

Attendance Management procedures should support not stress

This AGM is seriously concerned about Aberdeenshire Council's Attendance Management Procedure, particularly the draconian sickness absence triggers which have led to increased numbers of members falling foul of these and ending up either coming to work when unwell, or in formal procedures which place more and more stress on them and can result in dismissal.

We are concerned that staff who already have disabilities and underlying medical conditions are very vulnerable to hitting triggers with subsequent action being taken. We believe that putting additional pressure on these employees is in no one's interests – not the employees, the council or the service users. We are also concerned that it is in breach of equalities law. It certainly does not sit with the council as a Disability Confident employer.

The branch believes that Sickness Absence procedures must be genuinely supportive and distinguish between genuine ill-health and unnecessary absence. We believe that this approach would promote better health at work and would reduce absence through work related stress.

We believe that the council's procedures should also be consistent with the Scottish Government's Fair Work Framework which should be used as a benchmark.

This AGM calls on the branch to

1. Negotiate robustly with the council for a better Attendance Management procedure which properly supports staff who have genuine ill-health or who have chronic health conditions or disabilities. This procedure should have a focus on ensuring that reasonable adjustments are put in place where necessary and that disability leave is properly utilised to support these staff.
2. Lobby councillors as appropriate seeking their support for a disability friendly and equalities compliant procedure.
3. Ensure that any new procedure has had a thorough Equality Impact Assessment and Health and Safety Risk Assessment
4. Meantime press the council for a robust Equality Impact Assessment on the existing Attendance Management procedure to check that it does not discriminate against people with disabilities, mental ill-health and underlying medical conditions.

Mover: Kate Ramsden

Seconder: Kathleen Kennedy