

SLOUGH BOROUGH COUNCIL

REPORT TO: Employment & Appeals Committee

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PART I **FOR INFORMATION**

STAFF SURVEY RESULTS UPDATE

1. Purpose of Report

The purpose of this report is to provide the Employment and Appeals Committee an overview of the results of the council wide staff survey conducted in autumn 2016.

2. Recommendation(s)/Proposed Action

The Committee is requested to note the report

3. Supporting Information

This report provides results from the 2016 staff survey.

Scope of the survey:

The survey was for SBC staff only. (This includes library staff and a small number of Cambridge Education staff who had returned to the council by the time of the survey.) The survey did not cover partner organisations such as the Trust.

The survey was run by the employee engagement forum and administered using SurveyMonkey, a cost effective way to design, collect and analyse results. A web link was circulated to staff and a paper version made available to those without computer access.

The survey was structured around four key themes: employee voice, organisational integrity (living out the council's values), strategic direction (the council's vision and direction) and management.

The survey included free text spaces for staff to briefly explain their answers and the opportunity to comment on anything else they wished to raise that was not specifically covered in the survey questions.

Purpose of the survey:

The purpose of the survey was to assess the level of employee engagement across the council.

Employee engagement is described as ‘the extent to which people feel personally involved in the success of the council’, meaning staff speak positively of the organisation, are committed to the council’s goals and values, and are motivated to do their best for the organisation and contribute to the council’s success.

Proven benefits of highly engaged employees include increased customer satisfaction, the ability to attract and retain high quality staff, greater productivity and reduced absenteeism.

The results of the survey serve to highlight successes and identify areas for improvement.

Plans are being drawn up by the employee engagement forum, directorate SMTs and senior leadership to take actions forward in response to the survey results.

Key findings:

The following are the key findings of the 2016 survey and the main comparisons with previous results.

An overall response rate of 60% was achieved, compared to 42% in 2015. This is a good return rate for an optional survey.

Some of the top line results include:

- 89 percent of staff go the extra mile to help SBC succeed
- 88 percent of staff enjoy their job
- 54 percent of staff feel appreciated by residents
- 56 percent of staff feel appreciated by managers
- 77 percent of staff feel appreciated by colleagues
- 87 percent of staff know how their work contributes to the performance of the council
- 90 percent of staff rate the council average or above as an employer
- 33 percent of staff have been with the council for 10 years or more.

Next steps:

The results have been shared with staff at a series of briefings in January. They have also been shared with senior leadership, corporate consultative forum and councillors.

More than 1,700 individual comments were received and the employee engagement forum is analysing and responding to these – the comments will be grouped into themes and an update provided for each one.

To address the issues raised by the survey results and staff comments, the forum is updating the council-wide employee engagement plan for 2017/18.

The forum produces an employee engagement plan each year. Examples of actions undertaken in response to the previous survey include:

- Working to raised the profile of the employee engagement forum
- Organising the annual staff conference
- Conducting the annual staff survey and analysing the results
- Getting answers to staff's questions for senior leadership team
- Offering managers and staff support with engagement
- Encouraging senior leadership to visit teams around the council
- Staff comments boxes
- Promoting the SBC Heroes scheme to recognise staff who go over and above
- Giving input to council-wide initiatives as a voice for staff, e.g. the values refresh.

Additionally, employees are encouraged to take ownership of engagement by:

- Attending employee engagement drop-in sessions
- Attending staff conference
- Sharing information with other teams and sending news and success stories to the communications team so it can be shared in Grapevine
- Keeping informed via Newsround, Grapevine and insite
- Reading the employee engagement page on the staff intranet
- Having a photo in the phonebook on insite – helps other teams recognise you and builds 'one council'
- Getting involved in employee wellbeing events – a good way to meet people and build 'one council'
- Sharing suggestions via the staff comment boxes
- Nominating anyone who goes over and above as an SBC Hero, by contacting employeeforum@slough.gov.uk

A number of actions in response to the 2016 survey have already been taken forward, for example in relation to facilities and HR policies. The January staff briefings with the interim chief executive, leader of the council and chair of the employee engagement forum were the first in a series of briefings designed to improve communication with and engagement with staff.

Additionally the management team for each directorate will be looking at the results for their own area and developing directorate level action plans.

Actions in response to the survey will continue throughout the 2017/18 year.

An update on the actions will be given at the annual staff conference organised by the employee engagement forum in May 2017.

The staff conference brings employees, managers and councillors together as one council, raising the visibility of senior leadership and providing opportunities to engage staff in open conversation and ensure staff views are heard. It is an important opportunity to communicate the council's vision, values, direction and ways of working to engage staff with the council's strategic direction. Additionally, the conference is a key moment to recognise and celebrate successes. As such, the conference is one of the key actions for the council to build on employee engagement.

Conclusion:

The 2016 survey received a good response rate and while it cannot give a perfect picture of the council, it is a useful snapshot. The survey results provide a 'temperature check' of how things are and the direction they are moving in.

There are some positive results to celebrate and continue building on, such as team relationships and staff's commitment to their jobs and willingness to go the extra mile, as well as areas of development which we will be working on with action plans being put in place for the 2017/18 year.

4. Background Papers

None

5. Appendices

Appendix 1: Slides of Results – to be handed out at the meeting