

**Headlines, summary of findings, analysis and next steps**

**1. SURVEY HEADLINES**

Following on from the 2021 Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey the results have been analysed and the headline results are displayed below.

- Response rates
- Highest scoring questions
- Highest scoring concerns
- Key themes and achievements

**Response Rates:**

**Table 1: Survey Response Rate**

Distribution method	Sent out	Returns	2021 Response Rate from 5043 employees (%)	2021 Overall method response rate of 1251 employees (%)
Paper questionnaire	500	58	1%	4.7%
Online / electronic survey*	4543	1,193	24%	94.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>5043</b>	<b>1251</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>100%</b>

\*Online QR code incorporated in the online entries – 11 entries 0.9% of responses.  
Average time taken to complete the survey -10m: 38s

**Highest Scoring Questions:**

- 82.44%** Employees said no to having suffered with a mental health issue in the last year that has led them to seek support from their GP or other health professional.
- 80.66%** Employees had been able to access communications during the pandemic from their Line Manager.
- 79.25%** Employees were able to use all of their annual leave during 2020
- 71.43%** Employees said yes, they feel they had been able to maintain their mental health and wellbeing during the last year.
- 77.20%** Employees had been able to access communications during the pandemic from all user e-mails.

**Highest Scoring Concerns:**

- 70.25%** Employees said yes, they feel there could be more awareness or support for specific mental health concerns including suicide and the associated impacts.
- 66.69%** Employees have noticed an increase in mental health concerns within their service either themselves, colleagues or service users.
- 64.10%** Have feelings of missing contact with family / friends.
- 61.61%** Employees think training to help understand mental health issues would support a more positive workplace for them and their colleagues' mental health.

<b>Key Themes and Achievements</b>	<b>2021 % agreeing with statements</b>
Employees felt that they fully or mostly agreed that they are given the proper equipment to keep them safe and protect their health.	83.82%
Employees felt that they fully or mostly agreed that they felt safe with the Covid safety measures in place	81.72%
Employees have accessed communication from the following channels: Line Manager	80.66%
Employees were able to use all of their annual leave during 2020	79.25%
Employees feel that they fully or mostly agreed that their health and safety is well looked after at work.	78.6%
Employees felt that they fully or mostly agreed that they felt they had been provided with all the equipment they needed to undertake their role more flexibly	76.8%
Over half of employees have face to face interaction with other people as part of their job currently in 2021	73.56%
Over half of employees felt the Covid measures in place to minimise face to face interactions have allowed a similar level of service to be delivered and could be sustainable for the future.	61.43%
Over half of employees felt that they fully or mostly agreed that their mental health has been sufficiently supported.	56.71%

Over half of employees felt that a year on since the pandemic, they had coped with the impact of the rapid changes at work and in general extremely well or well.	51.45%
<b>Top 5 Areas for Focus and Development</b>	<b>2021 % agreeing with statements</b>
Employees feel there could be more awareness or support for specific mental health concerns including suicide and the associated impacts.	70.25%
Employees have noticed an increase in mental health concerns within their service either themselves, colleagues or service users.	66.69%
Employees think training to help understand mental health issues would support a more positive workplace for them and their colleagues' mental health.	61.61%
Employee's future concerns, either very concerned or quite concerned about Workload pressures.	61.13%
Employee's future concerns, either very concerned or quite concerned about ongoing changes to working practices.	60.05%

The Mental Health and Wellbeing Survey has had a slightly lower response rate than previous employee opinion surveys. Despite this the results show an overall positive picture for the mental health and wellbeing of Moray Council employees. To aid future response rates, more practical support with electronic submissions will be put in place to support the new ways of working. It is recognised that the response rate may have been impacted in certain services by Covid restrictions in place at the time of the survey launch.

The greatest positives from the survey are how employees have coped during the last year, being able to take the appropriate annual leave, recognising the Covid safety measures in place, with over 35% of employees working from home instead of their normal workplace and over 15% working between an office/school/ and their home. There was also a very positive response to the question about employees being able to access communication from their line manager.

There were less positive responses in relation to themes such as noticing an increase in mental health concerns within their service either themselves, with colleagues or with service users and over half of employees think training to help understand mental health issues would support a more positive workplace for them and their colleagues' mental health. Employees' concerns about the future related to workload pressures and ongoing changes to working practices.

The key focus for the immediate future are improving awareness, understanding and training on mental health, reviewing communications, particularly for front line staff, implementation

of the workload management toolkit and finalisation of the Mental Health action plan which is already being developed. In addition, discussions with services on their survey results will allow for further work streams to be identified with specific and detailed actions to be tailored to the needs of each service.

### **Areas to consider:**

- **Looking into the future regarding home working:**
  - 32.20% of employees would like a combination of home working and office/location based working
  - 22.34% preferring to remain at home on a regular basis.
  - 12.82% would like to remain in/return to my normal working environment
  - 31.53% of employees not possible to undertake their duties from home.
  
- **Support - have accessed or likely to access:**
  - 9.75% 24 Hour confidential helpline (Time for Talking)
  - 9.24% Occupational Health
  - 7.09% Human Resources
  
- 61.43% of Employees felt the Covid measures in place to minimise face to face interactions have allowed a **similar level of service to be delivered and could be sustainable for the future.**
  
- Over 25% of the Paper questionnaires received indicate that they have been able to **access communication on Moray social media channels.** Further focus on social media engagement could help reach our remote workers.
  
- Of the paper responses future work will focus on **supporting electronic access to digital and electronic engagement.**
  
- 61.61% of employees would like **training to help understand mental health issues** to support a more positive workplace for them and their colleagues' mental health.
  
- 50.25% felt **more regular interactions with colleagues** would support their health and wellbeing during these times, once Covid restrictions allow.

## **2. SURVEY ANALYSIS:**

The survey was broken down into 7 areas and details of the results are covered below:

### **You and your role**

Of those completing the survey over half of respondents (51.40%) worked in an office prior to March 2020. Other locations for work included a school (21.42%), in the community (e.g. Client's home) (6.95%), outdoors or in a vehicle (5.6%), in another type of Council building (e.g. community centre, library, pool, etc.) (5.2%). Of the other responses (9.43%), they were varied with respondents not being employed by the council in March 2020, a large amount of care sector employees and respondents working in multiple locations prior to Covid.

At the time of the survey in June/July 2021 in relation to employees' working situation, 43.73% of respondents continued to work as normal in their usual location. Slightly less 35.97% were working from home instead of the workplace. 13.67% of people were also working from other locations combined with homeworking rather than in their normal locations, along with nurseries and day services and the remaining respondents either on paid leave e.g. maternity, redeployed, on sickness absence or unable to work due to an underlying health condition.

43.56% of respondents reported being able to do their jobs from home however employees within services such as Health & Social Care, Education and environmental protection were unable to work from home due to the nature of the roles.

### **Interaction and working environment**

Over half of respondents (73.56%) had face to face interaction with other people as part of their job 2021. Interaction levels varied with almost half of respondents fully agreeing with an increase in use of emails (44.47%), increased use of virtual meetings/ VC (46.61%) and decreased face to face meetings (51.76%). Almost half of respondents (43.47%) did not interact with social media / chat rooms and 56.72% felt that their interaction had no change.

Over half of respondents (61.43%) felt the Covid measures in place to minimise face to face interactions have allowed a similar level of service to be delivered and could be sustainable for the future.

Of those respondents not agreeing that a similar level of service could be delivered, 325 additional comments were received. The highest themed responses indicated that although areas had delivered a service, it could not be sustained without face to face interaction with pupils/ service users/ families and others, as it was an essential part of the role and service provided. Other responses expressed concern over relational practice and sensitive issues that need to be discussed and dealt with face to face; with some employees noting that virtual meetings can be a barrier to effective communication and support. Other points made related to loss of communication for some clients, users and pupils. Technology issues, negative impacts for children, recruitment and workload pressures were also cited.

## **Working environment**

81.72% of respondents feel that they fully or mostly agreed that they felt safe with the Covid safety measures in place. 76.8% of respondents feel that they fully or mostly agreed that they felt they had been provided with all the equipment they needed to undertake their role more flexibly. 71.65% of respondents felt that they fully or mostly agreed that they felt able to have some control over their working environment. 51.22% of respondents felt that they fully or mostly agreed that they felt they had choice regarding their working arrangements.

22.46% of respondents felt they could only undertake part of their role at home due to not having all the required equipment. 35.47% of respondents agreed that they had not experienced negativity within the workplace regarding some employees working remotely and some not being able to. 29.93% of respondents had 'No view' about working from home having a positive impact on their mental health.

Looking into the future regarding home working, 32.10% of respondents would like a combination of home working and office/location based working, with 22.34% preferring to remain at home on a regular basis. 31.53% of respondents indicated it was not possible to undertake their duties from home.

## **Health and Safety**

78.6% of respondents feel that they fully or mostly agreed that their health and safety is well looked after at work. 83.82% of respondents feel that they fully or mostly agreed that they are given the proper equipment to keep them safe and protect their health. Over half of respondents (56.71%) felt that they fully or mostly agreed that their mental health has been sufficiently supported.

## **You, Your Life and Feelings**

Looking at employees' personal lives with the optional question regarding home commitments and circumstances, over half of respondents (56%) live with family or friends, 30.5% have childcare responsibilities and 14.7% living alone, with a large majority (60%) having support networks with family or socially.

When asked if employees felt they had been able to maintain their mental health and wellbeing during the last year, almost three quarters (71.43%) of respondents said yes.

When asked about feelings they had experienced, 64.10% said they were missing contact with friends/ family, 54.24% missing contact with colleagues and 51.90% had anxiety about workload.

The highest scoring question from throughout the survey was that 82.44% of respondents said 'no' to having suffered with a mental health issue in the last year which has led them to seek support from a GP or medical professional.

## **Support and training**

When questioned about support and training, over half of respondents (54.1%) felt they have accessed or would be likely to access their manager and 62.42% a colleague. The Human resources, Occupational Health and Time for Talking were the services least likely to be accessed.

To support their health and wellbeing, 50.25% of respondents felt they needed more regular interactions with their colleagues.

The remaining statements regarding 'what else could be done to support your health and wellbeing during these times' were as follows. These results demonstrate that over a quarter of respondents sought more information on health and safety, would like more virtual team meetings and structured support and over one fifth would like more virtual one to ones. The remaining statements demonstrated lesser needs in relation to additional support in relation to external resources to help with wellbeing, specific support on suicide awareness and financial wellbeing.

- I need more information about how the council is managing health and safety across the council in relation to Covid. (26%)
- I need more regular virtual team meetings. (25%)
- I need more structured support for work tasks. (25%)
- I need more regular virtual one to ones with my line manager. (22%)
- I need more information about how the council is managing the pandemic in the community. (18%)
- I need help finding external resources to help with wellbeing. (7%)
- I need more specific support focused on suicide awareness. (5%)
- I need help with financial wellbeing. (4%)

## **Communication**

Over half of respondents have accessed communication from the following channels: line manager (80.66%), all user emails (77.20%), Moray Intranet (66.56%), Staff updates on Interchange (65.83%) and Moray Website (55.36%) albeit over half the employees responding to the survey are pre-pandemic office based.

The extent of agreement regarding employees' future concerns is varied with 61.13% either very or quite concerned about workload pressures, 60.05% either very or quite concerned about ongoing changes to working practices and 44.99% either very or quite concerned about ongoing Covid concerns. With financial concerns response as 41.36% not at all concerned.

Over half respondents (51.45%) felt that a year on since the pandemic, they had coped with the impact of the rapid changes at work either extremely well or well. 41.8% reported having some good days and some bad, 3.86% had more bad days than good and 2.89% reporting they were struggling.

### **3. DEPARTMENTAL ANALYSIS**

While these results provide a picture of responses to the survey questions at a corporate level, as in previous surveys there are distinct variations at departmental / service level and the main themes to note and areas for action are set out below:

#### **Departmental Analysis – Headlines:**

The results show that while in general the workforce has managed the impact of Covid well there are areas of concern arising from the departmental analysis that identify specific service themes which require support and intervention in order to make improvements.

These include greater concerns in relation to being able to maintain mental health and wellbeing across Education (with the exception of Early Years) and Community Care (Care at Home) scoring significantly below the council average. Similarly, Education teaching staff and the central team, Community Care (Care at Home), central ASN teams, Community Care (OT, Social Work & Performance and Commissioning) and Criminal Justice (professional staff) have also noticed an increase in mental health concerns in relation to their own, a colleague or service user's mental health.

Anxiety about workload is a continuing theme with higher scores than the council average being noted for ASN teams, Community Care, Children's Social Work and Criminal Justice (professional staff) and all the Education teams (with the exception of Early Years). Workload pressures feature as a theme for the future across several services; namely Environmental Protection, Roads Maintenance, Transportation, Education, Education Resources and Communities, Community Care and Children and Families.

Communication via team meetings was challenging for some of the frontline services including Environmental Protection, Roads Maintenance, Care at Home and support staff in schools. In more general terms not having access to general communications in the form of emails, interchange etc also presented as a theme across Environmental Protection. Creating a more positive workplace presented as a concern in roads maintenance and schools staff both within teaching and support staffing departments.

Future work practices was an area of concern for a number of services including Education Resources and Communities colleagues and Roads Maintenance.

There was a desire for training to help better understand how to support staff with mental health across services however particularly with schools, Education Resources and Communities and Community Care.

### **4. NEXT STEPS**

These results show that while in general the workforce has managed the impact of Covid well there are areas of concern arising from the departmental analysis that identify specific service

themes which require support and intervention in order to engender improvements. These are currently being discussed with service management teams for consideration of inclusion in departmental plans and bespoke action plans as part of the development work supported by the OD team through the Culture Working Action plan. These have been delayed due to diversion of HR resources due to the Omicron variant in the latter part of 2021 and early 2022, however the recent developments in relation to restrictions and measures being relaxed in Scotland have begun to release the HR resource to focus on business as usual.

While it is clear that the results are generally positive, it is also good to note the responses indicate that progress is being made in some areas previously measured in the employee survey i.e. Health and Safety questions demonstrate a higher positive response than in the last employee survey. It is however also evident that there are areas that require improvement work in embedding the wider aspects of a positive workforce culture within specific teams and services.

The immediate areas for action are specifically in relation to improving awareness of mental health generally, training staff to have a better understanding of how to support staff and their mental health, reviewing communications particularly across frontline services, finding ways to improve workload management and providing clarity on about future work practices.

A key focus for the immediate future is the further development and implementation of workload management tools. Other areas identified in the results will also be incorporated into the Workforce Culture Action Plan including training solutions and interventions to support managers with improving their knowledge and skills of the management of mental health, with training being offered both in house and via the Flexible Working Fund provision and improving communications across frontline services.

Work with Heads of Service and third tier managers as part of the workforce planning process will also continue which will allow interpretation of the results within the context of specific services and teams with resultant actions agreed and owned by the managers whilst being supported by the workforce culture team where necessary.

Therefore, actions will be:

- Continue to disaggregate the results to an incremental bespoke approach specific to each service
- Focus engagement and culture activity on improving the knowledge and management of mental health, increasing mental health awareness, communicating change effectively and improving the management of workload and time pressures. These will be included in the Culture Working Action Plan and progress against targets reviewed by the Culture Working Group during 2022/23.
- Finalise discussions with service management teams on results and actions for consideration for inclusion in service plans to be concluded by end of February 2022. Departmental analysis information was issued to Heads of Service in December 2021. Service Management Team review meetings have been held during January and February 2022 with 3 outstanding for completion by end of February 2022.

- Development of monitoring arrangements via the workforce planning process. Annual workforce planning meetings will be held in March 2022 and service actions responding to the themes arising will be captured in the service workforce planning action plans, with Heads of Service being responsible for monitoring delivery with support from the OD Team where identified and agreed in the action plan.
- Finalise Mental Health Action Plan to capture outcomes and respond to themes arising from the survey. A draft plan was developed by November 2021 and presented to management for review. Feedback is being reviewed and the plan is scheduled to be finalised by end of March 2022. This will include responding to themes arising from the survey.
- Action feedback from the Culture Working Group on the Workload Toolkit presented in December 2021. Deliver pilot and evaluate to measure effectiveness prior to finalising resource. This will be delivered as per timescales in Culture Working Group Action plan and progress monitored by Culture Working Group.
- Review and consider guidance to provide standards of behaviours and performance in relation to new ways of working including virtual meetings etiquette, improving opportunities for interactions with colleagues etc. To be included in the Culture Working Action Plan and progress monitored via this group.
- Promote and signpost employees to internal providers of support e.g. EAP to support engagement and use of service to benefit mental health concerns. Create a communications plan to deliver and support effective engagement that will be delivered over 2022/23.
- Review access to digital communications and upskill employees appropriately, targeting areas where digital communications have scope for improvement. The digital champions' project will also support identifying gaps in skills via the digital skills survey and provide support and resources for upskilling as per the project plan. Needs will also be identified via annual training requests and solutions identified accordingly.

A corporate analysis booklet and employee booklet capturing these findings will be published on the interchange following the presentation of the results at Corporate Committee. The departmental dashboard summaries which have been issued to each Head of Service have been used to help inform specific areas of action both from within the departments and in conjunction with corporate initiatives such as workload management, mental health actions, employee engagement and workforce culture work. The outcome of the survey will also be used to inform the direction of the mental health action plan and workforce culture work to continually meet the shared aim of supporting employee mental health and wellbeing and developing a more positive workplace environment.