

## EMPLOYMENT AND APPEALS COMMITTEE

17 April 2023

### STAFF SURVEY

#### Report of the Strategic Director for Resources

Strategic Aim:	A modern and effective Council	
Exempt Information	No	
Cabinet Member(s) Responsible:	Cllr K Payne, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Governance and Performance, Change and Transformation	
Contact Officer(s):	Carol Snell, Head of Human Resources	01572 720969 csnell@rutland.gov.uk
Ward Councillors	N/A	

#### DECISION RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Committee:

1. Notes the analysis and commentary regarding the Council's employee staff survey that took place in October 2022.

#### 1 PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 To provide Members with a summary of the responses and feedback from an All Staff Survey that took place in October/November 2022.

#### 2 STAFF SURVEY – PROCESS

- 2.1 The Chief Executive was committed to undertaking a full staff survey in 2022. The organisation has gone through much change over the last two years. – change of Chief Executive and leadership posts, response to the pandemic, changes to ways of working, and development of a new Corporate Strategy. It was therefore considered timely to reach out to staff and invite their feedback on how the organisation is doing and seek their opinion on a range of issues about their role and working environment.
- 2.2 Whilst it has therefore been some time since our last full survey, we have carried out a series of shorter and focused 'pulse surveys' over the last 3 years.

- 2.3 In previous years, the Council has undertaken such surveys through an external provider. For this survey, it was managed in house to mitigate the costs and also to recognise our own capacity – technology and analysis – in carrying out the process in-house. (*Expected cost £7,000-£10,000 for external provision*).
- 2.4 Staff were prompted in advance – through the All Staff Briefing and All Staff emails that we would be undertaking a survey. They were provided with a link to the survey through Survey Monkey but also advised that arrangements could be made to complete a hard copy or word version if they were not able to use the online form. No requests were made.
- 2.5 Importantly, staff were reminded that the survey is 100% confidential – they were not asked for their name or team. Neither is it possible to identify the source email or completion point of the survey.

### **3 STAFF SURVEY – RESULTS**

- 3.1 Our overall response level was 56.5%, broken down over the Directorates as follows (*%age of response*):
- |                     |     |
|---------------------|-----|
| • People – Adults   | 25% |
| • People – Children | 19% |
| • Places            | 28% |
| • Resources         | 20% |
| • Not indicated     | 8%  |
- 3.2 Whilst this is a lower response level to previous surveys, it still represents a statistically valid survey. Feedback from other authorities who have also undertaken a staff survey have advised us of similar response levels.
- 3.3 Appendix A is a copy of the All-Staff Newsletter that was shared with staff in December 2022 and with Cabinet in January 2023 and which highlights the key findings of the survey.
- 3.4 Overall the survey provides a positive story with an overall satisfaction level of 68.2% - on par with previous satisfaction levels of 65% and 68%.
- 3.5 Other specific headlines are:
- Our staff are proud to work for the Council – they feel committed to the Council and to the Community.
  - They are enthusiastic about our services and their role and feel we always give of our best.
  - Staff understand that we need to change and their responses around organisational culture highlight the passion staff feel about their role and the contribution they make.
  - They feel they have clear expectations and that the Council makes good use of their skills and abilities

- Importantly, staff feel that they are treated with respect and that the Council positively and actively supports employee health and wellbeing.
- There are some strong messages about communication – staff feel it is a high priority in their team. The majority of staff also feel that the Council regularly updates staff on key issues and messages.

3.6 We also took the opportunity to re-present previous survey questions regarding Ways of Working. Staff continue to feel that Hybrid working has improved their work life balance. Whilst the most common working pattern remains being in the office 25% of the working time, the survey showed a slight increase in frequency of attendance at the workplace. A small number of staff responded that they do not attend the workplace at all – this is not in line with our Hybrid working arrangements and managers and staff have been reminded of the importance of ensuring some workplace attendance.

## 4 LEARNING POINTS

4.1 As with any survey or request for feedback – there are messages to be heard and lessons to be learnt. Key learning points are as below:

- Ensure that any change process includes a review phase – opportunity to reflect, seek feedback and learn.
- We are continuing to promote and share the Council's employee values that were developed during 2022 – this includes how we structure and present communications to staff, a refresh of our My Conversation Model and will also feature in our Management programme during 2023
- Invest more in on-the-job induction to help and support our new starters in their new role – this is important for retention.
- Be more open about opportunities for development and progression – to help people meet their aspirations and ambitions – again this is important for retention.
- We need to be more mindful about the hours our staff are working – this needs an open dialogue and discussion to help manage workloads and pressures.
- We could do more to ensure that we liaise and communicate with other teams in the organisation where our services overlap, for example through Teams Meetings, face to face meetings, workshops, telephone calls.
- We need to better demonstrate our commitment to our My Conversation model – ensuring every employee has the opportunity for regular conversation and engagement with their manager.

4.2 In addressing these, we feel we have a good infrastructure and building blocks to help us do better but will continue to look for pathways for improvement. For example:

4.2.1 We have developed a comprehensive Performance Framework against the Corporate Strategy which in turn informs Service, Directorate, Team and Individual

priorities - providing clarity of expectation. Managers therefore have a framework to enable them to work within, determine priorities and ensure that workloads for staff are achievable and manageable.

4.2.2 We carried out a refresh of our internal communication – comprising a weekly staff bulletin and a monthly e-magazine. We also continue with our regular All Staff Briefing sessions led by the Chief Executive. The redesign of our bulletins have enabled us to demonstrate the employee Values and ensure that we shine a light on success and achievement.

4.2.3 We have reviewed and relaunched our My Conversation model in order to:

- Recharge the principles and benefits of My Conversation.
- Remind ourselves of the importance and power of ‘conversations’ and meaningful connections – particularly in a Hybrid working model.
- Clarify and re-inforce the connection to performance management.
- Ensure a clear link to the revised employee values.

*(My Conversation is the Council’s framework and approach to performance management and staff development – initially developed in March 2020).*

4.2.4 Designed a Leadership Development programme for our Extended Leadership Team. This will progress into a Management programme for our wider management cohort during 2023/24. The focus here is about investing in key skills to enable the organisation and our staff to perform productively and effectively.

4.2.5 Developed more targeted and inclusive ways for our staff to become engaged in our Equality, Diversity and Inclusion agenda and objectives.

4.2.6 Continued to promote ‘Wellbeing’ – working alongside our Employee Assistance provider and an enthusiastic group of our staff who are committed to helping our staff be ‘well’.

4.2.7 We are undertaking an end-to-end review of how we onboard and induct staff to the Council to ensure their experience is a welcoming and positive one.

4.3 The Council will carry out a further survey during 2023/24 and will therefore be able to compare and track our progress.

## **5 CONSULTATION**

5.1 Nothing further required for this report.

## **6 ALTERNATIVE OPTIONS**

6.1 Not applicable – the report is advisory.

## **7 FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None arising from this report. Any initiatives or developments that emerge from the Staff Survey will be within existing budget.

## **8 LEGAL AND GOVERNANCE CONSIDERATIONS**

8.1 None required.

## **9 DATA PROTECTION IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 A Data Protection Impact Assessments (DPIA) has not been completed as there are no issues arising in connection with this report.

## **10 EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

10.1 An Equality Impact Assessment (EqIA) has not been completed as there are no equality issues arising from this paper.

## **11 COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None arising from this paper.

## **12 HEALTH AND WELLBEING IMPLICATIONS**

12.1 None – other than those outlined relating to the Health and Wellbeing of staff.

## **13 ORGANISATIONAL IMPLICATIONS**

13.1 Human Resource implications – the Council has a duty of care to its employees and is committed to providing an effective and productive environment for our staff to work in to enable them to be their best.

## **14 CONCLUSION AND SUMMARY OF REASONS FOR THE RECOMMENDATIONS**

14.1 It is important for the Council to understand and listen to the views and experiences of our staff in carrying out their day-to-day work – how their working environment helps or hinders their performance and ability. The Council is only able to deliver against its aims and objectives through our staff. A Staff Survey provides one avenue to enable us to reach out and ask specific questions and obtain real time evidence and data to inform future decisions and actions.

## **15 BACKGROUND PAPERS**

15.1 None

## **16 APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Staff Newsletter – Employee Staff Survey

A Large Print or Braille Version of this Report is available upon request – Contact 01572 722577.