



Stress Survey 2017

FINAL REPORT

**Views of Stirling
Council Employees**

September 2017

1 STATEMENT FROM UNISON STIRLING

Dear Colleagues

Thousands of public service jobs are being cut and each one of those is a tragedy for the person concerned. However, staff losing their jobs are not the only victims of the government's attack on vital public services. Those left behind are expected to keep those services running with fewer staff and less money.

The stress placed on remaining staff is taking its toll on their health, safety and wellbeing. UNISON is there to help members who are facing these issues. We do this in a number of ways: we offer advice and support to staff and we talk to employers about these problems and work with them to reduce the negative impact of change and cuts. We also represent individual members who have specific problems.

The law states that employers have a duty of care to ensure that workers are safe and healthy and consult with them on arrangements for health and safety matters. Moreover, employers must talk to union safety reps about things that may affect workers' health and safety - either as a group of workers or on an individual basis. UNISON's safety reps are all trained and do a fantastic job of keeping our workplaces safe.

This stress survey has been undertaken by the UNISON Stirling branch at the request of our members. They have communicated clearly that the strain of cuts and the continuous state of flux within Stirling Council has impacted significantly on their health and wellbeing.

Yours Sincerely



Lorraine Thomson
Unison Stirling
Branch Secretary

2 REPORT SUMMARY

This report details the views of Stirling Council employees regarding stress at work. Respondents were given access to an electronic survey via the Unison Stirling website over the 6-month period from November 2016 until April 2017. Unison members who updated their personal details were entered into a prize draw of a Morning Retreat for two was kindly donated by Stirling Highland Hotel. The winner of the prize wished to remain anonymous.

The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provide a useful definition of stress as;

'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.'

Prior to completing the survey respondents were advised that;

'All work has its pressures and people vary in their capacity to cope with different types of pressure. Some levels of pressure, even when high, can be motivating and challenging. Pressures that can be responded to effectively are likely to lead to job satisfaction. However, pressures at a level where an individual cannot cope, or even too little pressure or challenge, are likely to result in stress.'

The aim of the survey was fourfold:

- to measure employee awareness of policies such as the mental health policy or attendance and support policy;
- to ascertain the symptoms of stress suffered by employees;
- to ascertain the causes of stress; and
- to elicit suggestions from employees on what Stirling Council could do to reduce stress in the workplace.

RESULTS

Respondent profile

Of the 264 responses to the survey, 203 (77%) were from the Children, Communities & Enterprise directorate and 61 (23%) from the Localities & Infrastructure directorate. Three-quarters of respondents were female (74%) and almost half (46%) were in the 50+ age group. The vast majority of respondents were Unison members (92%) whilst 15 respondents stated they were not a member of a trade union. (A more detailed respondent profile is appended)

Stress at work

Almost 4 out of 5 respondents (78%) stated that they were caused undue stress by their work. Of those, 30 respondents (12%) had taken sick leave in the previous 12 months due to work related stress.

SYMPTOMS of stress

The symptoms of stress suffered most frequently by at least a quarter of respondents were:

- Continual tiredness (45%)
- Sleeplessness (41%)
- Loss of concentration (34%)
- Headaches (27%)
- Feeling depressed (25%)

CAUSES of stress

The causes of stress suffered frequently by at least a third of respondent were:

- Lack of consultation over changes (61%)
- Restructuring (57%)
- Lack of communication between staff and management (53%)
- Uncertainty about the future (49%)
- Insufficient time to do job (46%)
- Introduction of new management techniques (46%)
- Too much work (44%)
- Lack of control over work (38%)
- Lack of job security (37%)
- Unremitting pressure to perform well (37%)
- Unrealistic targets (36%)
- Failure to recognise achievements (36%)
- Skills no being fully utilised (35%)
- Pace of work dictated by others (35%)
- Overcrowding or cramped work areas (35%)
- Deadlines which are regularly too tight (33%)

Awareness of policies and support mechanisms

When asked of their awareness of specific policies fewer than 4 in 10 were aware of the Council's Mental Health Policy (37%) and around a third (32%) were aware of the Mental Health Employee Guide. In contrast the vast majority of employees (81%) were aware of the Supporting Attendance Policy. The principles of the attendance and support policy were included with the survey prior to answering questions about the policy.

40 respondents had used the Council's attendance and support service in relation to time off work due to work related stress. Almost half (18 respondents) didn't find the service useful whilst 10 respondents found the service slightly useful and a further 8 thought it was moderately useful. Only 4 of the 40 respondents felt the service was very useful.



Three-quarters of the 38 respondents were either fairly dissatisfied (12) or very dissatisfied (16) with the support they received on returning to work. Only two respondents indicated a degree of satisfaction.

Three main causes of workplace stress

Respondents were given the opportunity to state using their own words the three main causes of workplace stress. The top 6 categorised answers were:

1. Workload/ deadlines/ resources
2. Management/ Leadership issues
3. Lack of communications/ information
4. Change/ restructuring
5. Poor working environment
6. Lack of support/ respect/ appreciation

Three things to reduce workplace stress

Respondents were also given the opportunity to state in their own words ways they thought workplace stress levels could be reduced. The top 6 categorised answers were:

1. Better Management/ Supervision
2. Better Communications
3. Listen to/ engage with staff
4. More staff
5. Improved working environment
6. Value/ recognise staff



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3 INTRODUCTION

3.1 The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) provide a useful definition of stress as;

'The adverse reaction people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them.'

3.2 Prior to completing the survey respondents were advised that;

All work has its pressures and people vary in their capacity to cope with different types of pressure. Some levels of pressure, even when high, can be motivating and challenging. Pressures that can be responded to effectively are likely to lead to job satisfaction. However, pressures at a level where an individual cannot cope, or even too little pressure or challenge, are likely to result in stress.

3.3 Stirling Council has a range of policies including a Mental Health Policy and Attendance and Support Policy. The Council also facilitates stress at work risk assessments and recently promoted a Steps for Stress Guide and Coping with Change Guide.

3.4 Following concerns from members, Stirling Unison decided to undertake an electronic survey of members to ascertain their awareness and effectiveness of relevant Council policies as well as explore the symptoms and causes of workplace stress. The survey also encouraged respondents to make suggestion on how Stirling Council could reduce workplace stress for employees. Respondents were given access to an electronic survey via the Unison Stirling website over the 6-month period from November 2016 until April 2017.

3.5 Of the 264 responses to the survey, 203 (77%) were from Children, Communities & Enterprise Service (CC&I) and 61 (23%) from the Localities & Infrastructure Service (L&I). Within CC&I most respondents came from Communities and People (83), Schools and Learning (51), and Children and Families (41). Within L&I most responses came from Environment and Place (28) followed by Infrastructure (26).

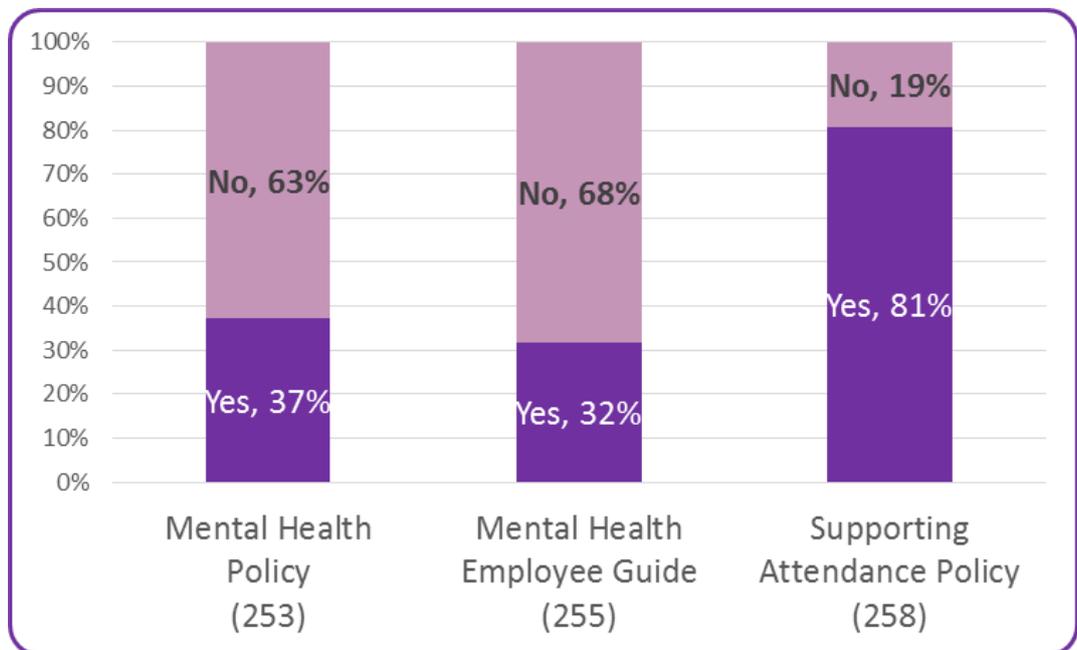
3.6 A responded profile is appended.

4 STRESS AT WORK AND AWARENESS OF POLICIES

Awareness of Policies

- 4.1 The first questions of the survey asked employees about their awareness of the Council's Mental Health Policy, Mental Health Employee Guide and Supporting Attendance Policy.
- 4.2 Figure 1 shows that fewer than 4 in 10 employees (37%) were aware of the Council's Mental Health Policy with a corresponding 32% aware of the Mental Health Employee Guide. In contrast, the vast majority of respondents (81%) were aware of the Supporting Attendance Policy.

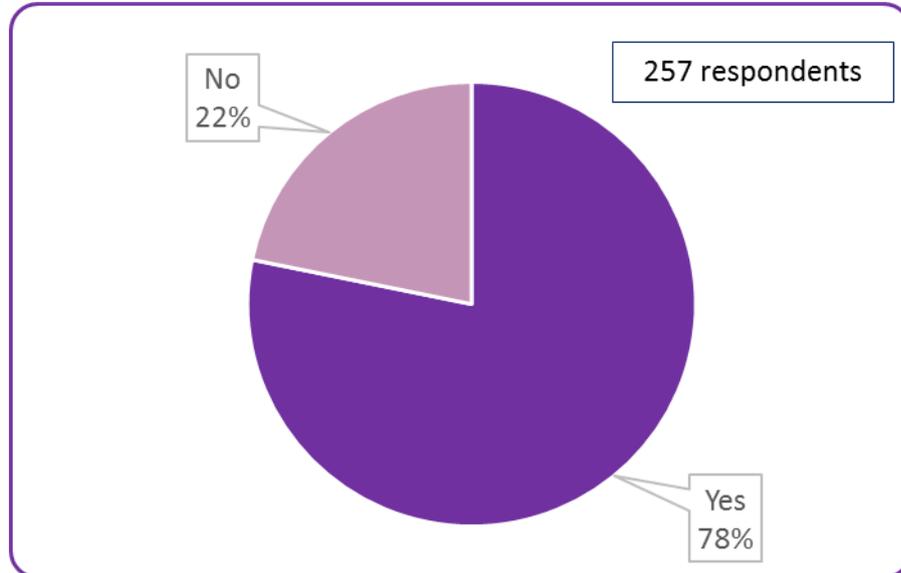
Figure 1 – Employee awareness of policies/ guide



Experience of stress and support mechanisms

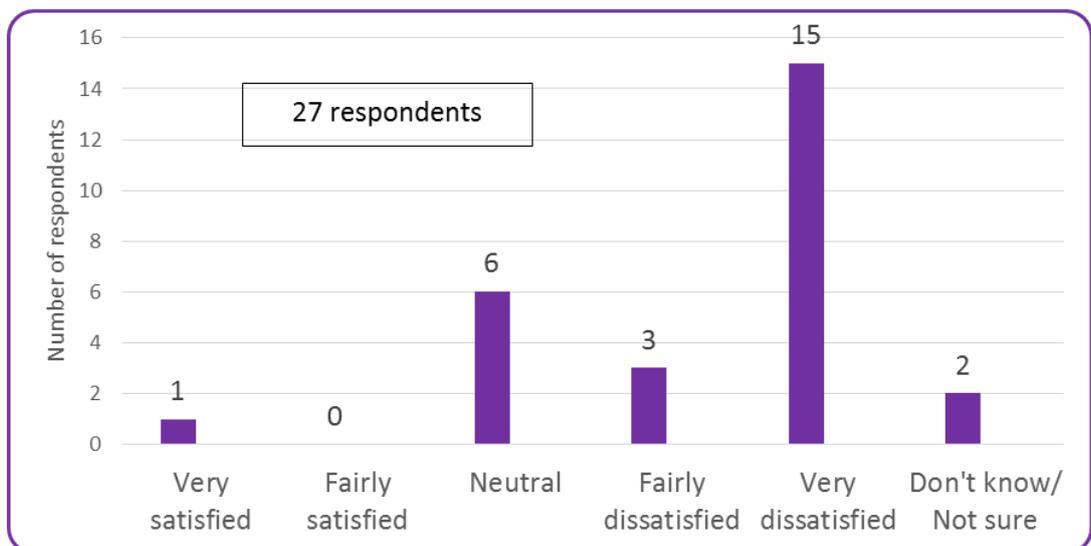
- 4.3 Respondents were then asked if they felt they were caused undue stress by their work. As shown in Figure 2, almost 4 out of 5 respondents stated that they had indeed suffered stress.

Figure 2 – Do you feel you are caused undue stress by your work?



- 4.4 Of those who had suffered work related stress, 30 respondents (12%) had taken sick leave in the previous 12 months. A similar number (27) stated that they had a stress at work risk assessment undertaken over the same period. When asked if reasonable adjustments/ recommendations were identified in the risk assessment fewer than half of respondents (12) stated that they had. Respondents were also asked about their levels of satisfaction with supports put in place as a result of their risk assessment. Figure 3 shows there were high levels of dissatisfaction albeit from a low base of respondents.

Figure 3 – Satisfaction with supports as a result of risk assessment

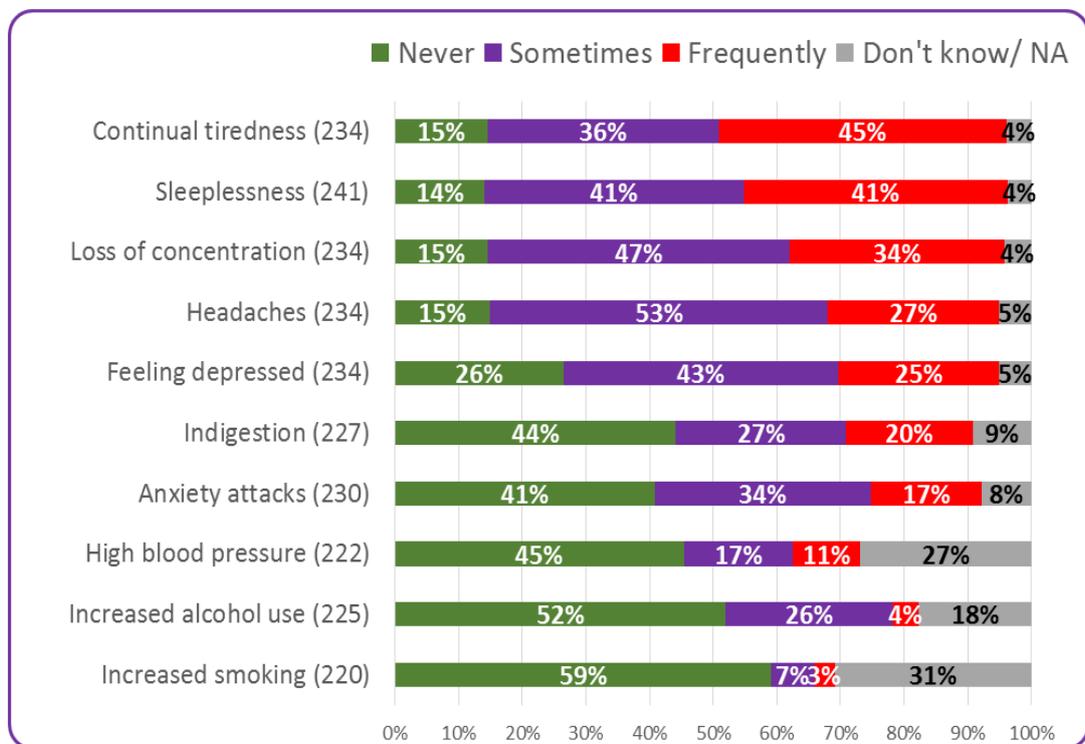


- 4.5 39 respondents had used the Council's Attendance and Support Policy in relation to time off work due to work related stress. When asked how useful they felt the attendance and support service was only 4 respondents stated it was very useful whilst a further 8 respondents felt it was moderately useful. The majority of the 40 respondents felt the attendance and support service was either only slightly useful (10) or not at all useful (18).
- 4.6 Satisfaction with levels of support given on return to work were very low with only 2 respondents either satisfied or very satisfied. In contrast the majority of the 38 respondents stated they were either fairly dissatisfied (12) or very dissatisfied (16)

5 SYMPTOMS OF STRESS

- 5.1 Respondents were given a list of symptoms of stress and asked how often if at all, they had suffered any. A list of symptoms was provided to choose from.
- 5.2 Figure 4 illustrates that substantial numbers of respondents suffered frequently from continual tiredness (45%) or sleeplessness (41%). A further third (34%) stated that they frequently suffered from a loss of concentration as a result of stress, whilst around a quarter reported having headaches (27%) or frequently feeling depressed (25%). Stress caused 1 in 5 respondents to have indigestion (20%) and around 1 in 6 reported suffering from anxiety attacks (17%).

Figure 4 – Symptoms of Stress

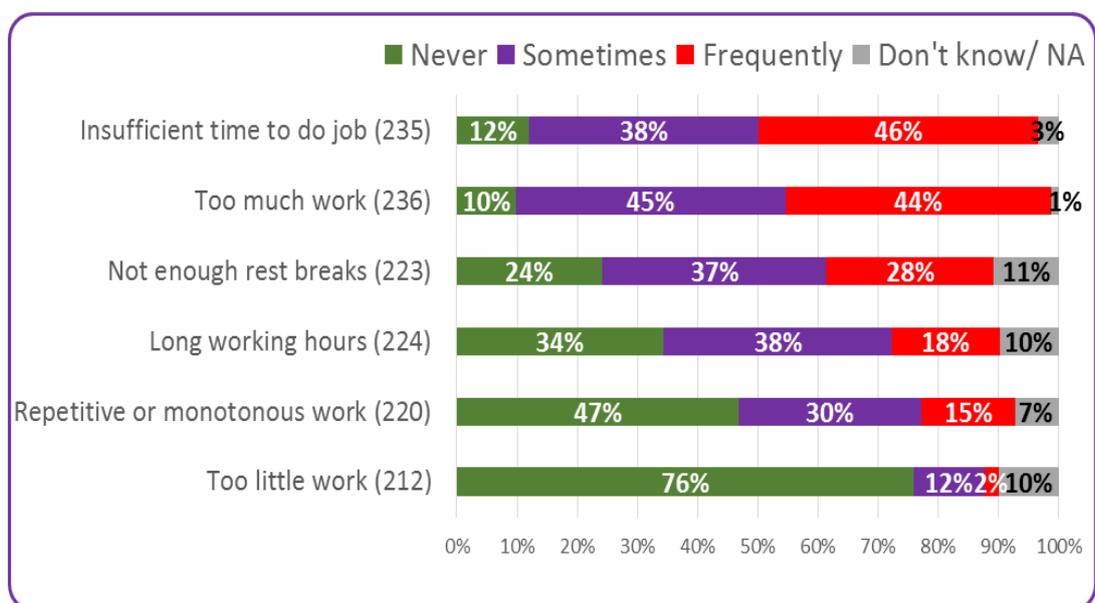


6 CAUSES OF STRESS

Causes of stress – DEMANDS OF JOB

6.1 Figure 5 shows that almost half of respondents (46%) stated that insufficient time to do their job frequently caused them stress at work. Slightly fewer (44%) reported the same regarding having too much work on their hands. More than a quarter (28%) of the 223 respondents felt they did not have enough breaks whilst almost 1 in 5 felt lone working hours frequently caused them stress. Having too little work was not a concern to respondents.

Figure 5 – Causes of stress – DEMANDS OF JOB



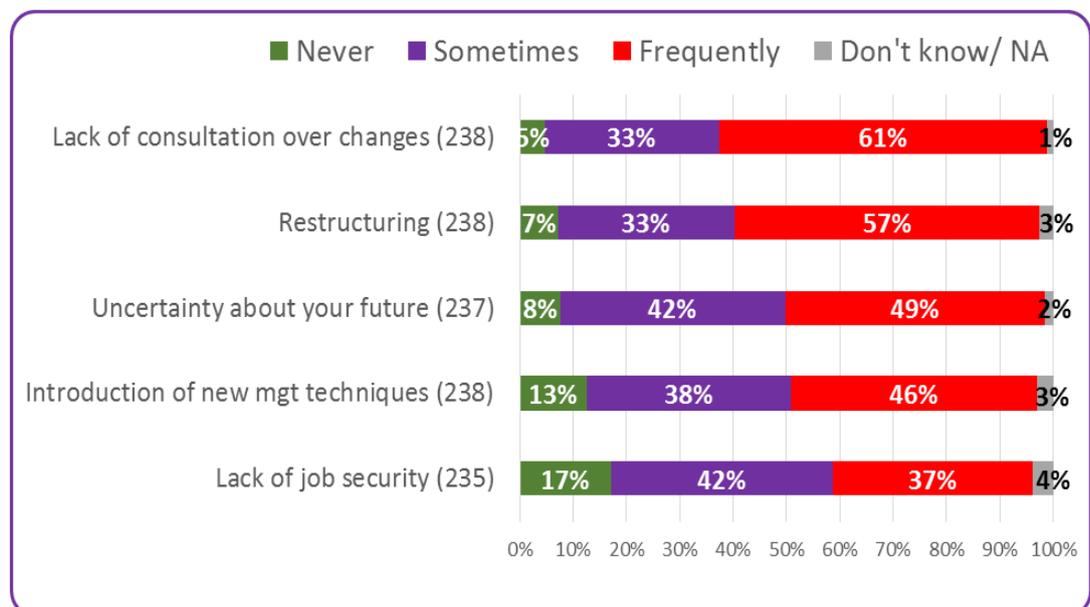
Causes of stress - CHANGE

6.2 Council policy recognises that:

“Changes can be big and may be stressful and challenging to cope with. But small changes can impact too and they can often be underestimated. Whether you’ve chosen the change or not, it still has an impact on you.”

6.3 This particular subject was the most significant of the 6 topics used in the survey to identify causes of stress. Figure 6 illustrates that around 6 in 10 respondents (61%) suffered frequent stress due to a lack of consultation over changes. Slightly fewer (57%) reported restructuring causing frequent stress. Around half (49%) suffered frequent stress due to uncertainty about their future and a similar proportion (46%) were frequently stressed by the introduction of new management techniques. Lack of job security was also a significant contributor to stress for more than a third of respondents (37%).

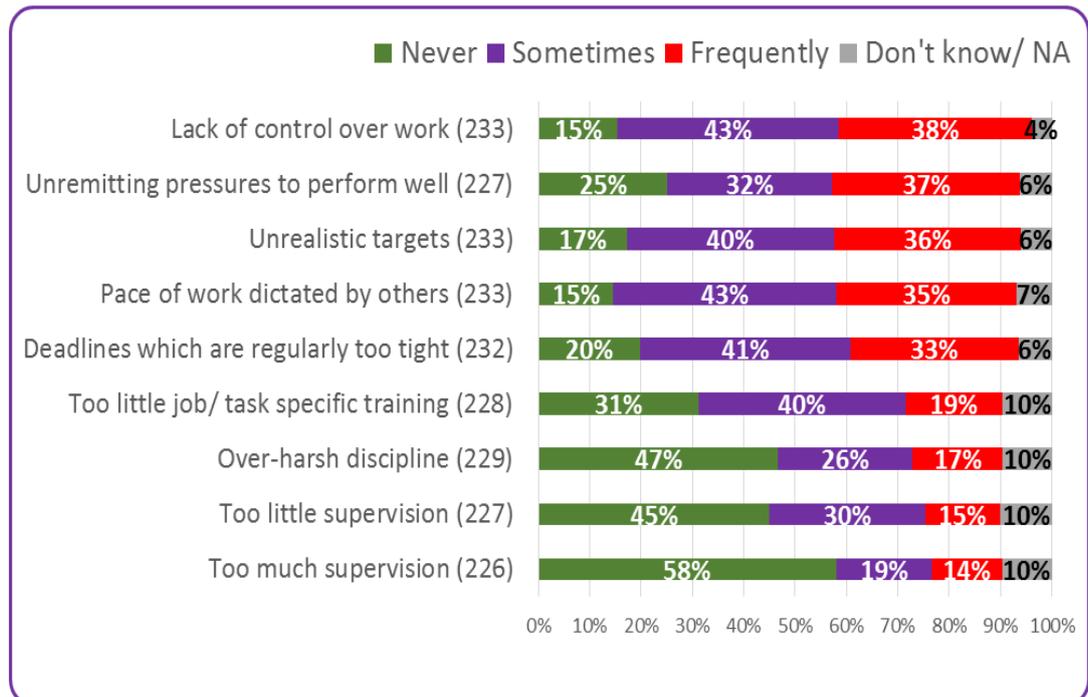
Figure 6 – Causes of Stress - CHANGE



Causes of stress – LACK OF CONTROL

- 6.4 Figure 7 shows that a lack of control over their work caused frequent stress to almost 4 in 10 respondents (38%). A similar proportion also suffered frequent stress due to an unremitting pressures to perform well (37%) and having unrealistic targets (36%). Around a third of respondents reported suffering frequent stress due to the pace of work being dictated by others (35%) or having deadlines which were regularly too tight (33%)

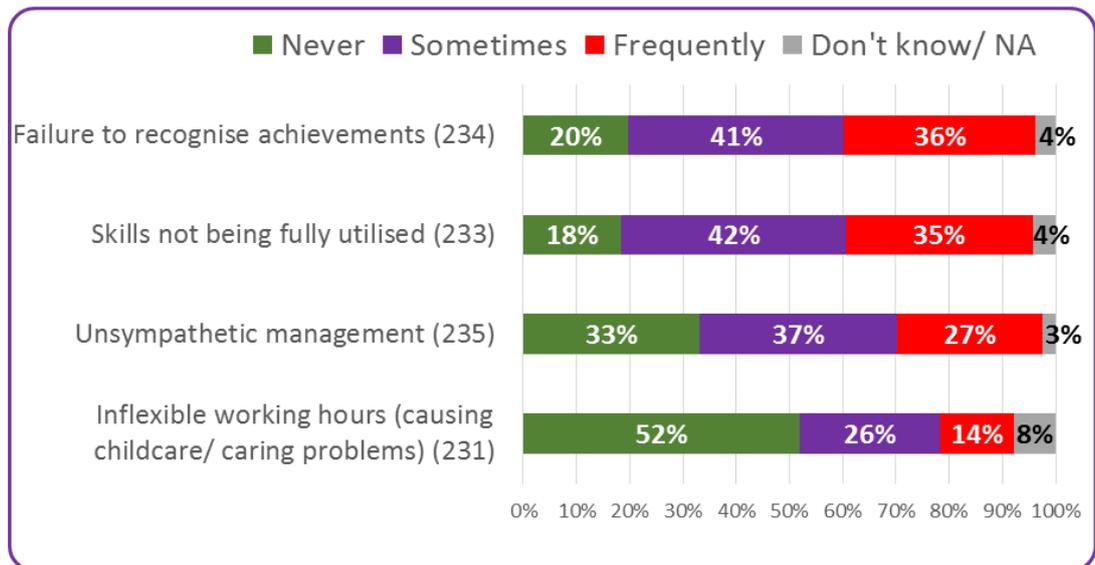
Figure 7 – Causes of stress – LACK OF CONTROL



Causes of stress – WORK LIFE BALANCE

- 6.5 Failure to recognise achievements was cited by over a third of respondents (36%) as a frequent cause of workplace stress (Figure 8). Around a third of respondents (35%) also felt that their skills were not being fully utilised whilst frequent stress was suffered by around a quarter of respondents (27%) because of unsympathetic management.

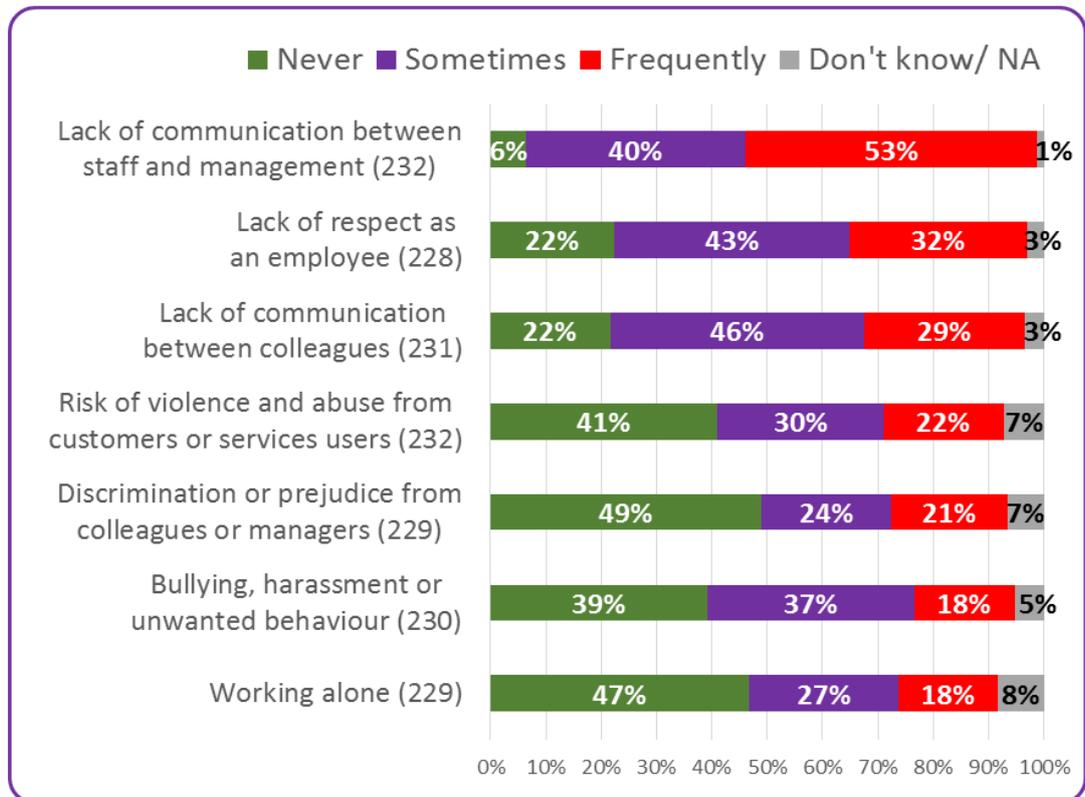
Figure 8 – Causes of stress – WORK LIFE BALANCE



Causes of stress – RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK

- 6.6 More than half of the 232 respondents (53%) stated that a lack of communication between staff and management was a frequent cause of their workplace stress whilst around 3 in 10 (29%) felt there was a lack of communication between colleagues. Around a third (32%) also felt that frequent stress was caused due to there being a lack of respect for employees (Figure 9).
- 6.7 A significant number of the 232 respondents (22%) suffered frequent stress due to a risk of violence and abuse from customers or service users. A similar proportion (21%) also experienced frequent stress due to discrimination or prejudice from colleagues or managers.
- 6.8 Almost 1 in 5 respondents (18%) reported frequent stress caused by working alone, with the same proportion frequently stressed due to bullying, harassment or unwanted behaviour.

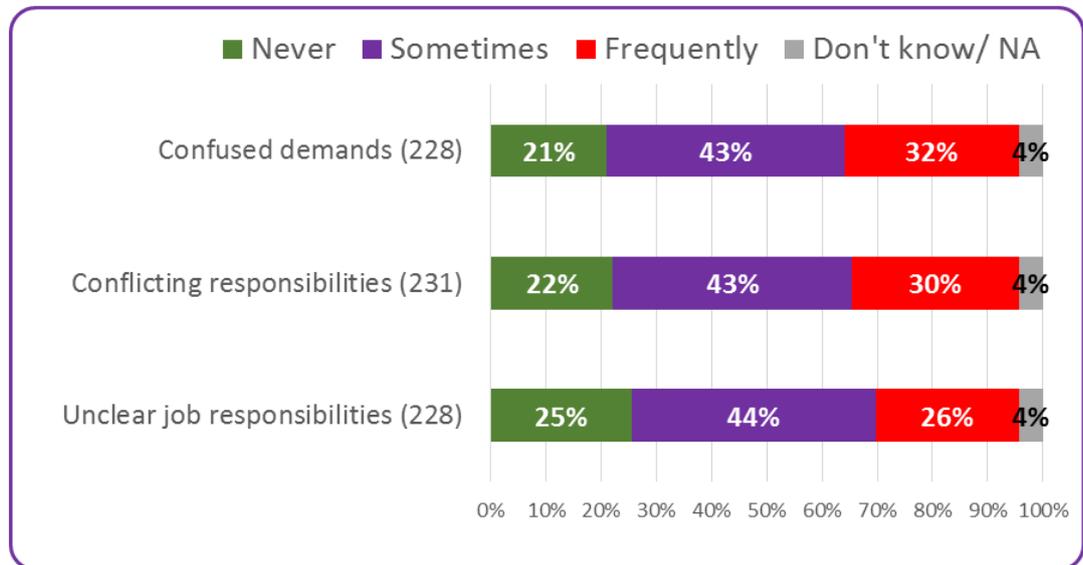
Figure 9 – Causes of stress – RELATIONSHIPS AT WORK



Causes of stress – CONFLICTING ROLES

6.9 Around a third of respondents (32%) suffered from frequent stress due to confused job demands (Figure 10). Conflicting responsibilities caused frequent stress for 3 in 10 respondents whilst around a quarter (26%) reported frequent stress as a result of having unclear job responsibilities.

Figure 10 – Causes of stress – CONFLICTING ROLES

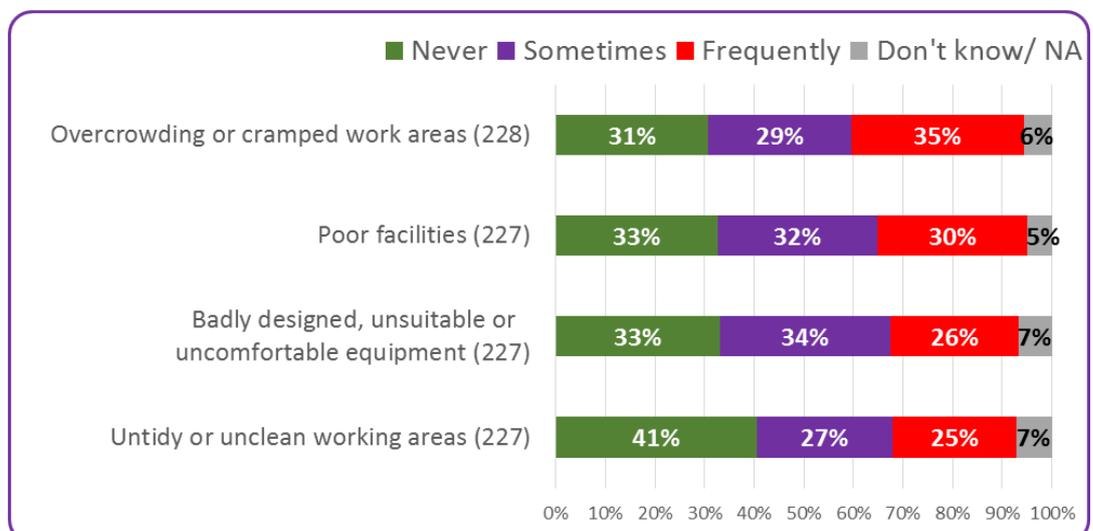


Causes of stress – WORKING ENVIRONMENT

6.10 Figure 11 illustrates that around a third of respondents (35%) stated that overcrowding or cramped work areas were a frequent cause of workplace stress and a further 3 in 10 cited poor facilities (Figure 11).

6.11 Untidy or unclean working areas caused frequent stress for a quarter of respondents with a similar proportion suffering frequent stress as a result of badly designed, unsuitable or uncomfortable equipment.

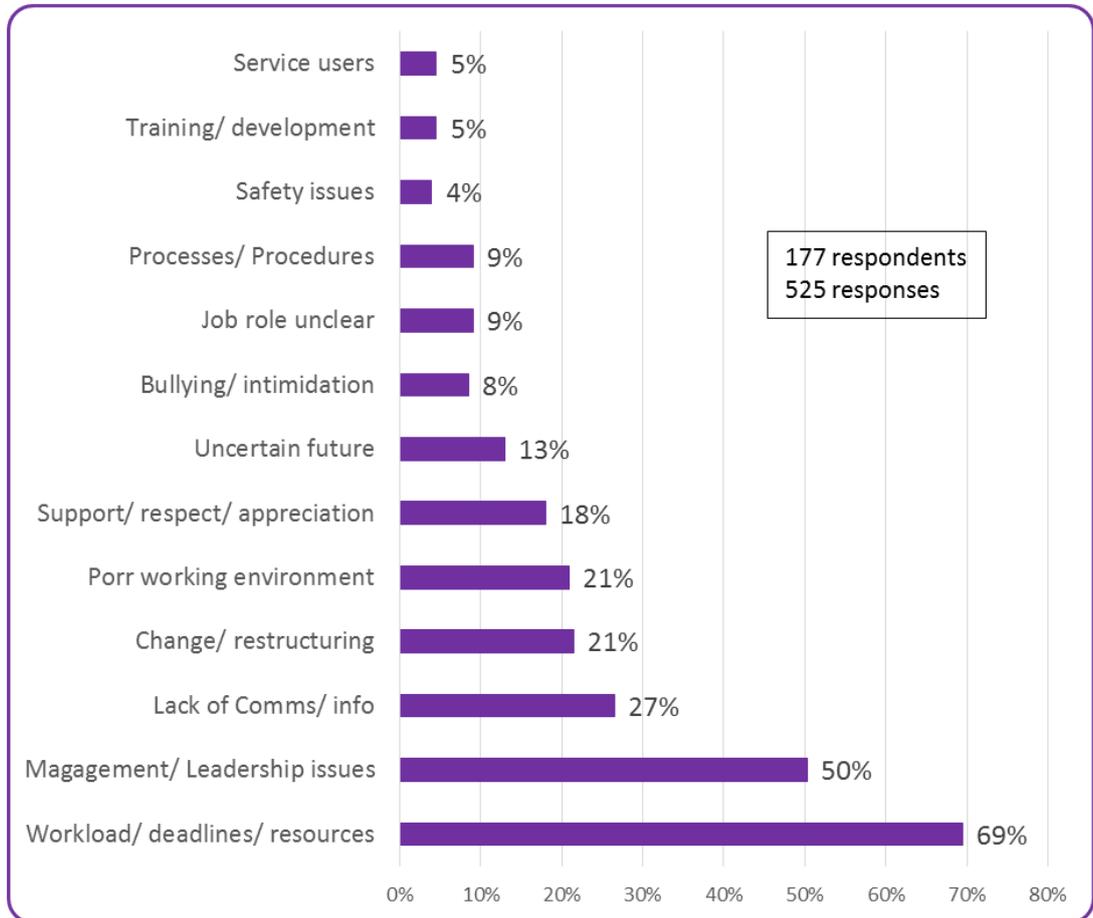
Figure 11 – Causes of stress – WORKING ENVIRONMENT



7 MAIN CAUSES OF STRESS

- 7.1 Respondents were asked to identify, using their own words, what they thought were the 3 main causes of their stress in the workplace, if applicable. The key themes suggested by at least 5% of respondents are shown below in Figure 12.
- 7.2 Perhaps not surprisingly, the main causes of stress mirrored those highlighted in previous sections. Around 7 in 10 (69%) of the 177 respondents stated that workload/ tight deadlines/ lack of resources were the main causes of their workplace stress. This was followed by half of the 177 respondents citing management/ leadership issues and around a quarter (27%) stating a lack of information/ communication.

Figure 12 – Main CAUSES OF STRESS (categorised responses)



- 7.4 Figures 12 and 13 above show that a major cause of stress highlighted by respondents was management/ leadership issues. Comments included:

“Tourist’ senior managers not in for the long haul but just to get some lines for their CV”

“No team manager for at least 6 months and ineffective/ awful senior management - no-one able to guide above or direct.”

“Lack of a clear, consistent and sustained direction and purpose - lack of leadership.”

“New management style “the say yes” culture affects ability to carry out job consistently.”

“No work planning from management, so no appreciation of all tasks being undertaken and the resources required to do such.”

“Lack of direction from managers - or too much direction with no consultation.”

“Amazes me some of the decision making by so called management in various sections regarding re-structure and vacancies. So many people been shoehorned into jobs clearly WITHOUT the experience required, yet denied!”

“Frustration - lack of leadership and an understanding of what it is that you and your team do.”

- 7.5 A lack of communication and information was also cited as a major cause of stress. Respondents' comments included:

“Lack of communication from managers - everything to us is a surprise, done on a whim, the decision made without knowledge and without consultation.”

“Rarely get told what goes on in regards to decisions, always find out actions later than most departments!”

“Lack of communication between staff and management (on strategic direction and work planning).”

“Lack of management structure i.e. sufficient discussion and/or feedback when changes are implemented”

- 7.6 Continuous change and restructuring were also a source of stress for respondents. Comments included:

“Constant threat of restructuring/ redesign/ office moves.”

“Constant change with little opportunity to consolidate progress.”

“Constant change of managers/ no manager for periods of time/ constant staff changes.”

"Almost constant change without apparent justification, consultation or success."

- 7.7 Figure 12 also shows that the working environment was cited as a source of stress. Comments included:

"Working Environment - cramped into a room that has too many people for its size."

"Noise caused by sitting in close to colleagues when phone calls are being made, the volume of people using the same area and sitting too close, no buffer between desks to absorb the noise."

"Horrible environment stuck in an industrial estate."

"The environment we work in. We work in an office that is a corridor where people constantly have to pass through to get to the rest of the building, we discuss personal business and bank account details here. The toilets are filthy and most are shared with the public. The whole place needs a deep clean."

"Poor Facilities - lack of canteen space to allow you to get away from your desk at lunchtime if you want to."

"Poor working environment e.g. Hot-desking, unclean and unhealthy communal areas."

"Aggressive work environment (open plan office) including disregarding my disability."

"Uncomfortable environment due to heating being erratic and selfish colleagues opening windows when other people are in obvious distress with the cold."

"Environment, open plan offices, high noise levels so unable to concentrate."

- 7.8 A lack of respect, support or appreciation was highlighted by respondents as a main cause of stress including:

"The fact that this employer simply does not care"

"Lack of respect for employees who are as well qualified if not more so than the managers themselves."

"Failure to recognise skills and achievements."

"Little empathy from staff following my recent bereavement."

"Lack of respect for employees as the organisation's most valuable asset."

"Being made to feel that I am not important and valued."

- 7.9 Having an uncertain future also caused undue stress including:

"Uncertainty over future structure."

"Constant changes/ uncertainty."

"Job Security: Office politics and lack of information leading to staff feeling insecure and paranoid, and always working in fear of losing job due to continuous cuts and restructuring."

- 7.10 Other comments on the causes of workplace stress included:

"Pressure to drive defective motors."

"Lone working in tenant's homes - lack of personal safety, attacks on staff. Threats through social media."

"Lone working - entering into possibly volatile situations with very little protection or appropriate training."

"Safety at work: Lack of action taken against tenants who are abusive / threatening / violent to staff."

"People being awarded posts because "their face fits" - pals or related to managers. Now that HR are not involved, there is no impartiality."

"The damage i.e. (waste of time & money, incompetence), some people continually get away with."

"Internal politics - managers trying to keep their jobs, going to any lengths at the expense of others."

"Unrealistic expectations from external agencies."

"Not wanting to get ill - triggering more absence management procedures."

"The restrictions and double standards that make it near impossible to do my job."

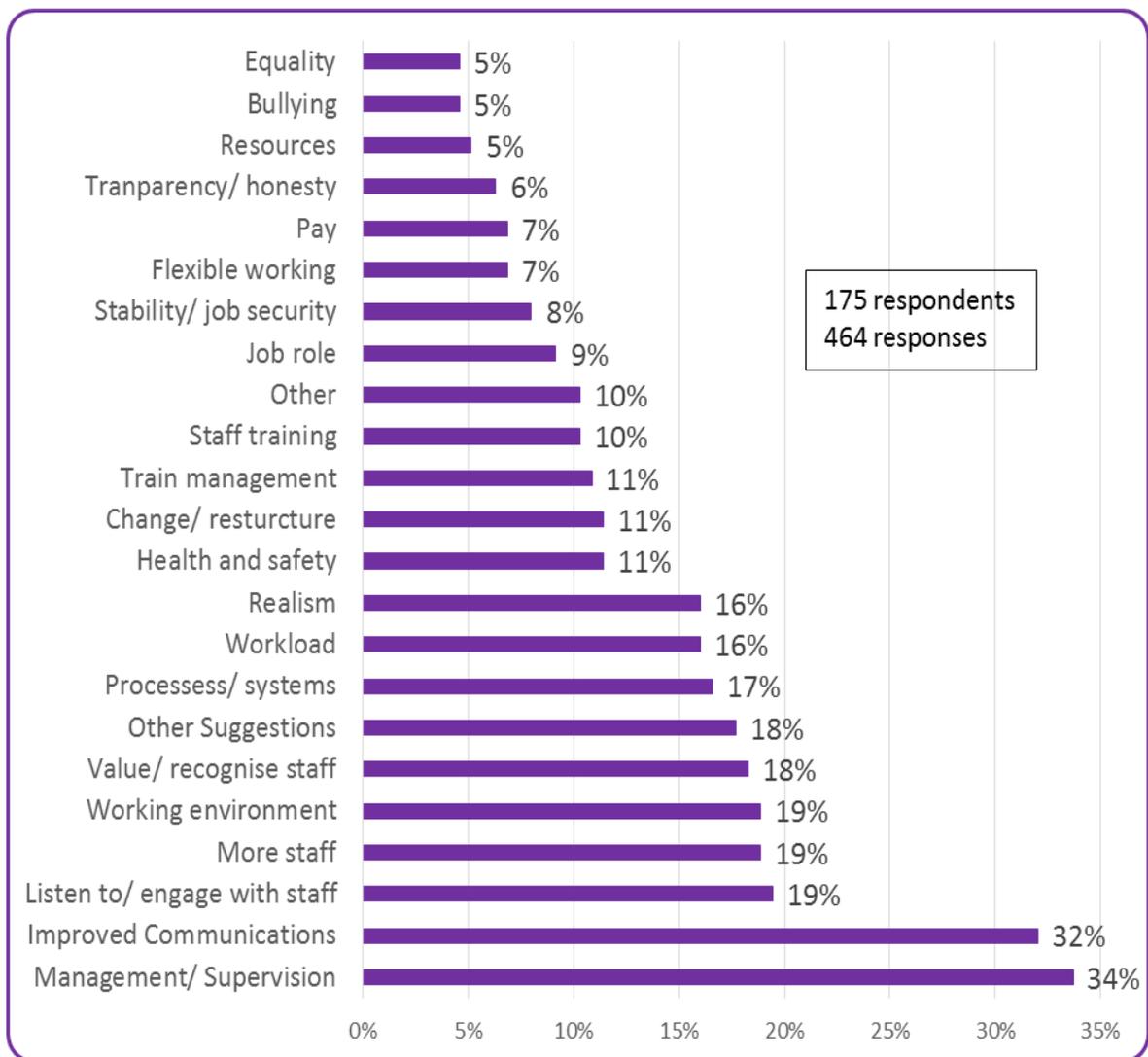
"Lack of flexibility to facilitate work-homelife balance (child care)"

"The culture of the organisation, bullying and uncaring."

8 HOW TO REDUCE STRESS

8.1 Respondents were asked to identify ways in which Stirling Council could reduce stress in the workplace. Figure 14 shows that the two main ways of reducing stress identified by respondents were related to Management/ Supervision and communications.

Figure 14 – WAYS OF REDUCING STRESS (categorised responses)



- 8.2 Figure 14 above shows that around a third of the 175 respondents (34%) gave a suggestion relating to management/ supervision as ways to reduce work related stress. These included:

"Strong leadership/ management with empathy and good communication skills."

"Direction to managers and teams from senior manager and director ensuring that all management team are singing from same hymn sheet."

"Management must recognise that staff/ management are equal, lead from the front, not disappearing into an office and sending out emails."

"Reduce stress - and resultant behaviours - amongst managers, the consequences of which then get passed to the rest of us."

"Change the management culture from top to bottom."

"Employ managers with PEOPLE management skills (this can't always be learned)."

"Managers need to step up to the mark - remember they have a duty of care to their staff."

"Wider awareness of what is going on in Communities from a whole council perspective! Senior Management need to plan better for community engagement."

"People in positions of authority should cease showing favouritism. A good manager supervisor would know not to behave in this manner."

- 8.3 Similarly around a third of respondents (32%) suggested that better communications would reduce stress levels. Comments included:

"Better communication - the big picture - do we have a job?"

"Communicate honestly and with staff on Change."

"Communicate better - hearing rumours of moves etc. before announcement is disconcerting."

"Better communication (including physical presence) between management (at all levels) and staff."

"Be told things when they are happening, not weeks or months later or not at all unless I bump into someone from another service or section to be told this or that, everything's a secret.... WHY?"

"Communicate regularly with colleagues regarding the overall council priorities and how we can help achieve them."

"Recognition that effective communication requires listening."

- 8.4 Figure 14 also shows that around 1 in 5 respondents believed that stress levels would be reduced if staff were listened to. Comments included:

"Listen to workforce concerns and be pro-active not reactive."

"Engage with the staff. Have directors and senior managers actually engage with their staff and have the manners to go around and introduce themselves."

"Be clearer with staff and listen to their ideas and opinions - give feedback."

"Managers who listen and respond to the concerns of employees."

"Teach managers to speak to their staff - not just lip service to communication."

- 8.5 Having more staff was also suggested by around 1 in 5 respondents (19%). Comments included:

"Identify that additional manpower required - staff left on package but never replaced."

"Stop paying people off and expecting the poor sods that are left to pick up their work while still expecting us to provide an "EXCELLENT" service."

"Employ more staff, cover staff vacancies/ maternity urgently increase therapeutic resources available to children and young people."

"Hire more staff of good experience instead of poor experience."

"Increase frontline staff. The very ones who are vital to needy services."

- 8.6 Similarly around 1 in 5 respondents made suggestions about improving the working environment including:

"Provide more desks, space and cleaner/ healthier working conditions."

"Provide proper kitchen/ canteen facilities for the employees to use."

"Working environment should be accessible for all including people with a disability."

"Work space should be conducive to people being able to uphold Data Protection and not have customers / staff on one phone being able to hear someone else's conversation because we are sitting 12 " from the person next to us using the phone."

- 8.7 Valuing and recognising staff was stated as a way to alleviate stress. Comments included:

"People in positions of authority need to respect their workforce in order that the workforce are led by example. Respect is not a right, it needs to be earned."

"Getting thanks is really important to keep morale high. From immediate manager to those at higher level."

"To be treated with respect even if you are Admin."

"Recognition by management that you are doing a good job. Even acknowledged verbally."

"More sincere praise from top leaders."

"Treat employees in a way that makes them want to stay."

"People should be treated with dignity and respect and this should be actively supported by senior staff. People exhibiting bullying behaviour should be challenged."

"Recognise the skills and talent in the workforce without using consultants etc."

- 8.8 Improving processes and systems were also identified as a way to reduce stress levels. Comments included:

"Re-examine processes and consult with the team to ensure they are fit for purpose."

"Have care planning and business matching staff managed in the same line management streams as practitioners so their processes are suitably flexible and aligned with the required aims and outcomes of Assessment and Care Management."

"Have less time consuming processes to do everything."

"Get rid of SWIFT, sort out the care plan process and other issues that require recording (ASP)."

"Implement projects in a thorough and proper manner - there is a culture here of being reactive and ticking boxes rather than being concerned with quality."

- 8.9 Figure 14 illustrates that around 1 in 6 respondents stated that dealing with their workload would reduce their stress in the workplace. Comments included:

"Staff are not required to work 24/7 therefore Managers must be aware of timescales in carrying out tasks/ duties."

"Review workloads; conduct effective impact assessments of post identified for VS."

"A lot of work tossed to Admin and told to get on with it irrespective of workload."

"Managers could distribute work more evenly between employees."

"Assign decent workload instead of piling on more work to lower grade staff."

- 8.10 Around 1 in 6 respondents also suggested a touch of realism would alleviate their stress levels. Comments included:

"To stop putting unrealistic targets on work."

"Understand and protect staff from unrealistic waiting lists due to reduced staffing."

"Manage customer expectations - we have to pretend we can deliver something that we know we can't. It is a nonsense."

"Address the imbalance between strategic vision and staff capacity."

8.11 Other comments included:

"Shocking that more people and trainees, are not continually being asked to do higher graded jobs for no extra grade or money. The way it's put on you and the "another string to your bow" comment, rubbish, it is clearly very stressful to have worked lumped onto you without payment and the poor attitude of we all have to change because of the cut backs, so many stories on this subject, I see it for myself continually but do the management care? No their attitude is to get the work done by asking people to do jobs way above what their grade and job description says! A DISGRACE!"

"Improve personal safety - Personal safety courses, monitoring of staffs whereabouts when out and about. Training for Managers on the vulnerability of staff and how this type of anxiety affects people."

"Stop reorganising - structural changes and consequent loss of staff is having a serious effect on service delivery."

"Try to understand the roles of different groups of workers and set clear job description for each group. Recognise locational shortcomings of Teith House and regularly monitor air quality, ticking time bomb....!"

"Create more parking facilities and ensure car sharing policy is being adhered to by every staff member, no matter what their job title is."

"Sort out the condition of the offices and parking issues - stressed before you even get to work."

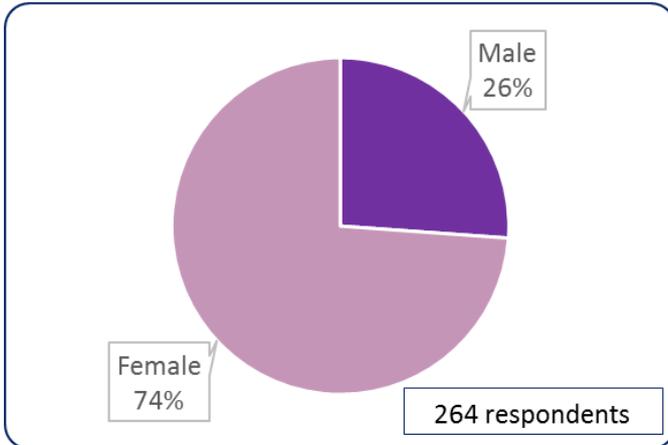
"Check bullying in the work place, not just apply lip service and carry out tick box exercises."

"Implement proper training for new tasks not just someone spending 5 minutes with you."

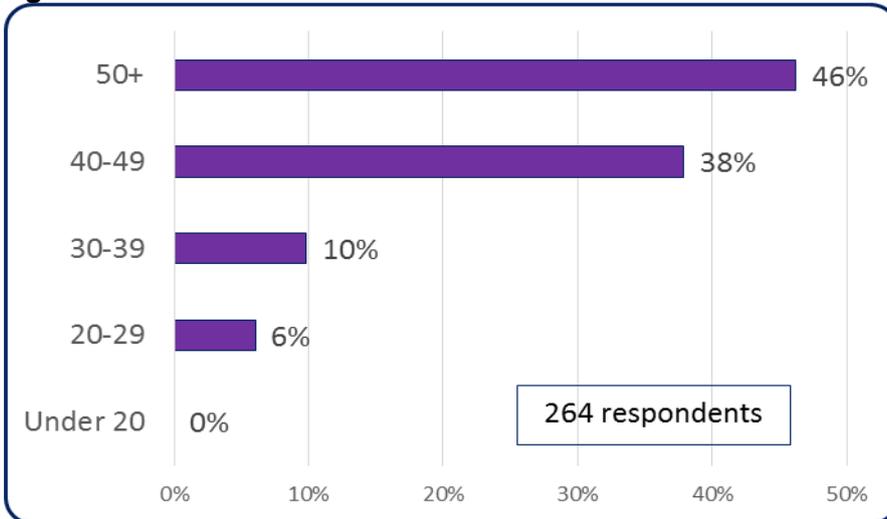
"Understand that inadequate facilities and constantly absent managers and never ending change all impact negatively on staff and promote stress."

9 APPENDIX 1 – RESPONDENT PROFILE

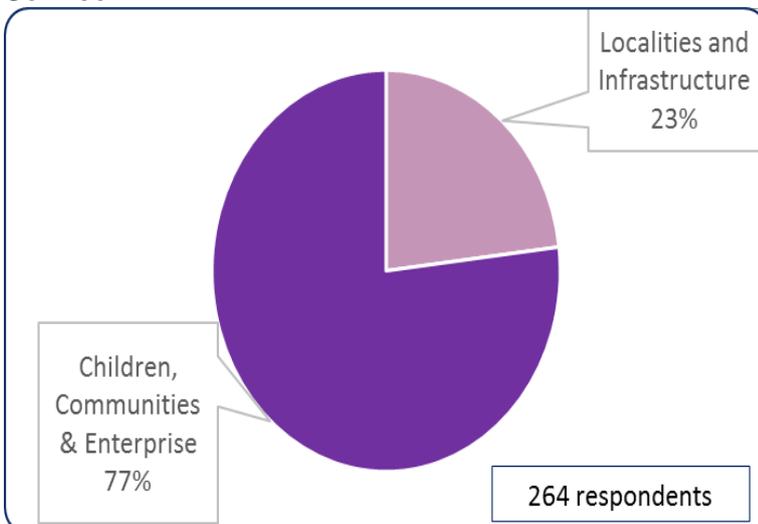
Gender



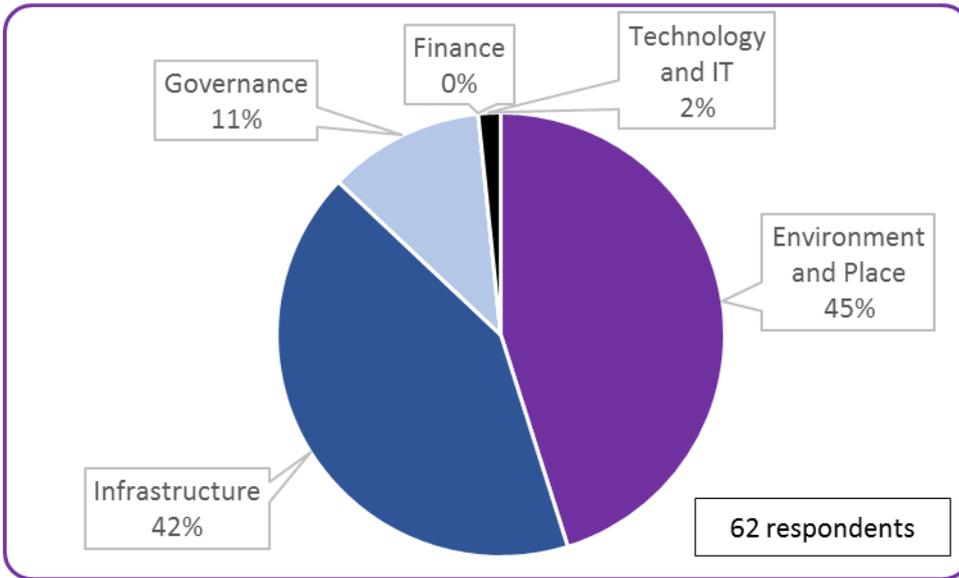
Age



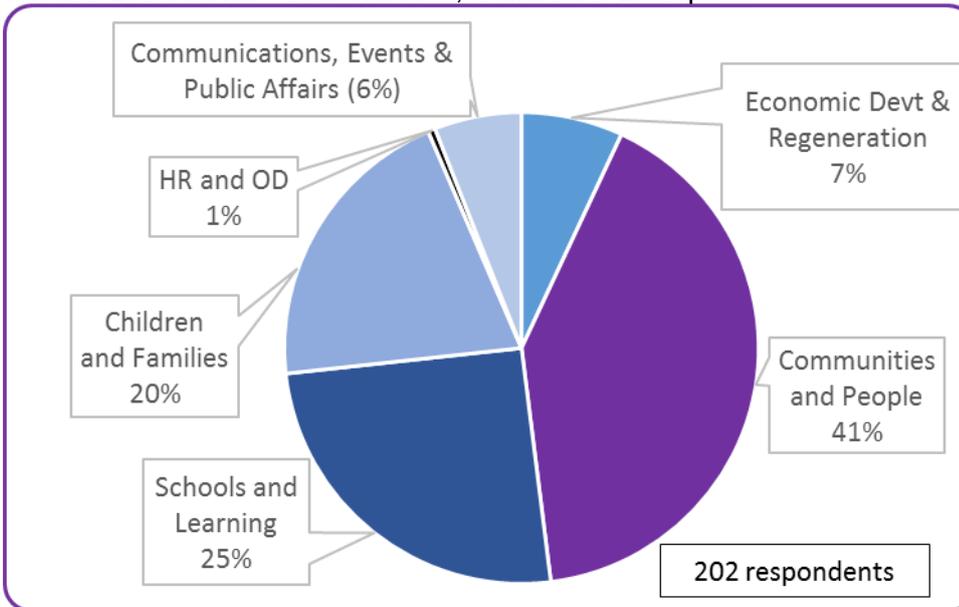
Service



Service Breakdown - Localities and Infrastructure



Service Breakdown - Communities, Children & Enterprise



10 APPENDIX 2 – COMMENTS – MAIN CAUSES OF STRESS

(Note: some responses have been removed to protect respondent identity)

- Abuse from pupils.
- Behaviour and disrespect from pupils to staff is appalling and lack of consequences for this.
- Behaviour of line manager.
- Being asked to do tasks that are not in my job description and that I am not trained in despite asking for said training on numerous occasions.
- Big brother surveillance.
- Building and surroundings unfit for purpose.
- Bullying - disrespectful staff - using my lack of knowledge/ skills against me rather than supporting me.
- Bullying & Intimidation.
- Bullying by managers.
- Bullying exclusion and hate crimes from colleagues.
- Change.
- Change in management.
- Colleagues moaning about everything.
- Complex work demands.
- Condition of the workplace (Wolfcraig).
- Conflict with management.
- Conflict with management.
- Conflicting demands.
- Constant change of managers/ no manager for periods of time/ constant staff changes.
- Constant change with little opportunity to consolidate progress.
- Constant threat of restructuring/ redesign/ office moves.
- Cramped working environment - Full time staff in hot desk set-up (Teith House).
- Cronyism.
- Current lack of staff.
- Cut 10 hours (per week).
- Deadline and unrealistic work pressures.
- Demands from others, made to feel inferior, made to feel not doing job, been told work not getting done just because I don't want to do it (because I do not have time).
- Demands on staff due to low numbers of staff.
- Due to a restructure, being moved into a post I did not want and very little consultation and guidance.
- Environment, open plan offices, high noise levels so unable to concentrate.
- Far too much, NS very repetitive paperwork.
- Flexible Working.
- Future.
- I am the only person who does this job in Stirling Council so the workload is unmanageable.
- Ignorance.
- Increased workload.
- Increased workload due to reduced staff levels.
- Internal politics - managers trying to keep their jobs, going to any lengths at the expense of others.
- Intimidation.
- Job Security.
- Job Security: Office politics and lack of information leading to staff feeling insecure and paranoid, and always working in fear of losing job due to continuous cuts and restructuring.

- Job uncertainty.
- Lack of a clear, consistent and sustained direction and purpose - lack of leadership.
- Lack of anyone actually defining my job as my job description hasn't been what I actually do for a number of years.
- Lack of clear communication.
- Lack of communication between management & staff.
- Lack of communication between managers and staff.
- Lack of communication between staff.
- Lack of communication between staff & management (on strategic direction and work planning).
- Lack of communication from colleagues.
- Lack of communication from management.
- Lack of communication from management.
- Lack of communication from managers.
- Lack of communication from managers - everything to us is a surprise, done on a whim, the decision made without knowledge and without consultation.
- Lack of communication on role now and in near future.
- Lack of information / change management from senior management.
- Lack of information regarding job security.
- Lack of leadership and management.
- Lack of leadership by very senior management.
- Lack of opportunity to discuss work demands with management.
- Lack of respect as an employee.
- Lack of space/ not enough desks.
- Lack of staff i.e. not replacing staff when they leave.
- Lack of staff to cover increasing workloads.
- Lack of supervision.
- Lack of support.
- Lack of support and recognition.
- Lack of support and supervision.
- Lack of support by management - ignorant of case load/ role.
- Lack of support from people above - no understanding of role, including no team leader; emails unanswered.
- Lone working - entering into possibly volatile situations with very little protection or appropriate training.
- Lone working in tenant's homes - lack of personal safety, attacks on staff. Threats though social media.
- Lone working in unknown/ vulnerable situations.
- Management.
- Management.
- Management attitudes to workers.
- Management failure.
- Management in Stirling council (Sit in offices not knowing what goes on in workplaces).
- Manager.
- Manager lack of knowledge / understanding of service area.
- Manager's manner.
- Management.
- Management attitude.
- Moving office periodically/ change in role.
- My manager's elastic toil/ flexi annual leave card.
- My previous head teacher bullied me.

- No team manager for at least 6 months and ineffective/ awful senior management - no-one able to guide above or direct.
- Not enough hours.
- Not enough time to keep up with workload.
- Ongoing fallout from bullying by manager
- Outsourcing to other agencies.
- Over work.
- Overwork.
- Overwork/ too many cases.
- Overworking.
- Poor communication from senior management.
- Poor management.
- Poor management.
- Poor management.
- Poor management from Team Leader.
- Poor processes causing lengthy delays in achieving outcomes.
- Powerlessness - inability to meet community aspirations due to reduced budgets.
- Pressure of conflicting deadlines.
- Pressures of work.
- Processes and the implementation.
- Rarely get told what goes on in regards to decisions, always find out actions later than most departments!
- Recent and ongoing restructuring and movement of inappropriate offices.
- Require more flexibility in working hours.
- Restructure has caused a great deal of stress.
- Restructures – constantly.
- Restructuring.
- Restructuring.
- Restructuring.
- Role and responsibilities.
- Role change (which I had no say in).
- Room with no windows.
- Staff members who cannot time manage.
- Staff numbers versus workloads.
- Staff shortages and cut backs coupled with increasing work demand.
- Supervisor.
- Systems not user friendly.
- The culture of the organisation, bullying and uncaring.
- The damage i.e. (waste of time & money, incompetence), some people continually get away with.
- The fact that this employer simply does not care.
- Too many managers.
- Too much work load.
- Too much pressure to deliver.
- Too much to do and too little staff.
- Too much work.
- Too Much Work - Staff Cuts.
- Too much work too little time constantly.
- Too much work.
- Too much work. - Lack of recognition of limitations.

- Too much workload.
- Uncertainty.
- Uncertainty about job.
- Uncertainty about the future.
- Uncertainty of future.
- Uncertainty over future structure.
- Uncertainty over job changes.
- Unclear guidance on my role and responsibilities.
- Uncomfortable environment due to heating being erratic and selfish colleagues opening windows when other people are in obvious distress with the cold.....
- Underestimated workload.
- Understaffed.
- Understaffing.
- Unnecessary time consuming processes.
- Un-realistic demands on remaining staff after each restructure now means everyone is at breaking point.
- Unrealistic expectations in terms of ability to complete all areas of work within timescales.
- Unrealistic expectations from external agencies.
- Unrealistic timescales.
- Unrealistic timescales for turnaround of work.
- Unsure of what my remit is and managers not getting back to me to discuss.
- Unsustainable workload and unable to meet expectations.
- Volume of work at busy times.
- Work place.
- Work process not clear and often changing without consultation/ communication.
- Working environment.
- Working Environment - crammed into a room that has too many people for its size.
- Workload.
- Workload.
- Workload.
- Workload.
- Workload.
- Workload continually being added to with no consultation.
- Workload demands.
- Worry over whether I will have a desk to work at once we move.

11 APPENDIX 3 – COMMENTS – HOW TO REDUCE STRESS

(Note: some responses have been removed to protect respondent identity)

- A period of rest from council staff moving jobs, departments and mass voluntary severance as no one knows who is doing what in the communities.
- Better communication between all levels of staff.
- Make sure there is equality.
- Access to fresh air, drinking water, appropriate hand washing materials/ sanitary bins.
- Actually be held accountable and meet departments/ teams face to face.
- Additional support to ease the workload and listen to strategies that would help.
- Allocated desks and computers.
- Allowing my manager to have more time to provide guidance and supervision.
- A lot of work tossed to Admin and told to get on with it irrespective of workload.
- As there is no communication about ongoing projects, best to publish these on the intranet.
- Be clear and upfront with staff instead of hearing through the grapevine.
- Be clearer with staff and listen to their ideas and opinions - give feedback.
- Better communication.
- Better communication.
- Better communication - the big picture - do we have a job.
- Better communication (including physical presence) between management (at all levels) and staff.
- Better communication between managers and individual employees.
- Better communication with unions.
- Better facilities for working environment.
- Better management.
- Better management attitude.
- Better management of processes.
- Better management of teams I support.
- Better thought about interior rooms with no windows.
- Better work areas - a desk/ chair, computer. Stop hot-desking.
- Bring back dignity at work act.
- Carry out an assessment of workload.
- Change the management culture from top to bottom.
- Clarify, communicate and train staff in work processes, particularly in relation to commissioning care packages, ensuring both frontline practitioners and administrative staff understand each other's roles and responsibilities.
- Clarity of purpose.
- Clear communication between staff and management. Confidential information to be kept confidential.
- Clear communications.
- Clear job roles and responsibilities.
- Clear work plans.
- Communicate.
- Communicate.
- Communicate and listen to employee concerns.
- Communicate better.
- Communicate better - hearing rumours of moves etc. Before announcement is disconcerting.
- Communicate honestly and with staff on Change.
- Communicate with staff.
- Communicate with staff. Inform us what our roles are.
- Communication.
- Communication.
- Communication.
- Consider workloads appropriately.

- Consult.
- Direction to managers and teams from senior manager and director ensuring that all management team are singing from same hymn sheet.
- Effectively deal with aggressive physical and verbal behaviour towards staff.
- Employ enough people to meet the needs of the service.
- Employ experienced manager.
- Employ managers with PEOPLE management skills (this can't always be learned).
- Employ more qualified staff.
- Employ more staff.
- Employ more staff, cover staff vacancies/ maternity urgently increase therapeutic resources available to children and young people.
- Employ staff.
- Employ supportive, skilled manager.
- Employ technically competent people to fill vacant posts and support staff.
- Empower employees to do their job.
- Ensure all communication is cascaded down to all.
- Ensure managers manage staff.
- Ensure team leader is providing clear communication/ overall work plan and prioritisation plan.
- Ensure that management provide supports for staff.
- Ensure that the organisation is open, transparent and accountable.
- Ensure those who are in positions of authority are adequate for their job.
- Expectations to be in line with resources.
- Fairer Workload.
- Fill staff vacancies.
- Find a clear sense of unity, direction and purpose.
- Flexible Working.
- Get a technical team leader in place immediately and effective management.
- Give us a better work environment.
- Good Management skills.
- Greater degree of honesty of intent.
- Greatly reduce paperwork.
- Have more discussions with their staff.
- Have more realistic expectations.
- Hire more staff of good experience instead of poor experience.
- Hire more staff.
- Hold managers accountable for their actions.
- Identify that additional manpower required - staff left on package but never replaced.
- Improve person safety - Personal safety courses, monitoring of staffs whereabouts when out and about. Training for Managers on the vulnerability of staff and how this type of anxiety affects people.
- Improve systems.
- Improve working environments.
- Increase funding to education allowing all children a fair education.
- Increase skilled staffing levels.
- Increase staff levels.
- Invest in qualified and experienced workforce to provide leadership.
- Job swapping.
- Keep communicating about all the changes.
- Less paperwork.
- Lessen the work load.
- Let staff get on with their work.
- Listen to employees.
- Listen and respect employees.
- Listen to staff.
- Listen to staff and stop reducing numbers any further.
- Listen to staff when they raise concerns around management.
- Listen to workforce concerns and be pro-active not reactive.

- Make a fast and final decision re the management structure within childcare.
- Make the work load the same for everyone.
- Manageable caseloads.
- Management must recognise that staff/ management are equal, lead from the front, not disappearing into an office and sending out emails.
- Management to meet with staff over stress reducing.
- Management training in attitudes towards employees.
- Managers, at all times, to update us where they are.
- Maximum use of flexible working, as was agreed at the time of the Big Move.
- More admin support hours.
- More flexible approach to work.
- More honesty from senior management.
- More staff.
- More staff.
- More staff.
- More staff.
- More supervision.
- More working hours (37 hours weekly) means more time for paperwork and staff meetings.
- Move away from open plan offices, or at the very least provide you with enough room to work in.
- Much more consultation.
- Not throwing surveys and looking for numbers all the time wanting same information.
- Now structure is in place, communicate with employees.
- Offer of extra hours when needed.
- People should be treated with dignity and respect and this should be actively supported by senior staff. People exhibiting bullying behaviour should be challenged.
- Permanent contract for member of staff.
- Planned workload.
- Proper communication before changes made and better supervision and training before change.
- Proper communication by senior management.
- Properly training managers - not promoting people without the adequate training and skills.
- Provide a role that will utilise my specialised skills.
- Provide Flexible Working Hours.
- Provide more desks, space and cleaner/ healthier working conditions.
- Recruit staff not supply fixes.
- Reduce paperwork.
- Reduce workload.
- Reduce workloads.
- Re-examine processes and consult with the team to ensure they are fit for purpose.
- Remove the fear of awful consequences if a box is not ticked.
- Replace staff that have left.
- Resetting of targets and timescales given reduction in staff.
- Respect from staff/ colleagues (I have this now in my new job thankfully).
- Review workloads.
- Review workloads; conduct effective impact assessments of post identified for VS.
- Sack bad employees.
- Sack the individuals involved.
- Set realistic policies.
- Sort out work volume.
- Speak to staff.
- Staff are not required to work 24/7 therefore Managers must be aware of timescales in carrying out tasks/ duties.
- Staff buddy system.
- Stirling has already decided to get rid of the post so I suppose that will reduce my stress.
- Stop being corrupt - that's how it feels now.
- Stop continually restructuring.
- Stop letting so many people go.
- Stop paying people off and expecting the poor sods that are left to pick up their work while still

- expecting us to provide an "EXCELLENT" service.
- Stop restructuring.
- Streamline systems.
- Stricter controls over flexi/ toil/ annual leave.
- Strong leadership/ management with empathy and good communication skills.
- Strong management support.
- Stronger Senior SW managers, willing to stand their ground with Financiers and Executive.
- Support staff.
- Support staff adequately.
- Support staff better when they are getting bullied.
- Take an interest/ listen to the above issues.
- Talk to staff and act on feedback.
- Talk to us.
- They could come and see us when you put in health and safety forms.
- To stop putting unrealistic targets on work.
- Treat as adults and human beings.
- Treat employees in a way that makes them want to stay.
- Understand and protect staff from unrealistic waiting lists due to reduced staffing.
- Understand that different staff have different requirements depending on what their job is.
- Understand that stress can cause permanent disability to some people with certain conditions and must be avoided.
- Value their staff more.
- Zero tolerance to bullying.