



Comhairle nan Eilean Siar Employee Survey

Survey Report 2024

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SUMMARY

This survey report presents an overview across a range of themes drawn from the results of the 2024 Employee Engagement Survey. This is now the fifth organisational wide survey that has been conducted and the results do indicate that there has been a shift in opinion across a wide range of factors in comparison to the 2018 survey results. It is recognised that there has not only been on-going planned organisational change and significant financial challenges but the Comhairle and its employees have faced additional challenges affecting both the workplace and individual personal lives.

Corporately there was a commitment to undertake an all staff survey every three years, events have, over recent years required that the focus be temporarily shifted to address immediate work relating circumstances. December 2019 saw the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, with national lockdowns affecting Scotland in early 2020. In June 2020 a COVID specific employee survey was undertaken to gain a better sense of current working practicalities and to gauge the impacts on employees both on a personal and professional level.

Following on from a period of COVID recovery the Comhairle was subject to a criminal cyber-attack on 7 November 2023. This attack resulted in the majority of councils systems being inaccessible and the loss of data. Services successfully implemented business continuity arrangements to ensure the ongoing delivery of key services whilst continuing to work on developing and implementing permanent solutions. Considerable progress has since been made in restorative work. Although there is now a greater sense of normality it is important to recognise that the workplace, and individuals' perspectives, have undoubtedly changed.

Based on the responses received it is very positive to note that employees report a consistent level of satisfaction at 69%, a further 46% of employees rated the Comhairle as the best/above average place to work and 45% confirmed that they were proud to work for the Comhairle. A range of other factors have also been reported at an increased level of satisfaction including pay, working hours and work life balance. An overwhelming 87% of respondents reporting that their work is important to them as it makes a difference.

The survey also identifies a number of areas for improvement. Employees report feeling disadvantaged particularly due to age, 12% of respondents and gender, 11% of respondents. The survey highlights an increase in accounts of bullying and/or harassment, the highest of which is reported from service users/general public. Although employees are now reporting over 50% of instances this level presents on-going concerns within the work environment.

Although 48% of employees think attendance is well managed across the Comhairle a further 52% of employees do not think this is managed well. Interestingly 78% of employees think that the current trigger points for employee review meetings under the sickness absence procedure are sufficient. Further analysis of the reported areas of concern will be undertaken to support improvement actions to more effectively support employees and address reported concerns.

Over 800 comments were received as part of the survey, common themes continue to include communication, training, increased staffing levels, reduced working weeks, pay, maintenance of buildings, workload, mental health and the management of staff absences. These comments will be shared with senior managers to help underpin further improvement planning.

In summary survey results establish that employees have demonstrated resilience and report increased levels of satisfaction across a range of work-related factors. Further work will be undertaken to analyse the valuable information provided within the survey in more detail. Recommendations will be made and aligned corporately to achieve continuous improvement across the Comhairle.

OBJECTIVES AND APPROACH

The Comhairle continues to recognise the importance of encouraging and supporting employees to share their views and work-related experiences and in turn contribute to future organisational development. Employees have had the opportunity to participate in organisational wide employee surveys since 2008.

The first comprehensive employee survey was carried out in 2008 by Ipsos MORI, an independent market research company. A Corporate Improvement Plan was then developed to address the key concerns raised by employees.

A second survey was undertaken internally using Survey Monkey in 2012 and the third employee survey undertaken in February 2015. The fourth employee survey was launched in June 2018 internally using Survey Moz. Survey results have now routinely formed part of the Comhairle's programme of corporate improvement planning and provided valuable evidence for continuous improvement activities across the organisation.

This fifth employee survey was launched in November 2024 internally using Smart Survey and in line with previous years a commitment made to share a summary of the overall results with employees and for those results to be published on the intranet.

Work was undertaken with the Recognised Trade Unions to develop the survey to make sure that the survey questions were relevant, meaningful and the results would provide measurable information and a level of consistent benchmarking information. This year the questions have again been grouped into several themed areas as outlined below:-

- Job Satisfaction
- Performance, Support and Training
- Digital
- Gaelic
- Discrimination/Bullying
- Management
- Sickness Absence
- Equal Opportunity Monitoring

All employees were also asked for several job-related details including length of service, department and section. These details allow a more in-depth analysis of the survey information and support the development of departmental specific improvements.

A full set of Equal Opportunity monitoring questions continue to be asked at the end of the survey to enable the Comhairle to monitor the effectiveness of its Equal Opportunities Policy and meet its legal obligations under the Equality Act 2010.

A response rate of over 40% has been the target for previous year's returns to ensure confidence in the survey results.

METHODOLOGY

All employees were invited to participate in the anonymous survey online using Smart Survey. For those who did not have access to the internet a paper questionnaire was made with a pre-paid reply envelope. The responses were analysed by the Human Resources team who ensured the confidentiality of the raw data.

A total of 729 questionnaires were completed and returned representing a response rate of 35%. The returns included 724 online returns (99%) and 5 paper questionnaires (1%). The response rates across each department are displayed below:

| Department | Employees | Completed Questionnaires | % Return Rate |
|---------------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---------------|
| Chief Executive's | 395 | 180 | 46% |
| Education & Children's Services | 1068 | 292 | 27% |
| Health and Social Care | 524 | 93 | 18% |
| Strategic Finance | 78 | 28 | 36% |
| No Department Stated | - | 136 | - |
| TOTALS | 2065 | 729 | 35% |

Recent organisational restructuring has seen both Technical Services and the Development Department merge under the Chief Executives Department, the combined return rate of 46% is comparable to the collective return rate of 45% in 2018. Education and Children's Service return rate increased from 22% in 2018 to 27% in 2024 whilst Strategic Finances response rate fell from 59% in 2018 to 36% in 2024. The return rate from across the Health and Social Care service remained at 18%.

It is positive to note that only 135 employees did not share the department in which they worked compared to 355 employees in 2018, this suggests an increased sense of confidence relating to the level of confidentiality around the data.

Survey Findings 2024

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction is commonly linked to employee morale, increased commitment and productivity and reduced sickness absence rates. Results show that employees levels of satisfaction across the Comhairle remain high at 69%, this is an increase compared to the reported levels of 64% in 2018.

It is hugely positive to note that despite continuing financial constraints and on-going periods of change for staff that the reported levels of job satisfaction have increased.

Results

“How satisfied are you with your present job?”

SATISFIED 69%
DISSATISFIED 18%

| How satisfied are you with your present job? | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|-----------------------------------|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Very Satisfied | 18.90% | 134 |
| 2 | Fairly Satisfied | 50.07% | 355 |
| 3 | Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied | 12.69% | 90 |
| 4 | Fairly Dissatisfied | 13.26% | 94 |
| 5 | Very Dissatisfied | 4.80% | 34 |
| 6 | No Opinion / Prefer not to answer | 0.28% | 2 |

Benchmarking

| How satisfied are you with your present job? | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| Very Satisfied | 19.85% | 17.79% | 18.90% |
| Fairly Satisfied | 54.80% | 46.62% | 50.07% |
| Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied | 11.65% | 15.59% | 12.69% |
| Fairly Dissatisfied | 9.99% | 13.97% | 13.26% |
| Very Dissatisfied | 3.20% | 5.59% | 4.80% |
| No Opinion / Prefer not to answer | 0.51% | 0.44% | 0.28% |







Pride

Pride is often considered an important indicator of the mood of the workforce. Results show a notable 9% increase in how proud employees feel to work for the Comhairle increasing up to 53% compared to the 2018 result of 45%.

Results

“I feel proud to work for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar”

AGREE 53%
DISAGREE 14%

| I feel proud to work for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree |  | 16.52% | 116 |
| 2 | Tend to Agree |  | 36.18% | 254 |
| 3 | Neither Agree nor Disagree |  | 33.19% | 233 |
| 4 | Tend to Disagree |  | 9.26% | 65 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree |  | 4.42% | 31 |
| 6 | Prefer not to answer |  | 0.43% | 3 |

Benchmarking

| I feel proud to work for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|--|-------|-------|--------|
| Strongly Agree | 11.2% | 13.6% | 16.52% |
| Tend to Agree | 37.7% | 31.3% | 36.18% |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 38.1% | 37.4% | 33.19% |
| Tend to Disagree | 8.7% | 11.7% | 9.26% |
| Strongly Disagree | 3.2% | 4.9% | 4.42% |
| Don't Know / Prefer not to answer | 1.2% | 1.2% | 0.43% |

As a place to work

Results show that employees continue to rate the Comhairle as one of the best or above average place to work (46%), this again is a positive increase comparable to the results of the 2018 survey.

Results

“How do you rate Comhairle as a place to work”

BEST/ABOVE AVERAGE 46%
WORST/BELOW AVERAGE 15%

| HOW WOULD YOU RATE THE COMHAIRLE AS A PLACE TO WORK? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | One of the Best | | 9.75% | 69 |
| 2 | Above Average | | 36.30% | 257 |
| 3 | Average | | 39.27% | 278 |
| 4 | Below average | | 12.99% | 92 |
| 5 | One of the worst | | 1.69% | 12 |

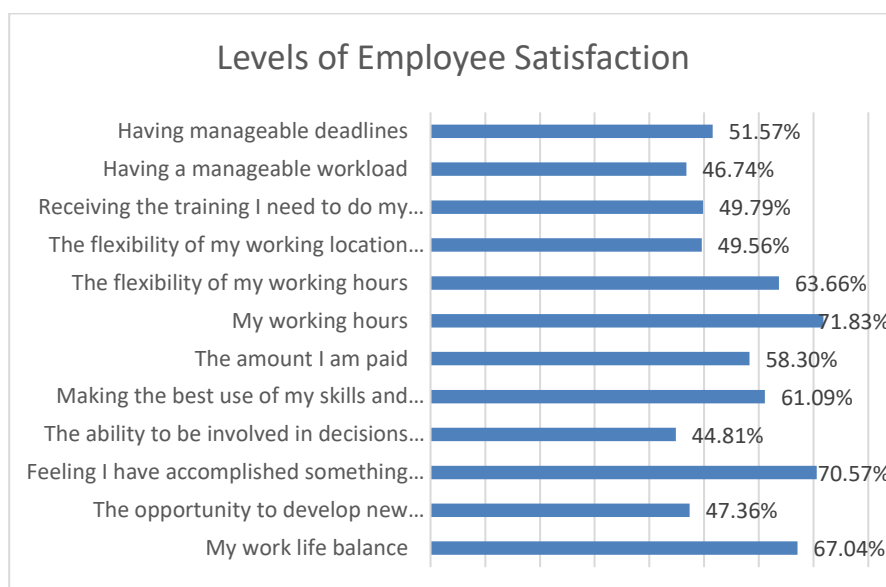
Benchmarking

| How would you rate the Comhairle as a place to work? | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|--|--------|--------|--------|
| One of the Best | 10.12% | 9.69% | 9.75% |
| Above Average | 34.31% | 33.77% | 36.30% |
| Average | 43.28% | 37.44% | 39.27% |
| Below average | 10.24% | 15.27% | 12.99% |
| One of the worst | 2.05% | 3.38% | 1.69% |

Aspects of the Job

As shown in the tables below employees are satisfied with a range of aspects relating to their jobs. Working hours came out top, closely followed by feeling like they have accomplished something worthwhile and work life balance, this is similar to the results in 2018. The ability to be involved in decisions that affect their job/area of work was ranked lowest.

Results



| Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of these factors in your job. | Very Satisfied | Fairly Satisfied | Neither Satisfied or Dissatisfied | Fairly Dissatisfied | Very Dissatisfied | Don't Know |
|---|----------------|------------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|-------------------|------------|
| My work life balance | 26.56% | 40.48% | 12.22% | 14.20% | 6.53% | 0.00% |
| The opportunity to develop new skills/qualifications | 13.84% | 33.52% | 22.54% | 17.40% | 12.27% | 0.43% |
| Feeling I have accomplished something worthwhile at work | 24.71% | 45.86% | 16.71% | 8.14% | 4.43% | 0.14% |
| The ability to be involved in decisions that affect my job/area of work | 12.66% | 32.15% | 21.34% | 17.50% | 15.79% | 0.57% |
| Making the best use of my skills and abilities | 18.17% | 42.92% | 18.60% | 12.02% | 8.01% | 0.29% |
| The amount I am paid | 15.04% | 43.26% | 17.16% | 14.04% | 10.50% | 0.00% |
| My working hours | 27.88% | 43.95% | 14.37% | 8.39% | 5.41% | 0.00% |
| The flexibility of my working hours | 30.76% | 32.90% | 19.17% | 8.73% | 7.30% | 1.14% |
| The flexibility of my working location (Hybrid Working) | 28.36% | 21.20% | 30.12% | 5.26% | 5.85% | 9.21% |
| Receiving the training I need to do my job properly | 16.12% | 33.67% | 22.68% | 16.12% | 10.56% | 0.86% |
| Having a manageable workload | 12.36% | 34.38% | 19.03% | 16.62% | 17.19% | 0.43% |
| Having manageable deadlines | 13.25% | 38.32% | 27.07% | 12.39% | 7.41% | 1.57% |

Benchmarking

On the whole levels of satisfaction have remained stable with slight increases across the board. Employees have reported a significant increase in satisfaction levels relating to the amount that they are paid, this has increased from 39.2% in 2018 to 58.3% in 2024.

Additional questions relating to flexibility and deadlines were included in the 2024 survey. Employees report higher levels of satisfaction in relation to working hours when compared to work locations. Just over 50% of employees report having manageable deadlines.

| Level of Satisfaction | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|---|-------|-------|--------|
| My work life balance | 66.0% | 63.2% | 67.0% |
| The opportunity to develop new skills/qualifications | 50.9% | 44.6% | 47.4% |
| Feeling I have accomplished something worthwhile at work | 72.7% | 70.7% | 70.6% |
| The ability to be involved in decisions that affect my job/area of work | 45.6% | 42.9% | 44.8% |
| Making the best use of my skills and abilities | 61.7% | 59% | 61.1% |
| The amount I am paid | 48.2% | 39.2% | 58.3% |
| My working hours | 61.0% | 67.8% | 71.8% |
| The flexibility of my working hours | - | - | 63.66% |
| The flexibility of my working location (Hybrid Working) | - | - | 49.56% |
| Receiving the training I need to do my job properly | 57.1% | 49.4% | 49.8% |
| Having a manageable workload | 49.5% | 45.2% | 46.7% |
| Having manageable deadlines | - | - | 51.6% |

Communication

Increased communication, consulting employees about change to work and ensuring employees are clear about goals and objectives can drive increased levels of satisfaction amongst employees.

Survey results from 2018 highlighted that 40% of employees reported feeling informed at work whilst 56% reported that communication was limited. It is positive that the 2024 responses show a slight increase in employees’ view of communication being effective across the Comhairle.

Results

“The Comhairle communicates effectively with employees?”

AGREE 42%
DISAGREE 36%

| How strongly do you agree or disagree with each? | Strongly Agree | Tend to Agree | Neither Agree not Disagree | Tend to Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| The Comhairle communicates effectively with employees | 9.0% | 32.7% | 22.1% | 23.1% | 12.8% | 0.3% |
| Employees are consulted about change at work | 8.7% | 24.9% | 26.0% | 25.9% | 13.2% | 1.3% |
| I am clear about the goals and objectives for my service | 20.5% | 43.5% | 19.4% | 10.7% | 5.6% | 0.3% |







Morale

The survey results show that morale within teams has increased from 42% reported in 2018 to 47% in 2024.

Results

“Morale is good in my team”

AGREE 47%
DISAGREE 39%

| Morale is good in my team | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree |  | 17.2% | 121 |
| 2 | Tend to Agree |  | 29.9% | 211 |
| 3 | Neither Agree nor Disagree |  | 13.1% | 92 |
| 4 | Tend to Disagree |  | 19.6% | 138 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree |  | 19.4% | 137 |
| 6 | Prefer not to answer |  | 0.9% | 6 |

Benchmarking

| Morale is good in my team | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|-----------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|
| Strongly Agree | 12.8% | 14.2% | 17.2% |
| Tend to Agree | 33.9% | 28.0% | 29.9% |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 18.1% | 17.5% | 13.1% |
| Tend to Disagree | 21.4% | 20.4% | 19.6% |
| Strongly Disagree | 12.8% | 19.4% | 19.4% |
| Don't Know / Prefer not to answer | 1.0% | 0.4% | 0.9% |

Employee Welfare

In 2018, 60% of employees reported that they felt that they were treated with fairness and respect, this has increased to 71% in 2024. It is also positive to recognise that 75% of respondents report getting the support they need from colleagues.

It is also important to note that there is a continued increase in employees reporting stress at work is negatively impacting their performance at work and personal life.

Results

“I am treated with fairness and respect here”

AGREE 71%
DISAGREE 14%

| I am treated with fairness and respect here | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | | 28.8% | 203 |
| 2 | Tend to Agree | | 42.1% | 296 |
| 3 | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | 15.1% | 106 |
| 4 | Tend to Disagree | | 7.5% | 53 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | | 6.1% | 43 |
| 6 | Prefer not to answer | | 0.4% | 3 |

Benchmarking

| Here are a number of statements about how you may feel towards your work with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar. How strongly do you agree with each? | AGREE | | |
|---|-------|------|------|
| | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
| I get the support I need from colleagues | - | - | 75% |
| I am treated with fairness and respect here | 65% | 60% | 71% |
| The health and safety of employees is given a high priority | 61% | 59% | 55% |
| The Comhairle values the diversity of its employees | 41% | 43% | 44% |
| I feel that stress at work is affecting me in my personal life | 28% | 34% | 37% |
| I feel that stress at work is affecting my performance at work | 24% | 27% | 30% |
| I feel that stress in my personal life is affecting my performance at work | - | - | 6% |

Work

87% of employees report that their work is important to them as they believe that it makes a difference in addition to over half (64%) reporting that they believe that the commitment that they give to their work is valued by their manager.

It is also important to note that 59% of the employees who completed the survey work extra hours and more than half , 65%, have stated that they do not feel able to take sufficient breaks.

Results

“My work is important to me as I believe it makes a difference”

AGREE 87%
DISAGREE 3%

| How strongly do you agree or disagree with each? | Strongly Agree | Tend to Agree | Neither Agree not Disagree | Tend to Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| I regularly work extra hours | 27.7% | 30.8% | 19.0% | 12.0% | 10.0% | 0.6% |
| I am able to take sufficient breaks | 16.5% | 48.6% | 15.8% | 12.4% | 6.7% | 0.0% |
| My roles and responsibilities have not changed significantly over the past three years | 14.2% | 29.9% | 16.9% | 21.8% | 14.7% | 2.6% |
| I receive support and training if I take on new roles and responsibilities | 8.6% | 26.7% | 28.5% | 19.1% | 14.2% | 3.0% |
| The quality of my work suffers because of my workload | 10.4% | 23.5% | 27.3% | 24.9% | 13.2% | 0.7% |
| I believe the commitment I give to my work is valued by my manager | 27.5% | 36.9% | 14.0% | 10.8% | 9.5% | 1.3% |
| My work is important to me as I believe it makes a difference | 45.2% | 41.8% | 9.4% | 1.6% | 1.7% | 0.3% |
| Management acknowledge that I have taken on extra roles and responsibilities | 13.7% | 24.7% | 31.5% | 14.0% | 12.3% | 3.9% |

Performance, Support and Training

Performance

Although 41%, a slight increase from 39% in 2018, of employees report that good performance is recognised a higher percentage of 50% have reported that they do not think that poor performance is dealt with effectively.

Results

“Good performance is recognised here”

AGREE 41%
DISAGREE 32%

| Good performance is recognised here | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|-------------------------------------|----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | | 10.4% | 67 |
| 2 | Tend to Agree | | 30.1% | 195 |
| 3 | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | 26.0% | 168 |
| 4 | Tend to Disagree | | 21.7% | 140 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | | 10.7% | 69 |
| 6 | Don't Know | | 1.2% | 8 |

“Poor performance is dealt with effectively”

AGREE 16%
DISAGREE 50%

| Poor performance is dealt with effectively | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|----------------------------|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree | | 4.7% | 30 |
| 2 | Tend to Agree | | 11.2% | 72 |
| 3 | Neither Agree nor Disagree | | 28.1% | 181 |
| 4 | Tend to Disagree | | 28.7% | 185 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree | | 21.4% | 138 |
| 6 | Prefer not to answer | | 5.9% | 38 |

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Benchmarking

| | Good performance is recognised here | | |
|----------------------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
| Strongly Agree | 9.4% | 7.0% | 10.4% |
| Tend to Agree | 32.8% | 31.6% | 30.1% |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 28.8% | 29.4% | 26.0% |
| Tend to Disagree | 19.9% | 19.7% | 21.7% |
| Strongly Disagree | 7.2% | 11.3% | 10.7% |
| Don't Know | 1.8% | 1.1% | 1.2% |

| | Poor performance is dealt with effectively | | |
|----------------------------|--|-------------|-------------|
| | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
| Strongly Agree | 2.6% | 2.6% | 4.7% |
| Tend to Agree | 16.1% | 12.1% | 11.2% |
| Neither Agree nor Disagree | 29.5% | 34.9% | 28.1% |
| Tend to Disagree | 31.7% | 31.5% | 28.7% |
| Strongly Disagree | 14.8% | 18.2% | 21.4% |
| Don't Know | 5.3% | 0.6% | 5.9% |







Appraisals

Employees are able to undertake both self-appraisals in addition to undertaking face to face appraisals with managers. Over 50% of employees continue to report undertaking a form of appraisal over the last 12 months.

Results

“Completed self-appraisal and/or performance appraisal within the last 12 months”

AGREE 52%
DISAGREE 32%

| I have completed a self-appraisal and/or have had a performance appraisal with my line manager in the last 12 months | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|----------------------------|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Strongly Agree |  | 26.6% | 171 |
| 2 | Tend to Agree |  | 25.8% | 166 |
| 3 | Neither Agree nor Disagree |  | 11.8% | 76 |
| 4 | Tend to Disagree |  | 12.8% | 82 |
| 5 | Strongly Disagree |  | 18.8% | 121 |
| 6 | Don't Know |  | 4.2% | 27 |

Accessing Training Information

It is encouraging to observe that employees who completed the survey know how to access employee related information through the employee handbook, 77% and job opportunities, 77%. Slightly fewer employees reporting knowing how to access information for training and development opportunities, 58%.

Results

“I know how to access the employee handbook for information on policies and procedures related to management of staff”

AGREE 77%
DISAGREE 10%

| Please indicate how strongly you agree or disagree with each | Strongly Agree | Tend to Agree | Neither Agree nor Disagree | Tend to Disagree | Strongly Disagree | Don't Know |
|--|----------------|---------------|----------------------------|------------------|-------------------|------------|
| I know how to access information on internal training and development | 19.7% | 38.4% | 18.7% | 13.0% | 7.5% | 2.7% |
| I know how to access information about job opportunities and internal vacancies | 33.5% | 44.0% | 13.3% | 5.0% | 3.6% | 0.6% |
| I know how to access the employee handbook for information on policies and procedures related to management of staff | 37.5% | 39.7% | 11.5% | 5.9% | 4.0% | 1.4% |

Digital





Digital

Due to the on-going focus on digitisation this years survey included questions relating to digital competency. The majority of employees feel competent with their digital skills (71%) however, 62% still stated that they would be interested in receiving training to improve these skills.

Results



“Competent with digital skills”

AGREE 71%
DISAGREE 4%

| How competent do you feel your digital skills are? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|-----------|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Poor |  | 3.6% | 23 |
| 2 | Adequate |  | 25.2% | 162 |
| 3 | Good |  | 40.0% | 257 |
| 4 | Very Good |  | 31.3% | 201 |

“Interest in improving digital skills”

YES 62%
NO 38%

| Would you be interested in receiving training to improve your digital skills? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|-----|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 61.5% | 394 |
| 2 | No |  | 38.5% | 247 |

Gaelic

Gaelic in the workplace



This is now the fourth time employees have been asked to share how they use Gaelic in the workplace, additional questions have been included to gauge attitudes towards learning.

As reported in 2018 the use of spoken and written Gaelic is rarely used by employees in a formal setting. On a positive note Gaelic is used more often informally amongst colleagues.



It is reported that 60% of employees are aware of internal learning opportunities and 60% of employees also report being willing to improve Gaelic skills.

Results

| Please indicate how you use Gaelic in the workplace? | Never | Not very often | Occasionally | Very Often | All the time | Don't Know |
|--|-------|----------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|
| Speaking with colleagues/service users informally | 38.8% | 14.1% | 21.0% | 16.8% | 9.0% | 0.3% |
| Speaking formally at meetings/in Committee | 77.1% | 9.2% | 7.6% | 3.8% | 1.3% | 1.0% |
| Writing informally | 74.5% | 9.6% | 9.9% | 3.5% | 1.9% | 0.6% |
| Writing formal letters/reports | 85.4% | 7.9% | 4.0% | 1.4% | 0.8% | 0.5% |

| Are you a fluent Gaelic Speaker? | | | Response Percentage |
|----------------------------------|-----|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 32.3% |
| 2 | No |  | 67.7% |

| Are you aware of internal Gaelic learning opportunities? | | | Response Percentage |
|--|-----|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 60.0% |
| 2 | No |  | 40.0% |

| Would you be willing to improve your Gaelic skills or to learn the Gaelic language? | | | Response Percentage |
|---|-----|---|---------------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 60.0% |
| 2 | No |  | 40.0% |

Employee Survey Report 2024

Benchmarking

| Please indicate how you use Gaelic in the workplace? | Never | | Not very often | | Occasionally | | Very Often | | All the time | | Don't Know | |
|--|-------|-------|----------------|-------|--------------|-------|------------|-------|--------------|------|------------|------|
| | 2018 | 2024 | 2018 | 2024 | 2018 | 2024 | 2018 | 2024 | 2018 | 2024 | 2018 | 2024 |
| Speaking with colleagues/service users informally | 35.2% | 38.8% | 11.7% | 14.1% | 21.3% | 21.0% | 20.2% | 16.8% | 9.6% | 9.0% | 1.9% | 0.3% |
| Speaking formally at meetings/in Committee | 79% | 77.1% | 7.7% | 9.2% | 5.5% | 7.6% | 3.7% | 3.8% | 1.9% | 1.3% | 2.1% | 1.0% |
| Writing informally | 76.7% | 74.5% | 7.1% | 9.6% | 7.7% | 9.9% | 4.5% | 3.5% | 2.3% | 1.9% | 1.8% | 0.6% |
| Writing formal letters/reports | 87.2% | 85.4% | 4.4% | 7.9% | 3.6% | 4.0% | 1.8% | 1.4% | 1.3% | 0.8% | 1.8% | 0.5% |

Discrimination/Bullying

Disadvantaged

The number of employees reporting feeling disadvantaged has changed marginally, there was a 2% increase in reported age-related disadvantage.

Results

| Within the past three years have you felt disadvantaged at work on account of any of the protected characteristics listed below:- | A Great Deal | A Little | Not at All |
|---|--------------|----------|------------|
| Age | 2.1% | 9.5% | 88.4% |
| Race | 0.2% | 1.6% | 98.2% |
| Gender | 1.8% | 9.4% | 88.9% |
| Religion/Belief | 0.3% | 5.7% | 94.0% |
| Sexual Orientation | 0.2% | 0.6% | 99.2% |
| Pregnancy/Maternity Leave | 0.8% | 1.8% | 97.4% |
| Gender Reassignment | 0.0% | 0.3% | 99.7% |
| Disability | 1.3% | 1.6% | 97.1% |
| Marriage/Civil Partnership | 0.0% | 0.3% | 99.7% |

Benchmarking





| Within the past three years have you felt disadvantaged at work on account of any of the protected characteristics listed below:- | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|---|------|------|------|
| Age | 10% | 10% | 12% |
| Race | 3% | 2% | 2% |
| Gender | 7% | 11% | 11% |
| Religion/Belief | 7% | 7% | 6% |
| Sexual Orientation | 1% | 1% | 1% |
| Pregnancy/Maternity Leave | 1% | 2% | 3% |
| Gender Reassignment | 0.1% | 0.2% | 0.3% |
| Disability | 2% | 2% | 3% |
| Marriage/Civil Partnership | 1% | 1% | 0.3% |

Discrimination/Bullying



Bullying

The survey highlights an increase in accounts of bullying and/or harassment, the highest of which is reported to be from service users/general public. Employees are now reporting over 50% of instances which has increased from 32% in 2018. This level of bullying and harassment presents on-going concerns within the work environment.

Results

| In the past three years have you experienced bullying or harassment (e.g. physical or verbal intimidation or threats) from any of the following? Please tick as many as apply | | | Response Total | % of Total Workforce |
|--|------------------------------|---|-------------------|-------------------------|
| 1 | Line Manager/Supervisor |  | 48 | 2.32% |
| 2 | Colleagues |  | 51 | 2.46% |
| 3 | Service Users/General Public |  | 84 | 4.07% |
| 4 | Other (please specify) |  | 21 | 1.02% |

NOTE:- Employees were able to select more than one option

| If you have experienced bullying or harassment over the past three years, did you report it to anyone? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|-----|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 53.42% | 86 |
| 2 | No |  | 46.58% | 75 |

NOTE:- Employees were not required to answer this question if they had not experienced bullying

Benchmarking

| In the past three years have you experienced bullying or harassment (e.g. physical or verbal intimidation or threats) from any of the following? Please tick as many as apply | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Line Manager/Supervisor | 51 | 43 | 48 |
| Colleagues | 56 | 38 | 51 |
| Service Users/General Public | 67 | 47 | 84 |
| Other (please specify) | 32 | 19 | 21 |

Management

Management

As highlighted in 2018, employee views of immediate line managers tend to be supportive and have remained consistent. Employee views of the overall general management of their service has increased since 2018 across the majority of factors.

Results (Line Management)

| Here are some statements that could be used to describe the person whom you report to on a day to day basis. Please indicate how often they apply to him/her, if at all. | Usually / Always Applies |
|--|--------------------------|
| Considers my ideas and suggestions | 67% |
| Appreciates the pressure I come under in my job | 66% |
| Consults me on matters when I can contribute | 71% |
| Discusses my training and development needs with me | 54% |
| Encourages us to work as a team | 69% |
| Recognises when I have done a good job | 65% |
| Gives me the information I need to do my job properly | 65% |
| Is good at delegating responsibility | 62% |
| Has a fair and effective management style | 67% |
| Is supportive if I have a problem or need help | 78% |
| Makes clear what is expected of me | 70% |
| Makes decisions quickly when needed | 69% |
| Makes effective decisions which improve the service we provide | 64% |
| Is open to flexible working arrangements | 67% |

Benchmarking (Line Management)

| Usually / Always Applies | 2015 | 2018 | 2024 |
|--|------|------|------|
| Considers my ideas and suggestions | 66% | 62% | 67% |
| Appreciates the pressure I come under in my job | 62% | 62% | 66% |
| Consults me on matters when I can contribute | 70% | 64% | 71% |
| Discusses my training and development needs with me | 64% | 58% | 54% |
| Encourages us to work as a team | 67% | 66% | 69% |
| Recognises when I have done a good job | 63% | 62% | 65% |
| Gives me the information I need to do my job properly | 65% | 63% | 65% |
| Is good at delegating responsibility | 62% | 61% | 62% |
| Has a fair and effective management style | 64% | 64% | 67% |
| Is supportive if I have a problem or need help | 77% | 74% | 78% |
| Makes clear what is expected of me | 71% | 71% | 70% |
| Makes decisions quickly when needed | 67% | 66% | 69% |
| Makes effective decisions which improve the service we provide | 63% | 62% | 64% |
| Is open to flexible working arrangements | - | - | 67% |

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Results (Service Management)

| Here are a number of statements about the management of your service. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each. | Always applies | Usually Applies | Sometimes Applies | Rarely Applies | Never Applies | Prefer not to answer |
|--|----------------|-----------------|-------------------|----------------|---------------|----------------------|
| Appreciates the workload associated with my job | 27.79% | 25.96% | 18.47% | 13.14% | 8.82% | 5.82% |
| Consults us on matters when we can contribute | 28.67% | 24.17% | 20.50% | 13.33% | 9.17% | 4.17% |
| Encourages us to work as a team | 33.17% | 27.97% | 19.60% | 7.54% | 6.70% | 5.03% |
| Recognises when we have done a good job | 30.50% | 22.17% | 22.50% | 10.83% | 9.00% | 5.00% |
| Gives us the information we need to do our job properly | 26.54% | 26.88% | 26.21% | 11.69% | 5.01% | 3.67% |
| Has a fair and effective management style | 31.39% | 26.21% | 20.20% | 7.35% | 8.35% | 6.51% |
| Is supportive if we have a problem | 37.96% | 25.42% | 16.39% | 8.19% | 6.69% | 5.35% |
| Makes clear what is expected of us | 31.65% | 28.79% | 22.56% | 6.90% | 5.56% | 4.55% |
| Makes decisions quickly when needed | 30.82% | 26.47% | 20.44% | 9.38% | 6.53% | 6.37% |

Sickness Absence

Sickness Absence



One of the additional themes of the 2024 survey was sickness absence. The cost of sickness absence across the Comhairle was £2.2 million in 2023/24 and work is on-going corporately to review measures to both better support employees and improve the management of sickness absence.

Although 52% of employees think attendance is well managed across the Comhairle a further 48% of employees do not think this is managed well. Interestingly 78% of employees think that the current trigger points for employee review meetings under the sickness absence procedure are sufficient.

Results



“Attendance levels/sickness absences are well managed across the Comhairle”

AGREE **52%**
DISAGREE **48%**

| Do you think attendance levels/sickness absences are well managed across the Comhairle? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|-----|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 52.1% | 297 |
| 2 | No |  | 47.9% | 2273 |

“Current trigger points for review meeting, under the sickness absence procedure are sufficient”





AGREE **79%**
DISAGREE **21%**

| Do you think the current trigger points for a review meeting, under the sickness absence procedure, are sufficient? (3 or more instances and/or 10 or more days' sickness absence within any three-month period) | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|--|-----|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 78.7% | 453 |
| 2 | No |  | 21.3% | 123 |

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“Return to work interviews are supportive”

AGREE 30%
DISAGREE 13%

| Do you find return to work interviews supportive? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|---|---|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Yes |  | 29.8% | 86 |
| 2 | No |  | 13.4% | 75 |
| 3 | My manager does not undertake return to work interviews |  | 10.1% | 59 |
| 4 | I have not been absent from work and/or have no experience of return to work interviews |  | 46.8% | 273 |

Employee Assistance Programme

Just over half of the employees who completed the survey reporting being aware of the Employee Assistant Programme,55%, of which 5.5% confirmed that they have accessed the service over the last 12 months. Overall 72% of employees that accessed the Employee Assistant Programme reported that it was beneficial to them.

Results

“Aware of the Employee Assistant Programme”

YES 55%
NO 45%

| Are you aware of the Employee Assistance Programme? | | | Response Percent | Response Total |
|---|-----|--|------------------|----------------|
| 1 | Yes | | 55.5% | 322 |
| 2 | No | | 44.5% | 258 |

Support

Employees responded positively to suggested support options. Internal health monitoring appointments were reported as the most beneficial option and would be welcomed by 62% of respondents.

Results

| Would you find the following beneficial? | Yes |
|--|-------|
| Regular information, by email, on wellbeing topics | 53.9% |
| Internal health monitoring appointments e.g. blood pressure, pulse, weight | 61.8% |
| Focused webinars on wellbeing topics | 43.1% |
| Creation of employee led internal support groups relating to wellbeing | 40.5% |

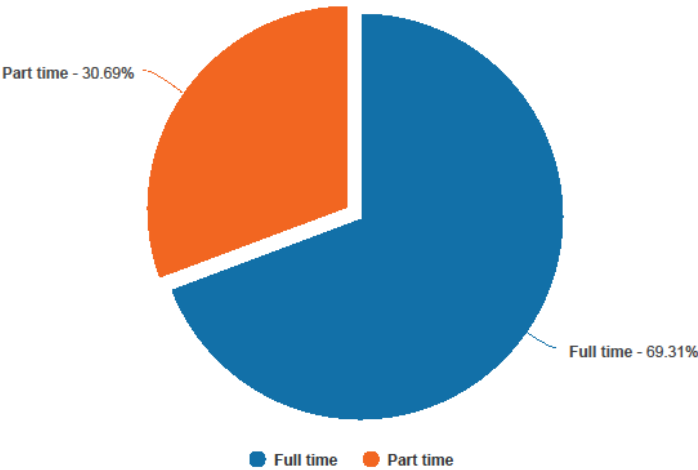
Equal Opportunity Monitoring

Equality Monitoring Information

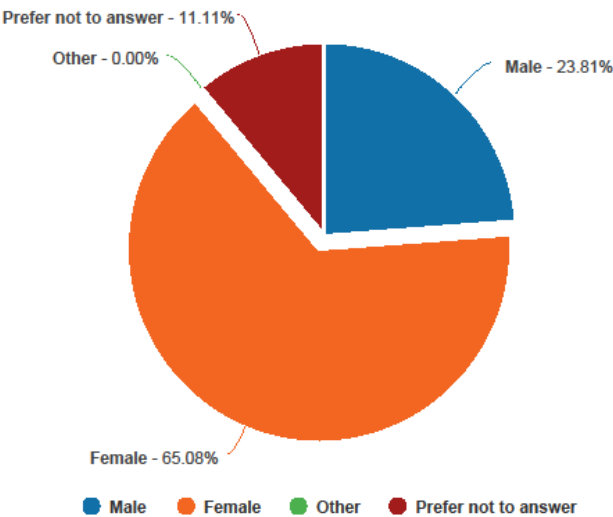
The current workforce consists of approximately 22% male and 73% female employees with 50% of employees falling within the 55 to 64 age category. A review of both employee age and sex profiles show that respondents mirror the overall workforce profile. Again employee working hours of respondents are broadly representative of the current working profiles which include 46% full time employees and 54% part time employees.

Caring responsibilities continue to be monitored and shows a significant increase with 256 employees now reporting undertaking caring responsibilities, this is equivalent to 12% of the workforce compared to 7% in 2018.

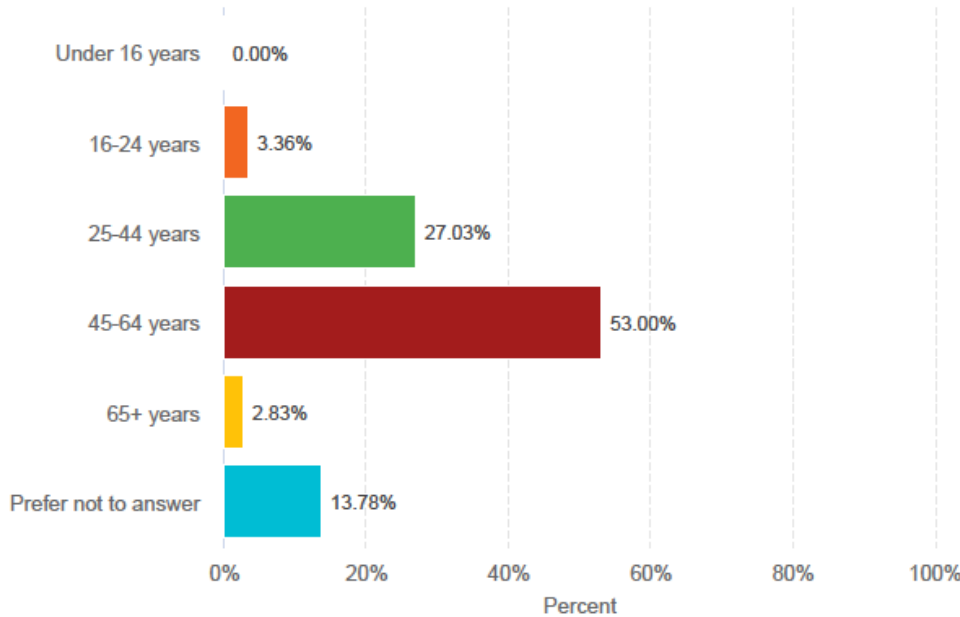
Survey Respondents Work Profile



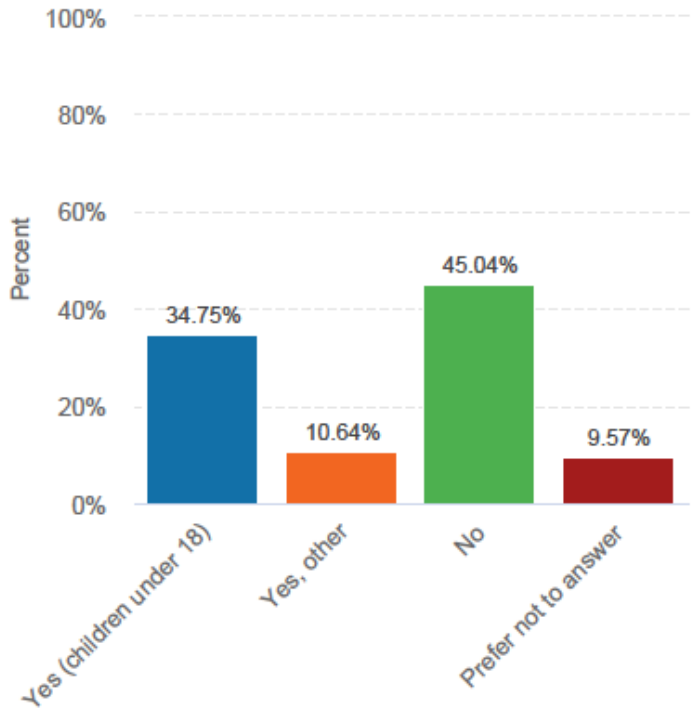
Survey Respondents Sex Profile



Survey Respondents Age Profile



Survey Respondents Caring Responsibilities Profile



Open Ended Questions

Throughout the survey there were a number of open-ended questions to allow employees to provide additional comments, over 800 comments were received. These comments will be shared with senior managers to support further improvement planning. Nearly 300 comments were received in relation to Gaelic, 81 relating to health and 117 detailed home working arrangements.

All employees had the opportunity to suggest changes that they felt would make the Comhairle a better place to work. Approximately 381 employees made comments. Common themes included communication, training, increased staffing levels, reduced working weeks, pay, maintenance of buildings, workload, mental health and the management of staff absences. Below are several examples of employee comments and suggestions: -

“What single change would you suggest to make the Comhairle a better place to work?”

“Ensuring that all staff working within a particular department have the same vision and goals and heads of service value the opinions of all staff in relation to changes and improvements”

“Start replacing staff that have retired / left. Remaining staff are having to take on extra work and most services are struggling to cope”

“Longer working hours during the week to contribute towards a 4 day working week. This would increase morale as more rest days are available”

“Tighten up on sickness absences”

“Paying staff unsocial hours at weekends would make it more attractive to staff, it would also ensure staff worked these shifts and didn't pull out of them at the last moment”

“Extra admin staff to free up Senior Management and other roles to do their own jobs more efficiently”

*“In house childcare. Drop in facility for staff to discuss wellbeing needs.
Discounted gym membership or free gym membership”*

“We used to get the employee newsletter and know who had started and who had left the organisation. Now I see faces around, and have no idea who they are. Could ID badge photos go against names in the internal phone book?”

“Employees being asked to create a handover before they leave their position within the Comhairle”

“Transparent and timely communication throughout the organization”

“Better collaboration between departments and services”

“More further education opportunities”

“Better communication from the top down including a sense of vision and corporate direction”

“Honesty and transparency with staff. real commitment to wellbeing and trauma centered care. Listen to staff about their services”