

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No. 6

meeting date: WEDNESDAY, 6 NOVEMBER 2019
 title: EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2019
 submitted by: JANE PEARSON - DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
 principal author: MICHELLE SMITH – HEAD OF HR

1. PURPOSE

1.1 To inform members of the 2019 Employee Survey.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives – } Well informed, trained, happy, healthy, well managed
- Corporate Priorities – } and motivated employees are essential to the Council
- Other Considerations – } achieving its priorities.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 We carry out a staff survey every two years and it is an important part of our staff engagement strategy. The purpose of the survey is to establish an overall picture of how staff feel about working for the Council and to compare results with previous years so that we can identify any trends. We want to know what staff think, what is important to them and how we can all work together to make the Council a good place to work and an organisation that delivers the best service it can to the residents of the borough.

2.2 UNISON are actively involved on the design and delivery of the survey and are supportive of the exercise. This year's survey will build upon previous surveys conducted in 2017, 2015, 2012, 2010, 2008 and 2006. The Action Plan from the last survey in 2017 is attached at Appendix A for information.

2.3 In the early days of our staff survey's there was some concern from staff regarding response rates and anonymity, whereby some staff didn't wish to respond because they felt they could be identified. Since then we have made efforts to ensure that responses are anonymous and only analyse data at a Directorate level rather than at a team or departmental level.

2.4 The survey uses a questionnaire methodology with the survey being made available to complete online. We also produce a paper version of the questionnaire for those employees who do not have access to a PC or prefer to complete it by hand. Paper copies of the questionnaire can then be 'posted' in collection boxes.

2.5 This year's survey will be launched in November and staff will have a couple of weeks in which to complete it. Once the closing date has passed the questionnaires will be analysed by an external research and consultancy organisation – Pearson Insight. They have worked with us on our previous surveys. They will produce a report of key findings which will be presented to CMT in the new year and we will then produce an action plan going forward. Results will be shared with staff in our regular staff briefings and will also be reported to Committee.

2.6 The key issues to be explored in this year's survey will be:

- what is important to staff – we want staff to rank the things that make somewhere a good place to work;

- communication - issues such as formal communications, the Intranet and staff newsletters;
- the Council as a whole - examining issues such as organisational culture, the Council's core values, customer focus and job satisfaction;
- wellbeing – including work life balance, stress and workloads; and
- suggestions for Improvement.

Following analysis of the results we may carry out further minor surveys to explore key findings in more detail.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

3.1 The research has several important strategic applications within our organisation and provides:

- contextual information to be used in the continual development of Managers and Heads of Service;
- intelligence on the culture of our organisation that can be measured against previous surveys to show change over time;
- information on the effectiveness of particular schemes such as flexible working hours and our communication methods; and
- an opportunity for employees to feedback to Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Heads of Service on key organisational issues that impact on their working environment.

4. RESPONSE RATES

4.1 Response rates for previous years is outlined in the table below. We are keen to improve the response rate this year following a dip in 2017.

	2017	2015	2012	2010	2008	2006
Council	46%	54%	49%	47%	38%	52%
Chief Executives	40%	36%	47%	30%	68%	51%
Community Services	24%	24%	20%	25%	17%	39%
Development	*	*	*	26%	33%	53%
Resources	38%	31%	48%	46%	36%	54%

*note the Development directorate was removed from the establishment following an organisational re-structure in 2012.

5. RISK ASSESSMENT

1.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:

1.2

- Resources – There may be some small resource implications depending upon steps taken in the Staff Survey Action plan.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal – None.
- Political – None.
- Reputation – Taking account of staff views and acting upon where possible/appropriate will serve to enhance our reputation as a good employer.

- Equality & Diversity – It is important that all staff have the opportunity to express their views/opinions via a fair and simple process that affords them anonymity and ensures that their views are given serious consideration by CMT, Heads of Service and Members.

6. **CONCLUSION**

6.1 That Committee note the report.

MICHELLE SMITH
HEAD OF HR

JANE PEARSON
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

For further information please ask for Michelle Smith, extension 4402

STAFF SURVEY 2017 - ACTION PLAN

Many of the comments received in the follow up staff survey can be divided in to one of two themes: Communication and Training and Development

AREA	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
A Communication	Staff felt that communications could be improved if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CMT minutes were circulated or made more accessible • More team meetings were held so that all the team and the managers are kept up to date 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minutes of CMT meetings are to be circulated in a more timely manner • Team meetings will be arranged in all service areas to follow on from the quarterly Heads of Service meetings • CMT will communicate with Heads of Service on 'hot topics' and this information will be circulated to staff • Managers to make sure they are visible to all their staff 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Immediately • After the next Heads of Service meeting • Ongoing • Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corporate Management Team and PA to CEX • Heads of Service • CMT and Heads of Service • CMT, Heads of Service, and Managers
	Staff suggested that the Council could be a better organisation to work for if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There was better communication from management 			
	Staff suggested that managers could keep their staff informed by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing the frequency of team meetings • Increasing the day-to-day contact with staff in their department 			
	Staff suggested they would be more proud to work for the Council if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achievements at work were highlighted to all • There was more positive PR communicated • There was an increased focus on good service 			
	Staff suggested they would be more satisfied with their job if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work they completed was more appreciated 	Achievements, positive feedback from customers and positive stories about service delivery are to be communicated better to all staff through Backchat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of HR • Heads of Service

STAFF SURVEY 2017 - ACTION PLAN

AREA	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
<p>B Training and Development</p>	<p>Staff felt training and development could be improved if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More training is allocated • Training is viewed more positively and is given more priority • Staff were kept up to date with the training opportunities which were available 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An Annual Training Plan is to be prepared based on the training needs identified at Performance Appraisals. • The Annual Training Plan is to categorise training requirements as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Corporate training ○ On the job training ○ Personal Development 		
	<p>Staff suggested that managers could let their staff know how they are performing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increasing their focus on training 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Training Plan is to be circulated to Heads of Service and be discussed at a forthcoming Heads of Service meeting to ensure all training needs have been identified. • The Training Plan is then to be reported to Personnel Committee • Corporate training opportunities are to be arranged every twelve months to include regular updating/refresher training on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Training on Excel, Word and Outlook ○ Stress Awareness ○ Safeguarding ○ PREVENT 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May 2018 • May 2018 • Next Heads of Service meeting • September 2018 • Ongoing 	<p>Head of HR and Principal Policy and Performance Officer</p>

STAFF SURVEY 2017 - ACTION PLAN

AREA	ISSUES	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
	<p>Staff believed the appraisal system could be improved if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> It seemed less like a tick box exercise There was an increased awareness that they are mandatory 	<p>Proposed changes to the appraisal system are already underway. This includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Creating a register to ensure all appraisals are undertaken To avoid delays managers no longer have to wait for their own appraisal to have been carried out before they can appraise their staff CMT to receive regular updates on the number of completed appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of HR
	<p>Staff suggested that managers could let their staff know how they are performing by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Giving more feedback and appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff to be given feedback and recognition for a job well done at appraisals 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Service
C Other comments	<p>Staff suggested that the Council could be a better organisation to work for if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There was more consistency in how staff were managed There were better flexible working opportunities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure that relevant policies and procedures are followed and applied consistently to all staff there is a consistent way in how staff are managed eg application of flexible working policy The Flexible Working Hours Scheme was reviewed in February 2018 and it has been agreed that it should be regularly reviewed. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Ongoing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Head of HR Heads of Service
	<p>Staff suggested they would be more satisfied with their job if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Council invested in better resources, offices, IT equipment and software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> New ways of working are to be considered as and when appropriate Corporate training on how to get the best use out of existing IT software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing Every 12 months 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Heads of Service and IT Head of HR

* Feedback and clarification on other matters raised has been provided to staff on the Intranet.