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| HIGH LIFE HIGHLAND  REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS  27 AUGUST 2019 | AGENDA ITEM REPORT No HLH /19 |

## **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 April to June 2019 which includes information relating to absence, disciplinary and grievance issues during this period.  It is recommended that Directors note and comment on:   1. the content of the quarterly HR report including the update on the staffing establishment; and 2. the outcomes of the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group activities. |

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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. |
| **3.**  3.1  3.1.1  3.1.2 | **Human Resources Report: April - June 2019**  Staff Establishment Numbers  The changes to the establishment for the period in full-time equivalents (FTE) are as follows:  Establishment at end of **Quarter 4 2018/19** (January to March 2019) = **690.55** Establishment at end of **Quarter 1** **2019/20** (April to June 2019) = **693.88**  The changes to the establishment are detailed in **Appendix A** |
| 3.2 | Attendance management |
| 3.2.1 | Reports show absence levels split between long-term absence (>10 consecutive working days) and short-term absence (10 consecutive working days or less). |
| 3.2.2 | The long term absence rates % up to the end of Quarter 1 were 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% |  |  |  | |
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| 3.2.3 | Quarter 1 has shown an increase of 0.64% in the long term absence rate compared to Quarter 4 of 2018/19.  There were 38 long-term absences within the quarter (compared to 22 in Qtr 1) of which 14 remained absent at the start of Q2 2019/20. Of those 14, three have returned to work during Q2 2019/20 and one has left the Charity.  Around half of the long term absences relate to physical and medical illnesses and operations, the remainder include absences relating to bereavement, long term and ongoing mental health issues which are not work related; reported debility following the instigation of the disciplinary process; and a small number reporting stress at work as the reason for absence. |
| 3.2.4 | The short term absence rates % up to the end of Quarter 1 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% |  |  |  | |
| 3.2.5 | Quarter 4 has shown decrease of 0.52% in the short term absence rate compared to Quarter 4 of 2018/19. |
| 3.2.6 | 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 |  |  |  | |
| 3.2.7 | The average sick days/FTE per employee has shown an increase of 0.25% days compared to Quarter 4 of 2018/19. |
| 3.2.8 | Youth and Library services have witnessed a marked upturn in long term absences during Quarter 1 2019/20 and with the support of the HR section individual line managers continue to monitor and identify attendance management issues which may require support and assistance through measures such as referral to occupational health, counselling, in-situ support/confidante. |
| 3.2.9 | HR works closely with managers and employees to find opportunities to encourage earlier returns to work for some long term absences where temporary redeployments or lighter/different duties may be appropriate. Managers are being encouraged to consider alternatives options for employees who are or are likely to be medically certified to be absent from work for a potentially prolonged period of time. Directors should note that a supportive but robust approach is being adopted in any such cases. |
| 3.3 | Staff Turnover  Resignations in Quarter 1 as a percentage of the number of posts and resignations was 0.97% equating to an average of 4 resignations a month across the whole organisation. |
| 3.3.1 | 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. |
| 3.3.2 | As requested by the Board, the HR Manager has undertaken a benchmarking review of annual staff turnover within similar organisations and results can be seen in **Appendix B.** |
| 3.3.3 | In HLH standard resignations in the whole of 2018/19 as a percentage of the number of posts and resignations was 8.4%. |
| 3.3.4 | Of the three other Trusts providing information, HLH’s annual staff turnover (based on standard resignations) is slightly higher than two of the trusts and is 5.7% lower than the other. |
| 3.3.5 | Looking at all leavers over the 2018/19 period, (including terminations, deaths, end of fixed term contracts and retirements) the annual staff turnover for HLH was 10.3%. |
| 3.3.6 | In the UK the average staff turnover rate for standard resignations is 15% with varying rates for different sectors. For example, private sector tends to have a slightly higher turnover, whereas the public sector, education, legal and accountancy tend to be lower. |
| 3.3.7 | HLH’s staff turnover of 8.4% is below the UK average however, there is no accepted optimal level of turnover for staff. While there are undoubtedly costs to turnover, the total cost depends on the job and the performance level of the individual doing the job. |
| 3.3.8 | An employee leaving an organisation can often be viewed as a negative outcome however staff staying too long with a company can create its own challenges with potential poor performance and complacency as a result of employment longevity. A balance therefore has to be reached. |
| 3.3.9 | Organisations need some amount of staff turnover to ensure that motivation levels remain high and that “fresh blood” is injected, often generating new ideas and working practices which in turn, help an organisation to grow. |
| 3.3.10 | The Highland area is unique in its geography and the areas of work and services delivered by High Life Highland are for the most part also particular to the organisation, providing specific types of employment in many rural areas where other employment opportunities are limited. Staff therefore tend to remain in post longer or be promoted from within the Charity (particularly in senior posts). |
| 3.3.11 | 65% of the voluntary resignations in 2018/19 were employees living within a 15 mile radius of Inverness where job opportunities are more plentiful, particularly within the leisure and catering sectors. |
| 3.3.12 | The challenge for staff and managers, particularly in the more rural areas, is in the management and support of career expectations. While HLH has a low to steady turnover and staff members remain in post for long periods of time, staff members have limited opportunity to develop or move up the ladder unless they are willing to move either around the Highlands or away from it entirely. |
| 3.4  3.5  3.6 | Use of the charity disciplinary processes  There were five new issues considered under the Charity’s disciplinary process in Q1 19/20, four of which were resolved. One further issue carried forward into Q2 2019/20 and is currently at the hearing stage.  Use of the charity grievance processes  There were two new matters considered under the charity’s grievance procedure in Q1 2019/20. One has been fully addressed and is now closed and the other carried forward into Q2 2019/20.  Harassment  There were no harassment issues raised during Q4 in 2018/19. |
| 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 13 June 2019  The main discussion areas at this meeting were:   * Zero tolerance (abuse of staff) – staff safety measures and protocols * Staff Morale * Joint settings e.g. facilities/schools – protocols for staff engagement * OH referrals and employees expectations |
| 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** | **Staff Health and Wellbeing** |
| 4.1 | Following a review from the 2017 staff survey, focus groups on staff health and wellbeing were facilitated by the Head of Development, HR Manager and Health and Wellbeing Manager in 2018. Subsequently a short life working group was established to consider feedback from the focus groups and take forward agreed priority actions.  The short life working group, Chaired by the Health and Wellbeing Manager, comprised of representation from all HLH services plus the HR and Marketing teams.  Following successful implementation of initial work streams linked to the issues raised in the initial focus groups it was agreed that the short-life working group should become a regular working group called the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group with the purpose of assisting in the delivery of the HLH Business Plan outcomes in relation to staff satisfaction. This group was formalised in June 2019.  The Staff Health and Wellbeing Group focus is on the following key objectives and priorities:   * To undertake programmes of work/initiatives that focus on staff health and wellbeing outcomes * Develop staff skills and knowledge around issues that affect staff health and wellbeing   It is hoped that by implementing the above staff will be healthier and happier both at work and in their personal lives and therefore be less likely to be absent from work due to health related issues. |
| 4.2 | Staff Health and Wellbeing Week |
|  | Following feedback from the staff focus groups, in May 2019 members of the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group co-ordinated HLH’s first Staff Health and Wellbeing Week. All HLH staff were invited to contribute to the week by delivering an activity for their colleagues. Over 100 activities were offered by staff, a huge range was available from healthy baking and quiz nights to paddle boarding and jogging workshops. The HLH Health and Wellbeing Week coincided with National Mental Health Awareness Week.  For the Staff Health and Wellbeing Week the HLH Marketing department created a brand new, password protected, website (for HLH staff only) to promote all the activities on offer and to enable staff to book into sessions of interest to them. Since the website went live in May 2019 it has had 476 staff users. The website was also populated with a range of information and tips to support staff to improve and sustain their health and wellbeing, and remains available as an ongoing resource for staff on topics including:   * Diet and nutrition * Mental health and wellbeing * Keeping active * Training courses available * Quick links to HLH policies that support health and wellbeing   The website will fall under the remit of the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group and will continue to have its content developed and reviewed by this group.  The new 10% discount on *high****life*** membership was launched during the Staff Health and Wellbeing Week – the uptake was as follows:   * 155 staff applied for discount to existing highlife membership * 8 staff applied for new discounted membership (3 family, 5 individual)   A survey was issued to staff at the end of the Staff Health and Wellbeing Week and the feedback will be taken on board by the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group regarding and planning and co-ordination for future activities. Comments from staff were wide ranging and included:  *“I really enjoyed the events I took part in. There was a good mix of options available so it was easy to pick something new to try.”*  *“I think it is a great idea to have this programme. It shows that the managers think about their staff wellbeing.”*  *“I think the step challenge has been great, as it is something that you can do easily and any time in the day.”*  *“It was a great way to de-stress and try out new sports - thank you to the HWB group for organising it. I also really enjoyed the step challenge!”*  *“As a sedentary office worker, thanks to the Step Challenge, I am now: walking to work when I can; walking between offices; walking to the shops at night (and my children are also getting into the hype of counting steps now by walking with me); walking at lunchtimes; and so on - I ALWAYS took the car before this. During the challenge I walked 243k steps which equates to 108 miles. To put this fundamental change in context...in the 4 weeks prior I walked 48 miles. It worked for me!”* |
| 4.3 | Step Challenge |
|  | A Step Challenge was launched during the Staff Health and Wellbeing Week, it was a four week initiative for staff teams of five who were challenged to take as many steps as possible.  85 staff took part and the total number of steps from all participating HLH teams was a mighty 23 million steps, the equivalent to 11,500 miles or the distance from Inverness to Sydney Australia. The winning team was recognised at the HLH Staff and Volunteer Awards in June 2019.  It should be noted that a number of staff who admitted were not physically active prior to the Step Challenge have confirmed they have kept walking and maintained a level of activity beyond the health and wellbeing week initiative. |
| 4.4 | Supporting Cycling at Work |
|  | To support cycling at work HLH applied to Cycling Scotland’s Employer Development Fund which aims to help tackle the practical barriers linked to active travel by providing 100% grant aid to organisations to make improvements at their premises benefiting staff and visitors. Two grants, have been secured, one in December 2018 for £2,910 and a second in July 2019 for £25,017.  The first project was to procure and install cycle parking for up to ten bicycles at the HLH offices in Inverness and Dingwall. The anticipated completion date for this project is mid October 2019. The installation of the cycle racks at both locations has been delayed, due to a backlog of work with the contractor. However, the contractor has now given assurances that the racks will be purchased and installed imminently.  The second project involved contacting all 70 RPOs in HLH to gauge the need for improved cycling facilities at their facilities. Focussing on those giving positive responses, a plan was devised for upgrading cycling facilities at 15 venues where i) there was no cycle parking at present, or ii) the size of current cycle rack was inadequate, or iii) the rack security required improvement. Liaison with each RPO will be undertaken to determine suitable design and type of facilities for each location, as well as the siting for each.  This project has been led by HLH’s Marketing Officer and the Principal Estates Manager has also been involved in delivering the project, with input from the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group.  The list of sites, in addition to the Ardross Street and Old Library offices, is as follows:  - Averon Leisure Centre  - Ben Nevis Visitor Centre, Fort William  - Black Isle Leisure Centre  - Brora Library  - Culloden Library  - Dingwall Leisure Centre  - Highland Archive and Registration Centre  - Highland Folk Museum  - Inverness Botanic Gardens  - Inverness Leisure  - Joss Street Youth Centre, Invergordon  - Lochaber Leisure Centre  - Nairn Leisure Centre  - Sutherland Swimming Pool, Golspie  - Tain Royal Academy Community Complex |
| **5.** | **Staff Survey 2019** |
| 5.1 | The results of HLH’s biennial staff survey are reported under Agenda Item 15. |
| **6.** | **Policies update** |
| 6.1 | The following two policies have been considered in line with the review schedule and have had minor amendments in terms of referencing to HLH as a Charity.   * Volunteering * Data protection |
| **7.**  7.1  7.2  7.3  7.4 | **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. |
| **Recommendation**  It is recommended that Directors note and comment on:   1. the content of the quarterly HR report including the update on the staffing establishment; and 2. outcomes of the Staff Health and Wellbeing Group activities. | |

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 16 August 2019

**APPENDIX A**

**CHANGES TO STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN QUARTER 4**

**(APRIL - JUNE 2019)**

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| **Post** | **Location** | **FTE** |
| Leisure Supervisor | Badenoch Leisure Centre | + 0.15 |
| Leisure Supervisor | Badenoch Leisure Centre | -0.2 |
| Leisure Assistant Seasonal | Nairn Leisure Centre | + 0.5 |
| Leisure Assistant Seasonal | Nairn Leisure Centre | + 0.5 |
| Leisure Assistant Seasonal | Nairn Leisure Centre | + 0.4 |
| Cashier/Receptionist | Culloden Academy Leisure Centre | -0.05 |
| Cashier/Receptionist | Culloden Academy Leisure Centre | + 0.05 |
| Leisure Assistant | Gairloch Leisure Centre | -0.52 |
| YDO - Care Experienced Young People. Externally funded | Clachnaharry, Inverness | + 0.5 |
| Project Officer, Green Health Events (temp 16 months) Externally funded | Highland wide | + 1 |
| Music Instructor | Sutherland and Easter Ross | + 1 |
| **Total** | | **+3.33** |

**Appendix B**