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| HIGH LIFE HIGHLAND  REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS  18 June 2020 | AGENDA ITEM REPORT No HLH /20 |

## **HUMAN RESOURCES - Report by Chief Executive**

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| **Summary**  The purpose of this report is to update Directors on Human Resources activity for the period January to March 2020 which includes information relating to absence, disciplinary and grievance issues during this period.  It is recommended that Directors:   1. note and comment on the content of the quarterly HR report including the update on the staffing establishment; 2. note the amendments to the Special Leave Policy guidance notes; and 3. note the postponement of the 2020 Volunteer and Staff and Long Service Awards. |

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| **1.** | **Business Plan Contribution** |
| 1.1 | This report supports the highlighted Business Outcomes from the High Life Highland (HLH) Business Plan:   1. Sustain a high standard of health and safety, and environmental performance 2. **Implement the Service Delivery Contract with THC** 3. **Improving customer engagement and satisfaction** 4. **Improving staff engagement and satisfaction** 5. **Enhance the positive charity image** 6. Be a trusted and effective partner 7. Achieve sustainable growth across the organisation 8. Develop health and wellbeing across Highland communities 9. **Develop and promote the High Life brand** |
| **2.** | **Background** |
| 2.1 | The Human Resources (HR) report is a summary of HR activity in the preceding quarter, offering an update on current staff numbers along with any change since previous reports. There is also an outline of the absence levels (which are sub-sectioned into short and long-term absence in this report); activity relating to any disciplinary, grievance and harassment issues; and an employee relations update. |
| 2.2 | Board members will be aware that the COVID-19 pandemic arrived in the UK during the quarter featured in this report. The impact of COVID-19 on the items highlighted in this report (Q4-2019/20) is either non-existent or minimal. |
| **3.**  3.1  3.1.1  3.1.2 | **Human Resources Report: January - March 2020**  Staff Establishment Numbers  The changes to the establishment for the period in full-time equivalents (FTE) are as follows:  Establishment at end of **Quarter 3 2019/20** (Oct 19 to Dec 19) = **704.08**  Establishment at end of **Quarter 4** **2019/20** (Jan 20 to Mar 20) = **703.95**  The changes to the establishment are detailed in **Appendix A**. |
| 3.2 | Attendance management |
| 3.2.1 | Reports show absence levels split between short-term absence (≤10 consecutive working days) and long-term absence (>10 consecutive working days). |
| 3.2.2 | The short-term absence rate % up to the end of Quarter 4 were as follows:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **%**  **Short term Absence Rates** | **Quarter 1**  **(Apr–Jun)** | **Quarter 2**  **(Jul–Sep)** | **Quarter 3**  **(Oct–Dec)** | **Quarter 4**  **(Jan–Mar)** | | **2016/17** | 0.92% | 0.68% | 0.90% | 1.45% | | **2017/18** | 0.98% | 1.06% | 1.31% | 1.74% | | **2018/19** | 0.99% | 0.99% | 1.32% | 1.42% | | **2019/20** | 0.90% | 1.00% | 1.58% | 1.33% | |
| 3.2.3 | Quarter 4 has shown a decrease of 0.25% in the short-term absence rate compared to Quarter 3 of 2019/20.  The long term absence rate % up to the end of Quarter 4 was as follows:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **%**  **Long term Absence Rates** | **Quarter 1**  **(Apr–Jun)** | **Quarter 2**  **(Jul–Sep)** | **Quarter 3**  **(Oct–Dec)** | **Quarter 4**  **(Jan–Mar)** | | **2017/18** | 2.62% | 2.29% | 2.68% | 2.28% | | **2018/19** | 2.12% | 2.37% | 2.70% | 2.73% | | **2019/20** | 3.37% | 2.55% | 1.27% | 1.64% | |
| 3.2.4  3.2.5  3.2.6  3.2.7 | Quarter 4 has shown a slight increase 0.37% in the long-term absence rate compared to Quarter 3 of 2019/20.  There were 21 long-term absences within the quarter (23 in Q3) of which zero remained absent at the start of Q1 2020/21.  Over 70% of the long-term absences relate to physical and medical illnesses or conditions, the remainder include absences relating to bereavement, long term and ongoing mental health issues which are not work related; and a small number (10%) reporting stress at work as the reason for absence.  There were no reported Covid-19 related long-term absences. |
| 3.2.10 | The average sick days per employee up to the end of Quarter 4 were as follows:   |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | **Average sick days per employee** | **Quarter 1**  **(Apr–Jun)** | **Quarter 2**  **(Jul–Sep)** | **Quarter 3**  **(Oct–Dec)** | **Quarter 4**  **(Jan–Mar)** | | **2017/18** | 2.30 | 2.17 | 2.39 | 2.53 | | **2018/19** | 2.02 | 2.18 | 2.45 | 2.57 | | **2019/20** | 2.82 | 2.34 | 1.74 | 1.81 | |
| 3.2.11 | The average sick days/FTE per employee has shown a slight increase of 0.07% days compared to Quarter 3 of 2019/20. |
| 3.2.12 | As outlined in previous reports, HR continues to work closely with all managers and employees to find opportunities to encourage earlier returns to work. The current COVID-19 situation means that the majority of staff are currently on furlough leave but managers remain committed to keeping in contact with all staff, regularly checking in on their health and wellbeing and highlighting to the HR Manager any concerns they have regarding staff health and wellbeing during this time.  At the time of writing this report, the charity has two staff being closely monitored by members of the Executive team to ensure their ongoing health and wellbeing during the COVID-19 situation/furlough leave. |
| 3.3  3.3.1 | Staff Turnover  Resignations in Quarter 4 as a percentage of the number of posts and resignations was 1.5% equating to an average of 5 resignations a month across the whole organisation. |
| 3.3.2 | Staff turnover remains in a ‘**green**’ RAG-rated status in terms of the Charity’s performance reporting and therefore does not present any current ongoing concerns for HLH. |
| 3.4  3.4.1  3.5  3.5.1  3.6  3.6.1 | Use of the charity disciplinary processes  There were two issues considered under the Charity’s disciplinary process in Q4-2019/20, both resulting in dismissal.  Use of the charity grievance processes  There were two new matters received under the charity’s grievance procedure in Q4-2019/20. Due to the current COVID-19 situation, and with the consent of those submitting the grievances; both submissions are currently on hold until all parties can participate in a hearing.  Harassment  There were no harassment issues raised during Q4-2019/20. |
| 3.7  3.7.1  3.7.2 | Employee relations  The Charity has engaged with the four Trade Unions (TUs) representing members within the organisation, namely Unison, Unite, GMB and EIS. The Charity deals with the TUs formally through the Joint Consultation Forum (JCF) which meets quarterly, the last meeting was held on 9 March 2020  The main discussion areas at this meeting were:   1. Holiday Flex Scheme and pension implications; 2. Annual leave notification and provision for Public Holidays; 3. Covid-19 situation. |
| 3.7.3 | In addition, the above Trade Unions are invited to be represented on the staff Health and Safety Committee. |
| 3.7.4 | Management and representatives of HR also discuss with the Trade Unions individual issues as and when required. |
| **4.** | **Policies update** |
| 4.1  4.2  4.2.1  4.2.2  **5.**  5.1 | The following policy has been considered in line with the review schedule with no amendments.   1. Service Equality Policy   For information, the Guidance notes for the Special Leave Policy have been updated as follows:   1. *Section 5. Voluntary Service in Reserve Forces*   Employees who are members of the reserve forces will now be entitled to full pay, without deduction of service pay or allowances, to attend annual training camp for up to 15 days in any year. Employees were previously required to surrender any service pay.  This change is in recognition of HLH’s commitment to the Armed Forces Covenant and application for the Employment Recognition Scheme Gold Award. It is not envisaged the amendment to the guidelines will result in anything other than an extremely minimal number of requests for this type of leave.   1. *Section 7. Bereavement*   If an employee seeks special leave with pay in the event of a death of a relative, it will be at the discretion of their Line Manager – the following is a guide to the number of days paid bereavement leave:  **Up to 10 working days paid leave** – on the death of a husband, wife, civil partner or partner (including same sex partner)\*, son or daughter\*\*, parent, step-parent, brother or sister, step-brother/sister, or a person with whom the employee is in a relationship of domestic dependency.  **Up to 5 working days paid leave** – on the death of a grandparent, grandchild, father/mother-in-law or son/daughter-in-law.  From April 2020, Parents who suffer the loss of a child under age 18 are entitled to 2 weeks statutory bereavement leave. This also applies to employees who have a still birth from the 24th week of pregnancy.  **Up to 1 day paid leave** may be agreed on the death of any other relative to facilitate attendance at the funeral.  \*Includes a partner with whom the employee is cohabiting, but who is not the employee’s legal spouse/partner.  \*\* Includes children in respect of whom the employee is the adoptive parent, legal guardian or carer.  **Volunteer and Staff Awards 2020**  In light of the current Covid-19 situation, the HLH Volunteer, Staff and Long Services Awards Ceremony, normally held in June each year, has been postponed for the time being. A decision on when or whether the event can be rescheduled will be taken once further information is available from Government regarding social distancing and gatherings once restrictions are relaxed/removed. |
| **6.**  6.1  6.2  6.3  6.4 | **Implications**  Resource Implications – there are no new resource implications arising from the recommendations of this report.  Legal Implications – there are no new legal implications arising from the recommendations of this report.  Equality Implications – there are no new equality implications arising from the recommendations of this report.  Risk Implications – there are no new risks arising from the recommendations of this report. |
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Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 4 June 2020

**APPENDIX A**

**CHANGES TO STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN QUARTER 4**

**(January - March 2020)**

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| **Post** | **Location** | **FTE** | | |
| Network Librarian | Lochaber | | -1 |
| Library Assistant | Lochaber | | 0.87 |
| **TOTAL** |  | | **-0.13** |