

The Highland Council
Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee
4 November 2015

Agenda Item	15
Report No	PDI 70/15

Employee Survey 2015

Report by Director Development and Infrastructure

Summary

This paper outlines the key findings and proposes improvement action priority areas to be addressed by the Development and Infrastructure Service in response to the views expressed by staff within the Service in the seventh Highland Council Employee Survey.

1. Background

- 1.1 The 7th Employee Survey was conducted during the period between 20 April and 22 May 2015. Within Development and Infrastructure, 308 employees returned their questionnaire, resulting in a response rate of 72.4%. This is a slight decrease from 74% in 2012 but still remains significantly higher than the corporate average of 35.6% which is comparable to other Scottish Local Authorities.
- 1.2 It is a highly robust dataset with 95% confidence that the responses are representative of those that would have been given by all employees had each completed a questionnaire to within +/-1.35%.

2 Main Findings

- 2.1 The satisfaction levels for the Development and Infrastructure Service are generally higher than the Highland Council as a whole. The majority of factors show an increase in satisfaction on all subject areas, bar three, from the views expressed in 2012. (Figures in brackets throughout the report show percentage change from 2012 results.)
- 2.2 The Survey showed an overall satisfaction of 72% compared to 68% in 2012 with an increase across practically all job factors.

Highest scoring factors are:

- good employment benefits 89% (+6)
- working hours 88% (+2)
- interesting work 83% (+17)
- personal safety at work 80% (+16)
- supportive colleagues 78% (+6)

3. Satisfaction with Job Factors

3.1 The factors with the highest increase compared to 2012 are:

- I receive the appropriate training 64% (+33)
- I work for a successful organisation 56% (+19)
- Morale in the workplace 52% (+18)
- I have confidence in senior management 59 (+18)

3.2 The only subject where there has been a decrease is change (management). Although staff have a better understanding of the reasons for change and say that change is better managed, less people look forward to change as a challenge 47% (-3). They also feel that reasons for change are not as well communicated 31% (-2) and that change is too fast 19% (+4).

3.3 Key Drivers:

The analysis identifies the top 6 out of 22 factors impacting on staff satisfaction with their present job. The factors that are impacting most on staff satisfaction in Development and Infrastructure are:

1. Interesting work (70%)
2. Pay (65%)
3. Good employment benefits (59%)
4. Job security (54%)
5. Enjoyment in the work I do (40%)
6. Working hours, Career Development and Feeling you have accomplished something (30%)

4. Views of Line Management and Senior Management

4.1 Views of line managers within the Development and Infrastructure Service generally remain at a high level with all areas improving.

Managers:

- Consults me on matters where I can contribute 74% (+5)
- Is approachable 87% (+7)
- Is open and honest 83% (+9)
- Listens to my ideas and suggestions 75% (+5)
- Discusses my training and development needs 69% (+9)
- Makes it clear what is expected of me 69 (+4)
- Makes decisions quickly when needed 73% (+12)
- Is available to speak to when I need to 77% (+8)

4.2 Views about senior managers have seen a very positive increase on the whole and the views of Development and Infrastructure staff are generally more favourable than Council staff as a whole.

Senior Managers:

- Senior managers keep employees informed 56% (+13)
- Senior managers are not interested in listening to staff 18% (-5)

- I have confidence in the Senior managers in my Service 59% (+16 compared to THC)

5 Communications

Views on communication are well above the corporate average and have improved significantly compared to 2012 results.

- Service - Fully/Fairly well informed 73% (+7%) THC 50%
- Area - Fully/Fairly well informed 70% (+9%) THC 47%

6. Training and Development and Employee Review and Development Plans

6.1 The Development and Infrastructure Service have a higher level than the corporate average in terms of Employee Review and Development plans (ERDs). Induction, training and Career Development responses are also higher than the corporate average. It is encouraging that the proportion of employees saying that they receive the right amount of training to do their job well has increased significantly. This might be a result of merging Property and Infrastructure since the previous survey. Employees in this part of the Service receive extensive technical training.

- I have had an ERD 82% (0) THC 62%
- I have received induction training 57% (+14%) THC 50%
- I receive the right amount of training to do my job well 64% (+33) THC 52%
- I receive training that is relevant to my future career development 45% (+20%) THC 3%

7. Workload and Stress

7.1 The proportion of employees stating that they have too much work to do (20%) has fallen by 3% since 2012. The proportion of staff stating that they could do more work has increased to 6% (5% in 2012).

The proportion of employees reporting that they experience high or above average levels of stress at work has fallen to 11% (0) and 29% (-8%) respectively.

The highest cause of stress is still reported as 'too much work' (43%, was 46%) followed by 'too much bureaucracy' and 'lack of resources, both 36%.

8. Change

8.1 Staff in Development and Infrastructure have a better understanding of the need for change, but are less able to see it as a positive challenge:

- I understand the need for change 81% (+3%) THC 77%
- I look forward to change as a challenge 47% (-3%) THC 48%

8.2 Development and Infrastructure staff are more positive about how change is managed. There has also been a positive increase in training and support received during change:

- Change here is well managed 24% (+13%) THC 25%
- I receive sufficient training and support when change takes place 31% (+15%) THC 26%

9. Reporting the Results

9.1 The results were presented by the Director of Development and Infrastructure to the Service Management Team on 20 August and to the members of the Employee Forum on 17 September.

10. Action Plan for Improvements

10.1 Valuable input towards the Service Action Plan for Improvements was received from the Management Team and the Employee Forum, with focus on communication, engagement with staff, career development, ERDs.

10.2 Next steps

A Service Improvement Plan will be developed and presented to Planning, Development and Infrastructure Committee in February 2016.

The Service Support Manager and the HR Business Partner will meet with the Heads of Service and their management teams in October, November and December 2015 to receive further input for the Service Improvement Plan.

The Actions from the Service Improvement Plan will be loaded into PRMS and progress will be reported at the QPR.

11. Service Improvement Action Plan 2012

11.1 The Action Plan 2012 – 2014 focussed on the following three areas for improvement :

- Morale
- Communication around change
- Cross team working

11.2 One of the main actions put in place was the implementation of the Employee Forum and the results of the 2015 Survey show a significant improvement on Communication, Interaction with Senior Management and Understanding of the need for Change. Members of the Forum also appreciate the improved knowledge of and working relationships between teams across the Service. Of the 20 Actions in the Action Plan 2012 – 2014, 15 have been completed/ implemented. The remaining actions for improvement will be included in the Action Plan for Improvements 2015 – 2018.

12. Implications

There are no specific resource, legal, risk, equalities, climate change/Carbon Clever, Gaelic or rural implications other than those highlighted in the report.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to:

- note the Development & Infrastructure Service results from the 7th Employee Survey; and
- note the timescale for the development of the Service Improvement plan.

Designation: Director of Development & Infrastructure

Date: 15 October 2015

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