



## Executive Advisory Body

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	29 September 2020
<b>Subject</b>	Annual People Survey
<b>Agenda No.</b>	6
<b>Paper No.</b>	18.5
<b>Prepared By</b>	[Redacted]
<b>Purpose</b>	Note

### 1. Background

- 1.1. On 1 October, we will launch our annual People Survey. The purpose of this paper is to inform the Executive Advisory Body and to make it aware of some of the improvement action that we have taken in response to last year's survey.

### 2. Key points

- 2.1. Although our engagement score of 82% is the highest of all 106 Government departments and agencies that took part across the UK, we are keen to build on our success. As well as working at a local level within teams, we have explored what action we can take across the organisation; always focusing on driving improvement.
- 2.2. Our approach has had to adapt to our new ways of working, with an increasing number of pulse surveys to monitor the impact on our colleagues' wellbeing. This is likely to continue in the year ahead.
- 2.3. We will deliver another 'deep dive' session to the Executive Advisory Body once this year's results are available. However, we would be grateful for any feedback on our approach before then.

### 3. Conclusions

- 3.1. Members are invited to note the progress that has been made.



#### 4. GOVERNANCE CHECKLIST

Please ensure that you detail which Corporate Plan Strategic Objective the paper contributes to. These strategic considerations should be used to assist you with the content of your paper.

Strategic Objective	Contribution
<p><b>Dignity, fairness and respect</b></p> <p>Delivering a service with dignity, fairness and respect at its core.</p>	<p>Our annual People Survey is arguably our best barometer of how our colleagues feel. Whilst dignity, fairness and respect rightly influence all our interactions with our clients, they should also be at the heart of how we treat one another. The People Survey results can help us measure how well we are doing that.</p>
<p><b>Equality and tackling poverty</b></p> <p>Promoting equality and tackling poverty.</p>	<p>The People Survey results are broken down into very detailed demographic data, covering both the protected characteristics and other factors such as length of service and location. This will allow us to delve into the detail to identify if any specific group is having a more negative experience across any of the thematic areas.</p>
<p><b>Efficiency and alignment</b></p> <p>Ensuring efficiency and aligning our activities with wider public sector for the benefit of the people we serve.</p>	<p>Like all public bodies, we will publish our high level results to ensure transparency and allow our clients and others to see information that may be of interest to them.</p>
<p><b>Economy, society and environment</b></p> <p>Contributing to our economy, society and protection of our environment.</p>	<p>Not Applicable</p>

State here how the paper considers these areas and any consultation undertaken in the agency. Only complete the section(s) relevant to your paper.

Strategic consideration	Impact
Environment	Not Applicable
Governance	The Executive Advisory Body will have the opportunity to review the results in full and discuss these with relevant officials early in the new year.



Strategic consideration	Impact
Data	Although this paper does not cover it directly, data protection considerations are central to the smooth running of our People Survey and it is critical that individual's remain confident that they cannot be identified.
Finance	The paper does not cover this area, but we will be re-charged by Cabinet Office for this survey, as happens every year.
Staff	This paper is largely focussed on how the People Survey results can help us to improve the overall staff experience and, in turn, improve our services for clients. Over 200 members of staff have been directly involved in sessions led by the culture team to discuss their local results. Others should have been involved in discussions with their own line managers and there have been numerous all-staff communications throughout the year. There is a potential impact on staff morale if our results deteriorate this year.
Equalities	The People Survey results are broken down into very detailed demographic data, covering both the protected characteristics and other factors such as length of service and location. This will allow us to delve into the detail to identify if any specific group is having a more negative experience across any of the thematic areas.
Estates	Our results can be broken down by location, helping us to identify specific issues with particular buildings.
Communications and Presentation	As the organisation with the highest overall engagement score, there may well be media attention, especially if our results deteriorate. We are working with communications colleagues to prepare for various different scenarios.

Impact Assessment
<div data-bbox="264 1458 1505 1525" style="background-color: #0070C0; color: white; padding: 10px; display: inline-block;"><b>Not Applicable</b></div>



## People Survey Update

### Timeline

Date	Activity
August – September	On-going programme of communications with colleagues to raise awareness of the People Survey and encourage participation, aimed especially at new joiners
1 October (00:01)	People Survey opens
30 October (23:59)	People Survey closes
25 November (PM)	Survey Managers have access to the ‘Advanced’ dashboard of results
2 December	‘Standard’ and ‘Intermediate’ dashboards become available
January 2021	Deep dive session with Executive Advisory Body to discuss results and responses

### Background

In January, we held a deep dive session with the Executive Advisory Body to discuss our first full year People Survey results. The headline message from that discussion was that our results overall were excellent. Our response rate of 85% was higher than the Scottish Government and Civil Service overall. Our engagement score of 82% is the highest of all 106 Government department and agencies who took part across the UK. However, we have been keen to both understand and build on our success. This paper outlines the work we have done and our plans for the year ahead.

### Our approach

Our approach has been twofold; bringing together representatives from across the organisation to take a strategic, corporate view of areas where we can drive improvement; whilst simultaneously working with teams locally to help them understand their results and improve engagement within their teams.

In relation to the former, we set up the People Survey Strategic Group. This is made up of representatives from across all business areas of the organisation. We were very keen that the group was representative of the wider organisation, not just by protected characteristics, but also by factors such as geographical location and length of service. The Group have focussed on bullying, discrimination and harassment. For each of these issues, our results were similar to the overall Scottish Government and Civil Service averages, but we are keen to take a zero tolerance approach. It was initially hoped that we could align with the work that the Scottish Government is doing in this area. However, we are unable to join their pilot, due to the current crisis, so we are developing our own approach. This will include

awareness sessions for colleagues and establishing a network of anti-bullying ambassadors. Our Executive Team have clearly and publicly re-iterated our zero tolerance approach on all-colleague calls. This Strategic Group also co-ordinated our response to a programme of on-going research, conducted by Ipsos Mori, looking at our on-boarding and induction process. A series of improvements to our processes have been made on the back of the findings.

Meanwhile we have also run sessions with teams from across the organisation to help them interpret and understand the detailed results from their business area. These sessions have been attended by around 200 colleagues and have focussed as much on the things that they need to continue to do well as on areas that they need to address.

## The impact of Covid-19

Prior to this year, we have avoided conducting pulse surveys between the annual People Surveys, due to the risk of survey fatigue. However, we have been keen to understand what impact the new ways of working are having on our colleagues. We therefore conducted wellbeing surveys during April and July. Whilst both of these surveys provided reassurance that colleagues were on the whole managing well, they did prompt some improvement activity. This included using some of the feedback to shape the training sessions we run for new managers and our sessions on personal resilience and wellbeing. Feedback suggested we should do more to help on-board the hundreds of new colleagues who joined the organisation during the lockdown, so we introduced the Induction Buddy Scheme. This initiative matches experienced colleagues to those who have recently joined to provide a safe space to ask any questions they have and help them feel part of the wider organisation. Early feedback suggests that the scheme is working really well in helping new colleagues to settle in and some of the colleagues who joined recently have volunteered to become buddies themselves.

## Communicating with our colleagues

At the start of the year we had an outline plan for a steady ‘drumbeat’ of internal communications around the People Survey. The purpose of this was to move away from the negative experience many colleagues have had in previous organisations, where communications relating to the annual People Survey ramp up significantly in the weeks leading up to its launch and the focus often feels like it is on driving up the response rate, rather than achieving lasting improvements. Our communications plan has had to adapt to the new ways of working, but our aim is still largely the same: to raise awareness of the People Survey for those who are new to it; and to re-iterate its purpose as a tool for driving improvement.

## Our approach for the year ahead

As we continue to adapt to our new ways of working, it is likely that we will continue to survey our colleagues on an on-going basis. To some extent, this year’s People Survey may feel a bit like one of the checkpoints in that on-going process and less like an annual event. However, the People Survey is more detailed than any of the



pulse surveys that we do, so we plan to analyse and respond to it in full. We will hold a deep dive session with the Executive Advisory Body when the results are available in early January; we will offer support to teams across the organisation to help them respond to their local results; and we will again look to use this rich intelligence source to shape our strategic approach and our response to the current situation.

## Conclusion

The Executive Advisory Body are invited to note the progress that has been made in responding to last year's People Survey and how this has had to adapt due to the on-going situation. At our deep dive session in January, we would welcome any feedback on how we can improve on this and how members would like to be kept informed.