

**HUMAN RESOURCES - Report by Chief Executive**

**Summary**

The purpose of this report is to update Directors on Human Resources activity including a quarterly report on staff numbers, absence, disciplinary and grievance issues. There is also a summary of the recent staff survey and a plan of action to address issues identified.

It is recommended that Directors:-

- i. note the content of the quarterly report including the results of the staff survey and update on the staffing establishment; and
- ii. receive a future report on performance management training for middle management staff.

**1. Business Plan Contribution**

1.1 This report contributes directly towards the following outcomes of the High Life Highland (HLH) Business Plan 2012-15 and indirectly towards others:-

- i. delivery of the contract with The Highland Council;
- ii. increased customer satisfaction;
- iii. increased staff satisfaction; and
- iv. a positive company image.

**2. Background**

2.1 The quarterly Human Resources (HR) report is a numerical representation of HR activity in the preceding quarter. It gives an update on current staff numbers and any change from previous reports. There is also an outline of the absence levels within the Company, number of formal disciplinary cases, formal grievance complaints, harassment issues and an employee relations update.

**3. Quarterly Human Resources Report: January to March 2013**

3.1 The report to Directors covering the last quarter gave a total establishment figure of 481.44 FTE

3.2 The change to the establishment in Quarter 4 (January to March 2013) has been an overall increase of 4.83 FTE. Most of these (4.31 FTE) were the staff that transferred to HLH in January 2013, when the Company adopted the running of the Culloden Academy Community Complex.

3.3 These can be detailed as;

- 1 Centre Co-ordinator
- 1 Leisure Supervisor
- 1 Clerical Assistant
- 3 Part Time Receptionists (3 x 15.25 hour posts)

3.4 The remaining increase (0.52 FTE) was for a post that existed within the Council but did not formally transfer to HLH as it was covered by a relief employee at that time. The relief member of staff retired recently and we have this post is now added to the establishment in order to fill the vacancy.

3.5 The staffing establishment as at the end of Quarter 4 is therefore 486.27 FTE.

**4. Absence**

4.1 The absence figures for quarter 4 (January to March 2013) were as follows:

<b>% Absence Rates</b>	<b>Quarter 1 Apr - Jun</b>	<b>Quarter 2 Jul - Sep</b>	<b>Quarter 3 Oct - Dec</b>	<b>Quarter 4 Jan - Mar</b>
<b>2011/12</b>	No data	No data	3.02% (1.81 days/FTE)	2.46% (1.55 days/FTE)
<b>2012/13</b>	2.10% (1.34 days/FTE)	3.58% (2.32 days/FTE)	3.48% (2.12 days/FTE)	3.48% (2.12 days/FTE)

4.2 Quarters 1 and 2 in 2011/12 were the last quarters when the business was still being operated by The Highland Council and no data is available for these periods.

4.3 Although the absence statistics show an increase from the corresponding quarter last year it is considered that the absence rate is still within the manageable range for our current procedures. No additional action is required at this time although the position is being continually monitored.

**5. Stress management**

5.1 HLH management have been undertaking a number of actions to improve efficiency, effectiveness and the quality of service. There has been an increased focus on performance experienced by all staff.

5.2 A number of additional support measures for staff have been introduced during this period, and various processes designed to support staff have been tightened or refined. These include better induction, regular meetings reviewing performance and personal development for all staff, and more involvement of middle management in planning and review through being included in the extended management team. The Business Plan provides clarity of management expectations, and all three Heads of Service have regular team meetings, as do the five Principal Managers and those who run north and south teams.

5.3 Reporting to the senior management team has revealed a slight increase in stress related absence recently, and appropriate actions have been identified and taken to address this. These include actions to promote awareness; advice on the staff intranet; and access to a web-based Mental Health and Wellbeing' course during work time.

- 5.4 Staff whose GPs report work related stress as a reason for absence are automatically asked to attend an occupational health meeting and appropriate actions are taken when where necessary or advised.
- 5.5 It is important to recognise that any period of change can be stressful, particularly where this change is being led from above, rather than self-directed. Directors can be confident that senior managers are aware of the impact of change, and that the change is necessary, at this time, for the needs of the organisation. The important requirement is to manage that change and support staff, some of whom may find themselves unable to cope in their current roles.
- 5.6 There are other factors influencing stress absence statistics, for example a there has been an unfortunate co-incidence of staff bereavement which, although unrelated to work, has a significant impact.

## 6. Staff Survey

- 6.1 Directors will recall that the HLH Staff Survey was introduced as part of ensuring that the views of staff working in the Company helped inform decisions on how the Company operates and organises its work. The survey was conducted in February 2013 and it is intended that a survey will be conducted every two years. The 2013 HLH Survey was designed to establish a baseline both in the short term and on which to judge future trends.
- 6.2 The survey was hosted using 'Survey Monkey' to allow online responses to be recorded and to make analysis of the results more straightforward. Employees were able to complete the survey on any internet enabled computer, tablet or smartphone. For those who did not have online access, a paper version of the survey was available through line managers.
- 6.3 Responses to the survey were strictly confidential and nobody from HLH or elsewhere was able to see any personal data or other identifying information.
- 6.4 Only 344 responses were returned out of approximately 1200 staff. This low number of returns combined with the positive feedback from a range of recent union consultations may suggest a general mood of satisfaction.
- 6.5 A summary of the main points arising from the survey is attached as **Appendix A** and a graphical analysis is at **Appendix B**.
- 6.6 The highest satisfaction levels (where employees stated they were Very Satisfied or Fairly Satisfied) were;
- Interesting work – 86.1%
  - Enjoyment in the work I do – 80.0%
  - Supportive colleagues – 77.3%
  - Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work – 75.6%
  - Working hours – 73.8
- 6.7 The areas with the highest dissatisfaction were:
- Career development – (25.5%)
  - Sufficient resources – (25.0%)
  - Pay – (21.8%)
  - Morale in your workplace – (18.6%)

- Feedback on your performance – (18.0%).

6.8 Career development will be addressed at least in part, by the continuing roll out of the performance appraisal scheme. This allows employees to discuss their aspirations and, in many cases, to put in place a development plan to help them move towards their work goals.

6.9 Given that HLH is tied to the negotiating machinery of the Scottish Joint Council, room for manoeuvre on pay is extremely limited. This situation and the ramifications of it will be communicated to staff through the Trade Unions.

6.10 The baselines for morale in the workplace and sufficient resources to do the job are understandable in the present climate of public service reductions. It is proposed simply to monitor these aspects for change in future surveys.

6.11 As with career development (above) feedback on performance should be addressed by the introduction of the staff appraisal system. We are also encouraging our Managers are being encouraged to provide more feedback to staff, both positive as well as less good.

6.12 The results have already been available to staff and their representatives.

## **7. Other Issues**

7.1 Discipline: There was 1 formal disciplinary case in Q4 2012-13. This led to a dismissal.

7.2 Grievance: There were no formal grievance cases in Q4 2012-13.

7.3 Harassment: There were no harassment issues raised during Q4 in 2012-13.

7.4 Employee relations: The Company has engaged with the three trade unions that have members within the organisation, namely Unison, Unite and GMB. The Company engages with the TUs formally through the Joint Consultation Forum (JCF) which meets quarterly. There is also the staff Health and Safety Committee to which all TUs are invited to appoint two members.

7.5 Scottish Living Wage: the Company implemented the Scottish Living Wage of £7.45, in parallel with the Highland Council from 1 April 2013.

7.6 Monthly Pay. In line with the Highland Council, the Company will be moving all staff on to monthly pay. This will be on a phased basis over the next 6 months.

## **8. Discussion**

8.1 The issue of stress absence has not impacted significantly on the absence statistics, and is focused on management staff.

8.2 The staff survey has not highlighted any particular areas of concern, although it does suggest that some staff could be better supported by their managers.

8.3 Putting these two issues together suggest that the time is right for a focus on management training for middle managers in HLH. This may have resource implications for the organisation.

8.4 It will be recommended that a report is brought to the Board recommending a way forward on the issue of training in performance management for middle managers, focussing both on their own understanding, and how they support their staff.

## **9. Implications**

9.1 Resource Implications – there may be future resource implications relating to training of middle managers – to be reported to a future Board meeting

9.2 Legal Implications - there are no legal implications resulting from this report

9.3 Equalities Implications – Approval of the recommendations in this report may assist HLH to avoid future claims of acting unfairly by better supporting all staff.

9.4 Risk Implications – there are no new risks arising from the recommendations of this report.

### **Recommendation**

It is recommended that Directors:-

- i. note the content of the quarterly report including the results of the staff survey and update on the staffing establishment ; and
- ii. receive a future report on performance management training for middle management staff.

Signature:

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 6 June 2013

### Staff Survey Summary

The first question asked "As an organisation to work for, I rate High Life Highland...". The responses were largely positive with 44.5% rating the organisation as above average or better (33.7% "above average" + 10.8% "one of the best") and another 45.1% saying that the Company was about average. 7.3% said that HLH was below average or one of the worst (6.4% + 0.9%). 3.2% had no opinion or chose not to answer (1.5% + 1.7%).

In rating the satisfaction levels of various aspects of the job, the top five (where employees stated they were Very Satisfied or Fairly Satisfied) were;

- Interesting work – 86.1% (4.1% dissatisfied)
- Enjoyment in the work I do – 80.0% (6.7% dissatisfied)
- Supportive colleagues – 77.3% (8.1% dissatisfied)
- Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work – 75.6% (8.7% dissatisfied)
- Working hours – 73.8 (10.2% dissatisfied).

The lowest rated (also where employees stated they were Very Satisfied or Fairly Satisfied) were;

- Career development – 37.8% (25.5% dissatisfied)
- Feedback on your performance – 47.4% (18.0% dissatisfied)
- Job Security – 49.4% (16.9% dissatisfied)
- Making the best use of your skills and ability – 61.3% (17.1% dissatisfied)
- Sufficient resources – 52.6% (25.0% dissatisfied).

Looking at the same responses the highest areas of dissatisfaction were;

- Career development – (25.5%)
- Sufficient resources – (25.0%)
- Pay – (21.8%)
- Morale in your workplace – (18.6%)
- Feedback on your performance – (18.0%).

The areas that the respondents listed as being the most important were;

1. Pay (885 points)
2. Enjoyment in the work I do (861 points)
3. Interesting work (809 points)
4. Job security (634 points)
5. Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work. (563 points).

At the other end of the scale, the items that were rated lowest in importance to employees were;

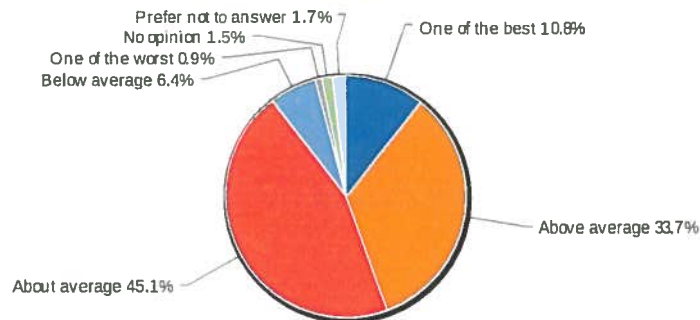
21. Receiving praise for good work (47 points)
20. Feedback on your performance (59 points)
19. Personal safety at work (61 points)
18. Working for a successful organisation (69 points)
17. Receiving guidance and support at work (138 points)



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HLH Staff Survey 2013

1. As an organisation to work for, I rate High Life Highland as (Tick One Option Only):



1. As an organisation to work for, I rate High Life Highland as (Tick One Option Only):

Value	Count	Percent %	Statistics
One of the best	37	10.8%	Total Responses 344
Above average	116	33.7%	
About average	155	45.1%	
Below average	22	6.4%	
One of the worst	3	0.9%	
No opinion	5	1.5%	
Prefer not to answer	6	1.7%	

2. Below is a list of things that your job may offer. First, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of these factors in your job?

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	No opinion	Prefer not to answer	Responses
Interesting work	41.9%	44.2%	9.9%	3.2%	0.9%	0.0%	0.0%	344
Pay	12.5%	43.9%	21.5%	16.0%	5.8%	0.3%	0.0%	344
Good employment benefits (e.g. leave, pensions)	19.8%	50.9%	18.0%	4.7%	1.7%	4.1%	0.9%	344
Working environment	26.7%	41.3%	16.3%	10.8%	4.7%	0.0%	0.3%	344
Career development	10.2%	27.6%	33.4%	14.5%	11.0%	3.2%	0.0%	344
Feedback on your performance	12.5%	34.9%	31.7%	11.0%	7.0%	2.3%	0.6%	344
Job security	10.2%	39.2%	30.2%	12.2%	4.7%	2.9%	0.6%	344
Supportive colleagues	36.9%	40.4%	14.0%	4.9%	3.2%	0.3%	0.3%	344
Working hours	30.2%	43.6%	15.7%	6.7%	3.5%	0.3%	0.0%	344
Sufficient resources (finance, equipment, staff to do your job)	12.5%	40.1%	20.9%	17.7%	7.3%	1.5%	0.0%	344
Making the best use of your skills and ability	18.0%	43.3%	21.2%	12.2%	4.9%	0.3%	0.0%	344
Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work	26.5%	49.1%	15.4%	6.4%	2.3%	0.3%	0.0%	344
Morale in your workplace	18.9%	41.6%	18.3%	11.3%	7.3%	1.7%	0.9%	344
Receiving sufficient training to do your job well	17.4%	41.9%	24.1%	11.3%	4.1%	1.2%	0.0%	344
Working for a successful organisation	17.7%	41.3%	29.1%	5.2%	1.7%	3.5%	1.5%	344
Opportunity to show initiative	23.3%	42.4%	20.6%	9.3%	2.9%	0.9%	0.6%	344
Personal safety at work	35.2%	46.2%	14.2%	3.2%	0.9%	0.3%	0.0%	344
Receiving praise for good work	19.8%	33.1%	29.7%	9.6%	6.1%	0.9%	0.9%	344
Receiving guidance and support at work	21.5%	39.5%	23.8%	9.0%	5.5%	0.3%	0.3%	344
Working as part of a team	30.2%	38.1%	18.3%	7.6%	3.8%	1.7%	0.3%	344
Enjoyment in the work I do	38.7%	41.3%	12.8%	5.2%	1.5%	0.0%	0.6%	344



3. Now looking at the same list again, which six are the most important to you? (Rank these 1 to 6 with 1 being the most important)

Item	Total Score <sup>1</sup>	Overall Rank
Pay	885	1
Enjoyment in the work I do	861	2
Interesting work	809	3
Job security	634	4
Feeling you have accomplished something worthwhile at work	563	5
Supportive colleagues	404	6
Good employment benefits (e.g. leave, pensions)	377	7
Career development	322	8
Making the best use of your skills and ability	309	9
Working hours	304	10
Working environment	289	11
Working as part of a team	252	12
Sufficient resources (finance, equipment, staff to do your job)	243	13
Morale in your workplace	223	14
Receiving sufficient training to do your job well	200	15
Opportunity to show initiative	175	16
Receiving guidance and support at work	138	17
Working for a successful organisation	69	18
Personal safety at work	61	19
Feedback on your performance	59	20
Receiving praise for good work	47	21

**Total Respondents: 344**

<sup>1</sup> Score is a weighted calculation. Items ranked first are valued higher than the following ranks, the score is the sum of all weighted rank counts.