.1 The HR team through their monitoring of the local recruitment context, work with colleagues in other authorities, both local and national, to ascertain whether pressures and challenges are Hampshire specific, or have broader impact.

4.2 The national labour market context is impacting not only the County Council but other public and private sector providers. These impacts include, but are not limited to:

- Insufficient places at, or numbers going into university for certain roles
- Individuals leaving professions prior to retirement age, as well as being in the peak of expected retirement rates in some professions
- Change in how individuals perceive their careers and change careers during their lifetime
- Individual attraction to particular careers in context of perceptions of role and accountability
- Changing profile of agency work option, offering good pay with less ongoing accountability and organisational commitment
- Image of public sector and its prospects for a career in the context of media coverage in respect of spending cuts and efficiencies
- Resilience of staff in sustaining pace of change and workload challenge in modern public service
- Government investments in infrastructure projects impacting on demand

4.3 Locally, there are specific impacts prevalent to the County Council and/or the local area, including:

- Disparity in pay with private sector in some areas
- Geography - cost of living in north Hampshire (especially housing) in context of bordering LA having ability to pay with London weighting
- Competition in lower graded roles with other sectors
- Use of headhunting in some sectors
- Competition between our own labour markets

5. Actions in progress

5.1 Alongside continuing to gather appropriate intelligence and benchmarking, the County Council, through HR and departmental teams is co-ordinating a number of recruitment related initiatives and interventions to address the needs across the various service areas.

5.2 These activities are focused on attracting individuals to work for the County Council, and succession planning for future resilience.

5.3 Current activity being undertaken in these areas includes:

- Reviewing traditional career path routes, developing new roles and focussing on the required skills necessary to perform well in the changing context
- Refreshing approaches to recruitment, including recruitment campaigns, recruitment fairs and use of social media
- Development of a broad county wide resilience offering for all, with specific resilience surveys and workstreams in areas of priority

need

- Undertaking research surveys and benchmarking against other local authorities
- Developing offerings to entice returners to professions to have confidence to return
- Working with universities
- Reviewing and further developing Talent Management approaches across the County with a greater focus around graduate and apprenticeship recruitment and leadership development

5.4 In addition to these activities, a broad county wide resilience offering is available, with specific resilience surveys and workstreams being put in place in areas of priority need.

5.5 Beyond these areas, there are activities at the initial stage of development. These include:

- Developing strategies to work with our schools to engage with pupils, as the next generation of the Hampshire workforce, around public sector image and opportunities.
- Reviewing how we promote our employee value proposition and the wider benefits of working for the County Council
- Working with economic partnerships in the south to ascertain where there are businesses at risk of redundancy or business/site closure, that we may be able to partner with to facilitate recruitment to public sector roles or highlight opportunities to re-train.
- Working in partnership with the military to ascertain opportunities to work with those resettling into civilian life including opportunities to directly recruit and highlight re-training opportunities.

5.6 At this stage, there are no clearly identifiable policy decisions for EHCC to consider.

6. Recruitment and retention activity and actions in Adult Services

6.1 It is noted that recruitment and retention in the provider roles within Adult Services is of particular interest to EHCC.

6.2 Vacancies for specific types of roles are provided below. Non-nursing roles includes Care Assistants and Domiciliary staff:

	Jan 2015	Feb 2015	March 2015	April 2015
Nursing fte vacant	33.90	33.90	33.90	5.61
Non-nursing roles fte vacant	93.72	90.38	93.90	87.34

33.90 nursing vacancies over January to March 2015, represented 45% of the nursing workforce. 93fte of non-nursing vacancies represents 12% of the non-nursing workforce.

6.3 Activity that has been undertaken specifically in adult services to address these two areas includes:

- Development of a Hampshire Care brand to support recruitment
- Use of recruitment days
- Development of career pathways from Care Assistant to Nurse

These activities provide an immediate response to recruitment matters. These actions have been taken initial research undertaken within the department regarding careers in care pending a further detailed diagnostic of matters impacting on recruitment and retention within caring roles.

6.4 The Hampshire Care brand has been developed to reflect that Hampshire's role as a direct care provider is not really understood or acknowledged by the community. This branding, which is now prevalent on all advertising and recruitment materials, is also supported by a statement about the values of Hampshire Care.

6.5 Recruitment activity has also been restructured to enable clustering of activity. This provides a more effective, structured and open approach for candidates, enabling them to better see the service in action, as well as enabling a more structured approach to recruitment and use of management time in this activity.

6.6 These approaches have led to better responses to advertisements and this has now translated to a reduction from vacancies being around 93fte to 87fte. The response to recruitment approaches is being carefully monitored to ensure that this continues with a downward trend.

6.7 The dramatic reduction in nurse vacancy rates reflects the creation of a new role of Assistant Practitioner. This role has been created to bridge the gap between Care Assistant roles and Nurses. The Assistant Practitioner performs all of the tasks within the nursing profile that do not require a qualified nurse to perform them. This has enabled the department to review and reduce the number of nurses required, in conjunction with increasing numbers of Assistant Practitioners. A

comprehensive training plan has been created which will run for 12 months to ensure that all Assistant Practitioners have the competencies required.

- 6.8 This role also provides a platform for Care Assistants who wish to move onto nurse training to do so, and also those who want to do their 'return to practice' qualification to enable them to re-register as qualified nurses.
- 6.9 The department also successfully recruited 6 nurses in March 2015, an unprecedented number and this has been assessed to be due to the re-brand.

7. Areas for engagement with EHCC

- 7.1 It is noted that for matters related to recruitment and retention, the role of EHCC is to provide governance and where appropriate, to make policy decisions.
- 7.2 It follows that operational matters for specific departments rest with the relevant Chief Officer with governance and oversight from the appropriate Executive Member and co-ordination of activities supported by HR, bringing any recommendations for policy interventions to EHCC as appropriate.
- 7.3 As set out in 2.3, an annual report will be provided to EHCC to provide key workforce data, inform the wider policy approach and also inform the wider members' briefing.

8. Recommendations

- 8.1 EHCC are asked to:
- a) Note the areas of council business which are being provided with particular support and focus in respect of recruitment and retention activity.
 - b) Note the activities currently being provided and those being planned for in the next phase of activity.
 - c) Note the defined role of EHCC regarding policy decisions in respect of recruitment and retention matters.
 - d) Determine whether the example report provided within appendix 3 should be provided to EHCC on an annual basis complemented by a presentation at members' briefing.
 - e) Note that this report provides a response to all aspects of the letter from the Health and Adult Social Care Committee as referenced in Appendix 2.
 - f) Report to the County Council that this Committee is satisfied that the

actions currently being undertaken by the County Council along with the additional actions and on-going work of this Committee referred to in this Report are an appropriate response to the Notice of Motion set out in Appendix 1 and to recommend to the County Council that this Committee progresses this matter in the manner identified in this Report without further reference to the County Council.

Links to the Corporate Strategy

Hampshire safer and more secure for all:	Yes
Maximising well-being:	Yes
Enhancing our quality of place:	Yes

Other Significant Links

Links to previous Member decisions:		
<u>Title</u>	<u>Reference</u>	<u>Date</u>
Employment in Hampshire County Council Committee	6570	11 March 2015.

Section 100 D - Local Government Act 1972 - background documents

The following documents discuss facts or matters on which this report, or an important part of it, is based and have been relied upon to a material extent in the preparation of this report. (NB: the list excludes published works and any documents which disclose exempt or confidential information as defined in the Act.)

<u>Document</u>	<u>Location</u>
None	

IMPACT ASSESSMENTS:

1. Equality Duty

1.1. The County Council has a duty under Section 149 of the Equality Act 2010 ('the Act') to have due regard in the exercise of its functions to the need to:

- Eliminate discrimination, harassment and victimisation and any other conduct prohibited under the Act;
- Advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, gender and sexual orientation) and those who do not share it;
- Foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it.

Due regard in this context involves having due regard in particular to:

1.2. The need to remove or minimise disadvantages suffered by persons sharing a relevant characteristic connected to that characteristic;

1.3. Take steps to meet the needs of persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic different from the needs of persons who do not share it;

1.4. Encourage persons sharing a relevant protected characteristic to participate in public life or in any other activity which participation by such persons is disproportionately low.

1.5. Equalities Impact Assessment:

An equalities impact assessment has been considered in the development of this report and no adverse impact has been identified.

2. Impact on Crime and Disorder:

2.1 No adverse impact has been identified.

Climate Change:

a) How does what is being proposed impact on our carbon footprint / energy consumption?

Not applicable.

b) How does what is being proposed consider the need to adapt to climate change, and be resilient to its longer term impacts?

Not applicable.

APPENDIX 1
COUNTY COUNCIL – 19 FEBRUARY 2015
NOTICE OF MOTION
ITEM 11(b)

NOTICE OF MOTION SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDING ORDER 18.1

Proposed by Councillor Criss Connor, seconded by Councillor Jane Frankum:

“This Council Notes:

That the Council is experiencing staff recruitment difficulties in many of its service areas and that these difficulties are adding an additional strain to a workforce already working at maximum efficiency. It is inevitable that these recruitment difficulties will also impact on the level of service that officers are able to provide to our residents.

This Council resolves:

To establish a cross party task & finish group to scrutinise this issue, examining the aspects below but adding others as necessary:

- Identify vacancy and turnover rates by service area
- Identify “hot spot” service areas which contain large numbers of staff approaching retirement age
- To examine to what extent the following are contributing factors to the recruitment issues and recommend actions accordingly:
 - i) pay
 - ii image of certain roles
 - iii) do roles need to be more interesting/challenging?
 - iv) do we “grow our own”?
 - v) is geography an issue, are market supplements used to attract people in the right areas?
 - vi) is there best practice elsewhere that could be examined?
 - vii) transport and parking support issues”

APPENDIX 2 - Letter from Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee



28 January 2015

Councillor Elaine Still
Chairman
Policy and Resources Select Committee

*Room 114, Elizabeth II Court South
Hampshire County Council
The Castle, Winchester
Hampshire, SO23 8UJ*

e-mail: Patricia.Stallard@hants.gov.uk

Dear Councillor Still,

Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee: consideration of workforce capacity in Hampshire

The Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee (HASC) met on 27 January 2015, and in the course of items on revenue budgets and delayed discharges from hospital, discussed issues related to workforce capacity; particularly in the areas of Winchester and Basingstoke.

Members held a brief discussion on the work being taken forward by the County Council to attract more people to the caring profession, and recent NHS drives to recruit medical staff from overseas. It was noted that unemployment in some areas of Hampshire is very low, and Members questioned whether Hampshire has the working age capacity to be able to meet critically important but sometimes hard to fill roles, such as carers, nurses and school crossing patrols.

Members agreed that the Policy and Resources Select Committee (P&R SC) might be best placed to scrutinise this topic, and to review work being taken forward across the County Council to tackle this issue. I am therefore writing to ask for your consideration of this item on a future P&R SC agenda.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you require any additional information on my comments above.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Patricia Stallard".

Councillor Patricia Stallard
Chairman, Health and Adult Social Care Select Committee

Cc: Cllr Stephen Reid, Executive Member for Human Resources
Carolyn Williamson, Director of Corporate Resources

**APPENDIX 3: EXAMPLE WORKFORCE REPORT
HAMPSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL**

Decision Report

Committee/Panel:	Employment in Hampshire County Council
Date:	Date
Title:	Example Workforce Report
Decision Reference:	n/a
Report From:	Director of Corporate Resources

Contact name: Jenny Lewis

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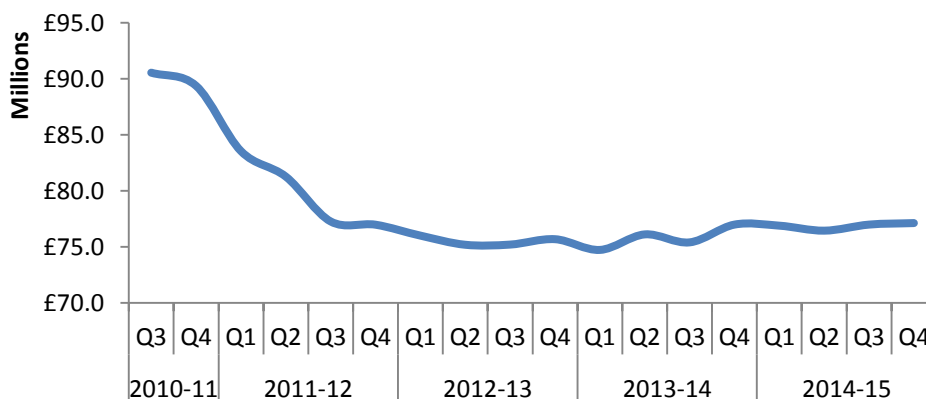
1. Executive summary

1.1 This report provides a high level overview of key data and trends relating to staff numbers, turnover and sickness. The statistics exclude staff based in schools.

1.2 The report covers the following:

- Workforce pay costs per month since Sept 2010
- Workforce numbers (fte)
 - overall and variance from Sept 2010 and current month
 - by grade and variance from Sept 2010 and current month
- Starters and leavers
- Turnover (including benchmark information)
- Sickness (including benchmark information)

2. Directly Employed Workforce pay costs per Quarter



3. Comparison of workforce numbers (fte) from September 2010 to March 2015 by grade

The following shows the workforce numbers (excluding schools). Both fte and headcount figures are shown by grade. This information provides for employed staff only, and not budgeted establishment.

Substantive Grade ¹ or equivalent based on salary	Sept 2010		Mar 2015		Variation		
	Count	FTE	Count	FTE	Count	FTE	
Salary <A	17	17.00	6	5.41	-11	-11.59	↓
Grade A	1,170	450.32	1,408	558.82	+238	108.50	↑
Grade B	1,883	917.32	1,653	858.28	-230	-59.04	↓
Grade C	3,197	2,282.81	2,533	1,916.71	-664	-366.10	↓
Grade D	2,354	1,835.99	1,787	1,375.44	-567	-460.55	↓
Grade E	2,163	1,932.12	1,790	1,572.35	-373	-359.77	↓
Grade F	2,423	2,091.41	1,896	1,661.06	-527	-430.35	↓
Grade G	818	774.18	723	681.48	-95	-92.70	↓
Senior Managers	863	810.38	720	683.35	-143	-60.01	↓
Total	14,888	11,111.53	12,516	9,312.92	-2,372	-1,798.61	↓

Since September 2010, there has been a significant reduction in senior managers. The County Council's strategy of growing and trading services has provided for increases in professional business, and this activity alongside the partnership with police and fire has led to some increases in management positions in specific areas, but overall a 16.5% reduction in senior management is evident.

¹ This may include staff who are paid according to pay structures other than EHCC07. They have been included in the substantive grade whose salary range matches their annual fte salary or, if between ranges, the grade below.

4. Age Profile

The following table shows the profile of staff aged 55² and over by department as at 1 May 2015. The percentages provided are based on headcount and not full-time equivalent.

Department	55-59	% of Total 55 and above	60- 64	% of Total 55 and above	65- 69	% of Total 55 and above	70+	% of Total 55 and above	Total 55 and above	%	Total staff in department
Adult Services	478	53.83%	296	33.33%	86	9.68%	28	3.15%	888	27.16%	3,270
CCBS	488	53.92%	289	31.93%	98	11.04%	30	3.31%	905	24.01%	3,769
Childrens Services	363	56.45%	222	34.53%	46	5.18%	12	1.87%	643	25.57%	2,515
Corporate Services	163	72.77%	51	22.77%	7	0.79%	3	1.34%	224	14.76%	1,518
ETE	230	35.77%	164	25.51%	113	12.73%	136	21.15%	643	47.56%	1,352
Total	1722	52.13%	1022	30.94%	350	39.41%	209	6.33%	3,303	26.59%	12,424

The age profile of CCBS is inflated by the profile of catering staff employed in HC3S. ETE is inflated by the profile of staff working in School Crossing Patrol and School Escort roles.

² Data reflects ages of staff as at 31 August 2015

5. External turnover

The following tables show external turnover by department over the last 13 months. Further historic trend information is available on the intranet.

Annual ³:	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Apr-14</u>	<u>May-14</u>	<u>Jun-14</u>	<u>Jul-14</u>	<u>Aug-14</u>	<u>Sep-14</u>	<u>Oct-14</u>	<u>Nov-14</u>	<u>Dec-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>
Adult Services	13.7%	14.8%	15.0%	14.9%	15.8%	16.0%	15.8%	15.6%	16.0%	15.4%	15.0%	14.3%	11.0%
Children's Services	12.6%	12.9%	12.9%	12.9%	14.0%	13.0%	14.8%	15.6%	16.5%	16.4%	16.6%	16.6%	13.4%
CCBS	15.2%	15.4%	15.6%	16.0%	17.0%	17.0%	17.7%	21.2%	21.9%	23.4%	23.9%	24.2%	19.7%
ETE	11.8%	12.4%	12.3%	12.5%	12.7%	12.1%	14.6%	15.4%	15.9%	15.4%	15.5%	15.9%	13.3%
Corporate Services	10.8%	11.4%	12.1%	13.9%	15.2%	15.1%	16.9%	17.5%	18.3%	19.4%	20.1%	19.0%	14.4%
All Departments	13.3%	13.8%	14.1%	14.4%	15.3%	15.1%	16.1%	17.5%	18.1%	18.4%	18.6%	18.4%	14.8%

External turnover data reflects the long term trend towards reduced headcount and peaks in turnover rates reflect planned activity related to transformation to 2015 workstreams, including Enhanced Voluntary Redundancies (including those agreed for police and fire prior to transfer of staff).

The data for CCBS reflects a general position of higher turnover in catering roles and are particularly influenced by the Hampshire Cultural Trust transfer and reductions in Community Safety and Libraries as part of planned workstreams.

³ Annual figures represent the number of external leavers in the preceding 12 months expressed as percentage of total average staff in the period

6. Sickness Absence Data by percentage of working hours lost

Annual ⁴:	<u>Mar-14</u>	<u>Apr-14</u>	<u>May-14</u>	<u>Jun-14</u>	<u>Jul-14</u>	<u>Aug-14</u>	<u>Sep-14</u>	<u>Oct-14</u>	<u>Nov-14</u>	<u>Dec-14</u>	<u>Jan-15</u>	<u>Feb-15</u>	<u>Mar-15</u>
Adult Services	5.12%	4.98%	4.97%	4.97%	5.02%	5.02%	4.91%	4.78%	4.72%	4.74%	4.70%	4.69%	4.64%
Children's Services	3.28%	3.29%	3.36%	3.45%	3.56%	3.59%	3.54%	3.57%	3.60%	3.63%	3.64%	3.68%	3.67%
CCBS	2.47%	2.48%	2.47%	2.50%	2.55%	2.54%	2.49%	2.45%	2.49%	2.54%	2.55%	2.56%	2.58%
ETE	2.45%	2.40%	2.38%	2.42%	2.41%	2.37%	2.38%	2.30%	2.23%	2.11%	2.09%	2.08%	2.06%
Corporate Services	1.98%	2.00%	1.99%	2.02%	2.07%	2.05%	2.08%	2.13%	2.07%	2.24%	2.31%	2.36%	2.39%
All Departments	3.33%	3.29%	3.30%	3.33%	3.38%	3.38%	3.32%	3.28%	3.22%	3.30%	3.30%	3.32%	3.31%

In April 2014, absence moved from being manager responsibility to input to individual staff responsibility to input. Overall the trend in absence reporting has remained broadly stable despite the significance of this change. It is noted that there are some areas where there is a very slight increase in absence rates. This data has been kept under close monitoring and review by HR Business Partners so that matters can be addressed in specific areas at the earliest opportunity.

⁴ Annual data reflects the percentage of working hours lost in the preceding 12 months.

7. Benchmarking information available to Hampshire County Council

The County Council is a member of a workforce data benchmarking group. The following County Councils are members of the group:

- Oxfordshire
- Kent
- East Sussex
- Wiltshire
- Buckinghamshire
- Surrey
- Essex
- Hertfordshire

All data is provided on the basis that individual councils cannot be identified. Of particular interest is turnover and sickness data. The data provided below is up to March 2014 and this is in the process of being refreshed.

Turnover data:

12 Month % Turnover (All Reasons)

Council	<u>Mar-11</u>	<u>Sep-11</u>	<u>Mar-12</u>	<u>Sep-12</u>	<u>Mar-13</u>	<u>Sep-13</u>	<u>Mar-14</u>
Hampshire	14.3%	17.5%	18.5%	17.6%	14.7%	12.7%	13.3%
Council 2	14.4%	19.3%	17.2%	17.7%	16.6%	15.4%	17.4%
Council 3	13.5%	19.3%	17.9%	14.5%	13.8%	14.8%	15.2%
Council 4	13.7%	15.1%	20.0%	18.4%	13.4%	14.7%	15.0%
Council 5	12.0%	17.2%	14.4%	14.5%	12.4%	31.1%	12.5%
Council 6	14.1%	15.4%	16.1%	14.1%	18.3%	17.7%	12.1%
Council 7	18.8%	18.2%	23.5%	33.8%	14.5%	15.6%	14.7%
Council 8	12.3%	12.8%	12.2%	11.9%	15.5%	11.7%	12.7%
Council 9	14.9%	17.3%	17.4%	16.7%	14.5%	19.0%	20.7%
Group Average	14.2%	16.9%	17.5%	17.7%	14.8%	17.0%	14.8%

The latest data shows that Hampshire is below average, but it is recognised that this is skewed due to a high rates in Council 9. It is recognised that Hampshire's rate is above three of the nine county councils within this group.

It is difficult to broadly compare across these councils as transformation related programmes are running, in some councils on different timelines and with other councils adopting a commissioning approach across a wider service area.

Sickness:

Sickness - 12 Month % Working Days lost

Council	<u>Mar-11</u>	<u>Sep-11</u>	<u>Mar-12</u>	<u>Sep-12</u>	<u>Mar-13</u>	<u>Sep-13</u>	<u>Mar-14</u>
Hampshire	3.7%	3.8%	3.7%	3.6%	3.5%	3.5%	3.3%
Council 2	3.3%	1.5%	3.5%	3.9%	3.1%	3.1%	3.3%
Council 3	3.9%	4.1%	4.1%				4.1%
Council 4	3.0%	3.2%	2.9%	2.8%	2.9%	2.9%	2.7%
Council 5	2.8%	2.6%	2.4%	2.4%	2.3%	2.2%	2.2%
Council 6	3.5%	3.4%	3.7%	3.1%	5.4%	3.2%	3.1%
Council 7		3.3%	3.3%	3.7%	3.5%	3.3%	3.3%
Council 8							
Council 9	3.9%	3.7%	3.8%	3.9%	3.3%	3.6%	3.6%
Group Average	3.4%	3.2%	3.4%	3.3%	3.4%	3.1%	3.2%

Whilst Hampshire's sickness data indicates that our rate for percentage of working days lost is marginally above the average, this should be viewed in the context that Hampshire is a large provider of services and therefore it would be anticipated that absence may be higher than those organisations who have less direct or smaller provision of services.

Furthermore, if viewed within a distribution curve, Hampshire's absence rate would broadly be within the middle of the distribution.