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| **HIGH LIFE HIGHLAND**  **REPORT TO BOARD OF DIRECTORS**  **12 JUNE 2024** | AGENDA ITEM  REPORT No HLH/ /24 |

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| **HR UPDATE – Report by Chief Executive** |

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| **Recommendation**  The purpose of this report is to update Board Members on the charity’s HR related matters.  It is recommended Directors:   1. comment on and note the HR matters for Q4 (Jan-Mar 2024); and 2. approve the updated flexible working policy in **Appendix C**. |

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| **1.** | **Business Plan Contribution** |
| 1.1 | High Life Highland’s (HLH) purpose is Making Life Better. The HLH Business Plan contains eleven Business Outcomes which support the delivery of this purpose, and this report supports the following highlighted outcomes from the Business Plan:   1. Seek to continuously improve standards of health and safety. 2. Commit to the Scottish Government’s zero carbon targets and maintain the highest standards in environmental compliance. 3. Use research and market analysis to develop and improve services to meet customer needs. 4. **Increase employee satisfaction,** **engagement and development to improve staff recruitment and retention.** 5. Improve the financial sustainability of the company. 6. Value and strengthen the relationship with THC. 7. Develop and deliver the HLH Corporate Programme and seek to attract capital investment. 8. Use research and market analysis to develop and deliver proactive marketing and promotion of HLH and its services. 9. Initiate and implement an ICT digital transformation strategy across the charity. 10. Develop and strengthen relationships with customers, key stakeholders and partners. 11. Deliver targeted programmes which support and enhance the physical and mental health and wellbeing of the population and which contribute to the prevention agenda. |

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| **2.** | **Background** |
| 2.1 | This report summarises the HR matters for Q4 2023/24. |
| **3.** | **Staffing establishment** |
| 3.1 | Changes to the charity’s staffing establishment = +1.24FTE (**Appendix A**)   * Quarter 4 (2023/24) establishment = 848.22 FTE * Quarter 3 (2023/24) establishment = 846.98 FTE |
| **4.** | **Staff turnover** |
| 4.1 | The number of resignations as a percentage of posts (number in brackets denotes the number of individual resignations) during the quarter was:   * January = 1.1% (11) * February = 0.8% (10) * March = 2.5% (25) |
| 4.2 | The number of resignations in March was higher than normal and the reasons for them were explored:   * 17 resignations were from the Leisure Service spread across 11 individual sites (mainly Leisure Assistants) * The remaining 8 resignations were spread across 5 other Services (with 5 being due to end of contract). |
| **5.** | **Attendance management** |
| 5.1 | Attendance management **(Appendix B)** has been RAG rated as amber in the performance report with further detail as follows:   * Short-term absence (<10 consecutive working days) = -0.29 * Long-term absence (>10 consecutive working days) = +0.77 * Long-term absences carried into Q4 = 19 individuals * Average days sick per FTE employee = +0.11 days |
| 5.2 | Whilst there has been a small decrease in short-term absences in Q4 there has been an increase in long term absences. |
| 5.3 | The HR Team continues to support service managers in the absence management of employees who are off sick on a long-term basis, using OH referrals, Wellness Recovery Action Plans and Counselling Services to expedite a quicker return to work, where possible. |
| 5.4 | Some long-term absences in Q4 could be directly linked to other HR processes which have since been resolved, with employees either having returned to work or left the organisation. |
| **6.** | **Implementation of HR policies or processes** |
| 6.1 | The following list details the application of HR policies or processes at the time of writing this report:   * Disciplinary procedure = 0 * Internal resolution process (formerly Grievance) = 2 (carried forward from Q3) * Dignity at Work = 0 * Whistleblowing = 0 * Official complaints against staff (external) = 0 |
| **7.** | **Industrial relations** |
| 7.1 | The charity recognises and engages with the following unions:   * EIS * GMB * UNISON * Unite the Union |
| 7.2 | Ongoing communication and consultation with the above unions is undertaken through the Joint Consultation Forum (JCF) which meets quarterly. |
| 7.3 | When the JCF met on 18 April 2024 the following items were discussed:   * HLH Purpose and i-care values * Exit Survey Report 2023 * Attendance Management (as part of attendance management project) |
| **8.** | **Policies update** |
| 8.1 | The following HR policies have been considered in line with the review schedule and updated to include HLH’s purpose, Making Life Better, but otherwise no changes were required:   * Absence and Attendance Management * Flexible Retirement * Employee induction * Relocation and Removal |
| 8.2 | The Flexible Working policy has been updated to reflect statutory changes to Flexible Working applications effective from April 2024 and it is recommended that Directors approve the policy in **Appendix C.** |
| 8.3 | The Substance Misuse Policy was scheduled for review but was temporarily paused pending discussion at the Health and Safety and Environmental Compliance Committee (HSECC). The review will proceed now that the May 2024 HSEC meeting has taken place. |
| **9.** | **Implications** |
| 9.1 | Resource Implications – there are no new resource implications arising from this report |
| 9.2 | Legal Implications – there are no new legal implications arising from this report |
| 9.3 | Equality Implications – there are no new equality implications arising from this report. |
| 9.4 | Risk Implications – there are no new risk implications arising from this report. |

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| **Recommendation**  It is recommended Directors:   1. comment on and note the HR matters for Q4 (Jan-Mar 2024); and 2. approve the updated flexible working policy in **Appendix C**. |

Designation: Chief Executive

Date: 28 May 2024

Authors: Morven MacLeod, Head of HR

**Appendix A**

**CHANGES TO STAFFING ESTABLISHMENT IN Q4 (Jan – Mar 2024)**

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| **Post Title** | **Location** | **FTE** |
| Adult Learning Facilitator | Dingwall | 0.4 |
| Tutor Coach | Inverness Leisure | 0.22 |
| Tutor Coach | Black Isle Leisure Centre | 0.07 |
| Caretaker Steward | Canal Park | -0.66 |
| Leisure Supervisor | IRASC | 1 |
| Leisure Supervisor | Dingwall Leisure Centre | -1 |
| Assistant Manager | Dingwall facilities | 1 |
| Leisure Supervisor | Dingwall Leisure Centre | 0.21 |
|  |  | **1.24** |

Table 1

**Appendix B**

**Attendance Management Tables**

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| **SHORT-TERM ABSENCE RATES** | | | | |
|  | **Quarter 1**  **(Apr–Jun)**  **%** | **Quarter 2**  **(Jul–Sep)**  **%** | **Quarter 3**  **(Oct–Dec)**  **%** | **Quarter 4**  **(Jan–Mar)**  **%** |
| **2021/22** | 0.66 | 0.66 | 1.13 | 1.62 |
| **2022/23** | 2.07 | 1.63 | 1.35 | 1.52 |
| **2023/24** | 1.49 | 1.29 | 1.47 | 1.18 |

Table 2

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| **LONG-TERM ABSENCE RATES** | | | | |
|  | **Quarter 1**  **(Apr–Jun)**  **%** | **Quarter 2**  **(Jul–Sep)**  **%** | **Quarter 3**  **(Oct–Dec)**  **%** | **Quarter 4**  **(Jan–Mar)**  **%** |
| **2021/22** | 1.93 | 2.88 | 2.96 | 2.51 |
| **2022/23** | 3.76 | 3.52 | 3.38 | 3.12 |
| **2023/24** | 2.79 | 2.78 | 2.94 | 3.71 |

Table 3

\*Number of employees off for periods exceeding 10 days were 33 in Q2 and 33 in Q3.

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| **AVERAGE SICKNESS ABSENCE DAYS PER EMPLOYEE** | | | | |
|  | **Quarter 1**  **(Apr–Jun)** | **Quarter 2**  **(Jul–Sep)** | **Quarter 3**  **(Oct–Dec)** | **Quarter 4**  **(Jan–Mar)** |
| **2021/22** | 1.63 | 2.33 | 2.70 | 2.73 |
| **2022/23** | 3.61 | 3.40 | 2.89 | 2.83 |
| **2023/24** | 2.61 | 2.52 | 2.87 | 2.98 |

Table 4

**Appendix C**

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| **A black and white logo  Description automatically generated** | ***Flexible Working Policy***  V2 – June 2024  Reviewed – June 2022  Review Date – June 2024 |

1. **Introduction**

High Life Highland’s (HLH) purpose is Making Life Better and the Charity recognises that many of its employees have family and caring responsibilities which they combine with their paid employment, (caring for children, elderly family members or other dependants). As an employer HLH is committed to retaining, developing and motivating employees by ensuring that they are able to balance work and home commitments.

1. **Principles**
   1. A proactive and flexible approach to the management of work issues is of direct relevance in retaining, developing and motivating valued employees.
   2. The development of flexible working practices is part of HLH’s integrated approach to the management of diversity, leading to improved equality of opportunity.

2.3 Work and home life can create conflicting pressures. HLH’s approach is to allow employees to integrate work and home life by encouraging the use of flexible working practices within the needs of the business.

2.4 Consultation with employees is the most effective method of exploring the possibilities of flexible working.

2.5 Managers are encouraged to consider the options for flexible working.

1. **Key Provisions**

**3.1** **Flexible Working Arrangements**

**3.1.1 Definition**

Flexible Working Arrangements provide employees, from their first day of employment, the statutory right to request certain permanent changes to their conditions of service. *(previously required 26 weeks employment)*

Applications for permanent changes to the following working conditions will be considered:

* A change to the hours they work;
* A change to the times when they are required to work;
* To work from home (whether for all or part of the week).

Applications will be considered in accordance with the set procedure and refused only where there is a clear business reason for doing so.

**3.1.2 Procedure**

Employees must apply in writing to the Head of Service . The use of the [Flexible Working Application Form](https://www.hlhinfo.com/userfiles/file/business_processes/Human%20Resources/HR11%20Flexible%20Working/HR11-F%20Flexible%20Working%20Forms/HR11-F01%20Flexible%20Working%20Application%20Form.doc) will ensure that the application provides all appropriate information for proper consideration.

The Head of Service will arrange, within a maximum of 28 days, for an appropriate manager to meet with the employee to discuss the desired work pattern in depth and to discuss how it might be accommodated within the needs of the business. The employee has a right to be accompanied by a trade union representative or colleague at this meeting.

Unless further action is necessary before notifying the employee, the Head of Service will write to the employee, within 14 days after the date of the meeting, to agree a new work pattern and start date, or to provide reasons why the request cannot be granted. There will be circumstances where it is appropriate for the Director of Service to agree extended timescales with the employee.

The Head of Service must consult with the Head of HR before making a decision on an application for flexible working.

Employees are limited to making two applications in any 12-month period. *(previously could only make one application in any 12-month period)*

**3.1.3 Appeals**

Employees who wish to appeal against a decision should do so by writing to their Director of Service within 14 days of being notified of the decision. The Director of Service will hear appeals under HLH’s [Grievance Procedure](https://www.hlhinfo.com/userfiles/file/business_processes/Human%20Resources/HR25%20Grievance/HR25-G%20Grievance%20Procedure/HR25-G01%20Grievance%20Procedure.doc) with the hearing taking place within 14 days of receipt of the appeal. Where a grievance cannot be resolved at this stage of the procedure the employee will have the right to have his or her grievance heard by the Chief Executive.

[Guidance for Managers](https://www.hlhinfo.com/userfiles/file/business_processes/Human%20Resources/HR11%20Flexible%20Working/HR11-G%20Flexible%20Working%20Guidance/HR11-G02%20Flexible%20Working%20Guide%20for%20Managers.doc)

[Guidance for Employees](https://www.hlhinfo.com/userfiles/file/business_processes/Human%20Resources/HR11%20Flexible%20Working/HR11-G%20Flexible%20Working%20Guidance/HR11-G01%20Flexible%20Working%20Guide%20for%20Employees.doc)