Finance and Resources Committee 17 November 2008

Employee Attitude Survey 2008

Executive summary and recommendations

Introduction

On 30 September 2008 HPC's first employee attitude survey was emailed to all employees with a two week date for completion. The survey results have now been compiled into a report, discussed with the Executive Management Team (EMT), and released to employees.

80% of employees completed the survey (which was voluntary). The overall results were extremely positive. It is anticipated that the survey will be conducted every two years to monitor improvements and identify any new trends.

Decision

The Council/Committee is requested to note the document. No decision is required.

Background information

Nil

Resource implications

Nil

Financial implications

Any improvements identified which involve a cost (such as training) will be included as part of the 2009/2010 budget.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Employee Attitude Survey Summary Report 2008

Date of paper

6 October 2008

Appendix 1
Employee Attitude Survey Summary Report 2008

1.0   Introduction

The Human Resources Department undertook an employee attitude survey for the first time in late June 2008 and received an excellent 80% response rate.
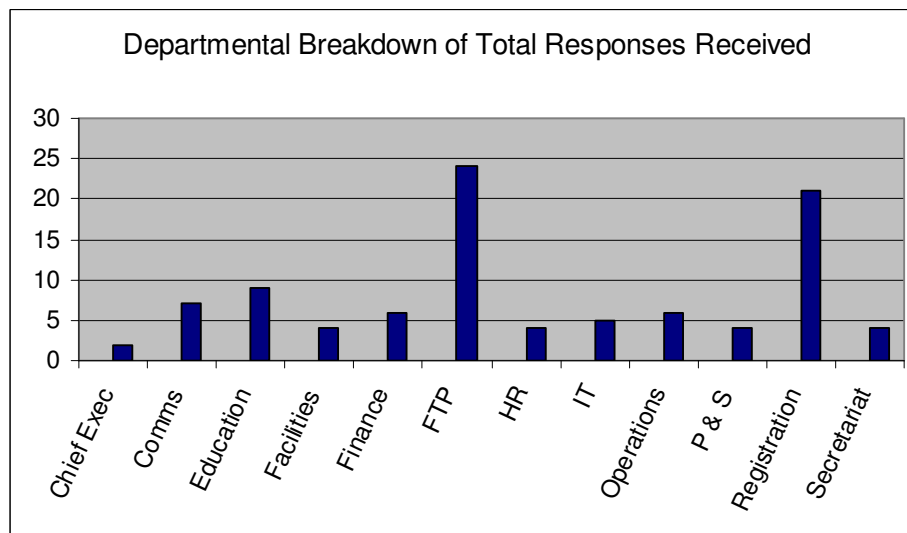
The aim of the survey was to gain a greater insight into the reasons why people were staying at the HPC, to find out which aspects of working at the HPC were most valued and to help identify opportunities for improvement. It will sit alongside the existing annual Exit Interview Report and between the two, will provide a comprehensive insight into contributing factors for people choosing to stay or to leave.

The survey was anonymous, however we asked that the department of the respondent be provided so that more targeted analysis could also take place. The results were co-ordinated by an external company to preserve the integrity of the survey and a decision was made to rely on commitment from human resources and managers to encourage participation rather than to make it mandatory and risk a negative employee perception of the survey.
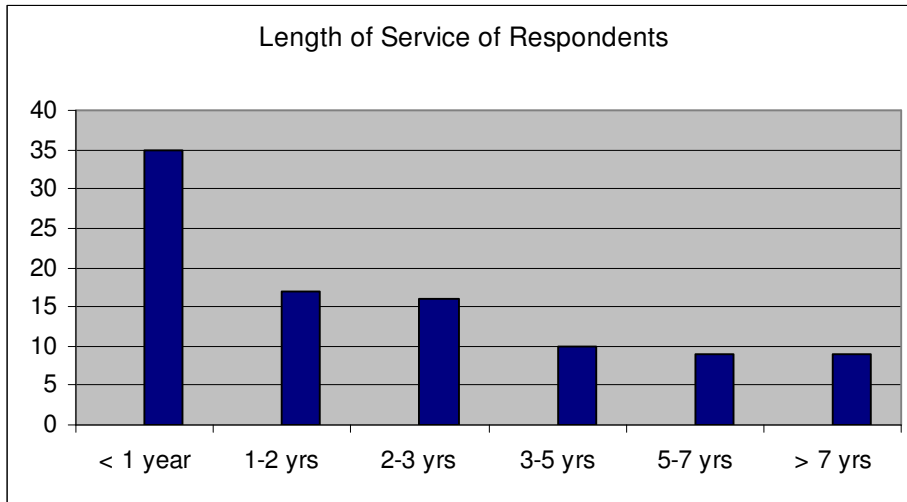
No information has been edited from the results and a summary has been provided of all comments made. Where comments were similar they have been grouped under a heading with the number of comments received shown. Where there is a direct comment from someone it is shown with quotation marks.
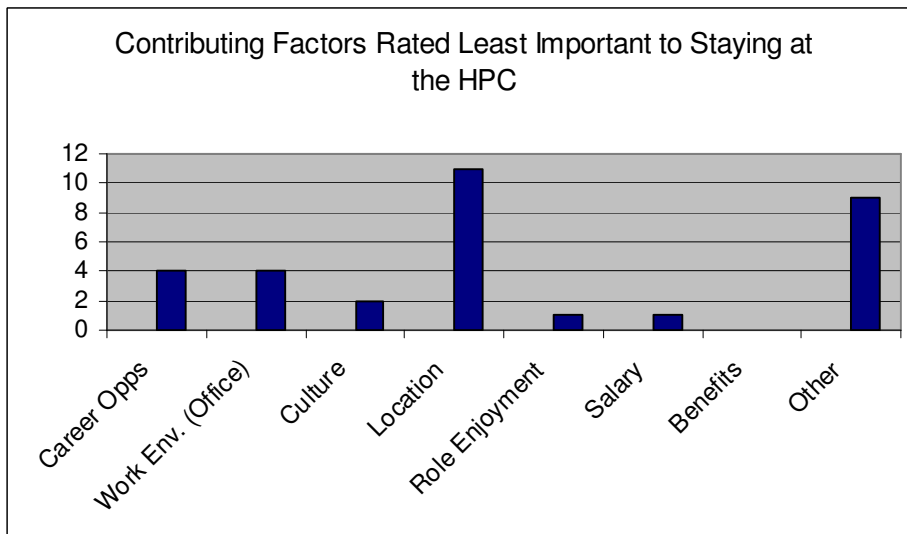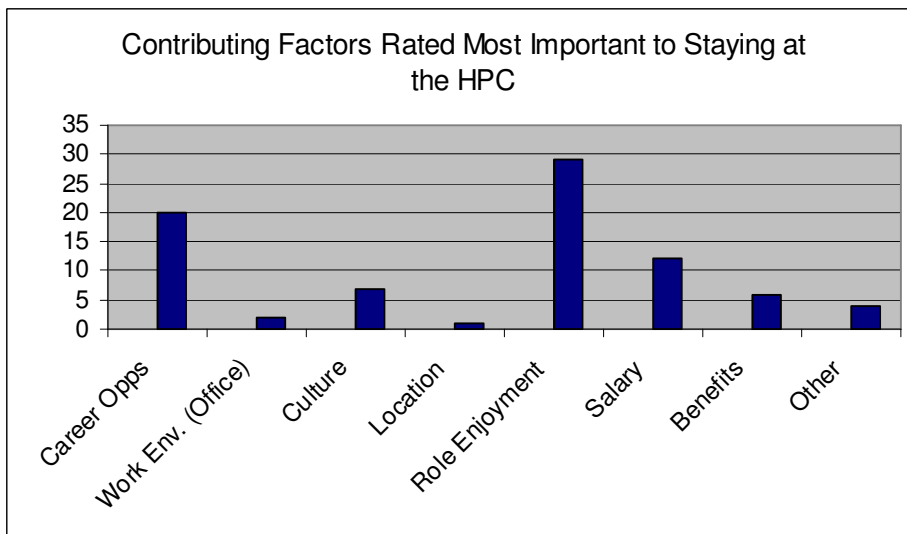
2.0   Summary
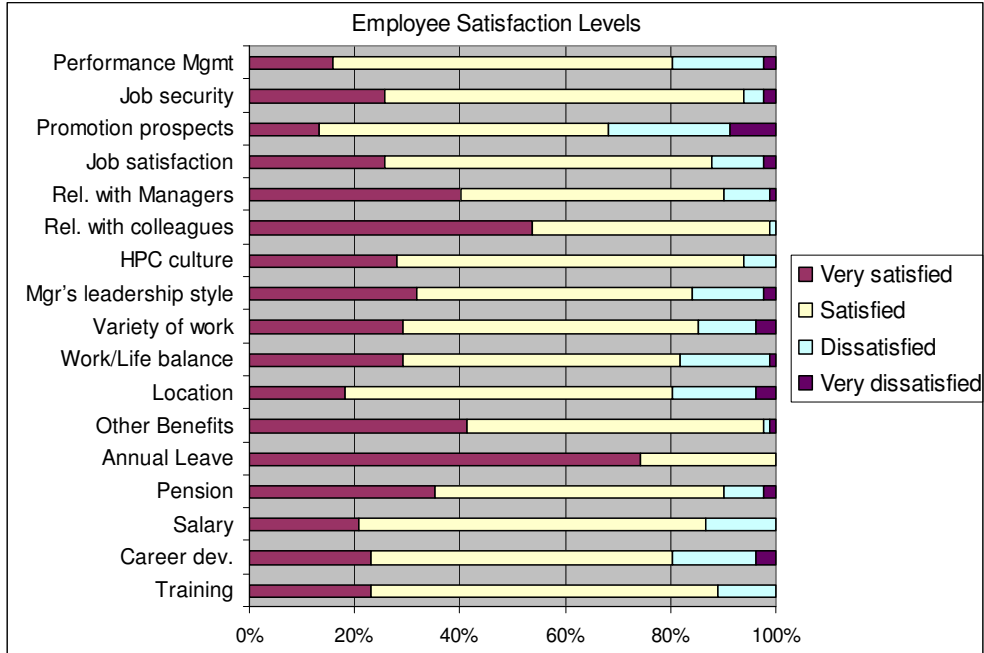
1. Which Department do you work for?

Departmental Breakdown of Total Responses Received

2. How long have you worked at the HPC?

Length of Service of Respondents

Length of Service	Respondents
< 1 year	35
1-2 yrs	17
2-3 yrs	16
3-5 yrs	10
5-7 yrs	9
> 7 yrs	9

3. Please rank in order of importance, 1 being most and 7 being least important, the contributing factors as to why you have stayed at the HPC.

Contributing Factors Rated Most Important to Staying at the HPC

Factor	Value
Career Opps	20
Work Env. (Office)	2
Culture	7
Location	1
Role Enjoyment	29
Salary	12
Benefits	6
Other	4

Contributing Factors Rated Least Important to Staying at the HPC

Factor	Value
Career Opps	4
Work Env. (Office)	4
Culture	2
Location	11
Role Enjoyment	1
Salary	1
Benefits	0
Other	9

4. How would you rate the following categories in your personal experience with the HPC?

Employee Satisfaction Levels

5. Please rank in order of importance, 1 being most important and 14 being least important, your opinion of the HPC's benefits.

Three Most Important Benefits

Three Least Important Benefits
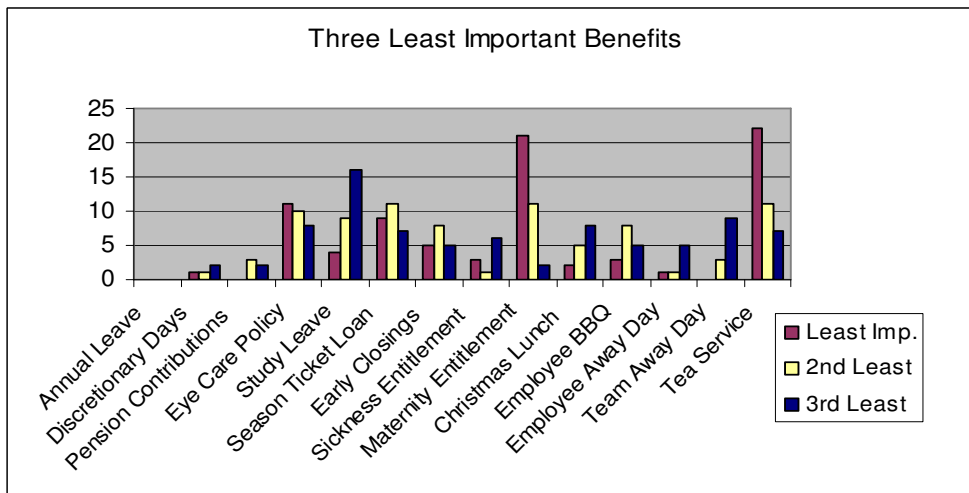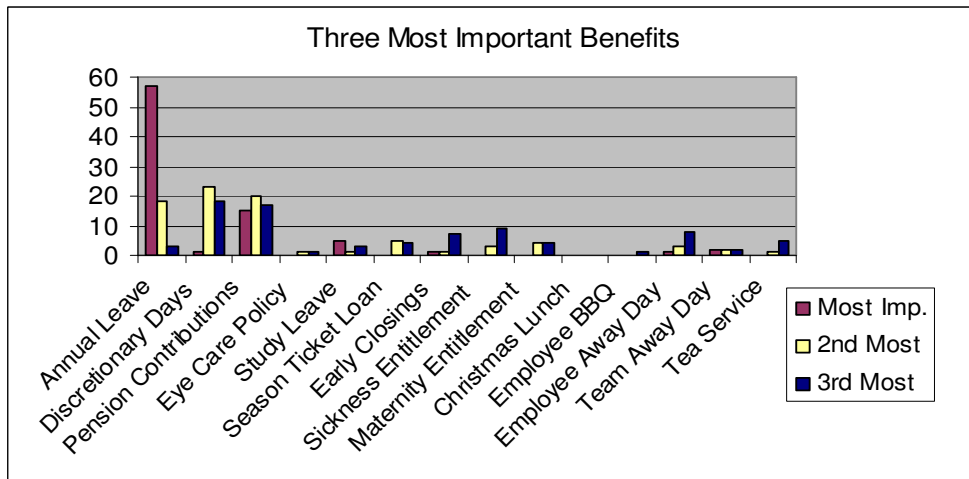
6. **What one significant change would improve your experience at the HPC?** (free-text has been grouped under key headings that were formulated as a result of the responses received) and in no particular order unless indicated by number of responses. Where more than one comment was received about a particular issue, the number of comments received has been indicated below. Please note that some people noted several improvements instead of one and these have been included).

Benefits (19 comments were received in total)
- Requests for the introduction of flexi-time (11)
- Salary Increase (3)
- Toil time taken at a time of employees own discretion
- Flexible benefits package
- Enhanced redundancy benefits (eg 4 weeks pay for each completed year of service)
- More annual leave
- Introduction of childcare vouchers
- Private healthcare

Examples of typical comments made in relation to flexi-time were "flexi-time. Ability to work contracted number of hours between for example 7am – 7pm. With opportunity to accumulate hours and take time at a later date. No change in salary, just flexible hours and time in lieu"

Office and Facilities (18 comments were received in total)
- More natural ventilation (3)
- Improved location (3)
- More open space (2)
- Better tea/coffee service and quality (4)
    1. Complimentary fresh fruit provided on tea round
    2. Orange juice provided on the tea round
    3. Cleaner cups, kitchen area
    4. customer service
- Cleaner toilets
- Less spread-out offices
- Showers
- Bigger cabinet space
- Energy efficient light bulbs
- Not working in open space planning
- Larger kitchen and extra microwave
- Lift access to Stannary St
- Monitor office space
- Ergonomic chairs
- Better performing PCs
- More meeting rooms

Examples of typical comments made were "more natural ventilation and less reliance on air-conditioning" and "a shower or somewhere to get changed other than the toilet after I cycle or walk to work". One comment stated that "we now need to keep on top of the office space requirements as the organisation grows and plan accordingly, so don't repeat the lack of rooms situation experienced in early 2008".

Career Development (12 comments were received in total)
- Job promotions (5)
- Acknowledgement of efforts and extra hours (3)
- Increased investment in personal development (2)
- Clearer policy on salary structure, promotions and recruitment
- More guidance from managers regarding their expectations

Communication (12 comments were received in total)
- Better communication to team from manager (5)
- More team working across departments (5)
- More frequent informal employee social events
- Employee events should be voluntary

Examples of typical comments made were "better communication and management of my tasks (through better, more robust systems), management more actively encouraging team interaction…."

Consistency and Fairness (4 comments were received in total)
- More professionalism from a handful of EMT and Council members (setting an example of professionalism)
- Greater transparency and accountability
- More consistency (2)
- Continuing current diverse recruitment rather than 'bright young things'.

HPC Culture (5 comments received)
- All EMT roles should be given equal significance by Chief Executive (eg more weight currently given to Director of Operations)
- Need to improve work/life balance (2)
- Less importance placed on the HPC 'family'; it is a workplace, "less importance should be placed on the 'family' culture existing at the HPC. As the organisation has grown there is less place for the idea. Some people do not wish to join a family but like the idea of 'coming and leaving' work. I also think a family culture can mean that some individuals can take matters more personally when they are, in reality, straight forward business decisions".
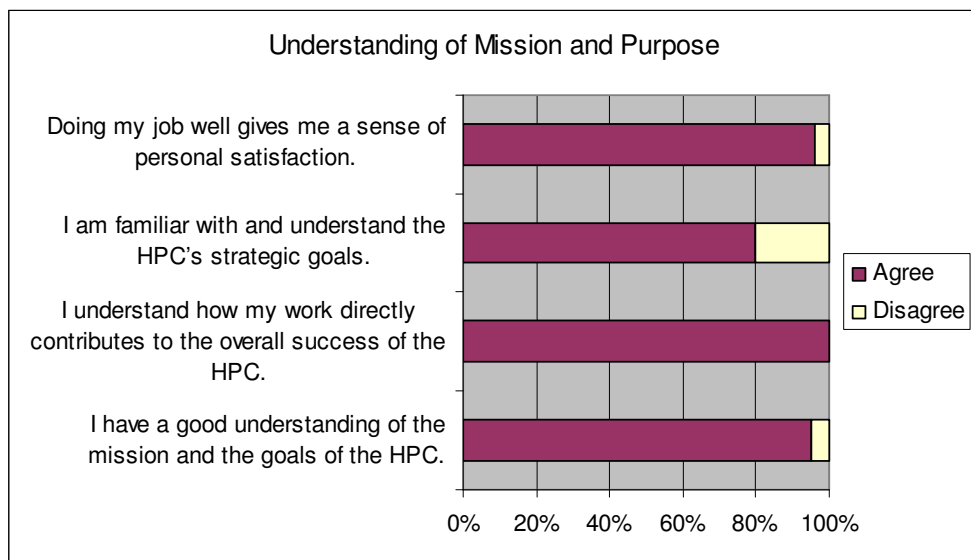- More role models to aspire to

Other
- Give agency employees realistic expectations of booking length
- Less dictation to managers and more freedom to improve service

- If disgruntled employees would leave the HPC. "if people that clearly don't want to be here and don't appreciate what HPC offers would leave".
- To not have to take appointments in own time
- Less managerial anxiety, " take them off performance pay it strangles everyone's creativity"
- Comments were made by people stating that they could not think of any changes to improve their experience (2)
- Comments alluded to the office space issues prior to the refurbishments however acknowledged that this has improved recently.

NB: Please note that manager's are not on a performance pay system.

7. Mission and Purpose

Understanding of Mission and Purpose

8. Communication

Communication

9. Training Opportunities

Training Opportunities

My work is challenging and rewarding.

My manager encourages and supports my development.

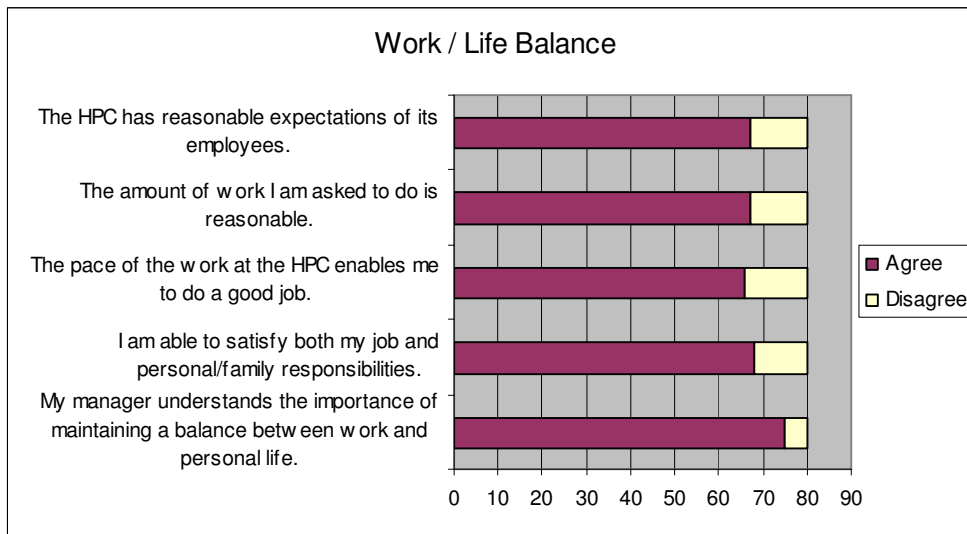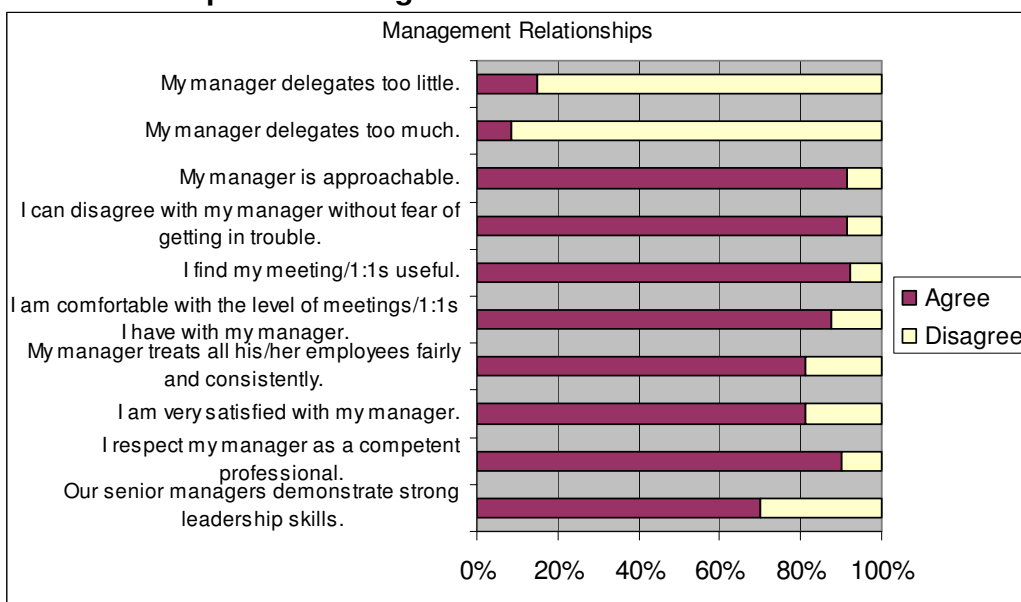I receive the training I need to do my job well.

I have adequate opportunities for professional growth at the HPC.

Legend: Agree, Disagree

Axis: 0, 20, 40, 60, 80, 100

10. Work/Life Balance

Work / Life Balance

The HPC has reasonable expectations of its employees.

The amount of work I am asked to do is reasonable.

The pace of the work at the HPC enables me to do a good job.

I am able to satisfy both my job and personal/family responsibilities.

My manager understands the importance of maintaining a balance between work and personal life.

Legend: Agree, Disagree

Axis: 0, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 80, 90

11. Relationships with Managers

Management Relationships

My manager delegates too little.

My manager delegates too much.

My manager is approachable.

I can disagree with my manager without fear of getting in trouble.

I find my meeting/1:1s useful.

I am comfortable with the level of meetings/1:1s I have with my manager.

My manager treats all his/her employees fairly and consistently.

I am very satisfied with my manager.

I respect my manager as a competent professional.

Our senior managers demonstrate strong leadership skills.

Legend: Agree, Disagree

Axis: 0%, 20%, 40%, 60%, 80%, 100%

12. Teamwork and Employee Relationships

Teamwork

The HPC values the contribution I make.

The HPC respects its employees.

I have good relations with members outside of my department.

I have good relations with members of my department.

There is a strong feeling of teamwork and cooperation at the HPC.

Teamwork is encouraged and practiced at the HPC.

Legend: ■ Agree □ Disagree

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

13. HPC Culture

HPC Culture

My ideas and opinions count at work.

People with different ideas are valued in this organisation.

We work to attract, develop, and retain people with diverse backgrounds.

I am comfortable sharing my opinions at work.

Legend: ■ Agree □ Disagree

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

14. Are there any further comments? (free-text has been grouped under key headings which were formulated as a result of the types of responses received, and in no particular order unless indicated by number of responses)

Benefits (4 comments were received in total)
- Pension: "the pension scheme should not have been reduced unilaterally by the Finance and Resources Committee without more notice and without consultation of employees".
- Holiday: "With statutory annual leave increasing, the HPC may need to look at increasing the amount in order to retain generosity"
- Flexi-time: Request for the introduction of flexi-time
- A review of benefits as we grow such as schemes where you can 'buy' and 'swap' benefits such as gym membership or health cover

Career Development (7 comments were received in this area)
- Pay: "it is not clear what people have to do to get a pay rise"
- Workloads "workloads are not particularly well managed and more personalised training to the job would allow more control over this"
- Career expansion (2) "joining the HPC from a career perspective was the best choice I have made with so much expansion coming up I haven't worked anywhere else which has offered as much opportunity to employees as the HPC" and another comment referenced the HPC as being a very good place for personal development,
- Career development would be encouraged more if there was information within departments as to suitable training courses
- Temporary contract employees are let go too easily regardless of ability.

Culture (8 comments were received in total)
- EMT: "certain members of the EMT can be self-protecting which makes it difficult to engage in developing the organisation"
- HPC has a fantastic work culture though kitchen expansion would help
- A balance needs to be struck between developing processes/procedures and developing relationships
- HPC is well balanced- relaxed but professional
- Some employees at HPC are not really part of teams
- Some employees have a high workload which is not acknowledged by senior management
- Employees are easy to approach regardless of their position and I have not found this so at other companies.
- A good company to work for in general, with an occasional lack of professionalism

Other (5 comments were received about the general survey)
- This survey is a very good idea and it would be good to do it again
- HR are great
- It would have been helpful to have more comment boxes to explain reasons behind responses
- Some questions were difficult to answer when your manager is outside of your own department
- Would have been good to have more middle ground in answers rather than 'yes' or 'no'

3.0 Conclusion

3.1 Themes
The survey was very positive overall and showed that the vast majority of employees were 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with an extensive range of working conditions (see question 4). Annual leave and pension benefits have historically been the most generous benefits at the HPC and whilst they were still rated as the most highly valued benefits, annual leave was significantly above pension.

Eleven respondents said that flexi-time would greatly improve their experience at the HPC and suggestions were made regarding other benefits such as childcare vouchers, enhanced redundancy, gym membership, private healthcare and flexible benefits packages.

Other areas which received multiple comments from respondents were office environment, communication and career development. Comments indicated that a small proportion of employees felt that the offices were too spread out and lacking in natural ventilation.

In terms of communication, comments were received that communication from managers to teams could be greater (five employees) as well as more inter-departmental working (five employees). Although the majority of employees agree that information is openly shared and that senior management communicates well with the rest of the organisation, a not insignificant 36 per cent of employees disagreed (question 8).

Whilst five employees commented that they would like to see more opportunities for promotions, 74 per cent of respondents felt that there were adequate opportunities for professional growth and 81 per cent said they received enough training to do their job well. Career opportunities was listed as the second contributing factor to staying at the HPC, behind enjoyment of role. Relationships, both with managers and employees, were rated very positively by almost all employees (questions 11 and 12) and the HPC culture and work/life balance were also positive (questions 10 and 13).

3.2   Considerations

With respect to **benefits**, it will be a consideration for human resources moving forward as to whether the benefits package may need to be reviewed. As statutory annual leave entitlements increase, the annual leave offered by the HPC will become less out of the ordinary and following the reduction to the employer's pension contribution in 2007 the pension benefit is no longer as attractive as in the past.

In relation to **benefits outcomes,** part of the human resources work-plan for 2007 is to investigate childcare vouchers and this recently been discussed with the EMT who agreed that a proposal supporting the introduction of childcare vouchers should be taken to the Finance and Resources Committee in their next meeting. The employee interest in flexi-time has been carefully evaluated by the EMT as there are a number of department-specific considerations as to how this would operate in terms of shift-work and work away from the office. The difficulties of implementing this in a number of department that require set hours to be worked due to business need and/or customer need (Registrations, Human Resources, Finance, IT, Secretariat and to an extent Fitness to Practise) are significant. It has therefore been decided that this is not a feasible option to implement at the current time for the HPC.

With regard to the **office environment**, the HPC has recently been through a significant period of change with the disruption caused by the building works and the settling period once employees moved to their new offices. As we have grown,

office space has been a concern for everyone and meeting room availability has now increased with the completion of the extension.

Outcomes for office environment concerns raised are that as a number comments in relation to the tea service suggest an overview of this area may be beneficial. A separate survey is going to be conducted regarding catering services. The kitchen area has been developed so that more seating room is available for employees and it has been agreed to introduce small improvements such as hot water tanks to allow more employees to use the kitchen simultaneously and quickly. A thorough desk assessment audit by an independent company has been conducted this year with follow up actions already being undertaken (including new equipment and occupational health referrals where this was suggested).

Communication has been identified in exit interview reports as being an area which could be improved upon and efforts to this end are already being made. There are currently frequent all-employee meetings, an additional feedback mechanism through the middle management group and the employee intranet site is being developed to improve interaction between departments. Ad-hoc initiatives have also been very successful, such as the human resources' new starter wall in the HPC corridor which introduced photographs of new starters as they arrived and received very positive comments from employees.

Finding new ways of communicating and building on existing avenues is a goal for the communications department in terms of **outcomes for communication** who have already identified that they will be looking at internal communications in 2009/2010. Where key trends concerning communication have been identified in particular departments these will be addressed by those departments (see following pages in the report).

Whilst career development was rated highly overall, there were comments received about **job promotions** and this is also something that receives comment in exit interview reports. Since the start of 2007 there have been four departmental re-organisations, within the Registration, Education, Fitness to Practise and Finance departments. These changes have led to a divergence from the previous 'flat' structure and have provided more avenues for progression within those departments.

In relation to **outcomes about job promotions** as the HPC continues to grow and to take on more professions and through natural turnover now that there are more layers in the structure, it is anticipated that opportunities for employee progression will continue to grow as well however it may not be at the previous high level that was created by four departmental reorganisations which occurred in a very short space of time.

Some general comments were made about **culture and professionalism** as well as **fairness and consistency.** The HPC has found that its ongoing programme of diversity training has been rated very highly by all employees and this will be continued. An NAO Audit has recently been conducted which explores this further and will be discussed with employees separately.

3.3 Departmental Trends

An analysis has also been undertaken by department to show whether any findings are specific to particular departments. Any results showing particular departmental themes have been forwarded to the relevant managers to be discussed at their team meetings. Overall, it was agreed that as a result of particular themes, certain departments would endeavour to provide more feedback about EMT decisions at departmental meetings, include Directors in planning days and team meetings, seek further feedback from employees on improved communication mechanisms within teams, look at ways to improve team working, and develop some training opportunities where required.