**Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace Survey**

1. In the previous report for Q2, reference was made to the Health and Wellbeing in the Workplace survey and a request was made for details and results of this survey to be provided at the next meeting. Results of the survey are now known and can be reported.

2. The aims of the survey research were to:

    - Gather anonymous information about the health and wellbeing of the WSCC workforce;

    - Provide baseline data against which progress can be tracked in the future;

    - Identify where to prioritise investment in WSCC employee health and wellbeing, beyond basic health and safety legal requirements; and

    - Involve WSCC employees and gather their thoughts and views on what matters to them.

3. The survey was distributed via an online link and on paper (1,517 paper versions issued) and was open for response from 1st July to 26th July 2019. The questionnaire was designed to closely follow the guidance from Public Health England (PHE) for a Workplace Health Needs Assessment. It covered various areas relating to health and wellbeing, including: workplace culture, alcohol use, diet and exercise, smoking, sleep, mental health and stress, as well as workplace support.

4. 1,427 response were received which is a response rate of 24%. This consisted of 149 completed paper surveys (16 blanks also received) and 1,278 on-line. This response rate falls within the threshold for statistically robust data.

5. In summary, positive elements of the survey included:

    - 71% rated their health as 'very good' or 'good' with 96% at least 'fair';

    - One third reported having their 'five-a-day';

    - 85% described themselves as non-smokers; and

    - Only 2% received the heist alcohol risk score.

6. The survey results identified the following issues:

    - Stress – high workload magnified by feeling a lack of control

    - Poor sleep – 50% have problems at least three nights a week;

    - Sedentary behaviour – over two-thirds are not doing enough physical activity; and

    - 11% of 24% respondents somewhat agree that they had been subject to personal harassment (unkind words/ behaviours).

7. The following sections contain details of the results and proposed actions.

General Health and Wellbeing

8. Respondents were asked how they felt their health was in general. Responses for the overall sample are shown below. The chart shows those that responded either 'very good', 'good' or 'fair'. Only 3% responded that their health was 'bad'.

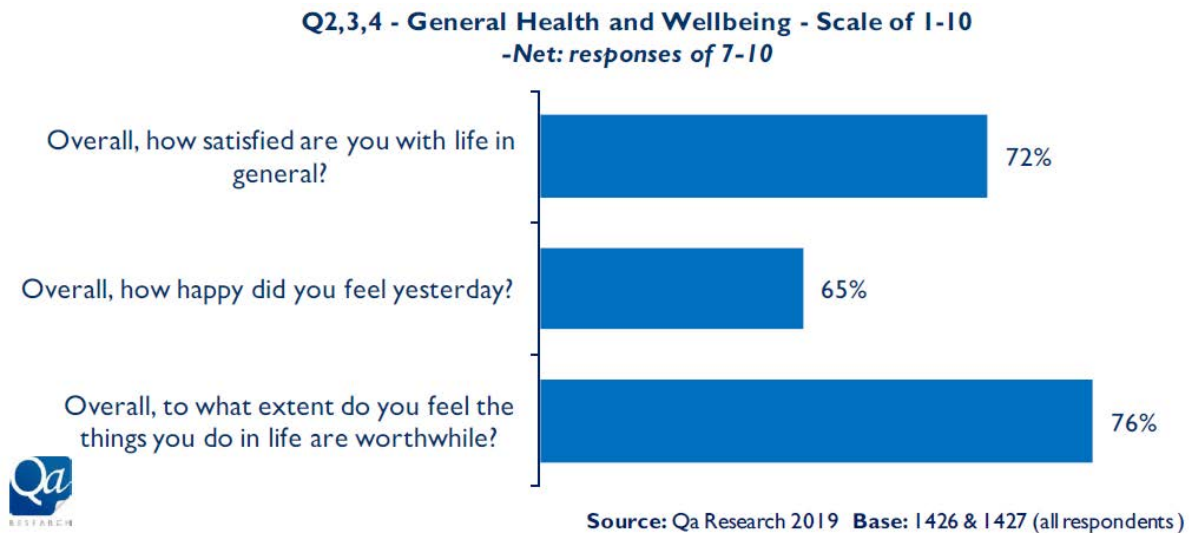### Q1. How is your Health in General?

NET Good: 71%
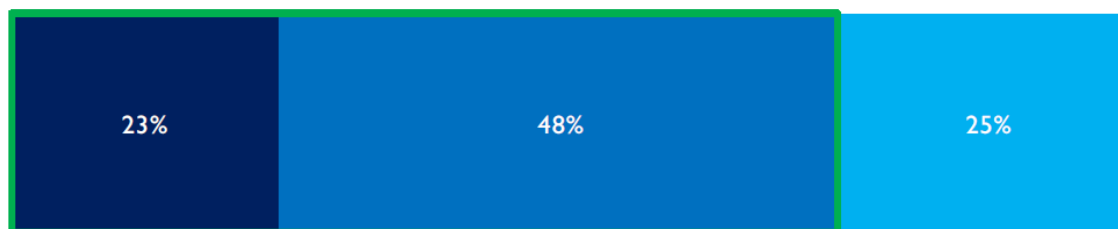
Very good	Good	Fair
23%	48%	25%

Source: Qa Research 2019 **Base:** 1427 (all respondents)

9. Just under three quarters (71%) said their health was either 'very good' or 'good', nearly all respondents (96%) felt their health was at least 'fair'. In general, respondents felt that overall, they were in good health.

10. To assess healthy eating, respondents were asked how many portions of fruit and vegetables they ate on a typical day. Just over one third (34%) said they had their 'five-a-day'. This is higher than the national average of 26% of adults in 2016, according to a 2018 NHS report.

11. Respondents were also asked on how many days in the past week they had done 30 minutes or more of physical activity (defined as being 'enough to make you breathe harder'). PHE guidelines state that if an employee does 150 minutes or more of physical activity throughout a week then they are doing a sufficient amount of exercise to limit the potential issues caused by physical inactivity, such as injury at work, increased sick leave and lower productivity.

12. In this sample just over a quarter (28% of male respondents, 27% of female respondents) said they did more than 150 minutes of physical activity per week. This is considerably lower than national figures which suggest 66% of men and 58% of women aged 19 or over meet this recommendation3.Another area of general wellbeing covered by this survey was quality of sleep. Employees were asked the extent to which their sleep had troubled them over the last month, as well as the number of days in a week they encountered problems with their sleep.

13. Just over two fifths (42%) of respondents reported having had 'quite a bit' or 'very much' trouble with their sleep over the past month (NET: sleep disturbance). A considerable proportion of respondents do not appear get regular, good quality sleep. Further to this, half (50%) of respondents had problems sleeping on at least 3 nights a week and just under a fifth (17%) had problems nearly every night. Taken together, responses to the two questions on sleep quality do seem to suggest that a considerable proportion of respondents struggle to get enough, good quality sleep, which could impair productivity and performance.

Mental Health

14. To understand employee mental health, respondents were asked how they felt about their life in general, as well as their mood. The questions were on an 11-point scale from 0-10, the chart below shows the proportion of respondents that answered seven or more, indicating good mood and satisfaction with life.

Q2,3,4 - General Health and Wellbeing - Scale of 1-10
-Net: responses of 7-10

Question	Percentage
Overall, how satisfied are you with life in general?	72%
Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?	65%
Overall, to what extent do you feel the things you do in life are worthwhile?	76%

Source: Qa Research 2019 Base: 1426 & 1427 (all respondents)

15. For all three measures, well over half responded between 7-10, indicating a 'good' mood and level of satisfaction with life; for the most part although, responses for the happiness question were quite a bit lower at 65% scoring 7 or more out of 10. This means that around one-in-three respondents indicated some degree of unhappiness (score of 6 or less), a substantial proportion.

16. Respondents were also asked about levels of anxiety, again on an 11-point scale from 0-10. A quarter (25%) of respondents overall indicated that they experienced high anxiety, given the severity this is a very sizeable proportion.

17. Overall, responses to questions pertaining to mental health do suggest that any future wellbeing strategy would need to address the mood of staff, particularly regarding anxiety and happiness.

Stress

18. Certain questions in the survey assessed stress specifically, a key contributor to work-related mental ill health; an issue that is particularly prevalent within the public sector (HSE Work-related Stress, Anxiety or Depression Statistics in Great Britain, published 30th October 2019).

19. To get a sense of overall stress levels, respondents were asked the extent to which they found their job stressful in general, from not at all stressful to extremely stressful. The chart below outlines responses of 'very' and 'extremely stressful' combined, overall and for the top 3 business units:

Q7. In general how do you find your job?
- Net: Very & Extremely Stressful -

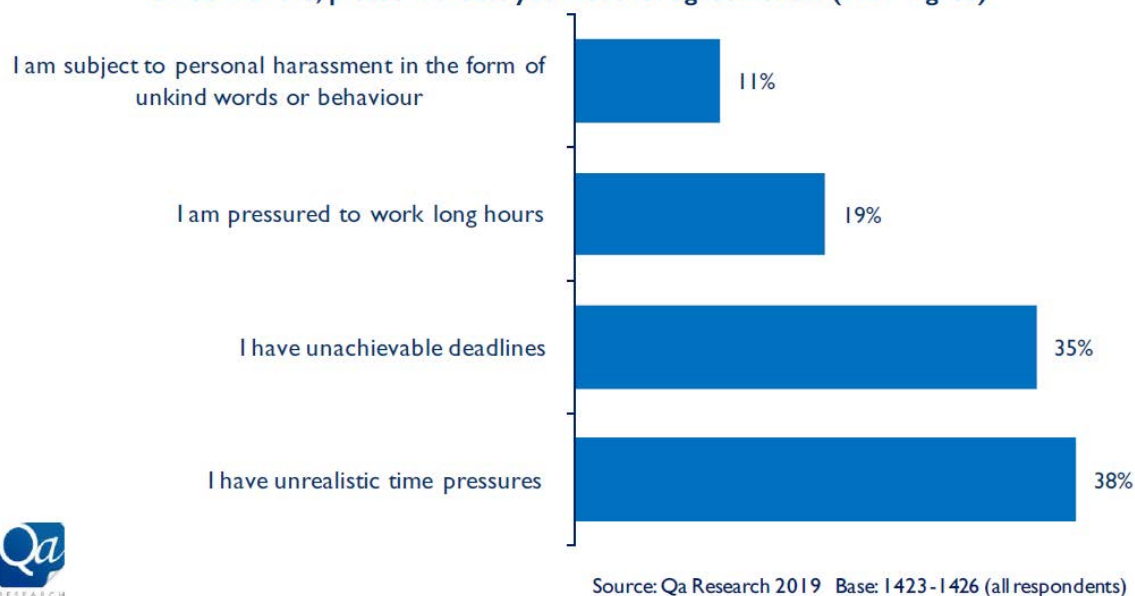|	
Overall (1426)	21%
Adult Services (299)	34%
Children & Family Services (266)	27%
HR & Organisational Change (51)	25%

20. There isn't any consistent national data for this question, so it is difficult to know how this compares with other workforces. To specifically explore what may be causing employees stress; respondents were asked how much stress various aspects of their job had caused them on a 5-point scale. The following table outlines the proportion that responded 4 and 5 out of 5 (NET Stress) indicating a high level of stress.

Considering the last three months, how much stress have the following caused you in your job? NET Stress: responses of 4&5 combined.							
	Your workload	Your level of control over your work	The type of work you have had to do	Your working hours	Your place of work	Your colleagues	Your line manager
Overall (1424-1426)	37%	29%	27%	19%	16%	14%	13%

21. 'Workload' appears to be causing a lot of stress for nearly two-fifths (37%) of respondents. To assess the extent to which this translates into having to take time off work, respondents were asked whether 'anxiety, depression or stress had led to missing a day at work in the last year'. One fifth (20%) of respondents said it had. The majority (76%) said it hadn't. Regardless, one in five having to take time off is a substantial number of lost working days.

22. As part of the questioning around job satisfaction, the following question was asked to gauge respondents' agreement with statements relating to workplace culture. The chart below shows the net agreement for each statement:
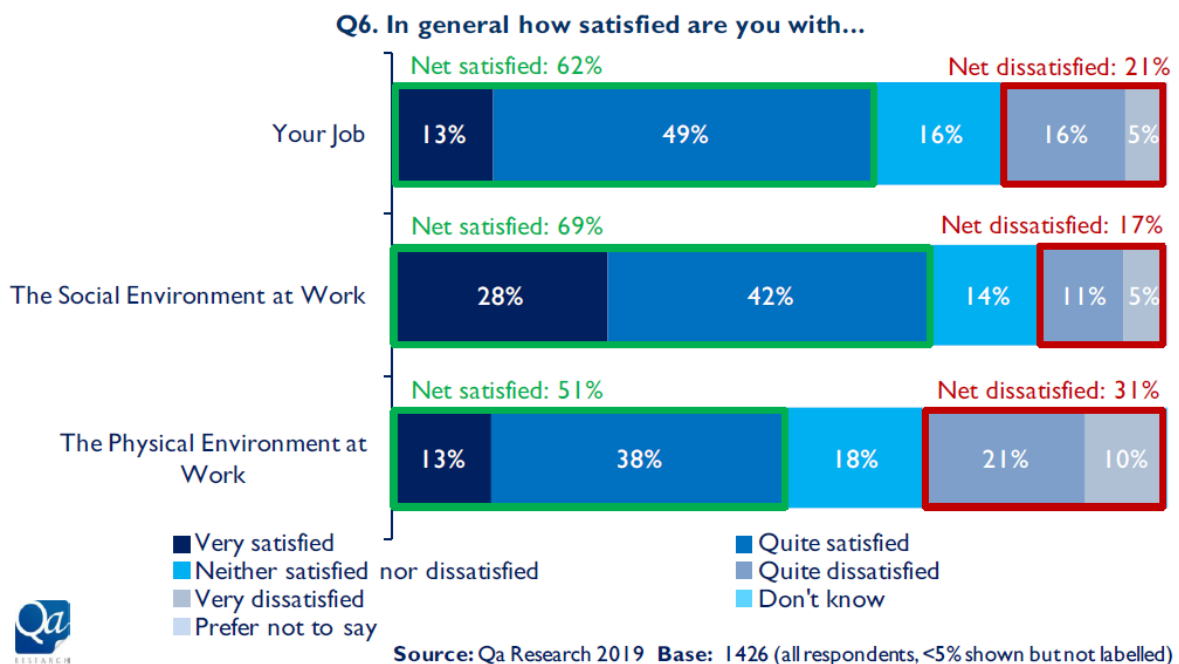
Q11. Considering the working conditions in your workplace over the last three months, please indicate your level of agreement... (NET Agree)

I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour	11%
I am pressured to work long hours	19%
I have unachievable deadlines	35%
I have unrealistic time pressures	38%

Source: Qa Research 2019 Base: 1423-1426 (all respondents)

23. Whilst only 11%, responses to the statement on harassment indicate that at least one-in-ten respondents consider that they have been subjected to some form of workplace harassment in the last three months; this is potentially an area to investigate further, however responses suggest any harassment is unlikely to have been severe with the majority (63% of respondents reporting some form of harassment) only 'somewhat agreeing.

24. These results confirm that there does appear to be an issue with workload for a substantial proportion of respondents. Just over a third (35%) agreed that they had 'unachievable deadlines' and nearly two-fifths (38%) said they worked under 'unrealistic time pressures'. Workload has been shown to be a key cause of work-related stress, depression and anxiety, in particular these two factors of unrealistic deadlines and time pressures. A considerable number of respondents clearly feel they are under a lot of pressure whilst at work.

25. These results suggest that the working conditions (the four cultural factors outlined above in Q.11) for a considerable number of respondents could be increasing their risk of developing stress, depression and anxiety. This is something that is worth looking into as stress, anxiety and depression are a major cause of workplace absence; around 9.9 million working days were lost in 2014-15 as a result.

Job Satisfaction

26. Job satisfaction is a key area of employee health and wellbeing. Employees that are happier in their jobs are more productive, work to a higher standard and are less likely to leave. Respondents were asked to what extent they were satisfied with their job overall, their physical workplace environment (e.g. cleanliness and temperature), as well as the social environment in which they worked (the culture and degree of co-operation).

Q6. In general how satisfied are you with...

Net satisfied: 62% — Net dissatisfied: 21%

Your Job: 13% | 49% | 16% | 16% | 5%

Net satisfied: 69% — Net dissatisfied: 17%

The Social Environment at Work: 28% | 42% | 14% | 11% | 5%

Net satisfied: 51% — Net dissatisfied: 31%

The Physical Environment at Work: 13% | 38% | 18% | 21% | 10%

■ Very satisfied   ■ Quite satisfied
■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied   ■ Quite dissatisfied
■ Very dissatisfied   ■ Don't know
■ Prefer not to say

Source: Qa Research 2019 **Base:** 1426 (all respondents, <5% shown but not labelled)

27. Just over one-in-five (21%) respondents were dissatisfied with their job. This increases to nearly a third (31%) of respondents being unhappy with the physical environment of their workplace.

Conclusions, Solutions and Actions

28. An important wellbeing issue that arose from this survey was that of anxiety and work-related stress, this is an important area to tackle due to the impact on productivity and sickness. Emphasising this, it's an area in which many (55%) would welcome more information and support.

29. The survey asked respondents for their view on what might help improve their health and wellbeing and to create less stress:

    • More manageable workload; fill vacancies

    • Being listed to; better management

    • More autonomy; reduced paperwork; and

    • Better IT and physical environment

30. Some short-term, quick solutions for stress and anxiety are being undertaken. These actions include:

    • Promoting existing support, including the:

        o EAP (Employee Assistance Programme) and Learning and Development offer for stress awareness, management and resilience.

        o Existing staff groups and classes.

- Reinforcing the need to undertake core management requirements consistently and well, including:

  o Supporting managers to have conversations about health, wellbeing, stress and resilience in team meetings and one-to-ones.

  o Encouraging regular breaks and lunch breaks.

- Building on the 'Move More' imitative which encourages

  o Walking catch-ups and debriefs with staff.

  o Staff walking and running groups, e.g. "Couch to 5k"

31. Medium- and longer-term action is being planned. This will centre around the production of an Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy and associated action plan. This strategy will be developed with staff and trade unions through engagements such as focus groups, to understand specific issues and possible solutions to enable a 'whole council' approach to important areas such as mental health.

32. For mental health, the strategy is likely to include initiatives and actions like:

- Development of mental health awareness e.g. mental health awareness built into induction process;

- Implementation of a Mental Health First Aid training programme with training to be completed by the end of the financial year;

- Encouragement for open conversations about mental health and the support available;

- Provision of working conditions that enable work life balance; and

- Mechanisms for monitoring employee mental health and wellbeing.

33. As part of the staff engagement to develop the strategy, a Workplace Health and Wellbeing network is being considered. This network will consist of representatives from each directorate acting as "health and wellbeing champions".

34. It is anticipated that a draft Employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy will be available by the end of the financial year.

Manager training for appraisals

35. Relating to the findings of the wellbeing survey, there is a need for consistency in line management practices as an important factor in reducing stress. An important aspect of this is the completion, and quality of appraisals. The previous report for Q2 included details about manager training for appraisals. Details of actions undertaken since that report and an assessment of the current status is provided below.

36. As of December, there were 716 Managers (defined as being Manager Self Service approvers) 482 (67%) have received appraisal training or are booked on a course over the next two months.   This leaves 234 managers (33%) still needing the training, out of the 234 managers, 139 (59%) are in Children's Services.

37. Every manager who has not completed the training has been contacted and asked to book themselves onto one of our courses. Many additional courses have been added to the Learning and Development gateway to provide for this additional need.

38. We are implementing a bespoke approach in Children's Service which is designed to help with the understanding of how personal supervision, case reviews and appraisals all align – the dates of these courses are now on the Learning and Development Gateway and Children's Services staff have been invited to book onto one of these bespoke courses.

39. Those managers that have not yet booked onto/attended one of our appraisal training sessions are being chased. At the end of January 2020, any remaining managers that have not booked onto or attended one of our training sessions will be escalated to the relevant Director for follow up.