

**The Highland Council**  
**Education, Children and Adult Services**  
**11 November 2015**

Agenda Item	16.
Report No	ECAS 104/15

## Employee Survey 2015

### Report by Director of Care and Learning

#### Summary

This report summarises the key findings from the 2015 Employee Survey and outlines proposals for addressing areas of further improvement for the Care and Learning Service.

#### 1. Background

- 1.1 The Employee Survey ran from the 20<sup>th</sup> April to 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2015.
- 1.2 Surveys were sent out to all team members in the Service. The response rate was 29% compared to the Council wide response rate of 36%.
- 1.3 As with previous surveys, the uptake by Highland Council staff not on email was relatively low (17%) compared to 36% who completed the survey online.
- 1.4 Section specific responses were as follows:

Care and Learning Services	Total Returns
Education	1,537
Children's Services	297
Additional Support Needs Services	231
Catering, Cleaning and FM	204
Adult Services	47
Resources	18
Not provided	10
<b>Total number of completed surveys</b>	<b>2,344</b>

- 1.5 The Care and Learning Service was established in April 2014 through amalgamation of the former Education, Culture and Sport Service and Health and Social Care Service. This is the first employee survey for the Care and Learning Service.
- 1.6 The 2015 survey is the first time analysis is available at Head of Service/Senior Manager level, and this will prove beneficial in developing improvement actions in a more targeted way.
- 1.7 The survey results are a highly robust dataset with an overall 95% confidence that the responses are representative of those that would have been given by all employees had each completed a questionnaire to within +/-1.7% (error rate for

Care and Learning).

## 2. Job Satisfaction

2.1 The overall job satisfaction in Care and Learning was positive, with 74% compared to a corporate result of 70% (up from 2012 by 3%). This is an improvement to previous results for Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care in 2012, which were 70% and 66% respectively. Highest results were recorded in Resources (83%) and CCFM (76%).

2.2 The highest scores for job factors that employees in Care and Learning were very or fairly satisfied with were as follows:

<b>Job Satisfaction Factor</b>	<b>2015 score C&amp;L Service</b>	<b>2015 score Council wide</b>	<b>2012 score Council wide</b>
Interesting work	89%	84%	81%
Supportive colleagues	82%	78%	74%
Enjoyment in the work	80%	74%	70%
Personal Safety at work	75%	75%	71%
Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile	74%	68%	64%
Job security	70%	65%	58%
Opportunity to show initiative	70%	65%	60%
Working as part of a team	70%	68%	64%
Working hours	70%	76%	76%

2.3 The lowest scoring job factors were as follows:

<b>Job Factor</b>	<b>2015 score C&amp;L Service</b>	<b>2015 score Council wide</b>	<b>2012 score Council wide</b>
Sufficient resources	39%	43%	43%
Career development	45%	40%	36%
Morale in your workplace	49%	46%	40%
Feedback on your performance	51%	49%	42%
Receiving praise for good work	51%	50%	44%

2.4 The analysis identified the top 6 out of 22 factors impacting on staff satisfaction with their present job. The job factors employees were least satisfied with, are not highly ranked with regards to their impact on staff satisfaction.

2.4 For employees across the Service, the six top factors are:

Rank	Job Factor	2015 score C&L Service	2015 rank Council wide	2012 rank Council wide
1	Pay	52%	1	1
2	Interesting work	50%	2	2
3	Enjoyment in the work	47%	4	4
4	Job security	46%	3	2
5	Supportive colleagues	42%	5	
6	Feeling valued and recognised	40%		

### 3. Management

3.1 Feedback on first line managers/supervisors and senior management was generally positive.

Statement: My line manager...	2015 score C&L Service	2015 score Council wide	2012 score Council wide
is approachable	81%	80%	76%
knows his or her job	78%	78%	73%
is open and honest	74%	73%	70%
listens to my ideas/suggestions	71%	68%	61%
is available to speak when needed	70%	71%	68%
makes decisions quickly when needed	70%	68%	65%

3.2 These results are an improvement compared to 2012 results for both Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care, when line managers were considered approachable by 75% and 81% and when it was felt they knew their job by 72% and 73%.

3.3 Less favourable are how employees view their line managers in relation to the following statements:

Statement: My line manager...	2015 score C&L Service	2015 score Council wide	2012 score Council wide
Does something about the pressure I come under in my job	48%	48%	57%
Acts on my ideas/suggestions	53%	52%	43%
Discusses my training and development needs	53%	54%	50%
Manages attendance in my team	54%	55%	51%

3.4 Views about Senior managers were as follows:

<b>Statement:</b>	<b>2015 score C&amp;L Service</b>	<b>2015 score Council wide</b>	<b>2012 score Council wide</b>
Keep employees informed of their views and decisions	50%	50%	37%
I have confidence in the senior management in my service	42%	43%	35%
Senior managers are not interested in listening to staff opinion	28%	27%	29%

3.5 Compared to 2012 results for the former Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care Services, these are highly improved responses. At that time, only 40% (Education, Culture and Sport) and 30% (Health and Social Care) of employees felt their senior managers kept them informed of their views and decisions, and 38% of Education, Culture and Sport employees and 34% of Health and Social Care employees had confidence in the senior management of their Services.

#### **4. Communication**

4.1 Views on how well employees feel informed are as follows (corporate scores in brackets):

- The Council keeps me Fully/Fairly well informed 50% (54%)
- The Service keeps me Fully/Fairly well informed 61% (61%)
- The Area keeps me Fully/Fairly well informed 60% (60%)

4.2 The corporate scores for the three statements have all increased since the 2012 survey.

4.3 With regard to sources of information that are available and used, 65% of employees quoted that informal conversation with colleagues as a source of information that they use. However, only 8% confirmed this as a preferred method.

4.4 Preferred sources of information include:

<b>Source of information</b>	<b>Preferred by</b>	<b>Currently used by</b>
E-mail	56%	71%
Personal contact from immediate manager	35%	56%
Meetings with immediate manager	27%	42%

#### **5. Training, Employee Review and Development (ERD) and Values**

5.1 77% of the Service staff support the Council's values, compared to the corporate figure of 79%. However, only 47% say they are aware of the organisational values, compared to 57% across the organisation.

- 5.2 Although 57% (62% THC) of employees have had an Employee Review and Development Plan, only 46% (52% THC) state they had one in the last 12 months. This is clearly an area for improvement.
- 5.3 In line with the corporate result, 57% of employees feel that employees are treated with dignity and respect at work. Employees who have been with the Council for over 20 years are less likely to agree with this statement (54%) than those who have been with the Council for up to 1 year (76%).
- 5.4 With regards to training, 55% believe that they receive training that is relevant to their current job, an improvement based on Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care 2012 results. The corporate result was 53%. This compares to 37% of Care and Learning Service staff who believe that they receive training that is relevant to their future career development (which is in line with employees across the organisation).
- 5.5 44% of employees confirmed they have received induction training - a score lower than the organisation's average of 50%.
- 5.6 59% of Care and Learning Service employees are supportive of the Council's promotion of Gaelic, compared to 56% across the organisation.

## 6. Change Management

- 6.1 In line with the corporate results, 76% of employees in the Service say they understand the need for change, and over half (54%) support the need for change. This compares with 2012 results in that 65% of Education, Culture and Sport employees and 69% of Health and Social Care employees understood the need for change. However, employees in the Care and Learning Service were less able to see change as a positive challenge:
- I understand the need for change 76% (THC 77%)
  - I look forward to change as a challenge 47% (THC 48%)
- 6.2 There is still room for improvement with regards to change management across the organisation. Less favourable feedback was received for the following statements, although results show improvements when compared with 2012 results for both Education, Culture and Sport and Health and Social Care:

Statement	2015 score C&L Service	2015 score Council wide	2012 score Council wide
I receive sufficient training and support when change takes place	24%	26%	22%
Change here is well managed	26%	25%	19%
The reasons for change are well communicated to me	28%	32%	27%
Staff are consulted on management decisions which affect them and their work	28%	28%	22%

6.3 In addition, when asked about causes of stress 'constant change' was identified by 36% (compared to 31% across the organisation) as one of a number of main causes (rank 5).

## 7. Workload and Stress

7.1 In relation to the questions on workload and stress, there has been an overall negative trend across the organisation and the Service's results were less favourable:

<b>Causes of stress</b>	<b>2015 score C&amp;L Service</b>	<b>2015 score Council wide</b>	<b>2012 score Council wide</b>
I have too much work to do	31%	26%	25%
I have a heavy work load but can cope	40%	41%	43%
I have the right amount of work to do	22%	24%	24%
I could do more work	4%	6%	5%
High/above average levels of stress	50%	44%	44%

7.2 Respondents in the Care and Learning Service (Highland Council figures in brackets) listed the following as main causes of stress:

- Too much work 48% (44%)
- Lack of resources 44% (39%)
- Too much bureaucracy 42% (38%)
- General nature of the job 41% (35%)

## 8 Other Issues

8.1 At the end of the survey, employees were asked to make one suggestion to improve Highland Council as an employer and feedback from Care and Learning Service employees included:

- More communication including between departments 8%
- Better pay, terms and conditions 6%
- Support/value/recognise/reward staff for what they do 6%
- More training (incl. relevant training) 5%

8.2 Responses to how employees would speak of The Highland Council to people outside the organisation were as follows:

<b>Statement</b>	<b>2015 score C&amp;L Service</b>	<b>2015 score Council wide</b>	<b>2012 score Council wide</b>
I would be critical (if asked)	19%	18%	27%
I would speak highly of the Council to people outside the organisation (if asked or without being asked)	25%	30%	26%

I would be neutral	49%	47%	43%
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## 9 Reporting the Results

- 9.1 The Care and Learning Service results were presented to the Directorate on 4 August 2015, and the unions were briefed on these results at a Service partnership meeting on 6 August 2015.
- 9.2 The Employee Survey provider, BMG, presented the corporate results to Directors and Heads of Service on 17 September 2015. The presentation was followed by a workshop that considered the corporate commitments needed to address the main factors in the survey results. In addition, individual Services are developing action plans to address service specific results and improvement areas.
- 9.3 Sets of survey questions were grouped together and analysed to measure overall responses to 3 indices:

Index	Council	C&L Services
Employee Engagement	59%	59%
Health and Well being	55%	54%
Fairer Highland	71%	72%

## 10 Areas for Improvement

- 10.1 Council wide the survey reports positive changes since the 2012 survey particularly in relation to managers and change.
- 10.2 There are areas for improvement and at the Weekly Business Meeting on 12 October 2015, senior managers identified and agreed the following commitments:
1. Value and recognise staff through managers engaging with their staff
  2. Communicate with employees in the way that they prefer and interpret and present information to meet their needs
  3. Provide appropriate training and career development opportunities for all staff
  4. Create and sustain mentally health workplaces
  5. Put people at the centre of change management activity
- 10.3 These commitments were put to the Staff Partnership Forum on the 19 October 2015, where they were welcomed. It was agreed that a particular focus be put on every employee having regular Employee Review and Development meetings and agreed plan. The Care and Learning Service management team will take this forward as a matter of priority.
- 10.4 Heads of Service in Care and Learning will consider the employee survey results for their sections and work with local teams and the staff side to confirm required actions, feeding into a Service action plan by February 2016. The action plan will be presented to the committee thereafter. The plan will also become the agenda for future Service Partnership meetings within the framework of the agreed 5 commitments above.

## 11 Implications

- 11.1 **Gaelic:** 47% of respondents support the Council's promotion of the Gaelic language and culture. The Service has responsibility for the Gaelic Language Plan.
- 11.2 **Equalities:** Responses to the questionnaire are analysed by most of the equality strands and the responses can be analysed to identify whether there are specific actions required to address any specific equalities area.
- 11.3 There are no risk, resource, legal, climate change/carbon clever or rural implications from this report.

## 12 Recommendations

- 12.1 Education, Children and Adult Services Committee is invited to:
- Note the results of the survey for the Care and Learning Service and the timescale for the development of the Service Improvement Action Plan.

Designation: Director of Care and Learning

Date: 3 November 2015

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Background Papers: [Employee Survey 2015 Final Results](#)