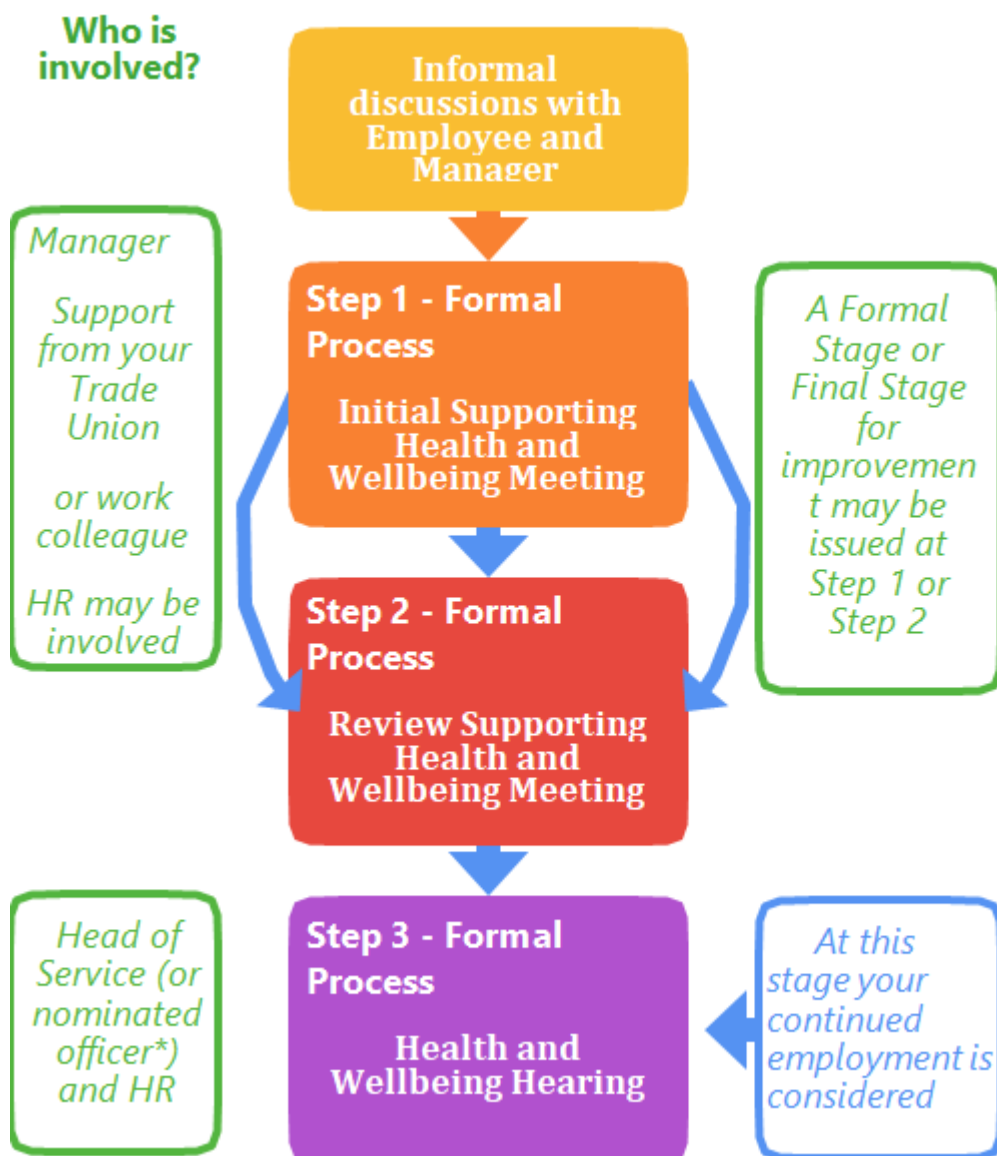


## Supporting Health and Wellbeing Procedure

The Supporting Health and Wellbeing Procedure includes informal and formal stages. Detailed below outlines each stage of the Supporting Health and Wellbeing Procedure:



\* Executive Director (Education & Children's Services) for employees on Teacher's Terms and Conditions of Employment.

## 4.1 Informal Discussions

The relationship between you and your manager is an important one - we want you to be yourself at work. Informal discussions between you and your manager are opportunities to get to know you and discuss what else may be going on at work or home that could affect your wellbeing and performance. It builds relationships. Talking regularly about your health and wellbeing helps us to understand how you are feeling and how we can support you. It may help us to plan for events or discuss emergency arrangements which may be needed, so that we can plan together, as far as practical to ensure work is not a complicating factor when events arise.

You should feel able to speak regularly about your workload, work-life balance or anything that may impact on your health and wellbeing. It's okay not to be okay. In order for us to support you as much as we can, we encourage you to tell us anything that may be impacting on your health and wellbeing. This will be treated in confidence.

It is important to identify if there is any additional support or reasonable adjustments you may need, either as a temporary measure or something more permanent and this will assist with that.

These discussions should happen regularly as part of 1-to-1 meetings, or when you return to work following an absence. General health, safety and wellbeing issues should also be discussed in team meetings.

There is a wide range of information available for you to access about health and wellbeing, including ill health prevention.

| Physical Health          | Mental                           | Lifestyle Choices and Financial Health |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--|
| Winter Flu Vaccination   | Occupational Health              | Healthy Eating                         |
| Active Travel            | Bereavement                      | Smoking Cessation                      |
| Men's Health             | Equally Safe (Domestic Violence) | BMI Calculator                         |
| MacMillan Cancer Support | Personal Sleep Profile           | Cholesterol Levels                     |
| Drug and Alcohol Support | Mental Health Awareness          | Recommended Alcohol Intake             |
| Women's Health           | Mindspace                        | Recommended Water Intake               |
|                          | Andy's Man Club                  | Citizens Advice – Debt                 |
|                          |                                  | Exercise                               |

Through discussions with your manager, it may be agreed that support or early intervention initiatives are required. Detailed below are types of support available:

|                                 |  |                                 |
|---------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| <b>Physiotherapy</b>            | <b>Carers</b>                              | <b>Trade Unions</b>             |
| <b>Health Surveillance</b>      | <b>Workplace Chaplaincy Service</b>        | Resilience                      |
| <b>Counselling</b>              | <b>GP</b>                                  | <b>Welfare Rights</b>           |
| <b>Mental Wellbeing</b>         | <b>LGBTi+ Staff Network</b>                | <b>Disability Staff Network</b> |
| <b>See Me at Work</b>           | <b>Healthy Working Lives</b>               | <b>HR</b>                       |
| <b>Management/Self-Referral</b> | National Campaigns                         | <b>Access to Work</b>           |
| <b>Flexible Working</b>         | <b>Mental Health Directory of Services</b> | <b>Corporate OD Team</b>        |
|                                 |  | <b>Health &amp; Safety Team</b> |

## 4.2 Reasonable Adjustments

At each stage of the process, we will consider reasonable adjustments which could be made to your duties or working arrangements in order to support you at work or to assist a return to work. This could be for a number of reasons, such as a disability underlying health condition or caring responsibilities.

If you have a disability or underlying medical condition which affects your ability to carry out your duties, there is no legal obligation to disclose this to us, however by telling us how this manifests itself at work; we will be able to discuss how best we can support you. The Council will fund the reasonable costs of any adjustment which will support you at work and/or assist a return to work. Funding may also be available from external organisations such as **Access to Work**.

Applications for Access to Work must be made directly by employees, however you can talk through what might help with your manager or Human Resources.

## 4.3 Absence Notification and Communication

If you cannot come to work because you are unwell, phone your manager to let them know as soon as you can and no later than the local arrangements for sickness notification, as previously agreed with your manager.

| <b>Task</b>                            | <b>Action</b>   |
|--|---|
| Tell your manager                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Why you are off</li> <li>◆ When you think you will return</li> <li>◆ If you have any work/meetings to be dealt with while you are off</li> <li>◆ Agree with your manager how and when contact will be made and if necessary, arrange for someone to make contact on your behalf</li> </ul> |
| If your manager has not heard from you | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ They will contact you</li> <li>◆ If they cannot reach you then they will try other</li> </ul>  |

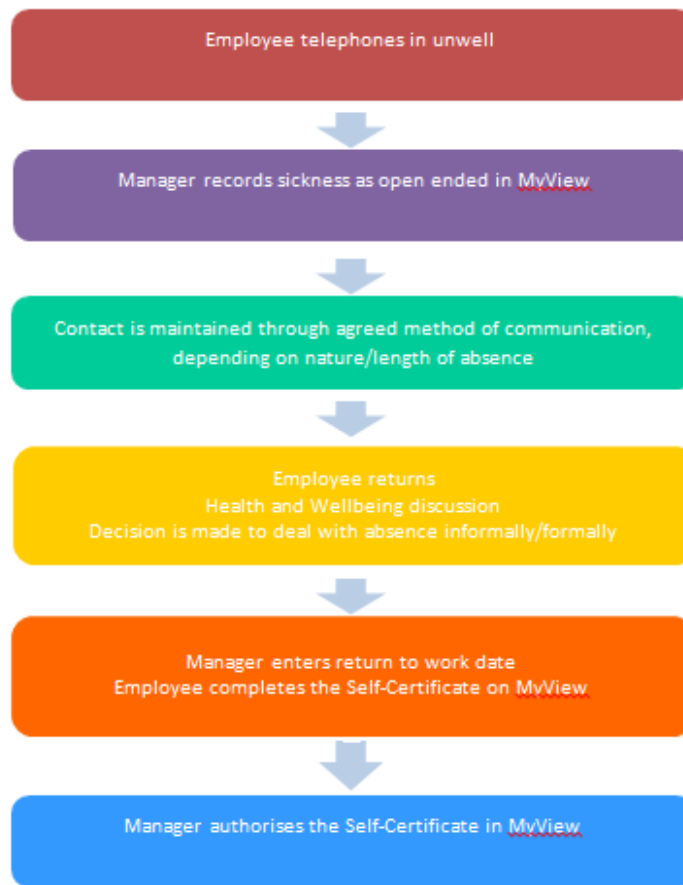
|  |  |
|--|--|
| within an hour of your due start time on your first day of absence | means to contact you – we have a duty of care to you   |
| If you do not contact your manager and we cannot get a hold of you | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Your absence will be treated as unauthorised. This means you will not get paid whilst you are off and may lead to disciplinary action, unless there are reasonable circumstances</li> </ul>   |
| If your absence continues beyond the first day                     | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Agree with your manager how best to maintain contact</li> <li>◆ If your absence continues beyond 7 days, you need a <b>Fit Note</b> . Discuss with your manager, or HR if appropriate, the frequency and method of ongoing contact</li> </ul> |

Teachers have separate arrangements in place for absence notification and certification. Please see **Part 2 Section 6.27 to 6.32** of the SNCT Handbook. Nothing within this framework is intended to conflict with the SNCT Handbook.

In the event that you feel unwell at work you should make your manager aware before going home.

If your absence extends beyond seven days, you should submit a **Fit Note** to your manager to cover the period of absence. Your manager will record the Fit Note information on **MyView** and once the internal processes are complete, it will then be returned to you.

On your return to work, your manager will have a discussion with you to find out how you are feeling and to ensure that you are fit to attend work along with providing you with any information that you have missed during your absence. Your manager will make a decision at this point if a more formal meeting is required, based on evidence from your absence record and individual circumstances. Detailed below are the steps in this process:



#### 4.4 Absence Monitoring

Absence levels are monitored on an individual, team, service and Council-wide basis. We do this for a number of reasons:

- ◆ *To support employees, as this enables more meaningful discussions and to implement any specific support required.*
- ◆ *To allow for managers to raise any specific team or service impact with their Senior Management Team.*
- ◆ *To benchmark with other local authorities as part of our Local Government Benchmarking Framework (LGBF).*

## 4.5 Management Arrangements

|  |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|
| All absences must be recorded in MyView  | The decision to move into the formal process should be evidence based                             | Managers will monitor absence regularly at individual and team level            | A decision about your continued employment can be taken prior to sick pay being exhausted |
| You are given the right to be accompanied by a Trade Union representative or a work colleague at any formal meetings | You should receive 5 working days' notice for any formal meeting                                  | Meetings should be supportive with the intention of keeping you in/back to work | If unable to attend a formal meeting, reasonable steps should be taken to re-arrange      |
| You will receive a letter following any formal meeting   | A Formal Improvement Stage may be issued, ranging from one to twelve months in any formal meeting | You have the right of appeal of any Formal Improvement Stage                    | Complaints will not prevent progression of formal stages                                  |
| Managers are accountable for decisions they make   | HR and Occupational Health advice can be sought a any stage, if required                          | HR must be present in all Health and Wellbeing Hearings                         | A Formal Improvement Stage should only be set once you are back to work                   |

## 4.6 Moving to the Formal Process

A decision by your manager to move to the formal process must be based on evidence and individual circumstances. The level of absence considered to impact upon service delivery is detailed below:

- ◆ 3 or more separate occasions (amounting to 3 or more working days of sickness absence) over a 12 month period; **or**
- ◆ A total of 6 or more working days of sickness absence over a 12 month period

*(Based on an employee's actual working day. Part day absences are included)*

Managers will decide whether to move to the formal process.

## 4.7 Resilience - Evidence-Based Assessment

Your manager will assess and consider any action to mitigate the impact of your absence against the needs of the service. This builds team and organisational resilience.

It is recognised that each employee's absence record is unique; therefore, consideration of your situation will be based on the circumstances of each period of absence leading up to this point.

The structure of each team configuration and impact on service delivery may also be different within and across teams.

Your manager must ensure their decision is fair and reasonable in the circumstances. The following chart shows the factors your manager will consider when making their decision.

## 4.8 Wellbeing and Performance - Outcome-Driven

Supporting Health and Wellbeing Meetings consider individual circumstances and are outcome-driven, taking into account your health and wellbeing, alongside the needs of your team and the organisation.

|   |
|---|
| <b>Review Evidence</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Absence patterns</li><li>◆ Previous year(s) attendance</li><li>◆ Underlying health conditions</li><li>◆ Reasonable adjustments</li><li>◆ Stages of improvement</li></ul>  |
| <b>Review Impact</b>  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Individual productivity/performance</li><li>◆ Team productivity/performance</li><li>◆ Service delivery</li><li>◆ Motivation/morale</li><li>◆ Turnover</li><li>◆ Cost</li><li>◆ Sustainability</li></ul>         |
| <b>Decide Outcome</b>   |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>◆ Employee returns</li><li>◆ Employee returns with adjustments and support</li><li>◆ Improvement stage set</li><li>◆ Capability transfer</li><li>◆ Ill Health Retirement</li><li>◆ Capability Dismissal</li></ul> |

## 4.9 Supporting Health and Wellbeing Meetings

A formal meeting in the monitoring process is known as a Supporting Health and Wellbeing Meeting. The discussion in this meeting will be similar to those that you have already had with your manager but in a more formal setting. The meeting will involve you and your manager, and you can be accompanied by your Trade Union Representative or a work colleague to provide you with support. HR may also be present. You need to engage with us in these meetings, as this will assist us in supporting you.

The purpose of Supporting Health and Wellbeing meetings may include the following, depending on individual circumstances:

- ◆ *Exploring the reasons for your absence(s), including any actions taken by you.*
- ◆ *Offering support mechanisms if appropriate/reasonable.*
- ◆ *Identifying and discussing any recognisable pattern of absence, and its potential/actual impact on the team.*
- ◆ *Considering advice already provided through the **Fit Note**, eg phased return or reasonable adjustments, requesting advice from the Occupational Health Service, as required.*

The **outcome** of the meeting will be one or a combination of the following, depending on individual circumstances:

- ◆ *Reasonable adjustments and a plan for implementation agreed or reviewed*
- ◆ *Referral to Occupational Health, if required, and explanation of the referral process and next steps*
- ◆ *Return to work plan agreed or reviewed*
- ◆ *Stress action plan agreed or reviewed*
- ◆ *Date of review meeting agreed*
- ◆ *Explanation of next steps if absence levels should continue*
- ◆ *A Formal Improvement Stage or Final Improvement Stage during which the expected improvement in attendance levels will be outlined, and an explanation of the next steps*
- ◆ *Health Capability Transfer (only if recommended by Occupational Health)*
- ◆ *Where the expected improvement in absence has not been achieved following a Final Improvement Stage or there is no reasonable prospect of a return to work within a reasonable timescale, you will be required to attend a Health and Wellbeing Hearing.*

## 4.10 Health and Wellbeing Hearings

Where your absence levels have not improved to the expected level during a Final Improvement Stage or there is no reasonable prospect of a return to work within a reasonable timescale, a Health and Wellbeing Hearing will be held. This will take place with your Head of Service (or nominated officer) and a member of the HR Team. If you are on Teacher's Terms and Conditions of Employment, this will be with the Executive Director of Education & Children's Services. In this Hearing, you can be accompanied by your Trade Union Representative or a work colleague.



The purpose of the Hearing is to consider your continued employment with the Council and may include the following, depending on individual circumstances:

- ◆ *Review the levels of absence.*
- ◆ *Explore or review the reasons for ongoing or recurring absences (including actions taken by the employee) .*
- ◆ *Review the impact of any reasonable adjustments previously agreed and implemented.*
- ◆ *Discuss any particular operational difficulties arising from your absence(s) or absence levels.*
- ◆ *Review Occupational Health report(s).*

The **outcome** of the Hearing will be one of the following, depending on individual circumstances:

- ◆ *Extension of a Final Improvement Stage (should only be considered normally in hearings) - you will be advised that, if no improvement is forthcoming during the extended final monitoring stage, dismissal will be considered*
- ◆ *Health Capability Transfer*
- ◆ *Ill Health Retirement – Tier 1 and 2 (where the employee satisfies the criteria of their pension scheme)*
- ◆ *Dismissal*

Up-to-date Occupational Health advice must be sought before dismissal (including consideration of ill health retirement or Health Capability Transfer).

## 4.11 Appeals

You have the right of appeal against a decision to set any Formal/Final Improvement Stage, enact a Health Capability Transfer or Dismissal. An appeal must be lodged, in writing, to the relevant Executive Director outlining the grounds of appeal, within 10 working days of receipt of the letter confirming the decision. Appeals will take place without unreasonable delay. **Appendix 1** details the arrangements for hearing appeals under this arrangement.

## 4.12 Other Policies and Guidance

In conjunction with this framework you may wish to familiarise yourself with other policies and guidance:

- ◆ **Time Off for Medical Appointments**
- ◆ **Occupational Sick Pay (OSP)**
- ◆ **MyView Guidance**
- ◆ **Occupational Stress Management Arrangement and Supporting Guidance**
- ◆ **How to Guides**
- ◆ **Guidance for Letters**
- ◆ **Alcohol and Drug Arrangement and Guidance**

## APPENDIX 1 – Appeals

For those employees engaged under Single Status, Craft and Teacher’s Terms and Conditions of Employment, appeals under this procedure will normally be heard at the following levels:

| Formal Action                   | Responsibility   |
|---------------------------------|--|
| <b>Formal Improvement Stage</b> | Option of Independent Review or Formal Appeal by other manager/nominated Senior Management Team member in a different school |
| <b>Final Improvement Stage</b>  | Appeal heard by Head of Service or other Nominated Officer   |
| <b>Dismissal</b>                | Appeal heard by Appeals Sub-Committee  |

There are no further rights of Appeal.

For employees engaged under Chief Officer Terms and Conditions of Employment, appeals under this procedure will normally be heard at the following levels:

| Role of Chief Official                              | Formal Action (performance) can be taken by: | Formal Action                             | Responsibility  |
|---|--|---|---|
| <b>Head of Service or Depute Director</b>           | Depute Director or Executive Director        | Improvement Stage                         | Independent Review or Formal Appeal heard by Executive Director |
|   |  | Final Improvement Stage                   | Appeal Heard by Depute Chief Executive or Chief Executive       |
|   |  | Dismissal                                 | Appeal heard by Appeals Sub-Committee                           |
| <b>Executive Director or Depute Chief Executive</b> | Depute Chief Executive or Chief Executive    | Improvement Stage/Final Improvement Stage | Appeal heard by Chief Executive or Appeals Sub-Committee        |

There are no further rights of Appeal.

## APPENDIX 2 – Roles and Responsibilities

Health and Wellbeing is everyone's responsibility. We all have a role to play.

| Health & Wellbeing  | Support at Work  |
|---|--|
| <p>All employees are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>take reasonable care of their own health, safety and wellbeing, and others we come into contact with;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>be aware of lifestyle changes they can make to improve and maintain good health and, in doing so, maximise their attendance at work;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>meet their contractual obligation to attend work when fit to do so and engage with management.</b></li> </ul> <p>Managers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>demonstrate supportive management behaviours and promote an open culture which provides employees with a voice in shaping the working environment;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>keep accurate GDPR compliant records, where required;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>support health improvement initiatives within the workplace and encourage employees to maintain a healthier lifestyle.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Council is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>ensure a robust policy framework is in place for health and wellbeing, which is fit for purpose, enabling managers to manage their employee;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>review the effectiveness and impact of the framework.</b></li> <li>◆ <b>develop an action plan on health and wellbeing as part of the Corporate Workforce Plan;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>provide learning and development opportunities on all aspects of health and wellbeing, including building</b></li> </ul> | <p>All employees are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>take advantage of appropriate learning opportunities and early intervention mechanisms;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>initiate and raise issues which affect their health and wellbeing (or that of their colleagues) with their manager at the earliest opportunity ;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>attend all early intervention mechanisms offered, if deemed appropriate.</b></li> </ul> <p>Managers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>create opportunities for health and wellbeing discussions to take place through 1-to-1 meetings, Learn Innovate Grow (LIG) development or Employee Review &amp; Development (ERD) discussions, team meetings and return to work discussions;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>respond fairly and sensitively to employees, taking all reasonable steps to support employees as appropriate;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>Follow up on stress action plans, report to Health &amp; Safety and review risk assessments, as necessary;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>be aware and promote early intervention initiatives and support which is available from the Council.</b></li> </ul> <p>The Council is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>provide and publicise health and wellbeing events, initiatives, campaigns and information;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>continue to review our health and wellbeing initiatives and support</b></li> <li>◆ <b>including our Occupational Health Service;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>ensure that each Service produces health and wellbeing plans to support health and</b></li> </ul> |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| <p><b>resilience, occupational stress, Health &amp; Safety and mental health</b></p>  | <p>wellbeing issues and develop actions at service level.</p>   |
| <p><b>Absence Notification</b></p>  | <p><b>Whilst Off/Returning to Work</b></p>  |
| <p>All employees are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>inform their manager if they are unfit to attend work;</b></li> <li>◆ <b>maintain appropriate regular contact with your manager.</b></li> </ul> <p>Managers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>agree with employee what regular contact is expected, depending on the circumstances and length of absence.</b></li> </ul> | <p>All employees are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>maintain appropriate regular contact with their manager;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>attend all intervention mechanisms offered/deemed appropriate which are put in place to support them whilst absent or following a return to work;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>take all reasonable steps to facilitate an early return to work from any period of absence.</i></li> </ul> <p>Managers are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>ensure all interventions are fully discussed and offered, where appropriate;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>meet with their employees to discuss absence informally or formally as required, to ensure that employees are fit to return to work or are receiving appropriate support required at that time;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>consider the impact the absence has had on their team/service in relation to any improvement stage set;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>provide support to the remainder of the team, where appropriate;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>evaluate any recommendations made on <b>Fit Notes</b></i></li> </ul> <p>The Council is expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>provide HR, Health &amp; Safety and Occupational Health expertise to support managers in managing/supporting their employees;</i></li> <li>◆ <i>report absence to the Corporate Health &amp; Safety Team in line with the Council's reporting procedures.</i></li> </ul> |
| <p><b>Recording</b></p>   | <p><b>Monitoring</b></p>  |
| <p>All employees are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <b>submit a Fit Note to their manager as soon as possible;</b></li> </ul>  | <p>All employees are expected to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ <i>be aware of their own absence levels and the impact this is having/has had on their team and service.</i></li> </ul>  |

- ◆ **complete the online sickness questionnaire upon return to work on MyView.**

**Managers are expected to:**

- ◆ **ensure the recording of sickness through MyView is timely and accurate;**
- ◆ **ensure that the reason(s) for absence is recorded accurately; monitor sickness absence levels, identify hotspots and undertake team and group interventions to improve health and wellbeing**

**Managers are expected to:**

- ◆ *monitor absence individually and at team level, discussing this with their manager as part of their own 1-to-1 discussions, their own health and that of their team.*

**The Council is expected to:**

- ◆ *provide managers with the tools and training in order to support employees appropriately and to monitor absence;*
- ◆ *identify hotspots, trend information and analysis which will inform targeted training/actions which may be required;*
- ◆ *continue to report sickness absence as part of the Sickness Absence Statutory Performance Indicator;*
- ◆ *work with other Councils sharing best practice, including the Local Government Benchmarking Family (LGBF) on sickness.*