

**The Highland Council**  
**Resources Committee – 25 November 2015**

Agenda Item	<b>12(c)</b>
Report No	<b>RES/ 102/15</b>

**Employee Survey 2015 – Corporate Development Action Plan**

**Report by Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development**

**Summary**

The paper provides a brief summary of the responses from Corporate Development staff to the Highland Council's 7<sup>th</sup> Employee Survey and provides the action plan agreed with staff as a result of their views.

**1. Background**

- 1.1 There were 187 responses to the Employee Survey from Corporate Development staff giving an overall response rate of 65%, amongst the highest Service response rates.
- 1.2 As Corporate Development is a new Service since the 2012 survey it is not possible to compare results with previous surveys.
- 1.3 This paper focuses on the results and actions for Corporate Development. There are some further service details presented within the corporate final report - [Employee Survey 2015 Final Report](#).

**2. Results**

- 2.1 The overall picture is generally positive with results for Corporate Development exceeding the overall Council results in most factors. Overall job satisfaction is 73% (3% higher than the corporate total).
- 2.2 There are also high levels of satisfaction with factors such as:
  - Interesting work (82%)
  - Working Hours (85%)
  - Approachable line manager (85%)
  - Line manager available to speak when needed (81%)
  - Line manager knows his/her job (89%)

88% of Corporate Development staff support the Council's organisational values.

75% have received an Employee Review and Development (ERD).

- 2.3 Corporate Development staff also responded positively against the analysis indexes of:
  - Employee engagement (65%)
  - Health & wellbeing (58%)
  - Fairer Highland (74%)

2.4 Whilst the results for Corporate Development were generally very encouraging with high satisfaction levels in many areas, the results also identify areas where staff still have concerns. These are factors that have scored lower and/or been identified by staff as important to them.

	<b>CD</b>	<b>Council</b>
Job security	53%	65%
Sufficient resources	51%	43%
Morale in the workplace	43%	46%
Feeling valued and recognised	55%	51%
Manager does something about the pressure I come under	58%	48%
Manager discusses my training and development needs	58%	54%
Receiving sufficient training to do your job	55%	54%
Career development	31%	40%
Making best use of skills and abilities	53%	59%
Feedback on performance	49%	49%
Manager acts on my ideas and suggestions	54%	52%
Senior managers keep employees informed	43%	45%
Preferred methods of communication:		
Personal contact from immediate line manager	48%	36%
e-mail	46%	53%
Team Briefings (face-to-face)	42%	30%

### 3. Development Themes and Actions

3.1 A working group was set up with cross-Service representation led by the ICT Operations Manager. Group members took detailed contributions from their section of the Service to inform the Action Plan.

3.2 As a result of the analysis of the results and staff feedback, a number of key themes were agreed that cut across all parts of the Service:

- Valuing and Listening to Staff
- Communication
- Staff Empowerment
- Effective Leadership and Management
- Learning from each other

The full Action Plan is in **Appendix 1**.

3.3 The Action Plan was then circulated to all Corporate Development staff and trade union representatives for final comment.

3.4 A key principle for the Action Plan is that it is achievable, visible and focussed and reflects the views of all staff in the Service. The actions set out an overall approach to create a culture in the Service that values staff and leads to

improved satisfaction and results. The actions will be tracked at Service management meetings and a progress report taken to Resources Committee at the end of 2016.

- 3.5 In addition to the action plan for the Corporate Development Service each Head of Service will also take forward actions to address any specific issues within their Service.

#### **4. Implications**

##### **4.1 Gaelic**

49% of Corporate Development staff state that they are supportive of the Council's promotion of the Gaelic language and culture. The Gaelic Development Manager will deliver a more detailed survey of staff's Gaelic abilities and needs later this year.

##### **4.2 Equalities**

Responses to the questions in the survey are analysed by most of the protected characteristics and the data will be examined to identify whether there are any specific issues to be addressed.

##### **4.3 Other**

There are no resource, legal, risk, climate change/ carbon clever or rural implications from this report.

#### **5. Recommendations**

The Resources Committee is asked to:

- a) Note the results of the Corporate Development staff response to the 2015 Employee Survey
- b) Note the Action Plan agreed with staff to address specific areas for improvement
- c) Note that the plan will be tracked by the Service Management Team and progress will be reported to Resources Committee towards the end of 2016.

Designation: Depute Chief Executive/Director of Corporate Development

Date: 13 November 2015

Author: Cathy Christie, Learning & Development Manager

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

**Corporate Development Service  
Employee Survey Action Plan 2015/2016**

<b>Action Area and Identified Improvements</b>	<b>Accountable</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>By when</b>
<p><b>Valuing and Listening to Staff</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>ERDs to be completed for all staff - ERD purpose to be re-positioned – take focus away from paperwork and annual review and turn it into something more meaningful for staff and more embedded in the day job. The ERD should be a regular conversation with staff – more than 1 session per year. Realistic expectations should be set about training budgets.</li> </ul>	Director and all HoS	All Line Managers	April 2016
<p><b>Communication</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continue to Commit to Team Briefings – use best practice that exists in the Service already, e.g. Customer Services, especially for remote staff. For HQ staff face-to-face contact should be the norm. Team leaders should commit to scheduling regular meetings.</li> <li>Commit to Openness – encourage the freedom to keep everyone informed but also more 2-way communication – not just briefing but staff engagement. This requires trust and a willingness to listen.</li> </ul>	<p>Director and all HoS</p> <p>Director and all HoS</p>	<p>All Team Leaders</p> <p>All Managers</p>	<p>November 2015</p> <p>January 2016</p>
<p><b>Staff Empowerment</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective Delegation – move away from micro-management and direction of approach/methods. Move towards trust and a focus on results. The emphasis should be on encouraging staff to think and to make decisions within clear lines of responsibility and accountability. Encourage staff to be flexible in how they deliver results – it's the end that matters rather than the process of getting there.</li> </ul>	Director and all HoS	All Managers	January 2016

