

PERTH & KINROSS COUNCIL

17 December 2014

Securing The Future Through Our People

Report by Chief Executive

PURPOSE OF REPORT

People are the Council's most valuable asset and it is through them that real, meaningful change is delivered. This report highlights the many positive people practices which have shaped our progress over the last year, and identifies future plans which will enable employees, at all levels, to fully contribute to the Council's transformation journey.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 Perth and Kinross Council is already sector leading in many areas, and this demonstrates clear vision and leadership, combined with the talent, dedication and ambition of its people.
- 1.2 People remain at the heart of everything we do, and over the last year there has been a continued emphasis on promoting a positive workplace culture, in which employees feel supported, valued and encouraged to be active participants in influencing the Council's journey.
- 1.3 Our approach to investing in, and engaging with our people is well established. A wide range of formal and informal processes and initiatives are in place to provide leadership and direction, focus on positive employee relations, keep colleagues informed, and involved in Council business, safeguard health and wellbeing, and promote effective communications, change and improvement. Key highlights for 2014 are detailed in the remainder of the report.

2. CONNECTING, INSPIRING, CREATING: CONTINUING THE JOURNEY

- 2.1 Building on the success of last year's Connecting, Inspiring, Creating Conference, a similar event was organised to support the launch of the updated Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement 2013 – 2023. Almost 300 delegates from across the Community Planning Partnership were invited to attend, which was held at Perth Concert Hall on 30 April 2014.
- 2.2 The purpose was to acknowledge the existing strengths of the Partnership and create opportunities for new connections to be made. Conference speakers aimed to inform and inspire those attending – delegates learned about the evolving journey of public service reform, the importance of developing community health and resilience, and an innovative approach to caring for people living with dementia, in the form of a self-contained village.

- 2.3 Short films (Community Plan v. 1 & 2) reinforced the vital role community planning partners play in supporting the achievement of people's aspirations and ambitions. Throughout the day, delegates from across the Community Planning Partnership worked together on a range of experiences which supported learning about different professional perspectives, and the potential to develop creative solutions to complex challenges.
- 2.4 Feedback from the event was extremely positive, and those attending noted the importance of developing greater understanding of the range of professional perspectives and opportunities in existence, with a view to supporting better outcomes for the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross.
- 2.5 These events have an increasingly important role in sharing knowledge and information about the dynamic landscape of public service reform. They also serve to inspire and connect people, and in doing so, reinforce a shared cultural vision which seeks to encourage creativity, innovation and a joined up approach.

3. CELEBRATING SUCCESS AND ACHIEVEMENT

- 3.1 A key strength of the Perth & Kinross Council culture is our commitment to celebrating success and achievement, both at an everyday level, and also on a larger scale. The latter takes place via a growing portfolio of prestigious events, which value team work, honour long service, and recognise and encourage individual achievement. These events are highly valued by those attending, thus reinforcing the emotional connection people have with the Council, and further securing the commitment and contribution of our employees, which are vital to our progress as an organisation.
- 3.2 ***Securing the Future (STF) Awards***
The annual Securing the Future Awards ceremony took place in Perth Concert Hall on Thursday 15 May 2014. The event, which is one of the highlights of the Council year, saw 58 teams competing to win gold in six categories related to the Council's priority areas, as well as the much anticipated Provost's Award.
- 3.3 This is the highest number of entries received (14 more than 2014) in the history of the award. Participating in the awards process is an extremely motivational experience, as it creates an opportunity to broaden understanding of the significant range of professional expertise, commitment and creativity in existence across the Council.
- 3.4 Gold award winners this year are as follows:
- *One Stop Women's Learning Service (OWLS)* – Category: Customer Focus
 - *Empowering Communities* – Category: Working with Communities
 - *Vacant Unit Dressing* – Category: Promoting Sustainability

- *Multi-Cultural Events Programme* – Category: Equalities
- *Business and Enterprise Month 2013* – Category: Improving Services through Partnership
- *ECS Facilities Management Development* – Category: Improving Efficiency and Quality

The winner of the Provost's Award was the Winter Festival.

3.5 In this, its seventh year, the Securing the Future awards remain a fundamental part of our drive to recognise the enthusiasm, expertise and commitment of our employees, who, working with colleagues both within the Council and across the Community Planning Partnership, continue to make a real difference to the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross.

3.6 ***David White Award***

This award, which was established in memory of Councillor David White, reaches its 20th anniversary this year. This significant milestone demonstrates a sustained understanding of the positive impact of individual learning and development on the achievement of team, service and organisational goals.

3.6.1 The role of managers in nurturing talent and encouraging personal and professional growth is critical to supporting a culture of learning, as well as contributing to the development of new ways of thinking and working.

3.6.2 As such, managers are asked to nominate employees who they feel embody the spirit of the award, which aims to recognise a wide range of achievements, from academic attainment, to adapting to a changing work role.

3.7 ***CoSLA Excellence Awards 2015***

To further promote the visionary work being taken forward by Perth & Kinross Council, gold award winners across the Securing the Future award categories are put forward for consideration in the CoSLA Excellence Awards. These awards take place within a context of considerable challenge for public services, and the focus for 2015 is on projects which are rising to the challenge by delivering local solutions with innovation, creativity and passion.

3.7.1 Perth & Kinross Council has an existing track record of success with these awards – this year 'Saints Academy Inclusion through Sport' project was announced as a Gold Winner. CoSLA will announce the long list for the 2015 awards in early December.

3.8 ***Scottish Public Service Awards***

These awards, launched in 2014, are designed to celebrate outstanding achievements within Scotland's civic landscape and give recognition to the rich and unique diversity of public life in Scotland, and the vital relationships that cut across departmental, geographic and institutional boundaries.

- 3.8.1 A total of 33 entries have been selected from over 160 applications for the new awards, which will honour the work of public servants across Scotland. Of these 33, the following four entries from Perth & Kinross Council have made the final shortlist:
- *OWLS* - Category: Campbell Christie Public Service Reform Award
 - *Walking Tall Project* - Category: Third Sector Partnership Award
 - *Water of Ruchill Flood Protection Project* - Category: Programme and Project Management Award
 - *ECS Facilities Management Team* - Category: Employee Engagement and Skills Award

3.9 Service Recognition Awards

Perth & Kinross Council recognises the value of a life spent in public service, and as such the Service Recognition Awards aim to formally honour the dedication and achievements of employees reaching their 20th, 30th and 40th year of continuous service in local government. This year 222 employees and their guests attended the red carpet event, which took place on 25 November in Perth Concert Hall.

- 3.9.1 The whole experience takes the form of a celebration of people's individual stories and successes. Feedback from those attending is overwhelmingly positive, and people are touched that their personal contribution to the successes and legacy of Perth and Kinross Council is visibly and publicly appreciated at an organisational level.

4. LEADING THE WAY - CENTRE FOR INNOVATION AND IMPROVEMENT

- 4.1 The approach to leadership development continues to evolve and grow, and this year, Chief Officers and Senior Managers have participated in a range of corporate opportunities designed to create space to think together, to discuss successes and challenges, and to confirm the shared cultural vision and leadership direction across the Council.

- 4.2 Chief Executive's Business Breakfasts, Senior Manager Briefings and Joint Executive Officer Team and Corporate Management Group sessions, continue as core elements of the approach to leadership development and networking. They offer a means of sharing information and knowledge, seeking views, making connections, and also creating the opportunity for dialogue on a range of subjects, from developing the role of the Centre for Innovation and Improvement, to sharing information on the budget etc.

4.3 Leadership, Learning and Improvement

Clearly, a key element of leadership is ensuring that those working within the Council are fully committed to the journey of change, and able to offer their best efforts in service of the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross. Developing talent and building capacity for growth is at the heart of the leadership agenda, and there is a firm commitment to build on existing success, and grow our capacity for change and improvement. This organisational commitment is embodied in the Centre for Innovation and Improvement which was launched in October 2013.

- 4.3.1 The Centre, which is a virtual concept, aims to support Perth & Kinross Council to further develop bold and imaginative approaches to addressing the challenges of public service reform and ongoing austerity. Branded 'Learn, Innovate, Grow', the Centre's initial focus during the pilot phase (October – December 2013), was on placing innovation and improvement at the heart of everyday business, and promoting internal expertise via a range of action focused learning and networking opportunities.
- 4.3.2 Learning is fundamental to growth, and organised sharing of knowledge, skills and expertise has continued as a priority throughout 2014. The impact of this increasing focus on prioritising learning and development appears to be evident in the Employee Survey, which indicates that almost 69% of respondents feel that their development is encouraged and supported. This is an increase of nearly 3% on last year's figures. Over the last year a wide range of practical opportunities have been provided to support people to develop new skills, expertise and working relationships – corporate highlights include:
- 4.3.3 *Learn, Innovate, Grow*: 107 learning events have taken place, on 53 different topics which include: Science of Improvement, Evidence Based Decision Making, Twitter for the Terrified, Transgender Awareness, Lean Thinking and Contracts Management, to name but a few. Sessions are available to all employees, and of note is the continued willingness of those leading the sessions to give their time and energy, as well as sharing their knowledge. At the time of this report, 585 employees have attended the sessions, with a further 42 people volunteering to run sessions to support learning on an equal number of topics. The experience evaluates extremely well, and continues to gain momentum – the overall average rating for the programme of events is 4.5 out of 5 stars.
- 4.3.4 *Learners Wanted*: this offers a variety of learning and development opportunities to all employees across the Council. This year topics have included Six Thinking Hats, Lateral Thinking, Co-operative Meetings, Video / Editing skills, Planning a Positive Retirement, European Computer Driving License, and a range of online courses. The Learners Wanted programme enables us to make opportunities available to employees at all levels – uptake continues to grow.
- 4.3.5 *Coaching*: this intervention supports the development of new ways of thinking and working, so crucial to transformational change. We continue to invest in our offer in this area – we now have 6 qualified coaches working internally, and this is enhanced by our ability to access around 20 qualified partnership coaches (at no cost to the organisation) through our membership of the Tayside Public Sector Coaching Alliance. As an Alliance, we have expanded our skill set into the areas of Team Coaching, and also Professional Relationship Coaching, as a means of supporting people through change and challenging times.
- 4.3.6 Our ability to support individual and collective learning has a direct impact on our ability to grow and develop as an organisation. As we move towards

2015, plans are in place to further align approaches to learning and development across all Council Services.

4.3.7 This will involve a combination of progressing opportunities, such as supporting the development of reflective practice, and more commercial, entrepreneurial thinking, along with a focus on increasing skills and capacity in the use of improvement methodology. This will be accompanied by improvements to systems which support learning, beginning with the upgrade of our current online Learning Management System by the start of the new financial year. A number of associated benefits will accompany this move, such as the mutually beneficial sharing of e-learning courses with around 21 other Councils.

4.3.8 2015 brings the opportunity to further align, and test out a range of improvement techniques and methodologies (in place across Services), at strategic, operational and individual levels.

4.4 *Employer Branding Project*

This project, established in August 2014, recognises the vital role central support services play in enabling front line Services to transform their business. The project brings together representatives from Corporate Organisational Development, Human Resources, Corporate Communications, Finance, Economic Development, IT, Research and Information and Strategic Planning and Improvement.

4.4.1 The Employer Branding project is significant in both scale and potential impact, as it creates an opportunity for central support functions to collectively and collaboratively modernise and adapt their practices, to help the organisation evolve.

4.4.2 This transformational project is entirely rooted in supporting cultural change and seeking even greater levels of employee engagement. As such it has also provided an opportunity to run a first test of the Employee Engagement Framework, which has been developed within the context of Scottish Leaders Forum Employee Engagement work stream.

4.5 *Angel's Share*

A key element of work of the Centre for Innovation and Improvement is creating energy and outlets for new ways of thinking and working. Now in its second year, the Angel's Share project has generated much interest and excitement in terms of *intrapreneurial* spirit. 20 applications (12 more than in 2013) are bidding for a share of £35k. Applications demonstrate employees seizing an opportunity to take forward a piece of work which they feel passionate about, and believe would make all the difference for their client group.

4.5.1 Employees across the Council have been invited to vote for their favourite projects – a record number of 23,285 votes have been registered (compared with 861 last year), which would appear to indicate healthy competition, and support for colleagues' ambitions to win funding. Voting

numbers equate roughly to each Council employee voting for their top four choices. The six projects with the highest number of votes will go forward to make their pitch to the Council's Angels on 18 December.

- 4.5.2 The Angel's Share is also supported by internal expertise - those presenting to the Angels will receive coaching from the Council's Business Growth Team to help them develop the best possible pitch – preparation being key to success.

4.6 Growing the Brand

In 2015, the core team will take forward a practical and inclusive programme of work to grow the brand and philosophy of 'Learn, Innovate, Grow', within the context of increasing capacity and skills to deliver the next Transformation Programme.

5. EMPLOYEE SURVEY

- 5.1 Our annual employee survey, which is carried out in September of each year, presents a consistent opportunity to understand employee experience at a particular point in time. Most importantly, it creates an opportunity to check our progress, and most importantly, take action to address any results which indicate areas of challenge.

- 5.2 This year, 3302 employees took time to make their views known, resulting in an overall response rate of 62%, a (4% increase on 2013 results). This is the highest ever response rate since the survey began (in 2008), which, given the significant other events also taking place during this time, is an exceptional achievement.

- 5.3 The survey has 17 questions, and also space for staff to offer views and / or comments on whatever subject is important to them at that point. Survey questions are presented as positive statements, and respondents are asked to indicate the extent to which they agree or disagree. For our summary results (*provided at Appendix 1*) the numbers of people who agree or strongly agree, and disagree or strongly disagree, are aggregated to show the level of agreement for each question.

- 5.4 Results indicating positive trends help to validate the effectiveness of approaches / activity in these areas. The emergence of a downwards trend is a useful means of identifying and understanding areas needing further support.

- 5.5 2014 survey responses indicate high levels of agreement, with average levels reaching almost 78% - up 2% from last year. Since last year, and across the Council as whole, 16 out of 17 questions show an increase in levels of agreement, ranging from 0.6% to 5.5%.

- 5.6 Notable improvements at Council level include:
- 61% of respondents feel they receive regular recognition and praise on performance at work (up 4% since 2013 and up almost 12% since

2008)

- 69% of respondents feel their development is encouraged and supported (up almost 3% since 2013 and up 8% since 2008)
- 80% of respondents feel they are treated as an individual (up almost 3% since 2013 and up 5% since 2008)
- 68% of respondents think their views and opinions count (up almost 3% since 2013 and up 8% since 2008)
- 73% of respondents report that their team has a good team spirit (up almost 6% since 2013 and up 4% since 2008)
- 88% of respondents say that the people they work with are committed to doing their best (up 3% since 2013 and up 7% since 2008)

5.7 Notable improvements at Service level include:

- 78% of respondents in Education and Children's Services feel their team has a good team spirit (up almost 6% since 2013)
- 86% of respondents in Housing and Community Care feel the people they work with are committed to doing their best (up almost 5% since 2013)
- 74% of respondents in The Environment Service feel that their role provides them with a daily opportunity to use their strengths (up almost 4% since 2013)
- 81% of respondents in the Chief Executive's Service feel their team is passionate about delivering excellent customer service (up 2% since 2013)

5.8 Services and Teams across the Council received their results during October, and are currently engaging staff in discussions about strengths and areas for improvement. Talking through, and acting on the results, is the most valuable aspect of the survey. The experience creates an opportunity for staff to shape and deliver improvements within their area of influence. Of prime importance is ensuring that improvement actions are incorporated into appropriate planning processes, such as Business Management Improvement Plans and Team Plans, so that progress can be monitored.

5.9 The employee survey remains a key part of the Council's approach to continuous improvement, and high levels of improvement in the 2014 results validate the focus on creating the right cultural conditions for change. Trends over the seven year period continue to be generally positive, and this big picture view confirms the effectiveness of the long term approach to supporting people through challenging times. Most importantly, the increase in the response rate indicates that participating in the employee engagement survey continues to be a meaningful experience.

6. RESHAPING OUR WORKFORCE

6.1 The Council's workforce planning is inherently linked to the medium term financial planning arrangements and our transformation programme. In

2009, the Council set out its workforce management strategy to address the financial challenges and other pressures. These workforce management measures have been effective in facilitating service redesign, transformation and controlling workforce costs. Indeed, our workforce management measures contributed approximately £9 million of savings in 2011/12, £5.4 million in 2012/13 and £6.2 million in 2013/14. Our approach involves employees and trade unions so they can contribute creative and innovative solutions.

6.2 Where appropriate, context has been provided based on information contained within the Audit Scotland report – ‘Scotland’s Public Sector Workforce’, published in November 2013 and the ‘Good Practice Guide’ published earlier this year. Unless otherwise stated, Perth & Kinross Council data is based on the workforce profile as at 31 March 2014.

6.3 Key Workforce Facts

- 6.3.1 • We have achieved a 6.8% reduction in the full time equivalent (FTE) number of employees over the period 2009 to 2014. This represents a reduction of 354 FTE employees.
- 6.3.2 • Given the commitment to maintain teacher numbers in line with school rolls, the reduction in FTE across the rest of the Council workforce is more significant at 8.3%.
- 6.3.3 • Over the last 12 months, we have seen a net reduction of 108 fulltime equivalent (FTE) number of employees from 4982 to 4874. This reduction comes at a time of significant Council investment in creating modern apprenticeships and graduate trainees to support youth employment.
- 6.3.4 • Perth & Kinross Council continues to have one of the lowest ratios of FTE employees per 1000 head of population. Based on 2013 population and other Council workforce data, only Glasgow, Aberdeen and Edinburgh City Councils have a better ratio than Perth & Kinross Council, all of whom have transferred staff to arm’s length external bodies (ALEOs). Transferred staff are no longer included within local government employment statistics.
- 6.3.5 • The proportion of permanent and fixed term employees has changed little over the last two years, with approximately 11% of our employment contracts offered as fixed term positions. This has increased from 8.3% in 2009 and is explained by an increase in fixed term modern apprenticeships and graduate traineeships, fixed term roles for cover such as maternity leave, and temporary roles to support time limited projects or facilitate reviews. The proportion of longer term (i.e. of more than two years) temporary contracts within our workforce has reduced, thereby providing benefits to employees through security of tenure, and for the Council as employer through flexibility and workforce planning.
- 6.3.6 • The Council continues to have an ageing workforce profile which has implications for workforce planning and development, and health and wellbeing for employees in terms of their own health, and also their own caring responsibilities. 41% of our employees are aged 50 and over. This compares with 40% who were aged 50 or over in 2009. Audit

Scotland report a similar trend nationally with 37.1% of the public sector workforce aged 50 and over.

- 6.3.7 • The proportion of our workforce aged over 50 is expected to continue to grow over the next 5 years as there are currently 16.9% of our workforce within the age 45-49 year age group. Changes in state retirement age and in public sector pension schemes are likely to influence attitudes to retirement in the longer term.
- 6.3.8 • The proportion of employees aged over 65 who are continuing in employment continues to rise from 60 in 2011 to 120 in 2014. While this change was a 100% increase, this group still represents only 2.1% of the total workforce. The average age of a Council employees increased from 44 in 2009 to 45 years and 6 months in 2014. Audit Scotland reports that the national average across the public sector is 44 years and 4 months.
- 6.3.9 • In 2014 the number of 16-24 year olds in our workforce stands at 234 which is a 27% increase compared to 2012. This means that 4% of our workforce is aged between 16 and 24. This is consistent with figures published by the Scottish Government and the Office for National Statistics which show that the percentage of young people in the public sector workforce has increased from 3.8% to 3.9% in the last year. All staff groups have seen an increase in the number of young people employed. However, the most significant factor has been the growth of our modern apprenticeship and graduate trainee programmes and the resulting growth in the number of young people securing sustained employment with the Council.
- 6.3.10 • Turnover, which is defined as the number of permanent staff leavers expressed as a percentage of the permanent workforce, increased from 6.4% in 2009/10 to 8.2% in 2013/14. As expected, turnover is greater in years in which voluntary severance schemes operate.
- 6.3.11 • In the period from April 2009 until 31 March 2014, 368 employees left the Council through early departure schemes, i.e. voluntary retirement and specific voluntary severance campaigns. This equates to approximately 6.1% of the 2009 workforce.
- 6.3.12 • In February 2014, following a second voluntary severance campaign, the Council approved voluntary severance for 107 employees to leave on various dates through to March 2015. These departures will deliver a recurring saving of £2.3 million per annum.
- 6.3.13 • The Council has maintained its commitment to protect jobs. A variety of options assist in fulfilling this commitment including retirement, voluntary redundancy, employees moving to other Council employment via our Skills Register.
- 6.3.14 • The gender profile of our workforce remains largely unchanged over the period 2009 to 2014 with a male: female ratio of 29:71 which is similar to the overall public sector and Scottish Councils, profiles outlined in the Audit Scotland report which are 31:69 and 33:67 respectively for 2013.
- 6.3.15 • In 2014, the percentage of Council employees in full time contracts was 61% with 39% employed on a part time basis. This compares to a public sector ratio of 63:37 and a Scottish Councils ratio of 58:42 in 2013.

7. ENHANCING EMPLOYABILITY

- 7.1 The Council is one of the largest employers within Perth & Kinross which places it in a unique position of having a significant impact on the local economy. This is reflected in our commitment to provide rewarding jobs, training and entry level jobs for young people, and work experience placements for those who may find it difficult to secure employment.
- 7.2 In so doing, we recognise that our actions as an employer contribute to fulfilling our objective of “Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy” through the local outcomes for a “Thriving Expanding Economy” and “Employment Opportunities for All”. This section of the report focuses on the role of the Council as an employer and draws on work that is led or supported by all Services.
- 7.3 ***Modern Apprenticeship and Graduate Trainee Programmes***
2014 has seen continuing success in offering training and employment opportunities to our young people through the Modern Apprenticeship and Graduate Trainee programmes. The number of young people commencing a vocational qualification as a Modern Apprentice since April 2012 is 160. This means that we are well ahead of our target to create 250 modern apprenticeship opportunities for young people over the 5 year period to 2017. We currently have 73 MAs across the Council workforce.
- 7.3.1 In addition, 16 Professional/ Graduate Trainees have commenced their training over the same period. Again, this is just ahead of our target of creating 30 such opportunities by 2017.
- 7.3.2 Perth & Kinross Council’s 2014/15 contract with Skills Development Scotland is to deliver 72 Modern Apprenticeship - 68 Level 2 Scottish Vocational Qualifications in 7 occupational areas, namely Business & Administration, Horticulture, Health & Social Care, Facilities Services, Sustainable Resource Management, Youth Work and Leisure & Wellbeing; and 4 Level 3 Scottish Vocational Qualifications in Business Administration.
- 7.3.3 A further two occupational areas are being delivered by external providers, namely IT and Health & Social Care – Young People (previously Early Years). There are also 5 craft apprentices in motor mechanics, joinery, electrical work and bricklaying.
- 7.3.4 In the 6 month period to 31 October 2014, 87% of young people leaving the programme had a positive outcome of achieving their qualification, progressing to a further qualification or further education and/or employment. The success rate in finding employment has been assisted by the introduction of a Job Academy to which Modern Apprentices graduate as they make successful progress through their vocational qualification.
- 7.3.5 The Job Academy ring fences entry level roles within the Council to our job-ready Modern Apprentices and enables them to progress through their vocational qualification. This initiative, which was fully supported by the

trade unions, gives the Council a valuable return on its investment in the training of young people with the skills, behaviours and attitudes we require for future roles, and changing the profile of our workforce as well as contributing to the Council's strategic objectives.

- 7.3.6 Since its launch during Apprenticeship Week in 2013, 13 young people have secured employment via the Job Academy, with a further two currently on a three month trial period.
- 7.3.7 MA Connections, our networking group for Modern Apprenticeships, continues to offer a range of opportunities to develop skills and confidence to enhance their employability. Monthly MA Connections events allow young people to meet with their colleagues, share experiences and be inspired by guest speakers from across the Council.
- 7.3.8 This year our modern apprentices chose to support the PKAVS Young Carers Project. They reached their target of raising £500 through a variety of fundraising activities which in turn help develop leadership and organisational skills, as well as encouraging communication skills, initiative and determination to succeed.
- 7.3.9 March 2014 saw the first MA Graduation Ceremony at which 29 young people graduated with vocational qualifications.
- 7.3.10 Our MA programme continues to promote the outcomes from the Curriculum For Excellence which is now embedded within all Perth & Kinross schools. Modern Apprentices and Graduate Trainees are all encouraged to access the Employment Connections HUB for support in finding employment – experienced staff can help with preparing CVs, interview preparation and finding out about job opportunities across Perth and Kinross.

7.4 Graduate Work Experience Placements

In February 2014, the Council committed the sum of £131k over two years to establish short term work experience opportunities for unemployed/underemployed graduates. The target is to provide 30 work experience placements over two years. Eleven graduates have now commenced their work experience placements in a variety of occupational areas across the Council, such as Youth Services, Procurement, Human Resources, Arts and Sports Development and a further 3 opportunities are progressing through the recruitment process. As well as undertaking projects and work activities in their chosen field, our graduates can access a programme of learning and development opportunities designed to enhance their employability.

7.5 Perth & Kinross Guarantee

The Council as an employer has been pleased to support the Perth & Kinross Guarantee. This is an innovative project which brings together the private and public sector locally with the Careers Academy UK Programme. The programme helps 16-18 year olds bridge the gap between education

and work by giving young people access to real experience of the world of work and enabling their social mobility, future networking and appreciation of career choices.

7.5.1 In Year 1 of the Programme, the Council was one of nine employers working with 39 young people from four schools across Perth and Kinross. In the current year, 2014/15, the Council is now one of twenty four employers who provide 55 mentors and paid internships, in addition to supporting master classes on a range of employability topics and hosting workplace visits designed to highlight the range of opportunities available locally.

7.6 Health & Social Care Academy

The Perth and Kinross Health and Social Care Academy supports people who are experiencing unemployment and are interested in a career in care. It gives an opportunity to find out more about what is involved in a care post, and gain skills and induction level qualifications they need to apply for entry level posts. Support with job applications and / or interview skills are also provided.

7.6.1 The Academy is supported by a partnership involving NHS Tayside, Perth & Kinross Council, Perth College UHI, Job Centre Plus and Skills Development Scotland. In 2014, there have been a total of 20 attendees over two courses. 65% of these attendees have progressed into paid employment.

7.7 Certificate of Work Readiness

The Certificate of Work Readiness is a Skills Development Scotland funded programme for young people furthest from the employment market. Training providers are funded to deliver various forms of support to 16 – 19 year olds in order to enhance their employability.

7.7.1 In partnership with external training providers, the Council have offered two Certificates of Work Readiness. One candidate was successful and progressed onto our Modern Apprenticeship Programme. The other candidate has progressed to train with a different employer and within a different occupational area.

7.7.2 The availability of the Certificate of Work Readiness is therefore a very positive approach, which allows young people to find the right training opportunity, and demonstrate their capability for further training. It also enables the Council to support those who may be furthest from the employment market before committing to offer an apprenticeship opportunity.

7.8 Work Experience Placements

Various work experience placements are offered throughout the Council. These opportunities provide valuable experience for those who are unemployed and for students requiring work experience in their chosen profession. The Council also works in partnership with Abertay University

and Perth College UHI to support students undertaking relevant business and administration qualifications.

- 7.8.1 Work is currently being undertaken to look at how the Council can support Perth College UHI 'New Skills' course for students with additional support needs, who would benefit from developing their independent living skills, social skills and thus enhance their employability.

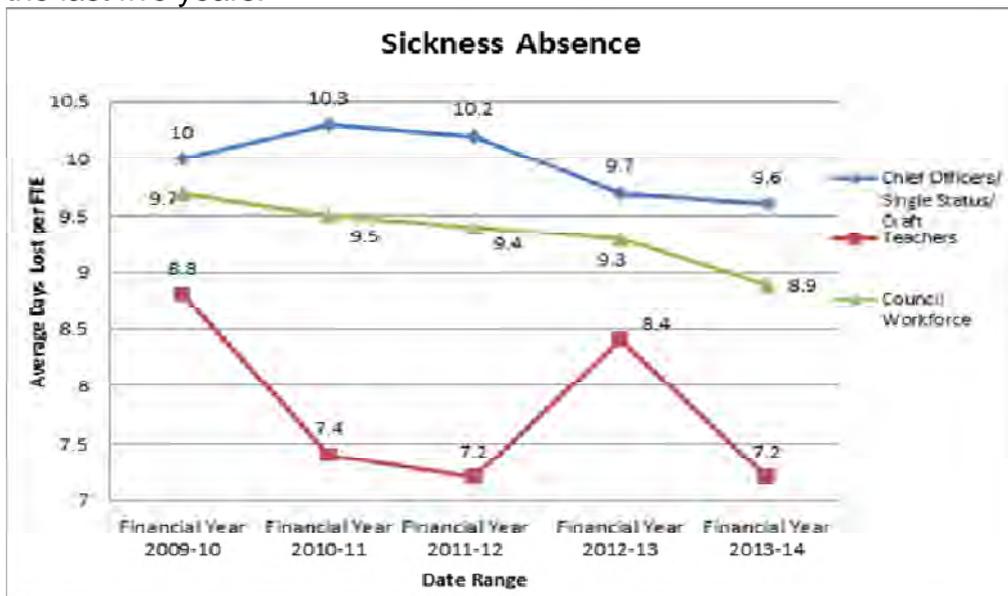
8. HEALTH AND WELLBEING

- 8.1 The Council's approach to health and wellbeing continues to recognise the synergy between promoting employee wellbeing and our corporate responsibilities to our communities.
- 8.2 Therefore our investment in the physical and mental wellbeing of our workforce contributes to the Council's Corporate Objective, to Support People to lead Independent Healthy and Active Lives, through the local outcome "Sustaining and Improving the Health and Wellbeing of Individuals, Families and Communities".
- 8.3
- Wellbeing Projects have been piloted with a variety of staff groups across all Services and in a variety of locations, for example, the Wellbeing Insight Tool provided employees with their own personal report on health and wellbeing and managers with aggregated results for their teams to indicate areas for more detailed consideration. Building resilience coaching was carried out within a Local Management Group of schools to support the development of wellbeing action plans.
- 8.4
- Extension of our winter flu vaccination programme. Now extended to around 3,500 employees in partnership with NHS Tayside and through the community pharmacy network. Last year we saw an overall reduction of 41% in absences relating to infections, which includes flu.
- 8.5
- Extension of our physiotherapy service to all staff groups saw 143 referrals in the first ten months of 2014 and Care First continue to provide 24/7 confidential counselling for employees and their immediate families
- 8.6
- We are currently working with local partners to raise awareness of drug and alcohol issues within our workforce, including the rollout of a new online substance misuse resource "Breaking Free Online".
- 8.7 One of the key outcomes from our strategies is maximising attendance which is measured by the average number of days lost to sickness per full time equivalent employee.
- 8.8 We are developing a positive attendance culture which is much more than the management of sickness absence and health promotion. Our Employee Survey results also provide insight into how employees view their experience at work which in turn allows action to be taken which promotes health and wellbeing, attendance and productivity.

8.9 Sickness absence levels have continued to fall across the whole Council workforce. In 2013/14, Perth & Kinross Council had an average of 8.9 days per FTE for sickness absence. This is a 4.3% improvement when compared to the previous year. Early information available through the Local Government Benchmarking Framework indicates that the Council remains in tenth position when compared to the draft information available for other Scottish Councils. Perth & Kinross Council's performance at 8.9 days is better than the Scottish Council average of 9.2 days.

8.10 Five Year Period Trend

The Performance Indicators (PI) in the graph below illustrate the trend over the last five years.



8.10.1 Over the five year period 2009-10 until 2013-14, there has been a 4% reduction in the average number of days per FTE due to sickness for Chief Officers/Single Status/Craft employee group, and an 18% reduction for Teachers. This equates to an 8% reduction across the whole workforce.

8.11 Comparison of Short Term (<7-28 days) and Long Term Absence (>28 days)

There continues to be a fairly even balance between short term certified absences of less than 28 days and long term absences (28 days or more) across all Services. The proportion of long term absences has increased by 3% overall when compared to the previous year.

8.12 Reasons for Absence

The top two reasons for absence remain the same as in previous years. Stomach/kidney is now the third top reason rather than infections.

Absence Reason	% of Top Reasons of Absence	
	as at 31 March 2013	as at 31 March 2014
Mental Health Issues	27%	27%
Musculoskeletal	14%	17%
Stomach/Kidney	11%	13%
Infections	12%	8%

- 8.12.1 Combined, the top four reasons for absence in 2013/14 account for 65% of all working days lost. The main reasons for short term certified absences (which vary between 7 and 28 days) were colds/flu, sickness and stomach upset. These accounted for 22% of total days lost. Work related stress remains low at 7.6% which is unchanged from the previous year.
- 8.12.2 The Council continues to engage a range of health professionals to support our workforce. Our Occupational Health Service will be delivered by People Asset Management with effect from 1 February 2015, providing new employment health assessments, health surveillance activity, management referrals, occupational health awareness and ill health prevention.

9. NEXT STEPS

- 9.1 Over the last year we have grown our approach to engaging with and supporting our people to deliver the best outcomes for the citizens and communities of Perth and Kinross. We will continue with this journey in 2015. Flexibility and agility will be key – therefore, our focus will be on building organisational capacity through cultural change and workforce development.
- 9.2 The public service landscape continues to evolve, and workforce planning will continue to play a positive part in shaping the workforce requirements for the future. In preparing our transformation plans it is vital that we define, and then develop, the skills and attributes we require for the 21st Century Public Service worker.
- 9.3 A key focus in 2014 has been about investing in a healthy and resilient workforce and building capacity through skills and talent to provide the workforce of the future. The young people in our workforce today are our future leaders; our efforts will continue to provide training and employment with career pathways throughout our organisation.
- 9.4 Our capacity to continually improve is critical to the delivery of better outcomes for all. Opportunities to learn about and apply relevant improvement methods (at individual, team, Service and organisational levels) will be increased. Through the Centre for Innovation and Improvement, we will work with colleagues across the Council to build on existing successes, and grow the philosophy of ‘Learn, Innovate, Grow’ at every level.

10. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

- 10.1 Perth & Kinross Council is facing the challenges emerging from public service reform head on, with a positive mind-set, and as a vital opportunity to evolve as an organisation.
- 10.2 Our achievements to date demonstrate resolve and resilience, and we will continue to offer a clear vision and direction of travel, to further inspire action which supports positive outcomes for all, at every life stage.

- 10.3 It is recommended that the Council:
- a) Notes the considerable range of organisational and cultural development activity taking place across the Council
 - b) Notes the continued success of the workforce management measures
 - c) Approves the continued provision of an annual report which details how we continue to support our people, in order to improve, develop and grow as an organisation

Author(s)

Name	Designation	Contact Details
Karen Donaldson	Corporate Human Resources Manager	kadonaldson@pkc.gov.uk 01738 475430
Sandra Flanigan	Employee Innovation and Engagement Manager	sflanigan@pkc.gov.uk 01738 475063

Approved

Name	Designation	Date
Bernadette Malone	Chief Executive	8 December 2014

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IMPLICATIONS, ASSESSMENTS, CONSULTATION AND COMMUNICATION

Strategic Implications	Yes / None
Community Plan / Single Outcome Agreement	Yes
Corporate Plan	Yes
Resource Implications	
Financial	None
Workforce	Yes
Asset Management (land, property, IST)	None
Assessments	
Equality Impact Assessment	Yes
Strategic Environmental Assessment	Yes
Sustainability (community, economic, environmental)	None
Legal and Governance	None
Risk	None
Consultation	
Internal	Yes
External	None
Communication	
Communications Plan	None

1. Strategic Implications

1.1 Council Corporate Plan Objectives 2013 - 2018

The Council's Corporate Plan 2013-2018 lays out five Objectives which provide clear strategic direction, inform decisions at a corporate and service level and shape resources allocation. They are as follows:-

- (i) Giving every child the best start in life
- (ii) Developing educated, responsible and informed citizens
- (iii) Promoting a prosperous, inclusive and sustainable economy
- (iv) Supporting people to lead independent, healthy and active lives
- (v) Creating a safe and sustainable place for future generations

1.2 This report does not specifically relate to one of the objectives, but assists with the delivery of all five.

2. Resource Implications

Workforce

This report summarises a number of key workforce resource issues.

3. Assessments

3.1 Equalities Impact Assessment

This report was considered under the Corporate Equality Assessment Framework. The Council's arrangements for workforce management, employee engagement and learning and development are designed to support and advance equality.

There is on-going monitoring and reporting of the Council's employment strategies through the equality monitoring statistics.

3.2 Strategic Environmental Assessment

Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) is a legal requirement under the Environmental Assessment (Scotland) Act 2005 that applies to all qualifying plans, programmes and strategies, including policies (PPS).

However, no action is required as the Act does not apply to the matters presented in this report. This is because the Committee are requested to note the contents of the report only, and are not being requested to approve, adopt or agree to an action or to set the framework for future decisions.

4. **Consultation**

4.1 This report was prepared in consultation with Executive Directors.

5. **Background Papers**

There are no background papers.

6. **Appendices**

Appendix one is attached to this report.

EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT SURVEY – September 2014 FULL COUNCIL RESULTS SUMMARY

The survey was made available to 5348 employees across Perth & Kinross Council and 3302 employees responded giving a response rate of 61.74% (58.07% in 2013)

High level results are summarised in the table below and compared with the results of 2008 pilot surveys through to the 2013 full Council survey.

Question	Aggregated Responses	Survey 2008%	Survey 2009%	Survey 2010%	Survey 2011%	Survey 2012%	Survey 2013%	Survey 2014%	Change
1. I am clear what is expected of me at work.	Agree	86.5	89.8	88.7	88.3	87.4	89.1	89.0	Down 0.1
	Neither agree nor disagree	7.1	5.9	6.9	7.2	7.9	7.1	7.3	
	Disagree	4.7	3.6	4.2	4.4	4.6	3.8	3.8	
2. I am treated fairly at work.	Agree	80	82.7	80.7	83.1	81.9	82.6	84.9	Up 2.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	12.5	10.9	11.9	10.5	11.3	11.6	10.2	
	Disagree	5.7	5.3	6.3	6.4	6.7	5.8	4.9	
3. There is a good fit between the job I do and my skills and abilities.	Agree	81.3	84.3	83.3	84.0	83.6	85.1	85.7	Up 0.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	10.3	9.6	10.4	9.7	10.5	8.8	9.1	
	Disagree	6.5	4.8	6.3	6.3	5.9	6.0	5.1	
4. I have the right tools, equipment and information to do my work effectively.	Agree	70	73.3	75.2	71.8	71.4	71.5	72.1	Up 0.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.7	15.1	14.3	17.1	16.2	15.3	15.0	
	Disagree	11.9	10.5	10.5	11.1	12.5	13.2	12.9	
5. My role provides me with a daily opportunity to use my strengths.	Agree	72.6	77.8	77.4	79.8	77.5	78.6	79.9	Up 1.3
	Neither agree nor disagree	16.1	14.1	14.7	12.9	14.7	13.5	13.7	
	Disagree	8.3	6.4	7.9	7.3	7.7	7.8	6.5	
6. I receive regular recognition and praise on my performance at work.	Agree	48.9	54	55.2	55.5	53.6	56.5	60.5	Up 4.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	25.5	26.1	24	25.8	24.9	24.4	23.8	
	Disagree	23.2	18.8	20.9	18.6	21.4	19.0	15.6	
7. At work my development is encouraged and supported.	Agree	60.7	64.5	63.2	65.1	63.6	65.9	68.7	Up 2.8
	Neither agree nor disagree	23.2	23.2	22.3	22.5	22.7	21.8	20.4	
	Disagree	13.9	11.3	14.5	12.3	13.7	12.3	11.0	
8. I am treated as an individual.	Agree	74.5	77.3	77.5	77.9	76.5	77.2	79.7	Up 2.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.9	14.7	14.1	15.0	15.8	15.9	14.2	
	Disagree	7.4	6.5	8.3	7.1	7.7	7.0	6.0	

Appendix 1

Question	Aggregated Responses	Survey 2008%	Survey 2009%	Survey 2010%	Survey 2011%	Survey 2012%	Survey 2013%	Survey 2014%	Change
9. At work my views and opinions seem to count.	Agree	59.1	63.8	63.1	63.6	62.5	64.6	67.5	Up 2.9
	Neither agree nor disagree	25	22.5	22.7	22.9	23.1	22.1	21.1	
	Disagree	13.5	12.6	14.2	13.5	14.4	13.3	11.4	
10. My team has a good team spirit.	Agree	69.4	71.6	67.5	69.5	66.6	67.6	73.1	Up 5.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	14.6	15.5	16.9	16.9	17.5	17.3	16.2	
	Disagree	13.8	11.6	15.7	13.5	15.9	15.1	10.7	
11. The people I work with are committed to doing their best.	Agree	80.7	83.9	83.9	86.0	84.1	85.0	88.0	Up 3.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	12.3	11.2	11.3	10.2	12.0	11.3	8.7	
	Disagree	4.5	3.6	4.9	3.8	4.0	3.7	3.2	
12. I know how my job contributes to the Council's objectives.	Agree	76	77.8	79.8	79.9	80.2	81.0	81.6	Up 0.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	17.2	16.7	15.6	15.9	15.6	15.4	14.5	
	Disagree	4.5	4	4.6	4.1	4.2	3.6	3.8	
13. I am given the freedom to solve problems.	Agree	72	74.3	76.7	78.0	76.7	78.7	80.3	Up 1.6
	Neither agree nor disagree	17.8	17.6	16.7	16.0	15.8	15.1	14.8	
	Disagree	8	6.8	6.5	6.0	7.5	6.3	4.8	
14. My team are passionate about delivering excellent customer service.	Agree	77.3	80	81.6	82.4	81.0	82.8	84.3	Up 1.5
	Neither agree nor disagree	15.8	14.5	13.7	14.2	14.9	13.7	13.1	
	Disagree	4.8	3.9	4.9	3.4	4.2	3.4	2.6	
15. Any problems that could stop me giving the best customer service are dealt with.	Agree	53.6	61.6	62.3	62.8	61.7	64.6	66.0	Up 1.4
	Neither agree nor disagree	29.2	25.8	25.5	25.8	25.3	23.7	23.3	
	Disagree	15.2	11	12.2	11.3	13.0	11.8	10.7	
16. I have sufficient opportunities to raise issues with my manager about change at work.	Agree		75.4	75.2	75.6	73.2	76.6	78.4	Up 1.8
	Neither agree nor disagree		15	14.6	14.8	16.1	13.7	13.7	
	Disagree		8.5	10.2	9.6	10.7	9.8	7.8	
17. I am able to cope with my workload..	Agree		63.5	61.5	72.7	71.7	72.6	74.1	Up 1.5
	Neither agree nor disagree		19.4	20.8	16.8	17.6	17.3	15.7	
	Disagree		16.2	17.6	10.4	10.6	10.1	10.2	

Percentages may not add up to 100% as some people may not have answered the question or due to rounding of figures