18 January 2017	ITEM: 7

Corporate Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Staff Survey 2016

Wards and communities affected:	Key Decision:
All	No

Report of: Jan Cox – Strategic Lead HR & OD

Accountable Head of Service: Jan Cox – Strategic Lead HR & OD

Accountable Director: Jackie Hinchliffe – Director of HR, OD & Transformation

This report is public

Executive Summary

Members received a report in September 2016 outlining the results of the 2016 Staff Survey and detailing the highest and lowest areas of performance. This report provides an update on the corporate actions taken in response to the survey findings and the plans to assess impact with a 'pulse survey' in Spring 2017.

1.   Recommendation

1.1   Members to note and comment on the corporate actions taken to respond to the 2016 Staff Survey findings.

2.   Introduction and Background

2.1   The 2016 staff survey was undertaken by BMG Research in April 2016. The survey went live on 11th April 2016 and ran for three weeks. During which time all employees were given the opportunity to complete a survey.

- A total of 1,475 responses were received, giving an excellent response rate of 71%, which is in line with the rate achieved in 2014 (72%).
- A total of 1,228 online responses were received out of 1,483 that were sent, which is a response rate of 83%.
- 247 staff completed paper copies, which is a response rate of 41%.

2.2   The outcomes of the survey were widely communicated though manager and staff conferences, posters and internal communications. BMG facilitated action planning workshops for each directorate and for the council as a whole,

enabling the development of focussed action plans. The key council wide priorities were identified as:

- Employee Engagement
- Induction
- IT
- Motivation
- Change Management
- Communication (particularly across directorates)

2.3 People Board provide the overall governance of the delivery of the action plans with DMTs, the Corporate and Directorate Workforce Groups and the council's Staff Forums contributing to the development and delivery of the interventions.

## 3.	Progress to Date

## 3.1	Employee Engagement

3.1.1 Engagement of staff links to a variety of areas including turnover, retention, wellbeing, absence, innovation and productivity. Engagement needs to be considered along with communication and sharing information.

3.1.2 Actions since survey:
- Additional analysis carried out to identify key indicators of engagement
- Directorates have been informed and guided around teams and areas of least engagement and indicators
- Directorate Workforce Groups established and supported by HR&OD to increase engagement across the council
- Engagement already showing signs of success:
    - 70% increase in nominations for Staff Awards 2016 compared to 2015
    - Wellbeing programme activity offsite including blood pressure checks, massages and free products
    - Communication posters and training offers via network of key personnel in satellite offices – via face to face engagement visits and digital communications
    - Increased Continuous Professional Development (CPD) applications across directorates

## 3.2	Induction

3.2.1 Effective induction is critical to ensure new employees are welcomed to the council, their expectations met and they are retained. Although the survey result was not negative it did show a 14% reduction in satisfaction from 2014

across the indicators. The Corporate Induction had been extensively reviewed following the appointment of the new Chief Executive in September 2015. Additional analysis undertaken following the survey demonstrated the changes had resulted in a positive improvement in feedback. However, consistency of experience and timeliness of information within local inductions were identified as key challenges.

3.2.2 Actions since survey:

- Focus group involving cohort of pre survey and post survey new staff plus members of Corporate Workforce Group and Staff Forums
- Trial and identification of improvements for induction checklist
- Update of resources on In-Form to support induction for staff and managers
- Introduction of additional elements including corporate systems, Health and Safety i.e.: lone worker, DSE, hot desking and remote working
- Introduction of Manager Induction
- Analysis of a re-induction
- Continued evaluation of both corporate and local induction
- Proposal of reviewed and improved induction including the corporate element to change to a "Welcome" event with local induction undertaking other areas of information
- New Recruitment and Selection training delivered in house incorporating a renewed directive for induction and probation as standard with expectations for Managers to follow for all staff

3.3   IT

3.3.1 Despite considerable improvements to the IT infrastructure since 2014 only 32% of staff indicated that the systems meet the needs of the business. Detailed analysis and feedback from the conferences, a focus group, the corporate workforce group and the IT Service Desk identified two key areas for action – Communication and Skills. In order to effectively progress the council's digital agenda and new ways of working is it critical staff understand the need for corporate systems and have the skills and confidence to utilise IT to its greatest effect.

3.3.2 Communication - Actions since survey:

- 4 targeted workshops have been run with selected 'remote staff'. This told us that we had good solutions for corporate training packages such as Objective but challenges with basic IT skills

- Planned Digital Strategy Workshops to communicate vision and understanding with support via a Digital newsletter to inform changes and improvements.
- Creation of library of tips/shortcuts and guides generated via intelligence from Service Desk and focus group with ongoing feed to measure change
- Improvements specifically around Phone Book and new user familiarity of desktop

3.3.3 Skills - Actions since survey:

- Additional induction element to include use of corporate systems and support for IT skills.
- Drop in sessions for January 2017 onwards to share/promote online learning.
- Thurrock Learning Zone review in March 2017 with increased use of platform for self-serve development and access to online resources
- Planned framework of development support across council for IT Skills
    - Basic IT skills programme for all teams, user led/self-serve, digital delivery where suitable with health check at recruitment stage to drive up IT literacy
    - Core offer IT skills for corporate programmes including VDI, Objective, ESS, MSS including Manager 1-1 sessions
    - Enhanced offer for teams using specific software and identifying shared learning and development for linked areas of work

3.4 Motivation

3.4.1 Motivation is a complex measure and impacted by a number of factors. The survey demonstrated a decrease since 2014. One of the key drivers of motivation is management behaviour, particularly recognition so the focus in this area is supporting managers to develop and utilise the behaviours needed to motivate teams.

3.4.2 Actions since Survey:
- Motivation included as a key action and consideration for all Directorate Action Plans
- A revised Leadership Development programme to be implemented in 17/18
- Manager development programme enhanced through bite-size sessions including "Managing in a Coaching Culture"
- Corporate Workforce Group and Directorate Action Groups directed to challenge and investigate motivational factors within their areas

- Motivation within teams communicated via Organisational Development with suggested guidance on what motivates staff
- Review of the skills set of the People and Organisational Development team

3.5 Change Management

3.5.1 Change Management was one of the lowest scoring areas across the council, although the result was in line with the benchmark. It was prioritised as a key area for action in recognition of the considerable change the council will be facing in the next few years and our commitment to effective change management. Key area of change in the next 3 years will be around Service Reviews and areas of improvement in change management will be evaluated to measure impact of improvements.

3.5.2 Actions since survey:
- Change Management is a standard priority and area of improvement for all directorate Action Plans
- Service Review Programme includes an engagement and communications plan with ongoing evaluation
- Front line staff involved in Service Review teams
- Support to all Directorate Workforce Groups via Organisational Development
- Information sharing via 'Team Briefing' to ensure all staff are engaged and understand reasons and intentions of change
- Staff Matters development programme refreshed from model of Serco Transition to support managers, staff and teams going through change
- Leadership & Management Development programmes to embed change management standards and best practice

3.6 Communications

3.6.1 The majority of the communications indicators were positive; the key factor identified by the survey was communication across directorates.

3.6.2 Actions since survey:

- Directorate newsletters in central area of Objective for all staff to access
- Internal and External communication departments centralised to align key messages across council
- Residents E-newsletter (to support 80% resident/staff in organisation) launched with staff encouraged to sign up

- Leadership Group focus on corporate working and sharing information across and through hierarchal channels
- Culture of "All Channel's Open" to be used in communications in all departments to be embedded across organisation
- Reviewed Thurrock Manager in collaboration with Service Boards, press office and identified HR areas to inform managers on wider information to be disseminated to staff
- Updates to improvements and actions via In-Form, Insight and via Corporate Workforce Group and Directorate Workforce Group

3.7 **Ongoing Progress**

Monitoring of the ongoing progress of actions from Staff Survey is being tracked and followed up using the Corporate Wide Action Plan (attached at Appendix 1). A red, amber, green (RAG) system is used on the plan to measure actions identified, progressing or completed. Dates on the action plan indicate work commencement and many are ongoing and being developed. The RAG system will be updated to show status of actions with reviews of all actions for January 2017and beyond being followed up by Organisational Development.

4. Communication and Evaluation

4.1 The response to the survey is communicated through extensive engagement of workforce groups and through a 'you said, we did' campaign to ensure the whole workforce can see the benefit of participating in the survey.

4.2 A staff 'pulse survey' will be undertaken in the Spring of 2017 to assess and evaluate the impact of the actions to date and enable action plans to be modified if required.

4.3 The survey results have informed the development of the council's People Strategy to ensure improvements are embedded in the longer term and support a high performing workforce.

5. Reasons for Recommendation

5.1 To advise the committee of the actions taken and planned in response to the 2016 staff survey and to convey progress.

6. Consultation (including Overview and Scrutiny, if applicable)

6.1 Consultation with workforce groups is ongoing as part of the development and delivery of the action plans. Specific events at manager and staff conferences have engaged the wider workforce.

7. **Impact on corporate policies, priorities, performance and community impact**

7.1   A high performing and motivated workforce is instrumental in the delivery of the council's priorities and in effective customer service.

8. **Implications**

8.1   **Financial**

Implications verified by: **Carl Tomlinson**
                             Finance Manager

The report provides an update on the actions taken to respond to the 2016 Staff Survey and does not result in any direct financial implications. Actions undertaken and planned will have to be met from existing budgets.

8.2   **Legal**

Implications verified by: **David Lawson**

                             Monitoring Officer

The report does not raise any legal implications.

8.3   **Diversity and Equality**

Implications verified by: **Becky Price**

                             Community Development & Equalities Tea,

The staff forums have worked with HR & OD to assess any potential diversity and equality implications arising from the survey. No implications have been identified.

8.4   **Other implications** (where significant) – i.e. Staff, Health, Sustainability, Crime and Disorder)

No other implications.

9. **Background papers used in preparing the report** (including their location on the Council's website or identification whether any are exempt or protected by copyright):

- Corporate O&S report September 2016
- Staff Survey results and action plans

10. **Appendices to the report**

- Appendix 1 - Corporate Wide Action Plan

Report Author:

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