

The Highland Council

Finance, Housing & Resources Committee – 26 February 2014

Agenda Item	25
Report No	FHR/ 47/14

Employee Survey 2012 – Progress on Action Plan

Report by Depute Chief Executive

Summary

This paper outlines the progress to date on the actions agreed as a result of the Employee Survey 2012. Members are asked to note the actions achieved and the work in progress.

1. Background

- 1.1 Highland Council carried out the sixth Employee Survey during September and October 2012. An action plan in response to the survey was approved by the Finance, Housing and Resources Committee on 10th April 2013.

The action plan was agreed following consultation with staff and Trade Unions on what needed to happen to improve.

Specific actions were identified to support improvement in three key areas:

- Valuing and Recognising Staff
- Communicating and Listening to Staff
- Providing training and support to staff to do their jobs well

2. Progress on Actions

- 2.1 The full Action Plan is in Appendix 1 and sections 3 - 6 below provide a summary of progress under each of the high level actions.

- 2.2 The progress on the Employee Survey actions was reported to the Joint Consultation Group in December 2013 to provide an opportunity to discuss progress and seek views.

3. Introduce a revised personal development planning process

- 3.1 The revised Employee Review and Development (ERD) process has been introduced and is being rolled out within the Services. This covers:

- induction
- regular reviews (covering health, safety & wellbeing; workload and work objectives; performance; skills and development) and
- the annual ERD Plan

More details are available on [Employee Review and Development](#).

4. Identify and reduce stress at work

- 4.1 A range of health and wellbeing activities have been introduced by the [Health, Safety & Wellbeing](#) team . The Council has achieved the Mental Health Commendation from Healthy Working Lives and is working towards the achievement of Healthy Working Lives Gold Award and the further roll-out of stress risk assessments.
- 4.2 Employee Development is now accredited to deliver [Mentally Healthy Workplaces](#) training and attendance is mandatory for all Council managers. Since starting the training programme in June 2013, 148 people have attended with a further 70 booked to attend.

There are also two e-learning courses available on My Online Learning - Mentally Healthy Workplaces and Stress Management in the Workplace.

- 4.3 The Highland Council Employee Stress Handbook is now available and a revised Stress Management policy is under development.
- 4.4 Activities were organised for National Stress Awareness Day, including Health Check and Mindfulness sessions. The Mindfulness has proved so popular that a series of sessions are being delivered across Highland and staff now have access to the Mindfulness Trainer's website and blog, protected for Highland Council, which provides tools and support.

5. Implement organisational values to increase positive leadership and management

- 5.1 The Council's values have been simplified. Each value is described in a word with behaviours that support the value. These are now the basis of the new [Employee Review and Development](#) process.
- 5.2 Management development at all levels (from supervisor to senior leadership) has been assessed through the Public Services Improvement Framework (PSIF) and actions to improve what we provide have been agreed as a result of the review.
- 5.3 A programme of development for Directors and Heads of Service has just been completed. Further development work is planned to increase leadership skills in engaging staff. The new Depute Chief Executive role has responsibility for developing the extended senior management team of the Council's 26 Heads of Service and managers who report directly to Directors.
- 5.4 The Senior Management Team has held meetings outside Inverness as part of the commitment to provide more face-to-face meetings with staff.

6. **Foster a working culture of trust**

- 6.1 A draft Workforce Development and Employee Engagement strategy that supports the Council's values to improve staff engagement has been developed for consultation.
- 6.2 Work is underway to develop a stronger partnership and collaborative approach to working with the Trade Unions. The initial approach has been agreed and a working group of staff and trade union representatives will develop this further.
- 6.3 Work is underway to develop a consistent method for recording training needs and training delivered across the Council, which will provide a clearer view of training requirements and support the development of Service Learning Plans.
- 6.4 The standards and practice of internal communications still needs to be reviewed and developed further, particularly communication during change within the Council.

7. **Work in Progress/Further Work Required**

- 7.1 Elements of the Action Plan are still in progress or require further work. Some of the actions, especially those linked to values, trust and increasing employee engagement, whilst underway will take time to demonstrate results. A summary of further work is listed below under each of the high level actions.
- 7.2 **Introduce a revised personal development planning process**
- The roll-out of the new Employee Review and Development (ERD) process needs to be completed across all the Services.
 - The introduction of the self-service functionality within the new Integrated HR and Payroll System will enable us to record accurately when Development Plans are completed and training needs identified.
- 7.3 **Identify and reduce stress at work**
- Through Mentally Healthy Workplace training, managers are being encouraged to undertake team stress risk assessments to follow up on the Service Work Positive risk assessments.
 - Work is underway towards the achievement of the Healthy Working Lives Gold Award. There is a meeting with Healthy Working Lives on 2nd December and then the strategy will be presented to the Central Safety Committee for approval. The target achievement date is now revised to July 2014.
- 7.4 **Implement organisational values to increase positive leadership and management**
- The Depute Chief Executive will lead development work with Heads of Service to develop our approach to embedding the values, employee engagement and increased collaborative working.

- The Council's values and behaviours are being included in all Council training courses with specific emphasis on management behaviour and staff engagement.
- Management development activities are being designed to support the change management for the new Council structures.

7.5 **Foster a working culture of trust**

- The Employee Engagement strategy will support the new Corporate Development Service to deliver the cultural and performance changes required by the new structure.
- Workforce planning is underway in some Services but further work is required to fully develop workforce and development plans. Support to Services to create these plans is being provided by HR through advice, work tools and templates.
- The Partnership Working Group has been established and a draft Partnership Working Framework will be discussed by the group. This is based on partnership working with the Council's Trade Union representatives and employee engagement at all levels. It will provide a collaborative approach to consultation, decision making and how we communicate with staff.
- Specific work on reviewing our internal communications practice and procedures will be carried out as part of the Partnership Working with the Trade Unions. An Internal Communications Plan will be reported to the Resources Committee in May along with the Partnership Framework.

8. Conclusion

8.1 Good progress has been made on the corporate actions although there are still areas for further work particularly in developing leadership and management styles that support staff engagement; reviewing and improving communications and staff engagement and implementing a partnership approach to communication, consultation and negotiation.

8.2 Services have also reported their Service specific action plans to the Strategic Committees and will be reporting progress.

8. Implications - Resource, Legal, Equalities, Climate Change/Carbon Clever and Risk

8.1 Work is being undertaken within existing budget resources and there are no legal, equalities, climate change/carbon clever and risk implications.

Recommendation

That the Finance, Housing and Resources Committee

a) note the progress made so far in the Employee Survey actions

Designation: Depute Chief Executive

Date: 11th February 2014

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Background Papers: [Employee Survey 2012 Final Report](#)

F,H& R Committee Report <http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/E424C726-07A8-4EC1-9732-63BB0E1F4AE0/0/Item23aFHR5213.pdf>

Appendix 1

	Action		Outcome	Lead	Date	
Valuing and Recognising Staff		Providing training and support to staff to do their jobs well				
1	Introduce revised personal development planning process to provide:	Induction	1.1 Implemented improvements to personal development plan (PDP) process in all Services including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Induction undertaken including planned review schedule (recorded through new Integrated HR & Payroll System) • 70% of staff/100% new starts state they have received induction • Pattern of reviews identified and implemented for all staff (recorded through new Integrated HR & Payroll System) • PDPs (recorded through new Integrated HR & Payroll System) • 80% of staff stating they have received PDP 	HR Manager (Policy & OD)	Dec 2013 & Go live date for IHRPS & Employee Survey	
		Regular Reviews (covering Health, Safety & Wellbeing; Workload and Work Objectives; Performance; Skills and Development)				
		Annual Personal Development Plan (covering Health, Safety & Wellbeing; Workload and Work Objectives; Performance; Skills and Development)				
Valuing and Recognising Staff		Communicating and Listening to Staff				
2	Identify and reduce stress at work through:	Health promotion activities	2.1	Achieved Healthy Working Lives Gold Award	Health, Safety & Wellbeing Manager Employee Development Manager	Dec 2013
		Work positive stress risk assessments	2.2	Completed Work Positive risk assessments and action plans for all Services		Sep 2014
		Deliver mandatory Mentally Healthy Workplaces training and e-Learning and other support materials	2.3	Maintained training and support in stress awareness, stress management, absence management.		On-going
			2.4	All managers completed Mentally Healthy Workplaces		Sep 2014
		Launch Employee Stress Handbook and proactive support to staff at risk of stress	2.5	Maintained Occupational Health provision and introduced early intervention for stress risk		Dec 2013

	Action		Outcome	Lead	Date	
Valuing and Recognising Staff		Communicating and Listening to Staff				
3	Implement organisational values to increase positive leadership and management by:	Promote organisational values and behaviours through personal development plan (Employee Development and Review)	3.1	Values and behaviours discussed and promoted with all staff Average 55% staff agreeing that the Council lives up to the values in their Service area	Employee Development Manager	Dec 2013 & Employee Survey
		Review management development to encourage behaviours that support the organisational values	3.2	Leadership and management behaviour developed against the organisational values Increase in summary index score: Line Management 70% (10% increase) Senior Management 45% (11% increase)		Apr 2014 & Employee Survey
		Deliver senior leadership development programme				
		Increase senior management visibility through face-to-face visits to workplaces				
Valuing and Recognising Staff		Communicating and Listening to Staff		Providing training and support to staff to do their jobs well		
4	Foster a working culture of trust through:	Employee Engagement strategy covering leadership, equality and diversity, workforce planning, employee wellbeing and partnership working	4.1	Created and implemented a corporate Workforce Development and Engagement Strategy	Senior Management Team	Jun 2013
		Collaborative work with Trade Unions to strengthen consultation and joint working through developing a partnership infrastructure	4.2	Continued to work in partnership with trade unions		On-going
		Focus on staff development and involvement in the workplace	4.3	Created Service Workforce Plans and Learning and Development Plans	HR Manager (Policy & OD)	Jun 2013- Dec 2014
		Focus on internal Service communications and Service staff groups to develop and evaluate staff engagement activities, including responses to employee survey	4.4	Increased effective communication and opportunities for two-way communication between all levels in the organisation Increase in summary index score: 'Information and Communications' 54% (20% increase)		Jun 2014 & Employee Survey
		Consistent communication throughout the Council by ensuring adherence to Internal Communications Procedure - team meetings, team brief etc. Review Internal Communications Procedure, including use of channels available through technology, and develop a plan to ensure procedures are implemented throughout the Council.	4.5	Created and implemented a formal joint lessons learned exercise at the conclusion of major change projects Increase in summary index score: 'Change and the Future' 42% (10% increase)	Employee Development Manager	Jun 2013 & Employee Survey
		Focus on early communications and staff involvement within change projects				