Research Report

Employee Survey 2012

Prepared for: The Highland Council

bmg research

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Prepared by: BMG Research

Date: November 2012

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1   Introduction

1.1   Background

In March 2012, The Highland Council commissioned BMG Research to undertake an organisation-wide survey of employees. The survey was carried out by means of a self-completion questionnaire, administered either electronically or via a paper questionnaire, with the objective to measure current employee views and attitudes, whilst tracking against the 2000 to 2010 results.

The following report provides a summary of the key findings derived from the survey undertaken during September and October 2012, including where possible tracking of changes since the 2000 survey.

1.2   Methodology

All 10,683 employees (including teaching staff) within the organisation were given the opportunity to complete a survey, either via a paper questionnaire or electronically. An electronic survey was made available to 4,657 staff via an emailed hyperlink sent to work email accounts and a paper questionnaire was distributed internally at the workplace to a total of 6,026 staff.

A total of 3,534 responses were received, giving an overall response rate of 33%. Although this is a slight fall since 2010 (36%), rates across other similar organisations have seen comparable falls, perhaps as a result of the current context of budget cuts and significant changes in the workplace. Particular effort was made in optimising the response rate, including the implementation of the following:

- A comprehensive communication plan;
- Pre-survey workshops with staff and managers;
- Updates three times per week on responses at Service level to ensure encouragement was targeted where most needed;
- Three reminders were sent electronically to those that had not responded within a set period of time during fieldwork; and
- The questionnaire was designed in plain English and kept to a minimum length.

The following table displays the response rates achieved by the two different distribution methods and by Service:

Table 1: Returns and response rate by distribution method and Service

	Sent		Returned		Response rate %
Service	**Online**	**Paper**	**Online**	**Paper**	**Total**
Chief Executive's Service	435	56	239	10	50.7
Education, Culture & Sport	1838	4782	522	1063	23.9
Finance Service	510	6	367	5	72.1
Health & Social Care	780	316	348	44	35.8
Housing & Property Services	409	142	257	29	51.9
Planning & Development	220	7	165	2	73.6
TECS	465	717	268	166	36.7
Unknown			1	48	
Total	**4657**	**6026**	**2167**	**1367**	**33.1**

The sample is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-1.35% at the 95% confidence level on an observed statistic of 50% (adjusted). Therefore, we can be 95% confident that responses are representative of those that would be given by all employees, had each completed a questionnaire, to within +/-1.35% of the percentages reported. For example, if a satisfaction score of 50% is given for a particular question, we can be 95% confident that if we had actually gained a response from every staff member at the Council, the score would lie between 48.65% and 51.35%. This is a highly robust dataset.

The following table presents the number of responses received by Service, with the associated standard error. The profile of the sample is further presented in Section 12.

Table 2: Returns and standard error by Service

	Total returns	Standard error
Chief Exec's Service	249	+/-4.36%
Education, Culture & Sport	1585	+/-2.15%
Finance Service	372	+/-2.68%
Health & Social Care	392	+/-3.97%
Housing & Property Services	286	+/-4.02%
Planning & Development	167	+/-3.09%
TECS	434	+/-3.74%
Unknown	49	-
Total	**3534**	**+/-1.35%**

1.3 The report

The data used in this report is rounded up or down to the nearest whole percentage point. It is for this reason that, on occasions, tables or charts may add up to 99% or 101%. Where tables and graphics do not match exactly to the text in the report this occurs due to the way in which figures are rounded up (or down) when responses are combined. Results that differ in this way should not have a variance that is any larger than 1%.

Significance testing has been used to look for statistical differences in the responses between groups of employees. In this case, the T-Test has been used. Where there is said to be a statistically significant difference between two or more variables, this is based on a 95% confidence level. All differences noted in this report are statistically significant (unless stated).

The following symbols will be found throughout this report:

*%	Denotes where the figure is less than 0.5%
cf.	Denotes the term 'confer', which is to compare. This is used where two or more figures are compared against each other
	The figures that are underlined and in bold type highlight those that are significantly different to the remaining figures.

2   Key findings

2.1   Highlights and lowlights

This section provides a brief summary of the most and least positive scoring areas recorded in the 2012 survey.

2.1.1   Most positive scoring areas

It is encouraging to see that 81% of staff feel satisfied that their job provides interesting work. A further three quarters are satisfied with their working hours (76%) and feel that their line manager is approachable (76%).

81%	• Satisfied that job provides 'interesting work'
76%	• Satisfied with 'working hours'
76%	• Line manager is always/usually approachable
74%	• Satisfied with 'supportive colleagues'
73%	• Line manager always/usually knows his or her job

2.1.2   Least positive scoring areas

Amongst the least positive scoring areas, just 12% of staff feel change was brought about as a result of previous employee surveys at the Council and 14% believe change will result from the 2012 survey. This highlights the importance of timely feedback of the survey results and open and transparent communication of what actions are to be taken. In addition, it is important that Services take a responsibility for assessing their own localised results and, alongside staff, building specific action plans. Communication between HQ and the Areas, as well as between Services is also an area for attention.

12%	• The results of previous staff surveys brought about changes within The Highland Council
13%	• Communication is good between HQ and the Areas
14%	• The results of this survey will bring about change within The Highland Council
16%	• Communications are good between Services
16%	• I would speak highly about morale in my Service

2.2 Changes since 2010

Much of the results collected in 2012 can be directly compared with previous surveys conducted biennially since 2000. The following tables provide a summary of the measures seeing the largest positive change since the last survey in 2010 and the largest negative change.

There are noticeably positive shifts in opinion concerning senior managers, with fewer staff saying they do not know what the senior managers in their Service do (-6% points) and more staff believing senior managers in their Service keep them informed of their views and decisions (+6% points). There has been a significant increase in the proportion of staff that have confidence in the senior managers in their Service (+4% points).

2.2.1 The largest positive changes since 2010

	2010	2012	% change since 2010
I don't know anything about what the senior managers in my Service do	36%	30%	-6%
Senior managers in my Service keep employees informed of their views and decisions	31%	37%	+6%
I have confidence in the senior managers in my Service	31%	35%	+4%
Satisfied with job security	54%	58%	+4%
Satisfied to be working for a successful organisation	39%	43%	+4%
My line manager always/usually keeps me in touch with what's going on	56%	60%	+4%
My Service lives up to the value: 'We will listen and respond to our communities, value their diversity and treat everyone with respect'	38%	42%	+4%
My Service lives up to the value: 'We will work in partnership, learn from others and be adaptable in order to provide the best possible solutions for the Highlands'	32%	36%	+4%

There are only three measures that have seen a significant fall in positive opinion since 2010. More staff feel they have too much work to do (+5% points), whilst fewer staff say they have received induction training (-5% points) and fewer feel satisfied that they accomplish something worthwhile at work (-4% points).

2.2.2 The largest negative changes since 2010

	2010	2012	% change since 2010
I have too much work to do	20%	25%	+5%
I have received induction training	55%	50%	-5%
Satisfied that you feel you have accomplished something worthwhile at work	68%	64%	-4%

2.3 Summary index

An effective method of summarising the variations in employee views is to develop an index score for each broad theme covered by the survey. The questionnaire was divided into a number of distinct themes. The following chart presents the index scores for each theme, with the index calculated by taking the mean average % positive score (i.e. agreement / satisfaction) for each of the statements included within that particular theme.

It is clear that, generally, staff hold more positive views of line management, their work for the Council and the Council as an employer. The least positive views are held of elements of change management, followed closely by Information and Communications and senior management.

Figure 1: Summary index scores by each employment-related theme

3   The Council as an employer

3.1   Introduction

This section explores staff views of the Council as an employer, including their overall level of satisfaction with their job, as well as how they would rate the Council to work for compared to other organisations and how they would speak about the Council to others.

3.2   Overall satisfaction with present job

Exploring how satisfied or dissatisfied employees are with their present job, two thirds (67%) say they are satisfied, whilst 19% are dissatisfied. There has been a statistically significant 3% point increase in satisfaction since 2010.

Figure 2: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job? (All respondents)

	% Satisfied	% Dissatisfied
2012	67	19
2010	64	21
2007	64	21
2005	67	19
2002	64	21
2000	63	21
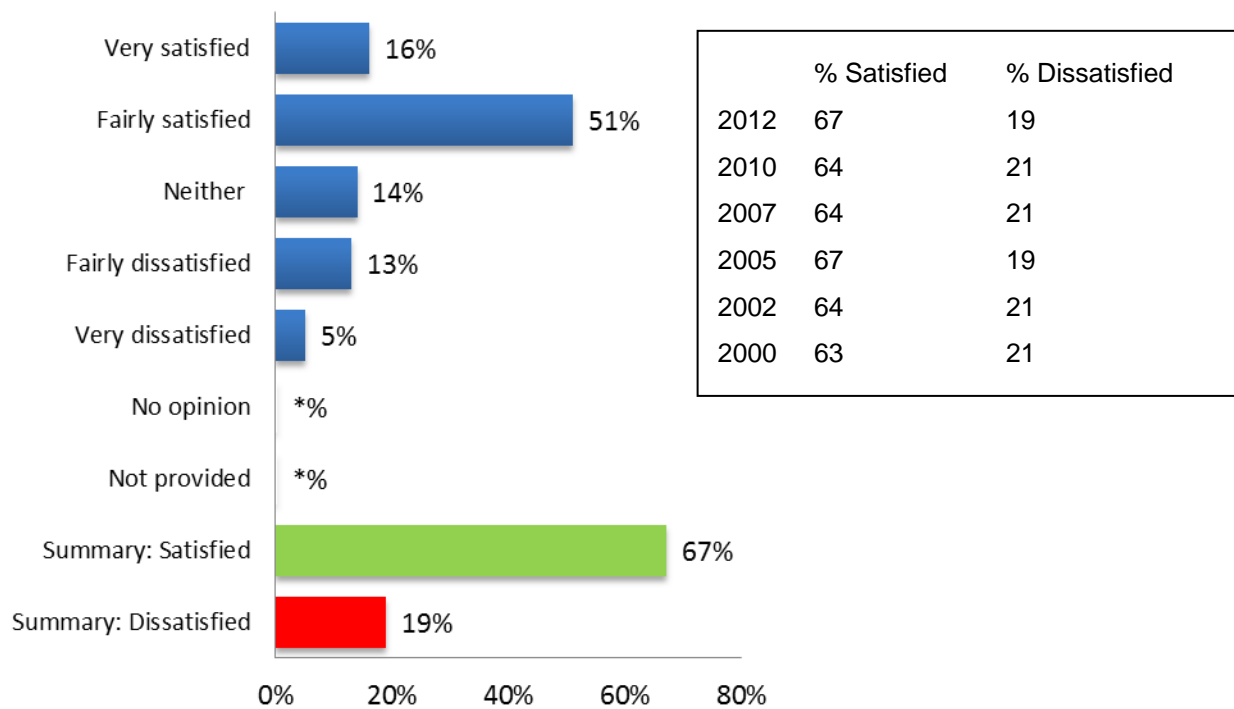
Unweighted base = 3534

Table 4 overleaf presents the levels of satisfaction and dissatisfaction by Service. The figures that are underlined and in bold type highlight those that are significantly different to the remaining figures. Staff in the Chief Executive's Service are most satisfied (73%), followed by staff in Education, Culture and Sport and Finance (excluding Business Support) (both 70%). Satisfaction, however, significantly reduces amongst staff in Housing and Property Services and TECS (both 59%). Nearly a quarter (23%) of TECS staff are dissatisfied with their job.

Looking at trends since 2010, there has been a significant increase in satisfaction amongst Planning and Development staff (+11% points).

Table 3: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job? By Service (All respondents)

Service	Satisfaction	Dissatisfaction	2010 satisfied
Chief Exec's Service	73%	15%	78%
Education, Culture & Sport	70%	17%	66%
Finance Service	67%	17%	65%
Finance – Business Support	61%	20%	-
Finance – excluding Business Support	70%	18%	-
Health & Social Care	66%	19%	61%
Housing & Property Services	**59%**	21%	62%
Planning & Development	68%	20%	57%
TECS	**59%**	23%	59%
Total	**67%**	**19%**	**64%**

Staff members could also be defined into a number of job categories, depending on their grade and job family. Levels of satisfaction do not differ greatly by job category, although just 54% of Clerical staff say they are satisfied. This compares to 83% of Senior Management, 74% in Management and Professional roles, and 73% of Promoted Teachers.

Table 4: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job? By Job Category (All respondents)

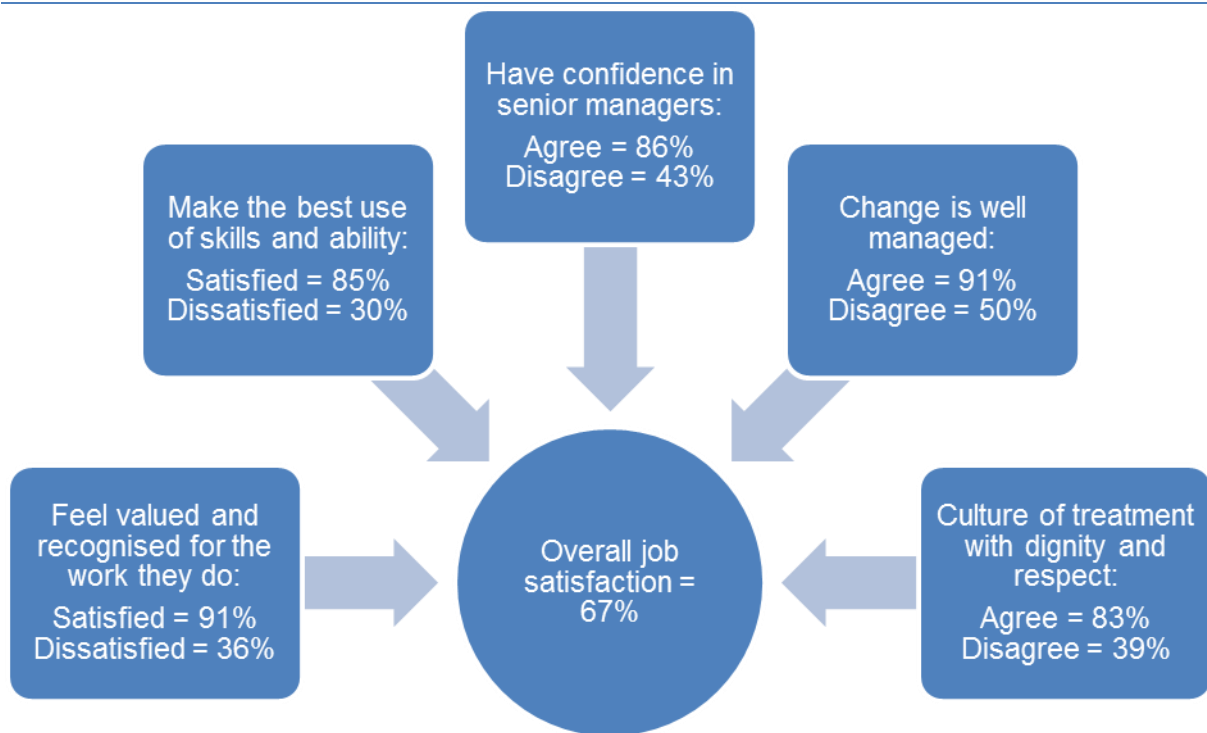| Job category	Satisfaction	Dissatisfaction	Base
Practical and Craft	68%	15%	158
Clerical	**54%**	25%	241
Care and Community	69%	15%	80
Administration and Technical	67%	18%	519
Management and Professional	74%	14%	343
Senior Management	83%	9%	23
Teacher	69%	18%	568
Promoted Teacher	73%	18%	217
Health Professional	57%	24%	84
Total	**67%**	**19%**	**3534**

Levels of satisfaction with the present job also vary by a number of other characteristics. Mirroring the pattern found in 2010, satisfaction reduces the longer a person has been in service at the Council, ranging from 80% of those who have

worked for the Council for less than one year through to 67% of those that have worked for over 20 years. Temporary staff are also more likely to be satisfied with their present job (78% cf. 67% permanent), whilst just 53% of employees with a disability say the same (cf. 68% no disability).

The following figure demonstrates how levels of satisfaction with the present job can vary depending on the views and experiences of staff members. Each of the figures in the chart represent the proportion that are satisfied with their present job. Where the figures vary, this is because a particular staff member may feel for example that their job makes good use of their skills and ability. Amongst these people, 85% are satisfied with their present job. Where they don't feel their job makes good use of their skills and ability, just 30% are satisfied with their job. Another example, where staff members are satisfied that they feel valued for the work they do, 91% are overall satisfied with their present job; however, where they are dissatisfied that they feel valued, their overall level of satisfaction with the job drops substantially to 36%.

Each of the differences shown below is statistically significant, suggesting they all contribute to 'shaping' levels of satisfaction with the present job.

Figure 3: The inter-relationship between a range of factors on levels of overall satisfaction with present job

Have confidence in senior managers:
Agree = 86%
Disagree = 43%

Make the best use of skills and ability:
Satisfied = 85%
Dissatisfied = 30%

Change is well managed:
Agree = 91%
Disagree = 50%

Feel valued and recognised for the work they do:
Satisfied = 91%
Dissatisfied = 36%

Overall job satisfaction = 67%

Culture of treatment with dignity and respect:
Agree = 83%
Disagree = 39%

3.3 Rating the Council as an employer

Continuing to explore overall views of The Highland Council, all employees were asked to rate the Council as an employer compared to other organisations they know or have heard about. In line with 2010, a third (32%) believes it is at least above average (or one of the best) (cf. 31% in 2010). One in five (19%) state the opposite and think it is one of the worst or below average (cf. 22% in 2010).

Figure 4: How would you rate The Highland Council as an employer compared with other organisations that you know or have heard about? (All respondents)
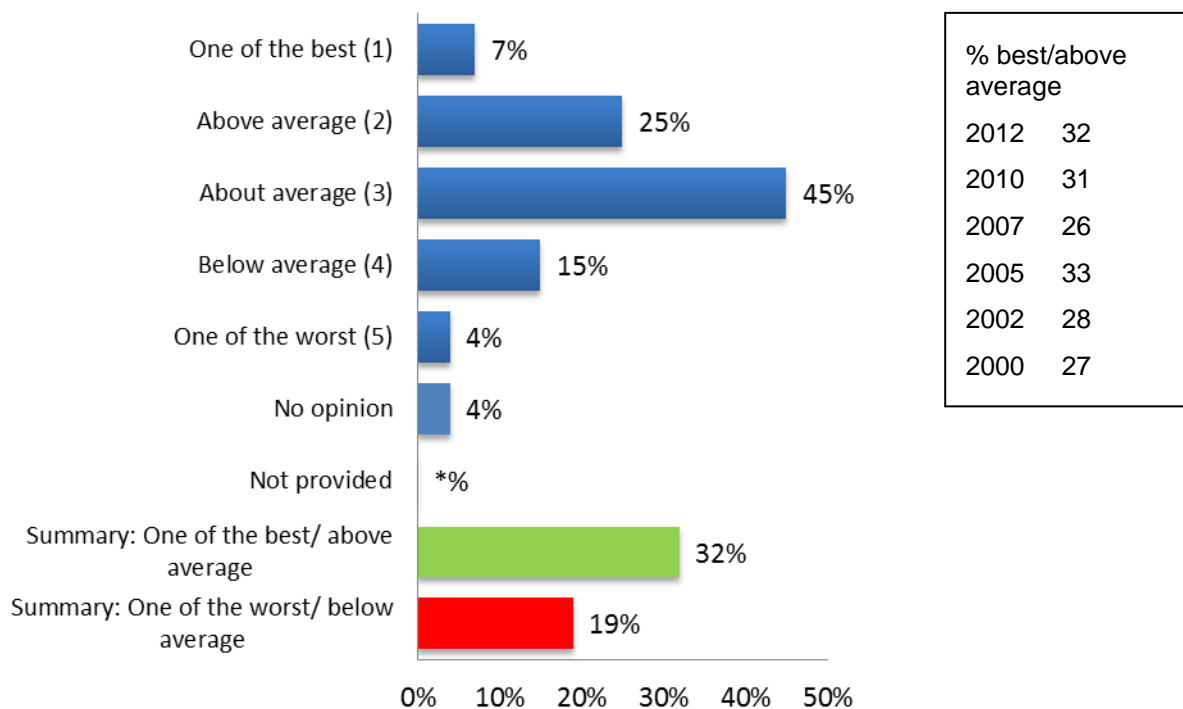
Unweighted base = 3534

There are marked variations by Service, with as high as 47% and 46% of those in the Chief Executive's and Finance Services believing the Council is one of the best or above average. Levels, however, reduce significantly amongst Education, Culture and Sport employees (22%) and those in Health and Social Care (32%). Encouragingly, there have been increases in positive opinion amongst Housing and Property (+8% points) and Planning and Development (+10% points) staff since 2010.

Table 5: How would you rate The Highland Council as an employer compared with other organisations that you know or have heard about? By Service (All respondents)

Service	Best / above average
Chief Exec's Service	47%
Education, Culture & Sport	**<u>22%</u>**
Finance Service	46%
Finance – Business Support	39%
Finance – excluding Business Support	55%
Health & Social Care	**<u>32%</u>**
Housing & Property Services	42%
Planning & Development	43%
TECS	36%
Total	**32%**

By job category, the following are the least likely to feel the Council is one of the best or above average as an employer:

- Health professionals (14%)
- Teachers (18%)
- Clerical staff (19%)

3.4 Employee advocacy

The way employees speak of their employer is known to be a good indicator of their engagement with the organisation, and likewise an engaged workforce is believed to lead to organisational success (MacLeod, 2010). A quarter (25%) of employees say they would speak highly of the Council as an employer, whilst a similar proportion would speak critically (22%). The largest proportion would be neutral (43%). Whilst the proportion of employees who would speak highly of the Council has remained the same since 2010 (25%), the proportion that would speak critically has dropped significantly by 6% points (from 28% in 2010).

Figure 5: Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of The Highland Council to people outside the organisation regarding...? : The Council as an employer (All respondents)

	% speak highly	% be critical
2012	25	22
2010	25	28
2007	23	30
2005	29	26
2002	23	30
2000	24	29
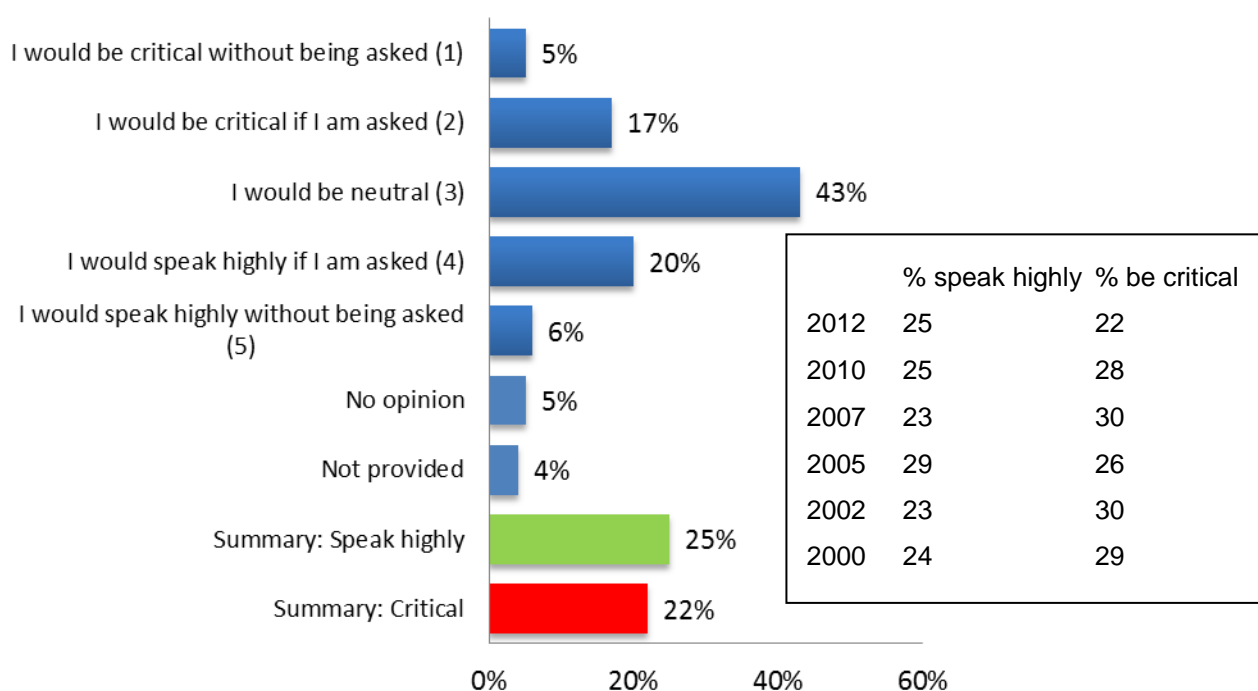
Unweighted base = 3534

As high as 42% of employees in the Chief Executive's Service would speak highly of the Council as an employer. However, levels drop to 18% amongst Education, Culture and Sport staff and 25% in TECS. It is interesting to highlight that although Education, Culture and Sport staff are less likely to be advocates of the Council, they have one of the highest levels of satisfaction with their job.

Table 6: Which of these phrases best describes the way you would speak of The Highland Council to people outside the organisation regarding...? : The Council as an employer - By Service (All respondents)

Service	Speak highly	Be critical
Chief Exec's Service	**42%**	13%
Education, Culture & Sport	**18%**	**27%**
Finance Service	32%	15%
Finance – Business Support	27%	**23%**
Finance – excluding Business Support	38%	11%
Health & Social Care	28%	15%
Housing & Property Services	31%	22%
Planning & Development	38%	14%
TECS	**25%**	22%
Total	**25%**	**22%**

Those in Management and Professional job roles are most likely to speak highly of the Council (45%), and this is significantly higher than Health Professionals (14%), Teachers (15%) and those in Clerical roles (16%). HQ staff are also better advocates of the Council (41% would speak highly), compared to 13% in Badenoch and Strathspey.

Employees were also asked how they would speak to people outside the Council about morale in their Service. Just 16% would speak highly, whilst more than double this proportion would speak critically (35%). There is little variation in opinion by Service, ranging from 23% speaking highly of morale in the Chief Executive's Service to 14% in TECS.

4   Working for The Highland Council

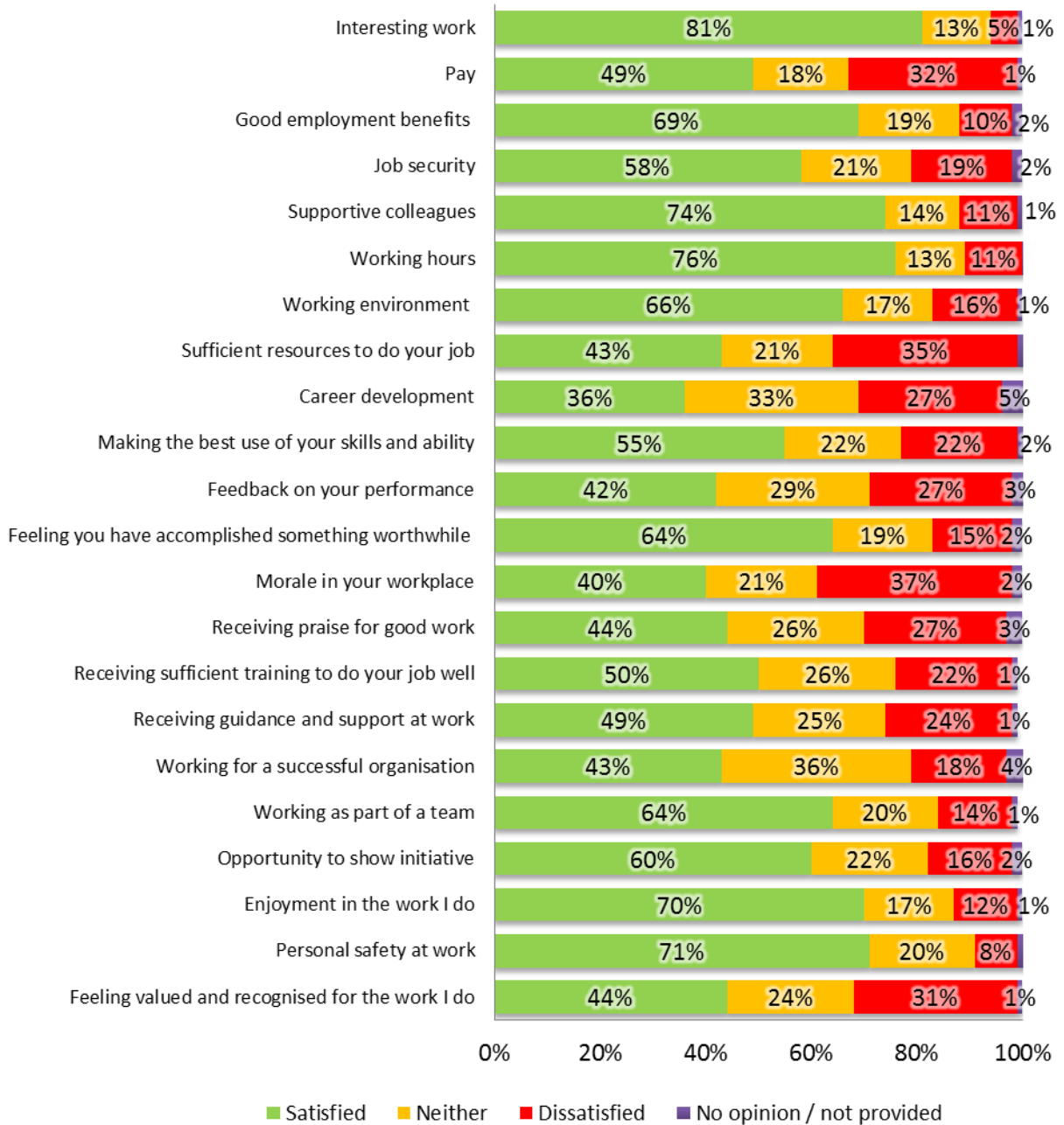### 4.1   Satisfaction with aspects of the job

Figure 6 presents employee views of a range of aspects of their job. It is clear that views are mixed. Positively, 81% of staff are satisfied that they have interesting work, whilst over seven in ten are satisfied with their working hours (76%), having supportive colleagues (74%), personal safety at work (71%), and enjoyment in the work they do (70%).

There are clearly areas seen less positively. Mirroring that found in the previous section, a relatively lower proportion of staff are satisfied with morale in their workplace (40%), and indeed, a similar proportion are dissatisfied (37%). Morale is highest amongst Education, Culture and Sport staff (45%), but lowest amongst Housing and Property staff (26%).

The level to which staff feel valued and recognised for the work they do, as mentioned previously, plays an important role in shaping overall views of working at the Council and satisfaction with jobs. Figure 6 shows that 44% of employees are satisfied that they feel valued, whilst 31% feel dissatisfied. Fewer staff in TECS (33%) and Housing and Property Services (35%) feel valued, as do 37% of Clerical staff. This is an area for attention for the Council. Linked closely with this is staff being satisfied that they get feedback on their performance, which is relatively low at 42%.

Over a third (35%) of staff are dissatisfied that there are sufficient resources to do their job. This is almost as high as the proportion that is satisfied (43%). Exploring this in more detail, 63% of staff in Finance are satisfied, yet this is far lower in TECS (35%) and Planning and Development (37%). Just 22% of Promoted Teachers are satisfied with resources, as are 27% of Health Professionals.

Figure 6: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of these factors in your job? (All respondents)

	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied	No opinion / not provided
Interesting work	81%	13%	5%	1%
Pay	49%	18%	32%	1%
Good employment benefits	69%	19%	10%	2%
Job security	58%	21%	19%	2%
Supportive colleagues	74%	14%	11%	1%
Working hours	76%	13%	11%	
Working environment	66%	17%	16%	1%
Sufficient resources to do your job	43%	21%	35%	
Career development	36%	33%	27%	5%
Making the best use of your skills and ability	55%	22%	22%	2%
Feedback on your performance	42%	29%	27%	3%
Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile	64%	19%	15%	2%
Morale in your workplace	40%	21%	37%	2%
Receiving praise for good work	44%	26%	27%	3%
Receiving sufficient training to do your job well	50%	26%	22%	1%
Receiving guidance and support at work	49%	25%	24%	1%
Working for a successful organisation	43%	36%	18%	4%
Working as part of a team	64%	20%	14%	1%
Opportunity to show initiative	60%	22%	16%	2%
Enjoyment in the work I do	70%	17%	12%	1%
Personal safety at work	71%	20%	8%	
Feeling valued and recognised for the work I do	44%	24%	31%	1%

Unweighted base: 3534

Exploring how satisfaction with each of the aspects has changed over time, there have only been a few significant increases or decreases. More employees are satisfied with job security (58% cf. 54% in 2010) and with working for a successful organisation (43% cf. 39%). However, fewer feel satisfied that they accomplish something worthwhile at work (64% cf. 68% in 2010).
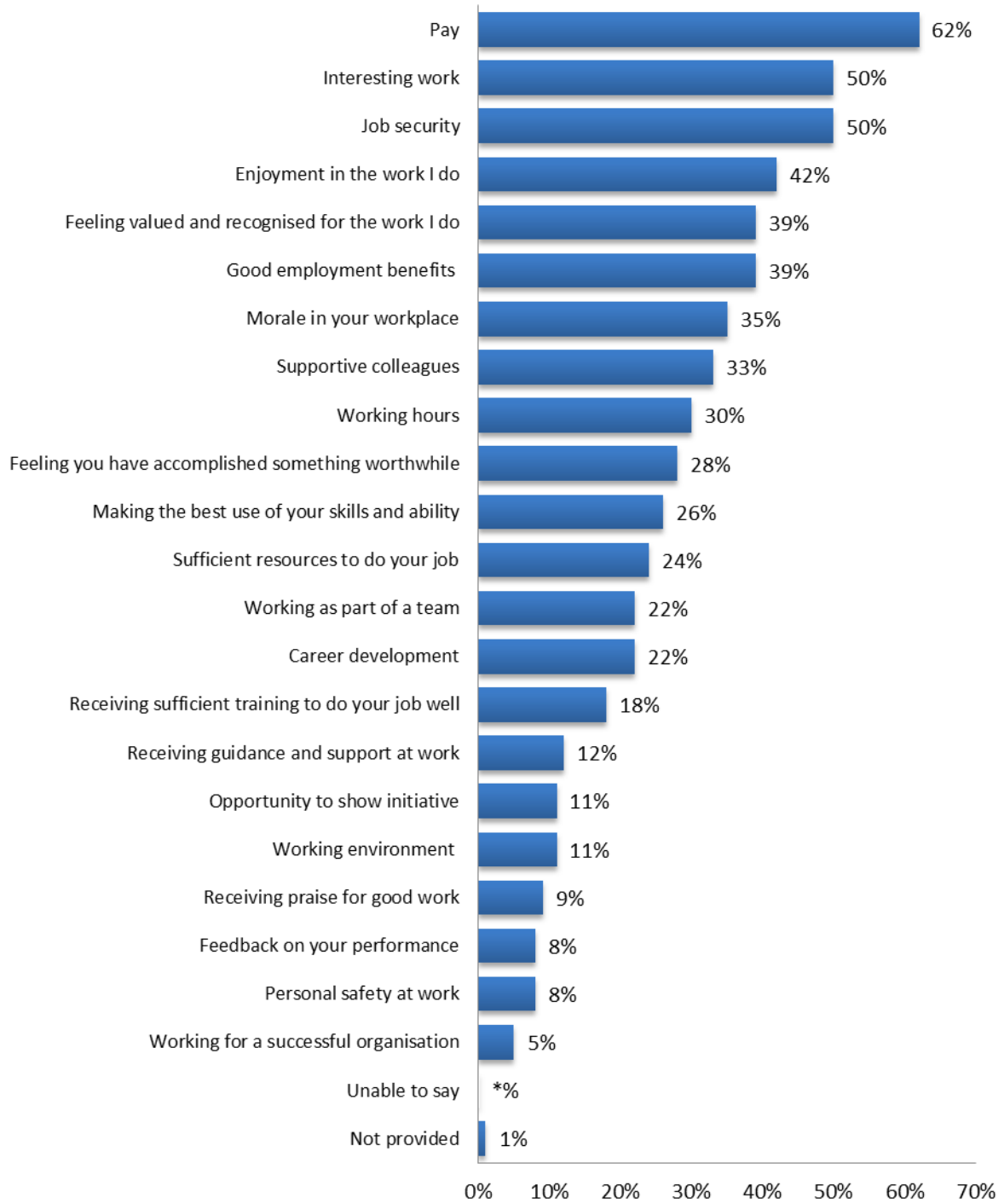
Table 7: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of these factors in your job? % satisfied over time (All respondents)

	2000	2002	2005	2007	2010	2012
Interesting work	76%	78%	80%	80%	80%	81%
Pay	42%	48%	49%	43%	51%	49%
Good employment benefits (e.g. leave, pensions, flexible working)	67%	70%	69%	68%	71%	69%
Job security	62%	62%	70%	59%	54%	58%
Supportive colleagues	70%	72%	73%	72%	72%	74%
Working hours	70%	71%	75%	74%	77%	76%
Working environment (e.g. health & safety, security)	56%	58%	58%	60%	64%	66%
Sufficient resources (finance, equipment, computers, staff) to do your job	33%	34%	41%	40%	42%	43%
Career development	28%	28%	34%	33%	36%	36%
Making the best use of your skills and ability	50%	50%	54%	52%	54%	55%
Feedback on your performance	32%	35%	39%	39%	42%	42%
Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work	61%	64%	64%	67%	68%	64%
Morale in your workplace	38%	41%	43%	42%	42%	40%
Receiving praise for good work	37%	39%	42%	42%	45%	44%
Receiving sufficient training to do your job well	37%	40%	47%	48%	51%	50%
Receiving guidance and support at work	N/A	N/A	44%	47%	48%	49%
Working for a successful organisation	34%	37%	41%	39%	39%	43%
Working as part of a team	58%	60%	62%	62%	63%	64%
Opportunity to show initiative	53%	56%	56%	58%	61%	60%
Enjoyment in the work I do	68%	70%	71%	70%	71%	70%
Personal safety at work	65%	67%	68%	68%	71%	71%
Feeling valued and recognised for the work I do	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	44%
Unweighted base	**5758**	**5043**	**4588**	**5056**	**4416**	**3534**

4.2 Importance of aspects of the job

Following on from this, all employees were asked to consider the same list of aspects of their job and select up to six that they feel are most important to them. Figure 7 overleaf shows that the highest proportion of staff feel pay is the most important to them (62%), followed by interesting work (50%), job security (50%), and enjoyment in the work they do (42%). These are the same priorities stated in 2010 (64%, 57%, 53% and 51% respectively).

Figure 7: Looking at the same list again, which six are the most important to you? (All respondents)

Category	Percentage
Pay	62%
Interesting work	50%
Job security	50%
Enjoyment in the work I do	42%
Feeling valued and recognised for the work I do	39%
Good employment benefits	39%
Morale in your workplace	35%
Supportive colleagues	33%
Working hours	30%
Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile	28%
Making the best use of your skills and ability	26%
Sufficient resources to do your job	24%
Working as part of a team	22%
Career development	22%
Receiving sufficient training to do your job well	18%
Receiving guidance and support at work	12%
Opportunity to show initiative	11%
Working environment	11%
Receiving praise for good work	9%
Feedback on your performance	8%
Personal safety at work	8%
Working for a successful organisation	5%
Unable to say	*%
Not provided	1%

Unweighted base: 3534

4.3 Prioritising action – importance versus satisfaction

It is possible to plot each of the aspects of the job on a chart to reflect its current performance (% satisfied) against how important it is to staff. This provides a method of prioritising where action is required; where priorities are those aspects deemed to be of high importance but not performing as well (lower satisfaction). These aspects sit towards the bottom right hand side of chart.

The priorities look to be pay, job security, morale and feeling valued and recognised.

Figure 8: Satisfaction versus importance – prioritising action
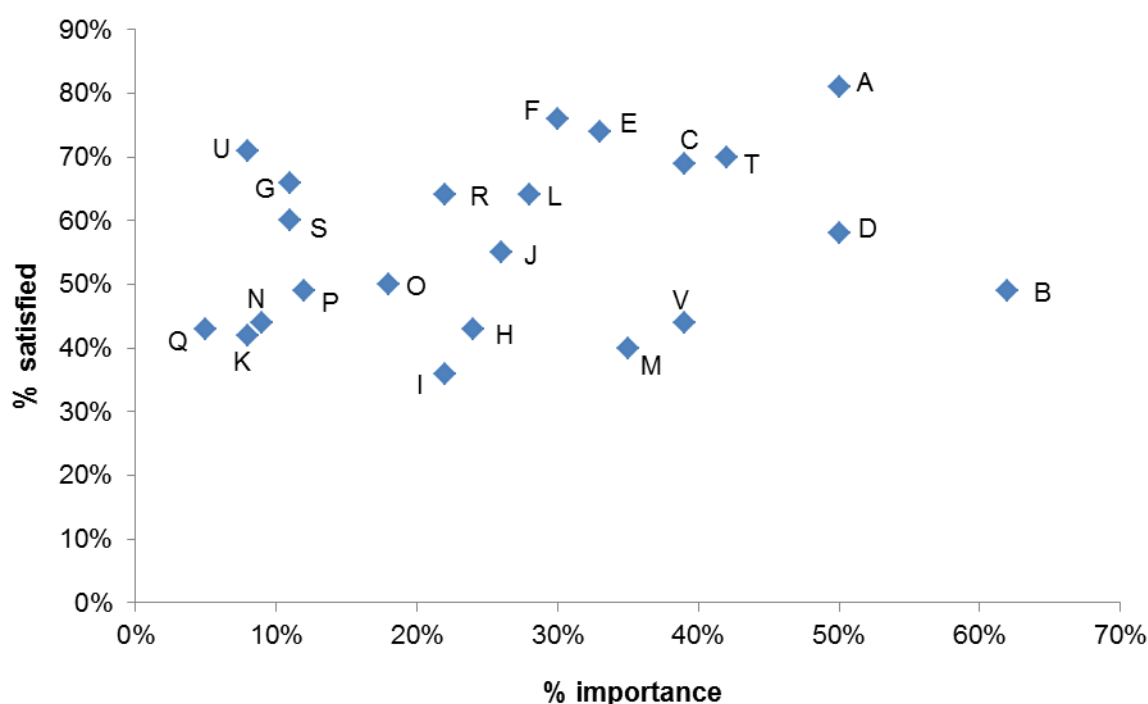
A	Interesting work	L	Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work
B	Pay	M	Morale in your workplace
C	Good employment benefits (e.g. leave, pensions, flexible working)	N	Receiving praise for good work
D	Job security	O	Receiving sufficient training to do your job well
E	Supportive colleagues	P	Receiving guidance and support at work
F	Working hours	Q	Working for a successful organisation
G	Working environment (e.g. health & safety, security)	R	Working as part of a team
H	Sufficient resources (finance, equipment, computers, staff) to do your job	S	Opportunity to show initiative
I	Career development	T	Enjoyment in the work I do
J	Making the best use of your skills and ability	U	Personal safety at work
K	Feedback on your performance	V	Feeling valued and recognised for the work I do

4.4 Workloads and stress

A number of questions were included in the survey exploring workloads and the level of stress experienced during work.

Looking firstly at the amount of work done in a normal week, a quarter (25%) says they have too much work to do. This is an increase of 5% points since 2010 (20%) but reverts back to levels experienced in 2002. The largest proportion has a heavy workload but they can cope with it (43%), and a further quarter (24%) believes they have the right amount of work to do.

Figure 9: Generally speaking, how do you feel about the amount of work you do in your normal working week? (All respondents)

% too much	
2012	25
2010	20
2007	22
2005	23
2002	26
2000	27
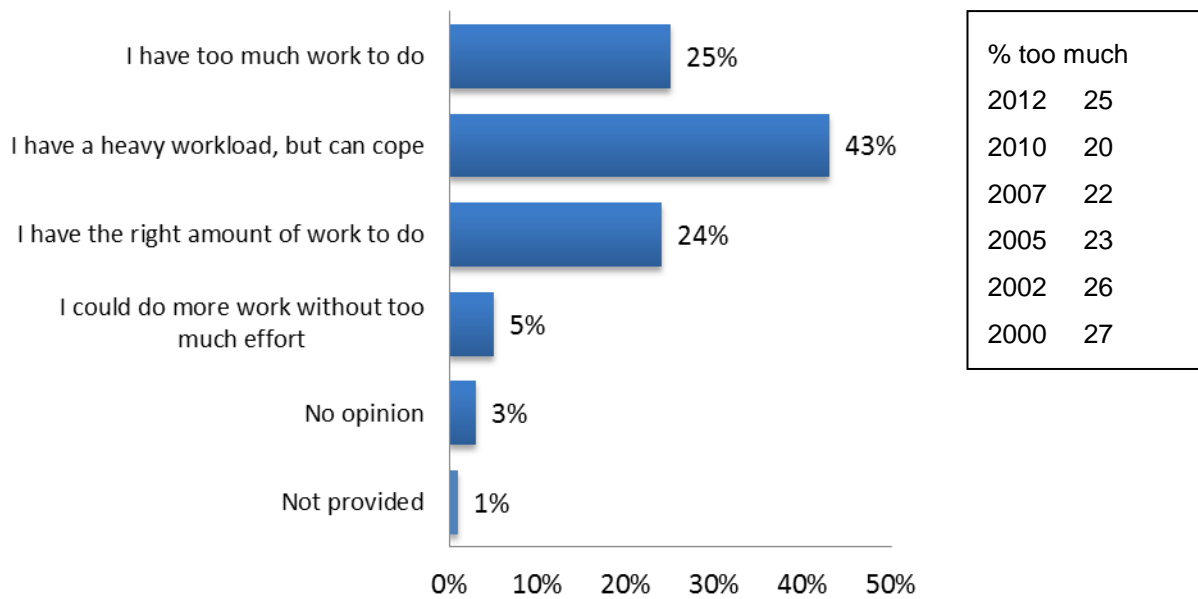
Unweighted base = 3534

Following on from this, over two in five (43%) employees believe they have high or above average levels of stress. This is, again, an increase since 2010 (+3% points). One in six (18%) staff say they have low or no stress at all.

Figure 10: Generally, what level of stress, if at all, would you say you experience at work? (All respondents)
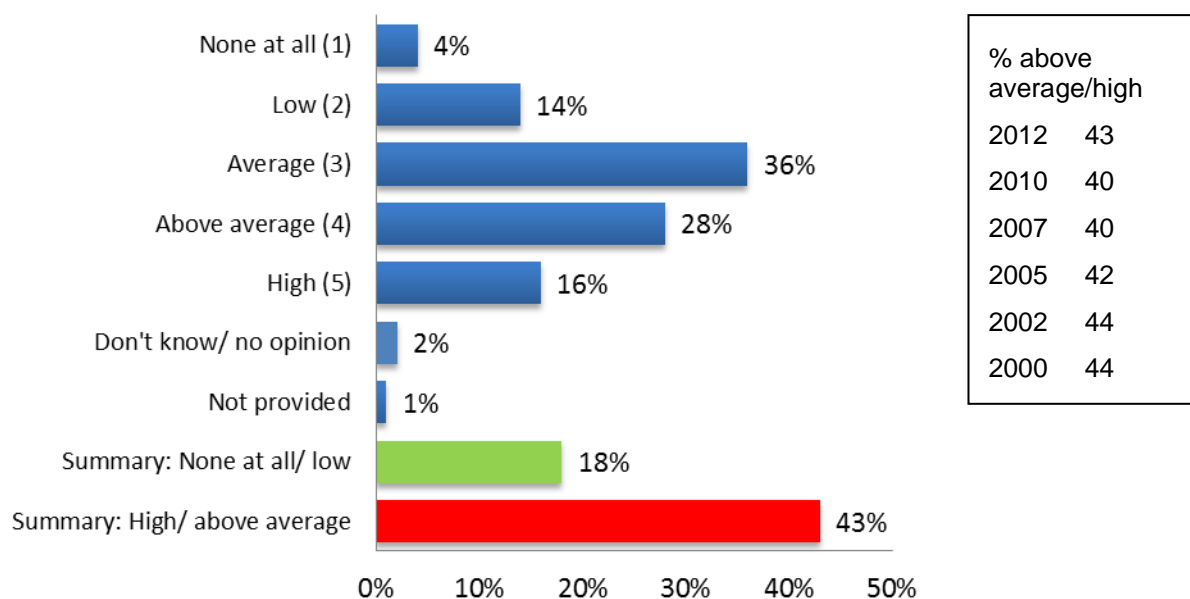
Unweighted base = 3534

Looking at both the workload and stress measures side by side, it can be seen that employees within Education, Culture and Sport are most likely to have too much workload (31%) and high or above average stress levels (46%). Health and Social Care staff have slightly less workloads (25%), but higher levels of stress (50%), whilst stress increases further again in Housing and Property Services (52%).

Table 8: Generally speaking, how do you feel about the amount of work you do in your normal working week? And Generally, what level of stress, if at all, would you say you experience at work? By Service (All respondents)

Service	Too much workload	Above average / high stress
Chief Exec's Service	13%	35%
Education, Culture & Sport	**31%**	**46%**
Finance Service	16%	35%
Finance – Business Support	18%	36%
Finance – excluding Business Support	14%	35%
Health & Social Care	**25%**	**50%**
Housing & Property Services	23%	**52%**
Planning & Development	23%	40%
TECS	19%	37%
Total	**25%**	**43%**

Clearly, Promoted Teachers display the greatest perceived workloads (52% too much), and three quarters (74%) say they have high or above average stress. Fewer in Senior Management say they have too much work (30%), but an equally high proportion feel they have above average or high stress (70%).

Table 9: Generally speaking, how do you feel about the amount of work you do in your normal working week? And Generally, what level of stress, if at all, would you say you experience at work? By Job Category (All respondents)

Job Category	Too much workload	Above average / high stress
Practical and Craft	9%	18%
Clerical	14%	27%
Care and Community	20%	23%
Administration and Technical	15%	38%
Management and Professional	32%	53%
Senior Management	30%	**70%**
Teacher	37%	54%
Promoted Teacher	**52%**	**74%**
Health Professional	**38%**	54%
Total	**25%**	**43%**

To explore this topic in more detail, all staff were asked to select from a list all the aspects that cause them stress at work. Figure 11 overleaf shows that too much work is the most common reason (40%), followed by the general nature of the job (38%) and lack of resources (35%). Interestingly, some reasons have been selected by fewer employees than in 2010, which seems contrary to the fact that stress seems to have increased. These include too much bureaucracy (-6% points), lack of resources (-3% points) and job security (-5% points).

Figure 11: Which of the following, if any, are causes of stress for you? Top 10 (All respondents)
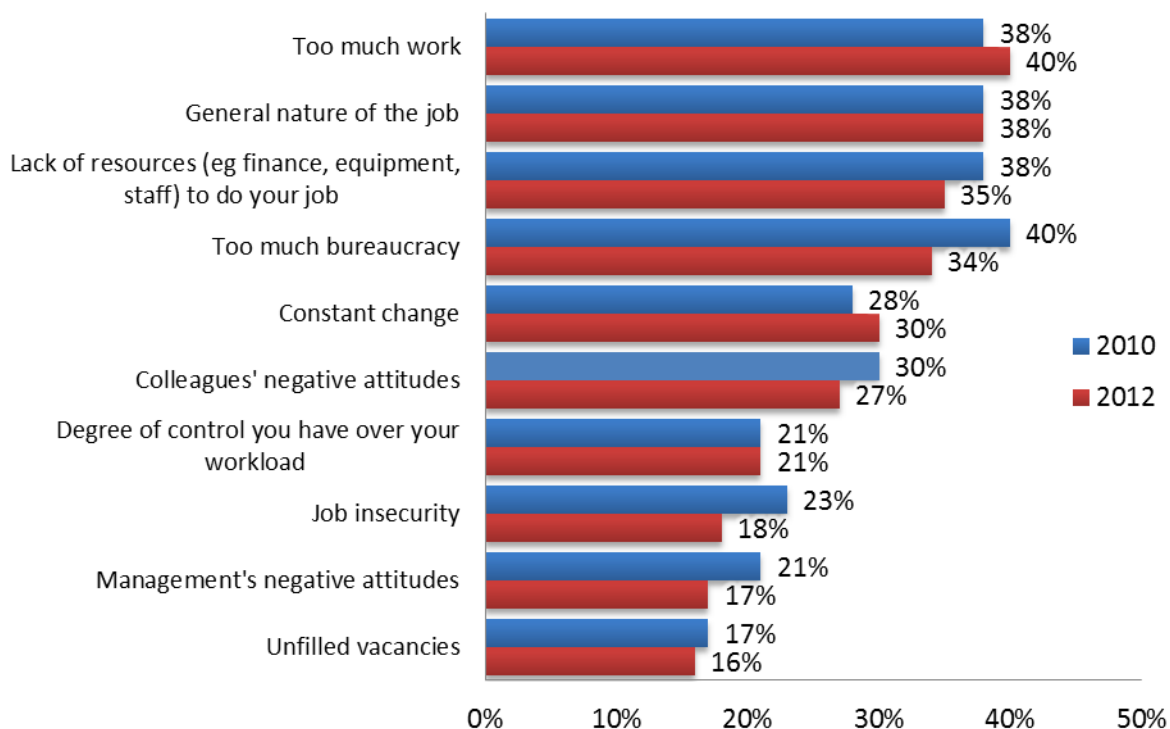
Unweighted base = 3534
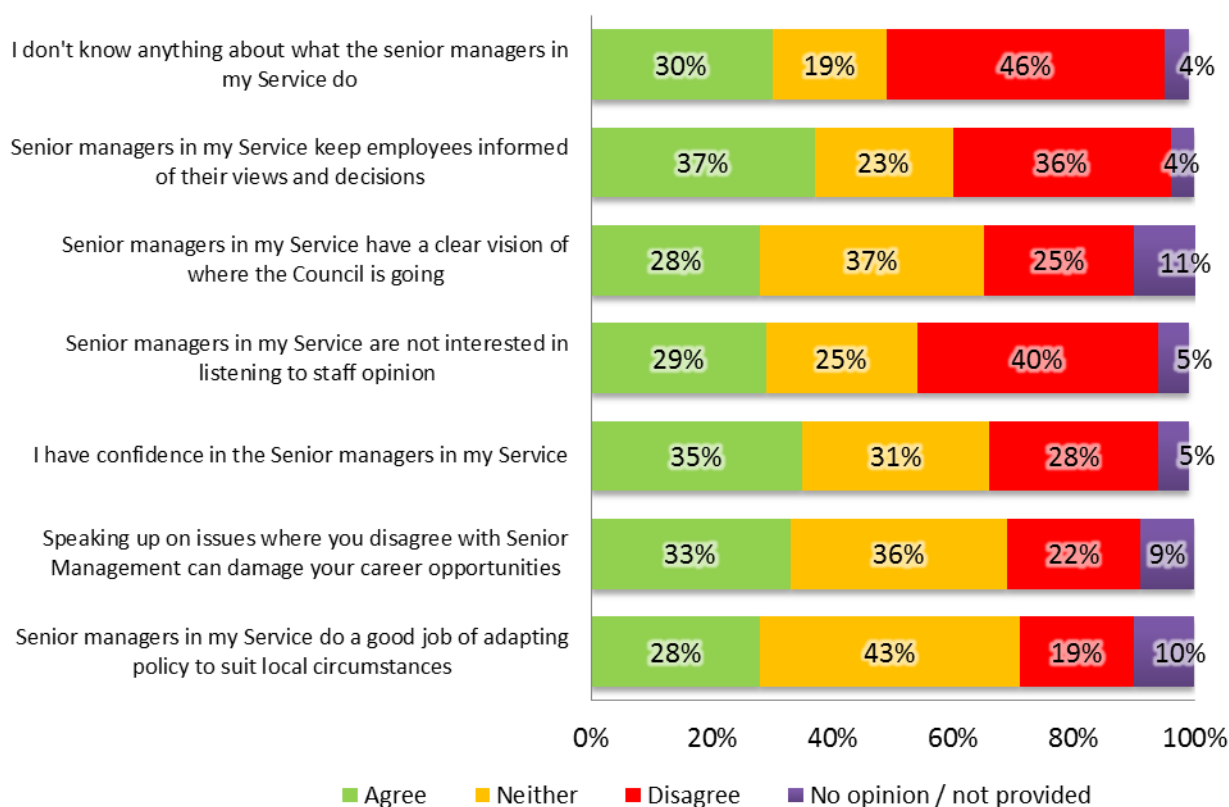
5   Management

5.1   Introduction

This section explores views of the management of the Council, including senior management (Directors, Heads of Service, Corporate Manager, Area Service Managers and Head Teachers) and line management / supervision.

5.2   Senior management

A number of statements were presented to staff concerning senior management and they were asked to rate their level of agreement with each. Views are relatively consistent from one statement to the next, with in some cases a larger proportion saying they neither agree nor disagree. This level of indecision is perhaps a reflection of staff not feeling informed enough to make a choice either way. There are also instances where the level of positive opinion is balanced with the level of critical opinion – in particular, 37% agree that senior managers keep employees informed of their views and decisions, but 36% disagree with this. Likewise, 28% feel senior managers have a clear vision of where the Council is going, but 25% disagree with this.

Figure 12: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning the management of your Service (meaning Directors, Heads of Service, Corporate Manager, Area Service Managers, and Head Teachers)? (All respondents)

Unweighted base: 3534

Although views of senior management seem to be polarised, there is a noticeable positive shift since 2010, and is the theme in the survey that has seen the most change over time. Fewer staff say they don't know anything about what their senior managers do (30%, -6% points), and more agree that senior managers keep them informed of views and decisions (37%, +6% points).

Table 10: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning the management of your Service (meaning Directors, Heads of Service, Corporate Manager, Area Service Managers, and Head Teachers)? % agree over time (All respondents)

	2000	2002	2005	2007	2010	2012
I don't know anything about what the senior managers in my Service do	33%	38%	36%	36%	36%	30%
Senior managers in my Service keep employees informed of their views and decisions	31%	31%	30%	29%	31%	37%
Senior managers in my Service have a clear vision of where the Council is going	19%	23%	24%	24%	27%	28%
Senior managers in my Service are not interested in listening to staff opinion	31%	32%	30%	29%	29%	29%
I have confidence in the Senior managers in my Service	26%	30%	31%	30%	31%	35%
Speaking up on issues where you disagree with Senior Management can damage your career opportunities	36%	37%	36%	34%	34%	33%
Senior managers in my Service do a good job of adapting policy to suit local circumstances	26%	25%	25%	24%	26%	28%
Unweighted base	5758	5043	4588	5056	4416	3534

Key variations by Service and job category are as follows:

- 47% of staff in TECS do not know anything about what senior managers in their Service do, as do 53% in Practical and Craft roles and 45% in Care and Community roles.
- Similarly, 48% of staff in TECS disagree that senior managers keep them informed of their views and decisions, as do 43% in Practical and Craft.
- 44% of staff in Care and Community agree that senior managers are not interested in listening to staff opinion.
- 41% of Planning and Development staff have confidence in senior management; however this drops to 28% of TECS staff and 31% in Housing and Property Services. A third (33%) of Teachers do not have confidence in senior managers.

5.3 Line management

Looking now at views of line management, it is immediately noticeable that perceptions become more positive in comparison to those held of senior management. This is a common pattern found across all large organisations, where there is more detachment from senior managers and therefore a more critical assessment.

Positively, approximately seven in ten employees agree that their line manager is approachable (76%), their line manager knows his/her job (73%) and is open and honest (70%). 68% also feel their line manager is available to speak to when they need to.

There are a few areas in which views are shown to drop. Just over two in five (42%) employees feel their line manager does something about the pressure they come under at work, with almost a quarter (23%) disagreeing with this statement, and 43% feel their ideas and suggestions are acted upon. A quarter (24%) of staff also disagree that their training and development needs are discussed.

Figure 13: Listed below are a number of statements that could be used to describe your immediate line manager or supervisor. Please indicate the extent to which the following apply to you? (All respondents)
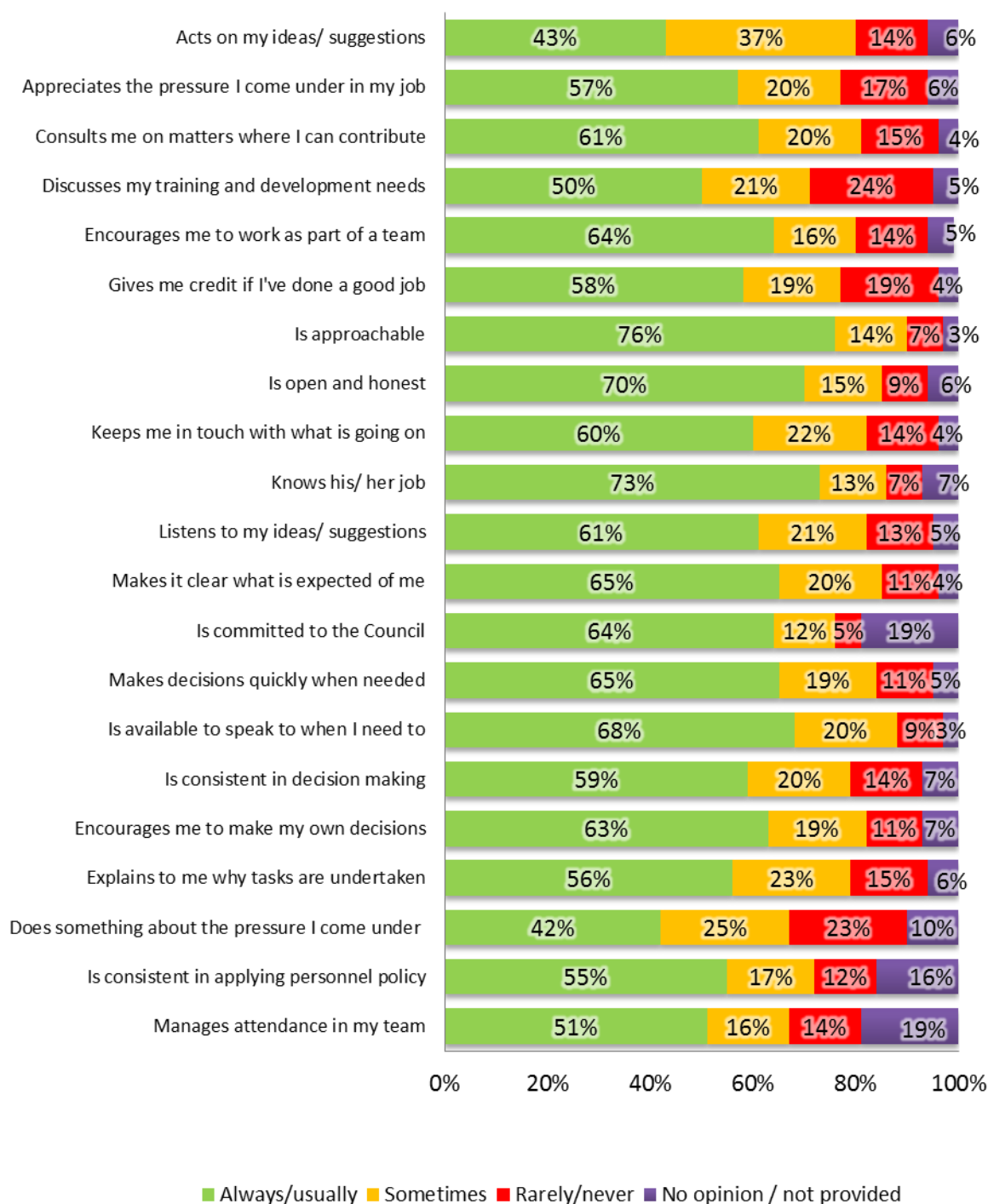
Unweighted base: 3534

Positively, there have been no drops in positive opinion since 2010, with the majority of measures remaining consistent over this time. Where there are changes, more staff feel their line manager encourages them to work as part of a team (64%, +3% points) and more staff feel they are kept in touch with what is going on (60%, +4% points).

Table 11: Listed below are a number of statements that could be used to describe your immediate line manager or supervisor. Please indicate the extent to which the following apply to you? % always / usually over time (All respondents)

|						
Acts on my ideas/ suggestions	35%	38%	40%	43%	42%	43%
Appreciates the pressure I come under in my job	51%	54%	54%	55%	56%	57%
Consults me on matters where I can contribute	56%	58%	58%	59%	59%	61%
Discusses my training and development needs	35%	39%	44%	46%	49%	50%
Encourages me to work as part of a team	53%	55%	57%	59%	61%	64%
Gives me credit if I've done a good job	50%	52%	54%	55%	56%	58%
Is approachable	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%	76%
Is open and honest	66%	67%	67%	69%	68%	70%
Keeps me in touch with what is going on	52%	54%	54%	57%	56%	60%
Knows his/ her job	72%	72%	72%	73%	73%	73%
Listens to my ideas/ suggestions	56%	57%	58%	60%	60%	61%
Makes it clear what is expected of me	60%	61%	60%	63%	64%	65%
Is committed to the Council	54%	58%	61%	63%	65%	64%
Makes decisions quickly when needed	61%	63%	63%	65%	65%	65%
Is available to speak to when I need to	64%	66%	66%	68%	69%	68%
Is consistent in decision making	54%	57%	56%	58%	58%	59%
Encourages me to make my own decisions	55%	57%	58%	61%	62%	63%
Explains to me why tasks are undertaken	49%	51%	52%	55%	57%	56%
Does something about the pressure I come under in my job	30%	34%	37%	40%	41%	42%
Is consistent in applying personnel policy	N/A	N/A	52%	54%	56%	55%
Manages attendance in my team	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	51%
Unweighted base	**5758**	**5043**	**4588**	**5056**	**4416**	**3534**

6   Information and communication

6.1   Introduction

This section explores a number of measures of communication and information sharing across the organisation. It looks at how informed staff feel about what is going on, how well different parts of the Council work together, and what sources of information are used and preferred to keep up to date.

6.2   Corporate communication

Over half (52%) of staff say they feel fully or fairly well informed about what is going on in the Council as a whole. This is in line with that achieved in 2010 (53%). Over a third (36%) say they have limited information or know not much about what issues are affecting the Council, which is a 6% point drop since 2010 (42%).

Figure 14: Which of the following phrases would you say best applies to The Highland Council as a whole (All respondents)

	% fully/fairly	% limited/not much
2012	52	36
2010	53	42
2007	41	49
2005	52	42
2002	48	45
2000	38	54
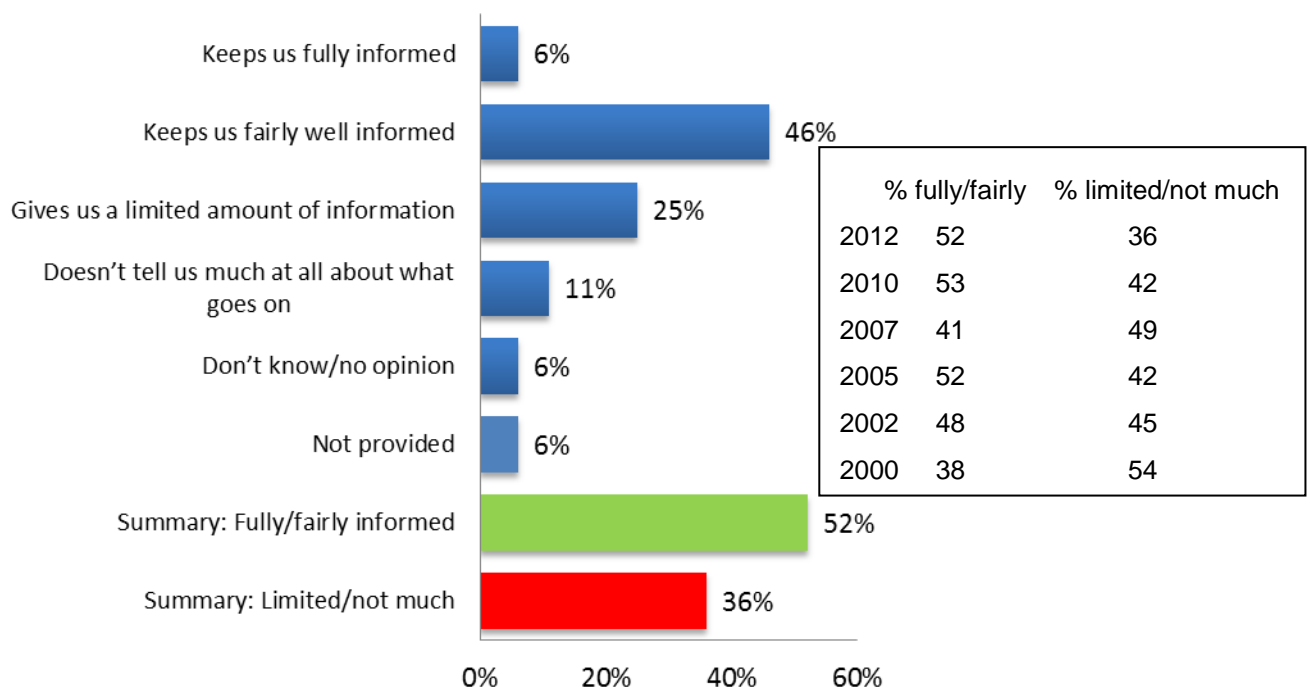
Unweighted base = 3534

Corporate communications look to be reaching some parts of the Council better than others. So whilst 66% in Chief Executive's Service, 64% in Planning and Development, and 63% in Housing and Property Services feel fully or fairly well informed, this drops to 37% in TECS. Indeed, the proportion feeling informed in TECS has dropped by 9% points since 2010.

Table 12: Which of the following phrases would you say best applies to The Highland Council as a whole - % fully / fairly informed (All respondents)

Chief Exec's Service	68%	66%	-2%
Education, Culture & Sport	53%	48%	-5%
Finance Service	57%	61%	+4%
Finance – Business Support	-	58%	-
Finance – excluding Business Support	-	70%	-
Health & Social Care	50%	57%	+7%
Housing & Property Services	56%	63%	+7%
Planning & Development	61%	64%	+3%
TECS	46%	<u>**37%**</u>	-9%
Total	**53%**	**52%**	**-1%**

6.3 Service and Area communications

Employees are slightly more likely to feel informed about the issues affecting the Service they work in (55%) and the Area they work in (56%) than the Council as a whole (52%). TECS staff are the least likely to feel informed of both their Service and the Area where they work (40% and 46% respectively).

Table 13: Which of the following phrases would you say best applies to the Service and Area you work in - % fully/fairly informed (All respondents)

Chief Exec's Service	62%	64%
Education, Culture & Sport	54%	55%
Finance Service	61%	67%
Finance – Business Support	57%	63%
Finance – excluding Business Support	63%	73%
Health & Social Care	60%	60%
Housing & Property Services	58%	59%
Planning & Development	66%	61%
TECS	<u>**40%**</u>	<u>**46%**</u>

Total		55%	56%

6.4 Attitudes towards communications

Exploring staff attitudes of communications, it is immediately noticeable that communications across the Council are an area for attention, and this follows on from the same message identified in the 2010 survey. Just 16% of staff agree communications are good between Services, which is almost 3 times lower than the proportion that disagree with this. Just 11% of Planning and Development staff agree with this statement, and 55% in Housing and Property Services disagree. Similarly, 13% of staff agree that communications are good between HQ and the Areas, with over double this proportion disagreeing with the statement. Fewer than 1 in 10 staff in the following Areas feel communications with HQ are good:

- Nairn (7%)
- Badenoch and Strathspey (8%)
- Mid and Wester Ross (9%)

Figure 15: Please specify how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning communication and information? (All respondents)
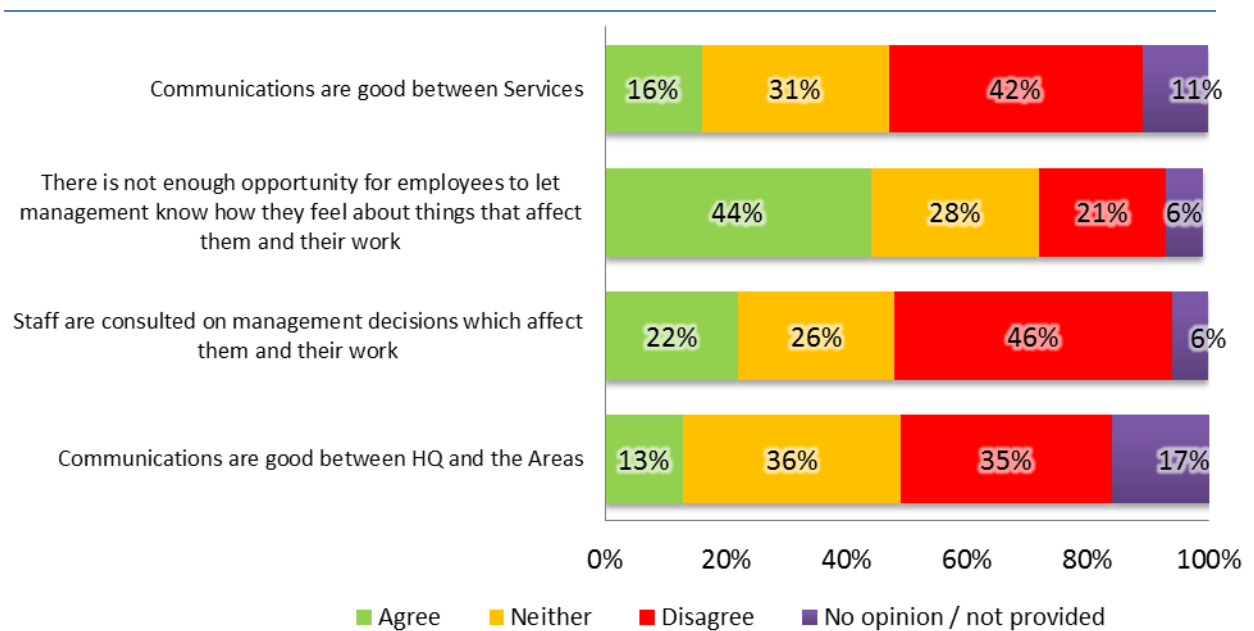
Unweighted base: 3534

There has been little movement in opinions over time. However, fewer staff believe they do not have enough opportunity to let management know how they feel about the things that affect them and their work (-4% points since 2010).

Table 14: Please specify how strongly you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning communication and information? % agree over time (All respondents)

Communications are good between Services	14%	14%	15%	14%	15%	16%
There is not enough opportunity for employees to let management know how they feel about things that affect them and their work	60%	53%	50%	50%	48%	44%
Staff are consulted on management decisions which affect them and their work	21%	21%	22%	20%	21%	22%
Communications are good between HQ and the Areas	N/A	13%	14%	12%	12%	13%
Unweighted base	**5758**	**5043**	**4588**	**5056**	**4416**	**3534**

6.5   Sources of information

Table 16 presents the proportion of staff that utilise each type of communication method to find out what is going on in the Council. E-mail (64%), informal conversation with colleagues (62%), personal contact with line manager / supervisor (56%) and the Intranet (56%) are the most common methods used. These are the same top 4 recorded in 2010, although fewer mention informal conversation with colleagues as a source in 2012 (-5% points). Service newsletters are also used by fewer staff (-15% points), as is the press / external media (-10% points).

Table 15: Listed below are a number of ways in which you may receive information about the Council. Which are currently sources of information that you use? (All respondents)

E-mail	62%	64%	+2%
Informal conversation with colleagues	67%	62%	-5%
Personal contact from Immediate Manager / Supervisor	56%	56%	=
Intranet	59%	56%	-3%
Press / External media	53%	43%	-10%
Meetings with Immediate Management	39%	40%	+1%
Big Picture (Council newsletter)	42%	38%	-4%
Notice boards	38%	35%	-3%
Service newsletters	50%	35%	-15%
Team briefings (face to face)	35%	34%	-1%
Pay slips	32%	31%	-1%
Circulars/Internal memos	31%	28%	-3%
Trade Union	34%	23%	-11%
Friends / neighbours / relatives	12%	12%	=
Councillors	7%	6%	-1%
Through other organisations	7%	5%	-2%
None of the above	-	1%	-
Not provided	-	2%	-
Unweighted base	**4416**	**3534**	

All employees were also asked to consider which methods they would prefer to use to find out what is going on in the Council. The chart overleaf shows that e-mail is the preference (50%), followed by personal contact from the line manager / supervisor (32%) and meetings with the line manager / supervisor (30%).

Figure 16: Listed below are a number of ways in which you may receive information about the Council. Which are currently sources of information that you use and which are sources that you would prefer to receive information? (All respondents)

Source	Currently receive info	Prefer to receive info
E-mail	64%	50%
Personal contact from Immediate Manager	56%	32%
Meetings with Immediate Management	40%	30%
Team briefings (face to face)	34%	28%
Intranet	56%	24%
Service newsletters	35%	14%
Big Picture (Council newsletter)	38%	12%
Notice boards	35%	9%
Circulars/Internal memos	28%	9%
Pay slips	31%	8%
Informal conversation with colleagues	62%	4%
Press / External media	43%	3%
Trade Union	23%	3%
Councillors	6%	1%
Friends / neighbours / relatives	12%	*%
Through other organisations	5%	*%

Unweighted base = 3534

7 Training and Performance Improvement

7.1 Attitudes towards training and performance improvement

There are mixed responses concerning training and performance improvement. Positively, 69% of staff say they have received training, yet more staff disagree than agree that they receive training that is relevant to their future career development (34% cf. 31%). Two in five (41%) staff in Health and Social Care agree they have had relevant training, yet this drops to 25% in Planning and Development and 27% in TECS.

A greater proportion of staff agree they receive training that is relevant to their job (48%), and this stands at 56% in Health and Social Care and Finance. However, it drops to 41% in TECS and just 24% amongst Clerical staff.

Over half (55%) of staff are aware of the training opportunities available to them, but 21% are not aware. A lack of awareness is higher in TECS (29%) and staff in Care and Community (34%) and Clerical (32%) roles.

Figure 17: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning training and performance improvement? (All respondents)
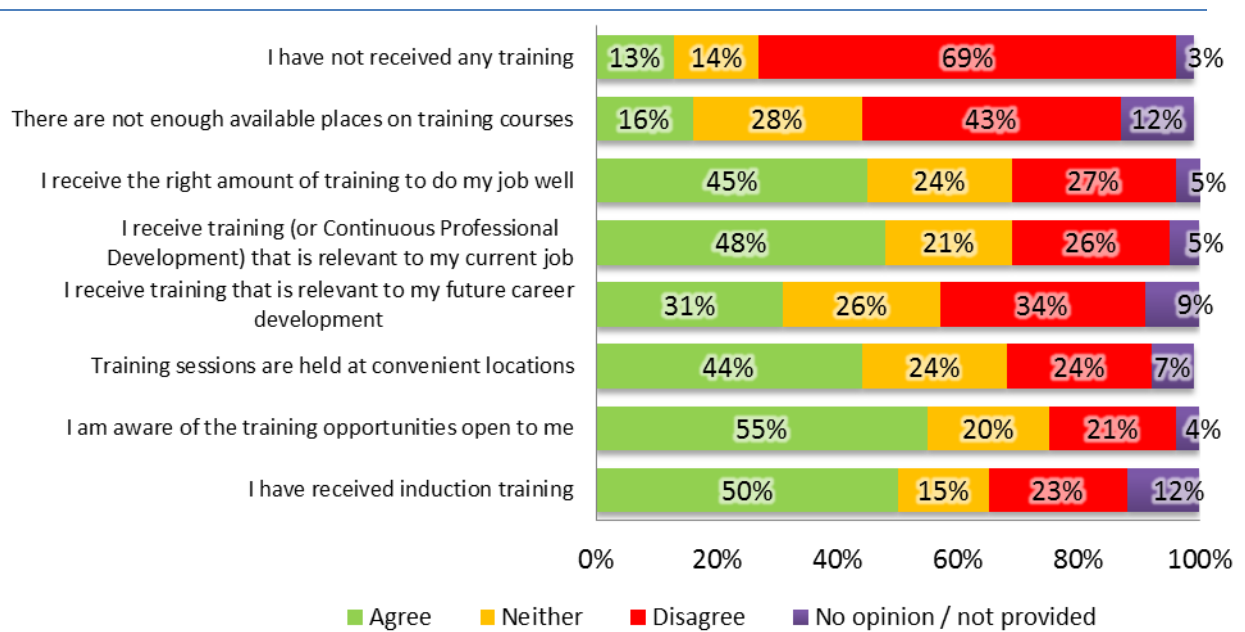
Unweighted base: 3534

Fewer staff in 2012 believe there are not enough places available on training courses (16%, -4% points since 2010). There are no other significant changes in views since 2010.

Table 16: To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning training and performance improvement? % agree over time (All respondents)

I have not received any training	18%	17%	15%	13%	12%	13%
There are not enough available places on training courses	N/A	29%	24%	20%	20%	16%
I receive the right amount of training to do my job well	31%	33%	38%	40%	45%	45%
I receive training (or Continuous Professional Development) that is relevant to my current job	52%	50%	56%	47%	50%	48%
I receive training that is relevant to my future career development	22%	24%	27%	30%	32%	31%
Training sessions are held at convenient locations	44%	44%	48%	44%	45%	44%
I am aware of the training opportunities open to me	44%	44%	49%	51%	56%	55%
I have received induction training	N/A	N/A	46%	51%	55%	50%
Unweighted base	**5758**	**5043**	**4588**	**5056**	**4416**	**3534**

8 Council's policies, initiatives and values

8.1 Introduction

This section presents the results of a number of measures concerning staff awareness and support for Council policies and initiatives, and an evaluation of how well they think their Service is living up to the Council's values.

8.2 Policies and initiatives

Whilst two in five (42%) staff are aware of the Council's Corporate Plan, a greater proportion are aware of their Service's Service Plan (51%) and their Section's / Team's plans (65%). Looking at awareness of the Service's Service Plans, this varies markedly by Service, from 79% in Planning and Development through to 36% in Education, Culture and Sport. Just 24% of Teachers are aware of their Service's Plans.

There has been a slight reduction in the proportion of staff that say they have had a Personal Development Plan (or PDR) (57%, down from 59% in 2010). Over four in five staff in Planning and Development (82%) and Finance (81%) have had a PDP / PDR; however, rates drop to 49% in Education, Culture and Sport and 50% in TECS. Just 23% of Practical and Craft staff have had such a review.

Figure 18: Here are some statements about the Council's policies and initiatives. Do each of them apply to you, or not? % yes (All respondents)
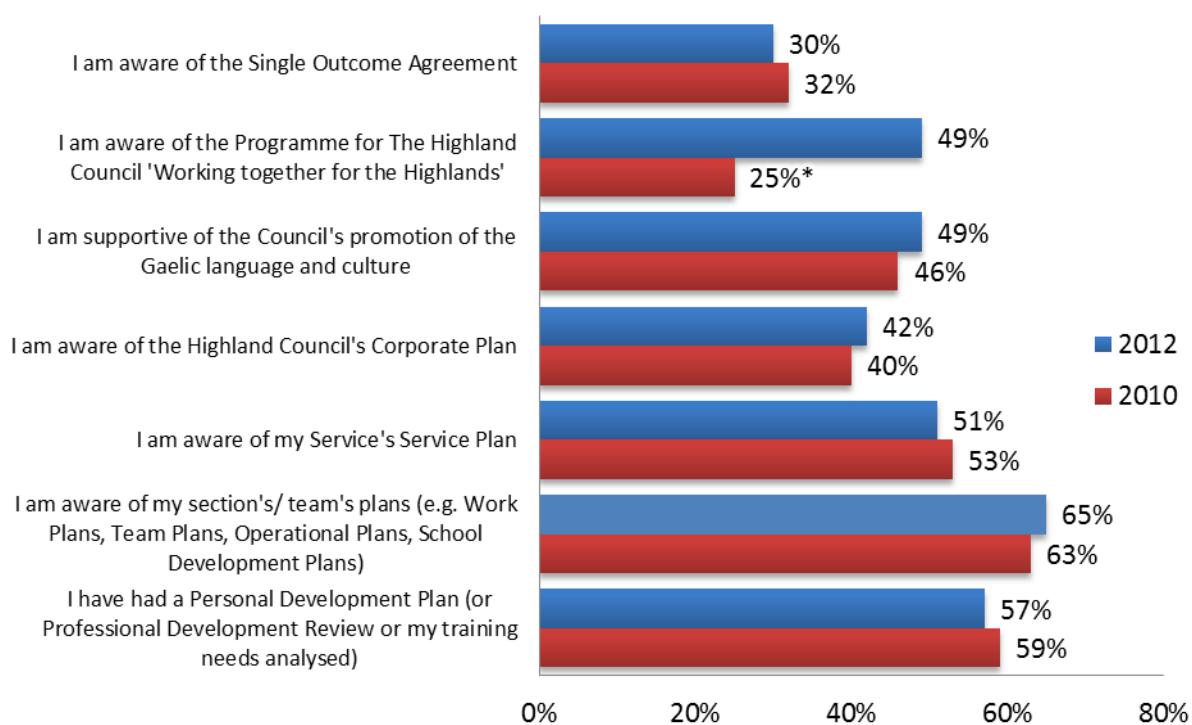
Unweighted base = 3534   * change of question wording

Table 17: Here are some statements about the Council's policies and initiatives. Do each of them apply to you, or not? % yes by Service (All respondents)

Chief Exec's Service	81%	76%	69%
Education, Culture & Sport	**25%**	**36%**	**49%**
Finance Service	62%	67%	81%
Finance – Business Support	59%	60%	60%
Finance – excluding Business Support	68%	74%	95%
Health & Social Care	**40%**	61%	60%
Housing & Property Services	62%	73%	63%
Planning & Development	71%	79%	82%
TECS	**41%**	**45%**	**50%**
Total	**42%**	**51%**	**57%**

8.3   The Council's values

The Council has six defined values by which they operate. All employees were asked whether they agree or disagree that these values are lived up to in their service area. There are relatively consistent views, with approximately 30%-40% of staff agreeing that each value is lived up to. It is important to highlight, however, that around a third of staff state they neither agree nor disagree to each suggesting they are undecided or unable to make a decision either way. This means that although agreement levels may seem small in some instances, this does not necessarily translate into a higher level of disagreement. Contrary to this, however, just 29% of staff believe the Council lives up to its value to be efficient and deliver value for money, with the same proportion (30%) disagreeing with this. 41% of staff in Planning and Development believe this value is lived up to, whilst this decreases to 22% in Education, Culture and Sport. A quarter (25%) of staff also disagree that the Council lives up to supporting staff to perform at their best and to have dignity at work. Just 26% of Clerical staff agree with this.

Figure 19: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council lives up to these values in your service area? (All respondents)
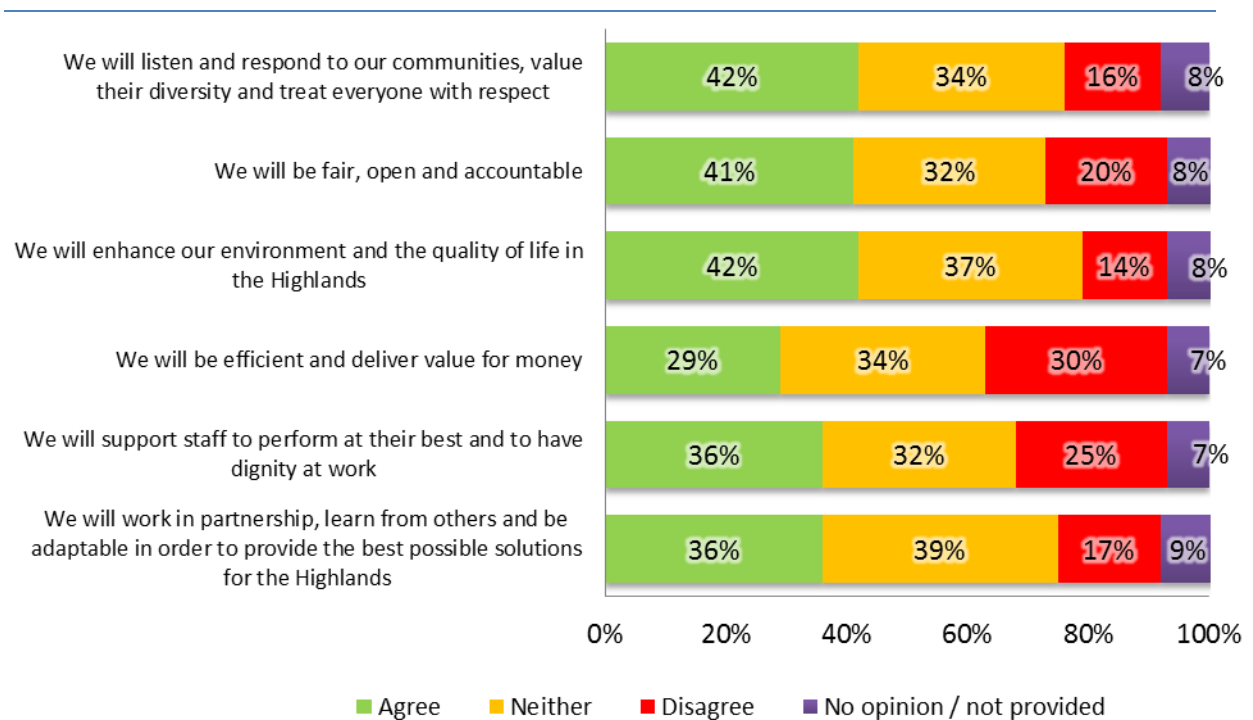
Unweighted base: 3534

Encouragingly, in 2012, staff are more likely to agree that the Council lives up to the values of listening and responding to communities and working in partnership, learning from others and being adaptable to providing the best possible solutions for the Highlands (both +4% points).

Table 18: To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council lives up to these values in your service area? % agree since 2010 (All respondents)

We will listen and respond to our communities, value their diversity and treat everyone with respect	38%	42%
We will be fair, open and accountable	39%	41%
We will enhance our environment and the quality of life in the Highlands	39%	42%
We will be efficient and deliver value for money	27%	29%
We will support staff to perform at their best and to have dignity at work	35%	36%
We will work in partnership, learn from others and be adaptable in order to provide the best possible solutions for the Highlands	32%	36%
Unweighted base	**4416**	**3534**

9 Change and the future

9.1 Attitudes towards change

Never has it been more important to gauge employee views of the way change is being managed at the Council. There are mixed views, with an encouraging seven in ten (69%) stating they understand the need for change. It is interesting to find, however, that fewer staff support the need for change (48%), suggesting that it is a process they know is needed but are not necessarily happy about it. This is not to say, however, that it is consistent across the Council, as support is far higher amongst staff in the Chief Executive's Service (65%), Finance (60%) and Planning and Development (60%). Support for change drops to 41% in TECS and 43% in Education, Culture and Sport.

Exploring how change is managed, a larger proportion of staff disagree than agree that the reasons for change are well communicated to them (37% cf. 27%), that they receive sufficient training and support when change takes place (39% cf. 22%), and that overall change is well managed (41% cf. 19%). Just 11% of staff in Planning and Development feel change is well managed, as do 16% in both TECS and Housing and Property Services. There are also variations by Area, with 28% of staff in HQ agreeing change is well managed, but dropping to 12% in Badenoch and Strathspey and 15% in Sutherland.

Two statements were included in the questionnaire to evaluate the perceived effectiveness of the last employee survey and the expected impact of this survey in bringing about change. It is apparent that a small proportion of staff saw any changes off the back of the 2010 survey (12%), with 35% disagreeing with this statement. This is particularly the case in Education, Culture and Sport (8% agree). Moving forwards, 14% of staff agree the 2012 survey will bring about change at the Council, and a larger proportion (44%) disagrees. This highlights the importance of ensuring a timely and transparent release of survey results, with staff involved and engaged in the process of action planning. A suggestion would be to continue communications with staff in the months following the survey updating them on any changes occurring as a result of the survey.

Figure 20: How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning change and the future? (All respondents)

Statement	Agree	Neither	Disagree	No opinion / not provided
I find the process of change causes me concern and worry	45%	27%	22%	5%
I understand the need for change	69%	18%	9%	4%
I look forward to change as a challenge	45%	33%	16%	5%
The reasons for change are well communicated to me	27%	31%	37%	4%
I support the need for change	48%	34%	13%	5%
Change here is well managed	19%	33%	41%	6%
Change here is too fast	24%	44%	24%	8%
I receive sufficient training and support when change takes place	22%	32%	39%	7%
The results of this survey will bring about change within The Highland Council	14%	32%	44%	9%
The results of previous staff surveys brought about changes within The Highland Council	12%	35%	35%	17%
I think my Service is dedicated to continually improving the service it delivers	47%	29%	17%	7%

Unweighted base: 3534

There have been no statistically significant changes in opinion since 2010.

Table 19: How strongly do you agree or disagree with each of the following statements concerning change and the future? % agree over time (All respondents)

I find the process of change causes me concern and worry	42%	42%	34%	44%	47%	45%
I understand the need for change	60%	58%	64%	62%	70%	69%
I look forward to change as a challenge	41%	39%	44%	43%	46%	45%
The reasons for change are well communicated to me	15%	17%	20%	21%	28%	27%
I support the need for change	43%	41%	43%	42%	49%	48%
Change here is well managed	15%	16%	18%	18%	19%	19%
Change here is too fast	27%	25%	21%	22%	21%	24%
I receive sufficient training and support when change takes place	16%	16%	20%	20%	23%	22%
The results of this survey will bring about change within The Highland Council	15%	12%	13%	11%	12%	14%
The results of previous staff surveys brought about changes within The Highland Council	N/A	9%	11%	9%	11%	12%
I think my Service is dedicated to continually improving the service it delivers	N/A	N/A	46%	44%	48%	47%
Unweighted base	**5758**	**5043**	**4588**	**5056**	**4416**	**3534**

10 Treating people fairly

10.1 Introduction

This section explores the extent to which staff feel they are treated fairly, both in terms of employment and development opportunities, and more generally, feelings of treatment in the workplace.

10.2 Potential barriers to employment

Firstly, all staff were asked whether they have ever faced barriers to employment or development opportunities on the basis of a number of characteristics (e.g. age, gender, race etc). There have been no significant changes since 2010, with age seen as the most common barrier (15%). Age is more frequently seen as a barrier amongst staff aged 20-29 and 60+ (18% and 22% respectively). Gender is seen as a barrier by 8% of staff, with no difference in views of males and females (7% and 8% respectively), whilst 23% of people with a disability say they face barriers due to their disability (cf. 6% no disability).

Table 20: Thinking about the Council as an employer, how strongly do you agree or disagree that people face barriers to employment or development opportunities on the basis of the characteristics below? % agree over time (All respondents)

Age	19%	16%	15%
Disability	10%	8%	7%
Gender	11%	9%	8%
Gender reassignment	N/A	N/A	4%
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A	N/A	2%
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A	N/A	6%
Race	4%	4%	3%
Religion or belief	4%	3%	2%
Sexual orientation	3%	2%	2%
Unweighted base	**5056**	**4416**	**3534**

10.3 Perceptions of disadvantage

Following on from this, all staff were asked whether they have ever felt disadvantaged at work on account of a number of characteristics (the same characteristics as presented in the previous measure at section 10.2). Again there is no significant movement since 2010. The largest proportion says they have felt disadvantaged due to their age (6%), with this doubling to 12% amongst staff aged 20-29 and 60+. Over a third (34%) of staff with a disability say they have been disadvantaged at work on the basis of their disability, whilst 13% of lesbian, gay and bisexual staff say they have been disadvantaged on the basis of their sexual orientation.

Table 21: Within the past two years, have you felt disadvantaged at work on account of...? % yes since 2010 (All respondents)

Age	7%	6%
Disability	2%	2%
Gender	4%	3%
Gender reassignment	N/A	*%
Marriage and civil partnership	N/A	*%
Pregnancy and maternity	N/A	1%
Race	1%	1%
Religion or belief	*	*%
Sexual orientation	1%	1%
Unweighted base	**4416**	**3534**

10.4 Flexible working

The Council has a Flexible Working Policy. Exploring views of this policy and staff experiences of flexible working, there has been no significant movement since 2010. Over three in five (62%) staff say they are aware of the flexible working options available to them, with awareness as high as 96% in Planning and Development and 94% in Finance, yet just 40% of staff in Education, Culture and Sport are aware. There are wide variations by job category, with 97% of staff in Management and Professional roles aware of the options available to them, but this stands at 32% of Practical and Craft staff and 34% of Teachers.

One in five (21%) staff say they would like to use the flexible working option but have not been able to. This increases to 25% in Education, Culture and Sport, which could be due in part to a lack of awareness of the options available to them as indicated previously. A third (32%) of Promoted Teachers feel unable to use the options available to them, which is perhaps more of a reflection of the nature of their job, being timetabled and predominantly on-site.

Figure 21: Do each of the following apply to you, or not? % yes (All respondents)

	2012	2010
I am aware of Flexible Working options available to me	62%	62%
I use or have used a Flexible Working option	35%	37%
I would like to use a Flexible Working option but have not been able to	21%	20%
I feel I could use the Flexible Working option if I wanted to	49%	50%
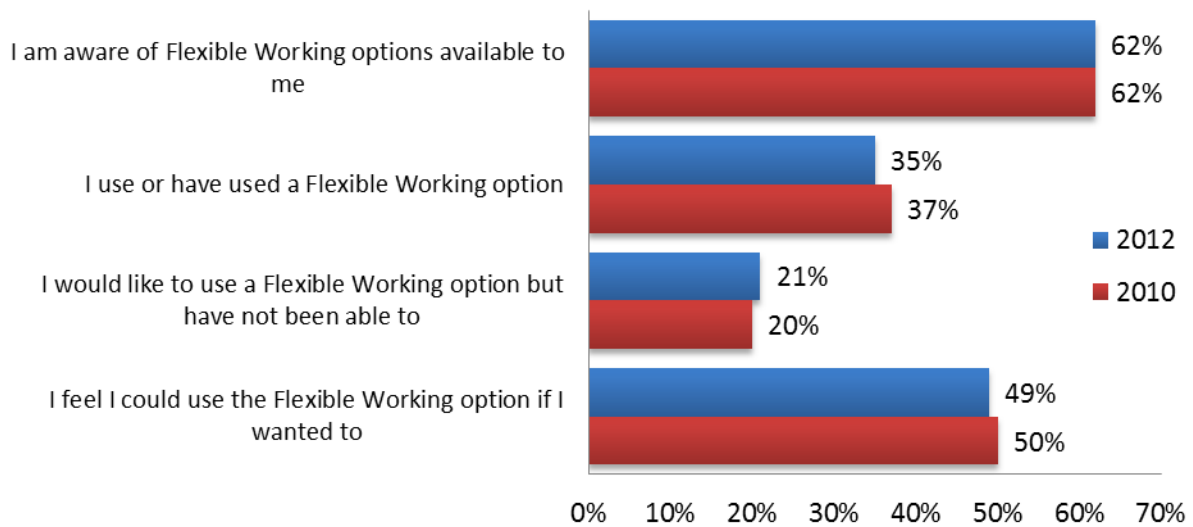
Unweighted base = 3534

Exploring this in more detail, all staff were asked whether there are any barriers to them personally being able to use the flexible working option. The largest proportion feel there are no barriers that they are aware of (45%), which is as high as 65% in Planning and Development, 63% in Finance, and 62% in Housing and Property Services. Almost two in five staff in Education, Culture and Sport say their service delivery arrangements would not allow flexible working (38%), as do 56% of Promoted Teachers and 39% of Teachers. One in five (20%) of all staff feel there is a lack of information about the available options, and this increases to 26% of Education, Culture and Sport staff, substantiating the earlier point regarding a lack of awareness.

Figure 22: Which of the following, if any, are barriers to you personally using the Flexible Working option? (All respondents)

Service delivery arrangements will not allow it	29%
Lack of information about Flexible Working options	20%
Lack of management support	12%
Colleagues would not support my application	5%
Some other factor (e.g. IT equipment)	8%
No barriers that I am aware of	45%
Not provided	5%
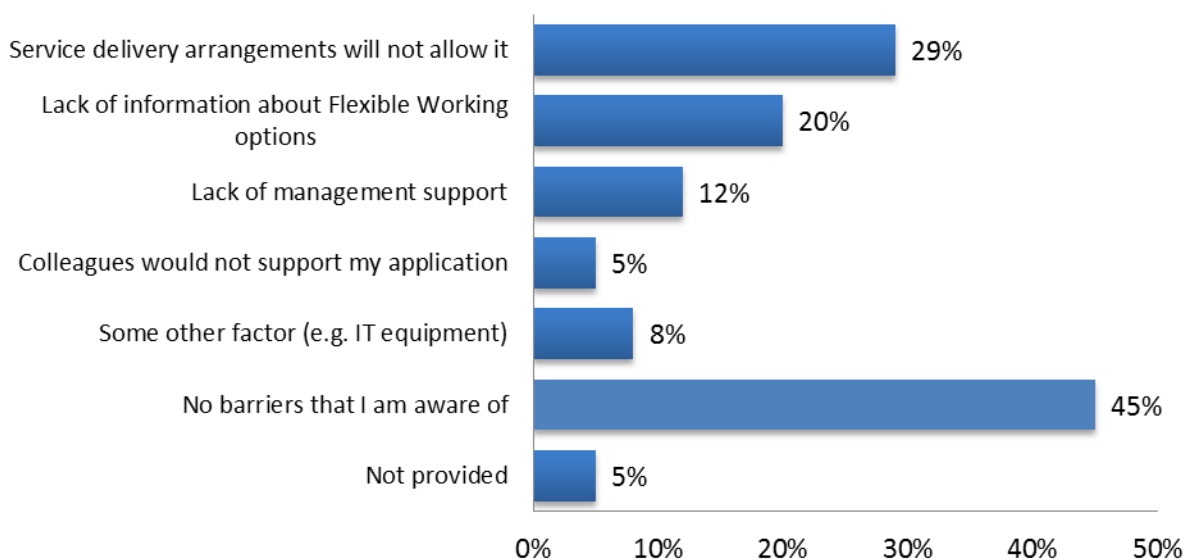
10.5 Respect and dignity

A new addition to the 2012 questionnaire was an exploration of whether staff agree or disagree that there is a culture in the Council where staff are treated with dignity and respect. Overall, 44% agree with this statement and 17% disagree. A quarter (25%) is ambivalent, stating they neither agree nor disagree.

Mirroring some of the patterns found throughout the 2012 results, TECS staff are the least likely to be positive, with 37% agreeing they feel treated with respect and dignity, whilst 42% of Education, Culture and Sport staff feel the same. By job category, agreement is also lowest amongst Clerical (33%), Practical and Craft (37%), and Health Professional staff (38%).

Figure 23: To what extent do you agree or disagree that there is a culture in the Council where you are treated with dignity and respect? (All respondents)
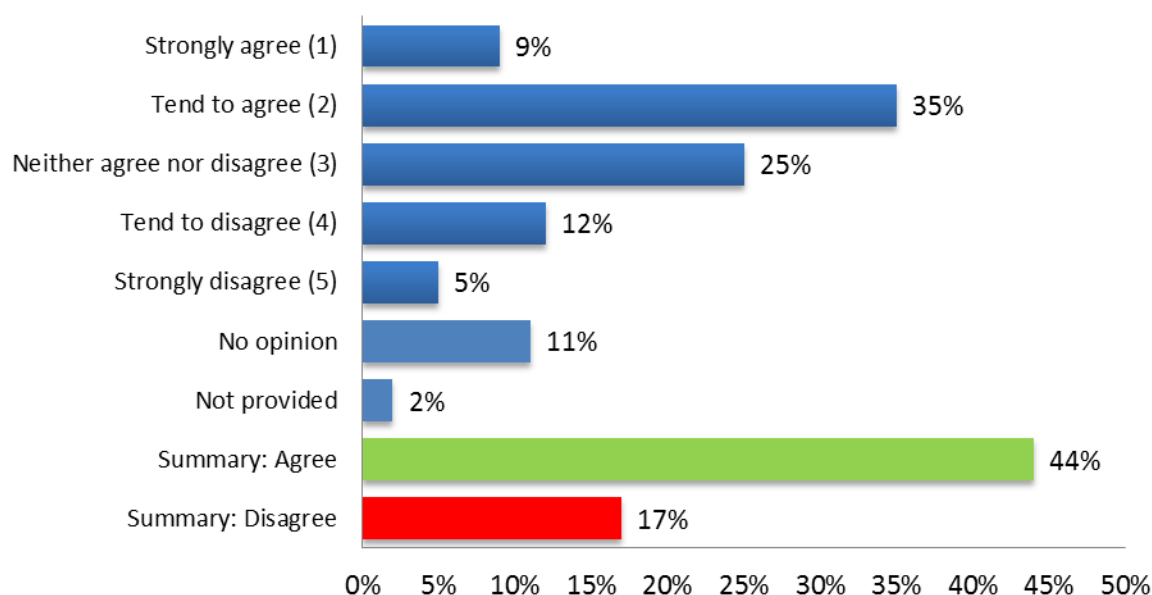
10.6 The Fairer Highland Outcome

The Highland Council has an overarching aim to ensure that staff feel there is an organisational culture where everyone is treated with dignity and respect. Whilst this is measured to some extent in the previous section, it has been possible to develop an index score (The Fairer Highland Outcome) combining a number of measures included within the questionnaire. The positive result for each measure is used for the calculation, with the index calculated as the mean average score. The measures that make up the Outcome are shown in the table overleaf.

Table 22: The measures making up The Fairer Highland Outcome

Feedback on your performance	% satisfied
Receiving praise for good work	% satisfied
Opportunity to show initiative	% satisfied
Cause of stress: 'Colleague's negative attitudes'	% not selected
Cause of stress: 'Dealing with aggressive members of the public	% not selected
Cause of stress: 'Management's negative attitudes'	% not selected
Cause of stress: 'Harassment or bullying of any kind within the Council'	% not selected
Face barriers to employment or development opportunities on the basis of various characteristics	% do not agree
Senior managers in my Service are not interested in listening to staff opinion	% do not agree
Speaking up on issues where you disagree with Senior Management can damage your career opportunities	% do not agree
My line manager / supervisor: 'Acts on my ideas/ suggestions'	% always / usually
My line manager / supervisor: 'Is open and honest'	% always / usually
My line manager / supervisor: 'Encourages me to make my own decisions'	% always / usually
Staff are consulted on management decisions which affect them and their work	% agree
Felt disadvantaged at work on account of various characteristics	% not selected
There is a culture in the Council where you are treated with dignity and respect?	% agree

The chart overleaf presents The Fairer Highland Outcome (index score). The total Council-wide score is shown, as well as the scores across the Services and by job category. There are few variations by Service, although the index score is slightly lower (and less positive) amongst TECS (69%) and Housing and Property Services (72%) staff. Senior Management have the highest index score across the job categories (89%), whilst the score drops to 68% amongst Care and Community staff and 70% amongst Practical and Craft staff.

Figure 24: The Fairer Highland Outcome by Service and job category (All respondents)

Category	Percentage
Council-wide	74%
Chief Exec's Service	76%
Education, Culture & Sport	75%
Finance Service	76%
Health & Social Care	76%
Housing & Property Services	72%
Planning & Development	77%
TECS	69%
Practical and Craft	70%
Clerical	75%
Care and Community	68%
Administration and Technical	73%
Management and Professional	79%
Senior Management	89%
Teacher	73%
Promoted Teacher	78%
Health Professional	80%

Unweighted bases vary

11 How to improve The Highland Council as an employer

At the end of the questionnaire all staff were given the opportunity to state in their own words what one suggestion they could make to improve The Highland Council as an employer. These verbatim comments have been coded into common themes and presented in Table 23 overleaf.

Perhaps unsurprisingly given the earlier findings regarding issues with communication across the Council and between Services, the largest proportion feels this needs to be improved (7%). Some example quotes are as follows:

> *"Because the organisation covers such a huge area, the one thing I feel they lack on is communication both between offices of the same services, but also between the various services."*

> *"Closer working and communication between services within the council."*

> *"The Council's plans for increasing efficiencies and reducing budgets needs to be communicated more simply and directly to every employee. Although this is a sensitive subject, everybody within The Council has a right to know if their job is likely to become insecure in the future so we can plan ahead and make lifestyle changes if necessary."*

A further 7% of staff provide a suggestion for improved pay, terms and conditions (including the same pay for the same work, remote allowance, fair pay scale and bonuses / overtime). This is evidenced with the following comments:

> *"Please give me a job description and pay that reflects the work I actually do and a permanent contract rather than endlessly renewing my temporary one."*

> *"Fairer pay scale to match roles and responsibilities."*

> *"Reduce the vast difference in the pay scales between senior management and staff."*

One in twenty (5%) employees believe improvements would be made at the Council if staff were listened to, as well as if staff were supported, valued, recognised and rewarded. Some example comments for both these themes are provided below:

Listen to staff

> *"Management MUST listen to people on the ground, doing the job! Particularly in care homes, the people doing the job know the problems far far better than management does."*

> *"Listen to the staff and have a working party of Managers and staff from various departments to air their views or these of colleagues."*

"Listen to the workers instead of Management who come up with ideas but have no idea of the effect they have on the work force - as most of the changes made are not working and costing money."

Support, value, recognition, reward

"Caring as much about the staff as about getting the job done and ensuring that loyalty and dedication is rewarded."

"Value your bottom of the rung workers and don't undermine their contribution to the council by cutting their wages. Since the evaluation process, morale has been very bad amongst council workers. The lower paid were made lower paid still. A bad move for any employer. If it were done to save costs, why then were the salaries of the high ranking council officials not slashed to the same extent? We are made to feel we are of little importance."

"Introduce some small staff incentives for work well done."

Table 23: Finally, if you could make one suggestion to improve The Highland Council as an employer, what would it be? (All respondents)

More communication (inc. between departments / services, face-to-face)	7%
Better pay, terms and conditions (inc. same pay for same work, remote allowance, maternity, fair pay scale, bonus, paid overtime)	7%
Listen to staff	5%
Support / value / recognise / reward staff for the work they do	5%
Consult / ask our opinion	2%
Should be more honest / truthful / keep to promises	2%
Need to be better informed / hold meetings (tell us about changes)	2%
More training (inc. Relevant training)	2%
Treat everyone as an individual not a number / to be treated fairly (e.g. supply teachers the same as other staff)	2%
Need more staff (lower level, chalk face, male, classroom assistants)	2%
Less top / senior management	2%
Improve performance management (discipline, lazy workers, incompetent management)	2%
Cut waste / stop wasting money (outsourcing, unnecessary projects)	2%
No comment	46%
Unweighted base (2% or more listed above)	**3534**

12 Key driver analysis

12.1 Introduction

To supplement the analysis of the employee survey data, The Highland Council commissioned the application of Key Driver Analysis (KDA). KDA seeks to determine the key influences on overall satisfaction with the present job amongst its employees. The analysis here is based on a comprehensive range of attitude scales included in the survey, exploring the relative impact of each factor on overall satisfaction.

This section is very much designed as a 'practical toolkit' to enable practitioners to make informed decisions about policies and communication strategies. We have kept the text deliberately punchy in order to get to the main messages quickly and effectively.

12.2 Method of Assessing Key Driver Importance

The principle of the method we used is based on assessing the statistical correlation between employees' ratings on each of the 62 possible "key drivers" within the questionnaire, in turn, and their ratings of overall satisfaction with their present job. This correlation is based on the proportion of variation in overall satisfaction that could statistically be "accounted for" or "explained" by related variation in satisfaction with individual factors. If the correlation is high, then the factor will be "important" in the sense of the analysis. If it is low, it will imply that the factor is less important. The rationale for this is that a high level of correlation implies a likelihood that improving satisfaction levels for the individual factor will in turn improve overall employee satisfaction with their job. If there is little or no correlation, this offers no evidence that improving the factor might have any impact on overall satisfaction.

We reflect the importance as an index value in which 1.0 is equal to the average importance across all factors. A level of 2.0 implies that the factor in question is twice as important as the average. "Key Drivers" are factors that have high importance.

12.3 Analysis of the 62 individual factors

The following figure presents the most important 15 factors impacting on satisfaction with present job. Factors related to enjoying the work they do and feeling valued and recognised have the greatest impact, as does whether staff feel they have accomplished something worthwhile at work. Each of these is shown to have more than 2 times the level of importance in driving satisfaction levels than the norm.

Figure 25: Top 15 most important factors impacting on satisfaction with present job

Factor	Value
Q3A/20 Enjoyment in the work I do	2.411
Q3A/22 Feeling valued and recognised for the work I do	2.229
Q3A/12 Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work	2.045
Q3A/13 Morale in your workplace	2.013
Q3A/10 Making the best use of your skills and ability	1.994
Q3A/17 Working for a successful organisation	1.974
Q3A/16 Receiving guidance and support at work	1.789
Q3A/18 Working as part of a team	1.523
Q3A/19 Opportunity to show initiative	1.498
Q3A/9 Career development	1.496
Q3A/14 Receiving praise for good work	1.469
Q3A/11 Feedback on your performance	1.375
Q3A/1 Interesting work	1.279
Q9/5 I have confidence in the Senior managers in my Service	1.251
Q3A/15 Receiving sufficient training to do your job well	1.222

Another useful way to present the key driver analysis results is to build a prioritisation matrix based on the level of importance as a driver versus the extent to which its current standing in the survey is positive or negative. The following figure takes the top 10 individual measures impacting on overall satisfaction with the job and plots the key driver index score against the level of agreement or satisfaction (positive %) gained in the survey. Those measures, therefore, that have a high index score (high in terms of importance as a driver of satisfaction), but may not be performing well relative to other measures are those that require the greatest attention and prioritisation.

The figure shows as expected the priorities for The Highland Council moving forwards are:

- To ensure staff feel valued and recognised for the work they do
- Feel motivated to do a good job
- Feel they have the opportunity to do what they do best

Figure 26: The prioritisation of factors that impact on overall satisfaction with the job

13 Profile

Table 24 presents the profile of the responding sample, with the corresponding figures from 2010 shown also (where the figures are known).

Table 24: Profile of the sample (All respondents)

Gender			
	Male	30%	29%
	Female	69%	65%
	Not provided		6%
Age			
	Under 20 years	*%	*%
	20-29 years	8%	6%
	30-39 years	16%	15%
	40-49 years	32%	31%
	50-59 years	35%	32%
	60+ years	8%	9%
	Not provided		7%
Disability			
	Yes	4%	3%
	No	95%	92%
	Not provided		4%
Ethnicity			
	White Scottish	-	77%
	Other White British	-	15%
	Other White	-	3%
	Black/Asian/Mixed/Other		1%
	Not provided	-	4%
Religion			
	None	-	31%
	Christian	-	46%
	Other	-	12%
	Not provided	-	11%

Sexual orientation		
Heterosexual	-	89%
Lesbian, gay, bisexual	-	1%
Not provided	-	10%
Length of service		
Up to 1 year	5%	6%
Over 1 year, up to 2 years	7%	3%
Over 2 years, up to 10 years	39%	39%
Over 10 years, up to 20 years	27%	27%
Over 20 years	21%	23%
Not provided		2%
Contract status		
Temporary	9%	8%
Permanent	90%	88%
Not provided		4%
Area		
Caithness		10%
Sutherland	24%	6%
Easter Ross		9%
Mid and Wester Ross		8%
Skye & Lochalsh	29%	5%
Lochaber		9%
Inverness		30%
Nairn	34%	2%
Badenoch & Strathspey		4%
HQ	12%	11%
Not provided	1%	6%
Job category		
Practical and Craft		5%
Clerical		7%
Care and Community		2%
Administration and Technical		15%
Management and Professional		10%
Senior Management		1%
Teacher		16%

Promoted Teacher		6%
Health Professional		2%
Other / not provided		37%
Familiarity with Gaelic		
Speak conversational Gaelic	3%	3%
Speak intermediate Gaelic	1%	1%
Speak basic Gaelic	10%	10%
Do not speak Gaelic at all	84%	84%
Not provided		1%

14 Appendix 1: Table of Figures and Tables

Table of Figures

Table of Tables

With more than 20 years' experience, BMG Research has established a strong reputation for delivering high quality research and consultancy.

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