



## Executive Advisory Body

Date of Meeting	Tuesday 30 January 2024
Subject	Civil Service People Survey results
Agenda No.	41
Paper No.	Below the Line
Prepared By	Organisational Development Team
Purpose	Note

### 1. Background

- 1.1. Each year we take part in the Cabinet Office run People Survey. As well as overall engagement, the survey tracks staff attitudes towards topics such as leadership, change, pay and workload. Overall, 3,020 of our colleagues completed the survey this year, an excellent response rate of 74%.

### 2. Key points

- 2.1. The attached PDF file outlines our high-level organisational results. Our scores for engagement and most of our key themes have deteriorated since last year, albeit from an incredibly high baseline. One exception is the theme of Pay & Benefits, where our scores have improved year-on-year.
- 2.2. For most of these themes, despite the fall, we continue to score more favourably than most parts of the Civil Service. However, we are determined to not rest on our laurels and to use the survey results to drive improvements in key areas, particularly around Learning & Development and Leadership & Managing Change.
- 2.3. We will be taking a more interventionist approach than in previous years, with action plans being prepared to drive improvements in key themes.

### 3. Conclusions

- 3.1. We are keen to hear your initial reflections. We welcome any immediate feedback you have and look forward to discussing this with you in more detail in early April. For that meeting we can focus our content on areas that are of particular interest to members. We will also update you on the progress we have made. Prior to then, we would appreciate an opportunity to speak to any of the non-executive members who have a strong interest in this area.



## 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
Helping to deliver a social security system with dignity, fairness and respect.	These People Survey results give us a robust insight into the views of our colleagues in a number of critical areas.
Supporting people in Scotland to access devolved benefits that they are entitled to.	The anonymity of the survey allows colleagues to flag potentially barriers to accessing benefits for clients.
Running our service in a responsible way.	Colleagues' insights provide valuable feedback for how we can better deliver our service.

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	Key governance groups, such as Executive Team and People & Places Forum have been briefed on the results.
Data	Data protection colleagues are fully briefed on the People Survey results and have previously advised on how they are shared.
Finance	Not Applicable
Staff	Colleagues have been given access to the results, via the Cabinet Office database and encouraged via internal communications to discuss them in their teams.
Equalities	The Diversity and Inclusion Team have been briefed on these results and have agreed to support the analysis by protected characteristics. We have also given this early consideration in our initial analysis and will be speaking to the Internal Equalities Network about any disparities of experience.
Estates	The survey results potentially offer insights in this area that we will share with relevant colleagues as appropriate.
Communications and Presentation	Our Strategic Communications Team have been heavily involved in discussions around how we share these results with colleagues

**An Impact Assessment** must be carried out during the development of all new Agency policies and services and when making significant changes to policies and services. The Corporate Assurance team should be involved from an early stage to provide guidance and advice relating to completing impact assessments.

[Impact Assessment Saltire Page](#)



General Impact Assessment Queries: [Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot)

Equality Impact Assessment Queries: [Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot](mailto:Corporateassuranceteam@socialsecurity.gov.scot)

**Please complete the below table.**

Type of Impact Assessment	Required (Y/N)	If No - briefly state reason e.g. Not relevant/Not eligible – agreed with Deputy Director	If yes – briefly state progress to date, highlight any significant issues.
<a href="#">Child Rights and Wellbeing Impact Assessment (CRWIA)</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Data Protection Impact Assessment</a>	N	This is an annual survey and colleagues have advised previously on how the results are stored and disseminated.	
<a href="#">Equality Impact Assessment (EQIA)</a>	N	The survey is run by Cabinet Office, who have considered all appropriate equalities considerations.	
<a href="#">Fairer Scotland Duty assessment</a>	N	Not relevant (although we will consider results by socio-economic background)	
<a href="#">Future proofing legislation</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Human rights in policy making</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Islands Communities Impact Assessment (ICIA)</a>	N	Not relevant	
<a href="#">Strategic Environment Assessment (SEA)</a>	N	Not relevant	

## **2023 People Survey results – summary for Executive Advisory Body**

### **Background**

Each year, all Civil Servants across the UK are invited to complete an engagement survey run by the Cabinet Office. As well as overall engagement, the survey tracks staff attitudes towards topics such as leadership, change, pay and workload. Results are made available to each department and agency. Overall, 3,020 of our colleagues completed the survey this year, an excellent response rate of 74%.

Our results for the first five years of our existence were incredibly positive. With an engagement score in the top three across the entire UK Civil Service, we were atypical for a large operational delivery body (see appendix 1). And our results remain better than the Civil Service average for most areas. Nevertheless, there is a decline in our results in a number of key areas that we are keen to understand and address.

### **Overall summary of results**

The attached PDF file outlines our high-level organisational results. Our scores for engagement and most of our key themes have deteriorated since last year. One exception is the theme of Pay & Benefits, where our scores have improved year-on-year. For most of these themes, despite the fall, we continue to score more favourably than most parts of the Civil Service. However, we are determined to not rest on our laurels and to use the survey results to drive improvements in key areas, particularly around Learning & Development and Leadership & Managing Change.

Another area that we always focus on is bullying, harassment, and discrimination. Although our headline numbers are broadly stable in this area, we take a zero tolerance approach and see one instance as one too many. We have also noted an increase in the number of colleagues who have answered “prefer not to say” and in the reported rates for some groups with certain protected characteristics. The sensitive nature of the subject matter means that it is sometimes difficult to know exactly what or where the issues are, but they will be a key area of focus.

### **Actions we are taking**

We have already briefed all relevant governance and leadership groups of the results and shared access to the full results with colleagues. This allows all staff within the organisation to examine results for their business area and beyond. We have encouraged discussions within teams to explore where quick and simple action can be taken. More formally, we have tasked each of our six divisions with



developing their own action plan. This is the first time we have formally required action plans to be prepared and monitored.

A recent Westminster parliamentary report recommended that all departments across the UK make a more concerted effort to both respond to the People Survey results and also to publicise these to colleagues and stakeholders. This is something we were already planning to do this year, in anticipation of a more challenging set of results.

Whilst we do not want to lose any momentum around this improvement activity, we also need to simultaneously continue our analysis to better understand what the results are telling us. This will involve more detailed scrutiny of the different teams in each division and interrogating the results by different demographics, in order to highlight any discrepancies between groups. We will also explore the c.2,000 comments left by colleagues in response to the open text question of the one change they would like to see.

### **Input from Executive Advisory Body**

As with previous years we are keen to share these results with Executive Advisory Body and to hear your reflections and recommendations for action. We welcome any initial feedback you have and look forward to discussing them with you in more detail in early April. For that meeting we can focus our content on areas that are of particular interest to members. We will also update you on the progress we have made. Prior to then, we would really appreciate an opportunity to speak to any of the non executive members who have an interest or background in responding to this type of survey.

### **Conclusion and recommendations**

This year's People Survey results remain a very positive reflection of our colleagues' experience of working for Social Security Scotland. But we do recognise that our results have declined in some important areas and we are keen not to be complacent. We would welcome any feedback from members and would be keen to have follow-up conversations with any interested members prior to our more detailed discussion in early April.

## Appendix 1: Comparator bodies' results from 2022

The table below shows the overall engagement score for where comparable organisations were in 2022. Even with our Engagement Index score falling to 69% we are likely to be above most, if not all, of them again for 2023.<sup>1</sup>

Organisation	2022 Engagement Index %	Organisation size
Office of National Statistics	68	2500-5999
Valuation Office Agency	65	2500-5999
Health and Safety Executive	56	2500-5999
HMRC	59	>6000
DWP	60	>6000
DVLA	54	>6000

<sup>1</sup> We expect to find out other organisations' headline results for 2023 in February 2024.



**Appendix 2: PDF summary of our overall results (sent as a separate PDF file)**