

Report of the Director of Resources and Housing

Report to Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources)

Date: 22 February 2018

Subject: Update - Employee Engagement Survey and Appraisals

Are specific electoral Wards affected? If relevant, name(s) of Ward(s):	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Are there implications for equality and diversity and cohesion and integration?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
Is the decision eligible for Call-In?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Does the report contain confidential or exempt information? If relevant, Access to Information Procedure Rule number: Appendix number:	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

Summary of main issues

1. This report provides a summary of the Council's annual Employee Engagement Survey and mid-year appraisal round.

Recommendations

2. It is recommended that the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) note this update. Comments are welcomed.

1. Purpose of this report

- 1.1 To share top level findings from the Council's 2017 Employee Engagement Survey.
- 1.2 To share mid-year appraisal completion rates for the Council.

2. Background Information

- 2.1 This is the fourth year that we have run the Employee Survey in its current format, with a set of questions aligned to our 'Doing our Best' ambitions, values and manager habits. It is one of the important ways by which we listen to staff views, ideas and experiences at work.
- 2.2 Our staff networks also provide a valuable opportunity to listen to our employees, and we estimate that around 1000 employees are now connected to our staff networks. Many of our networks have relaunched and refocussed in 2017, and are having a growing influence and positive impact.
- 2.3 Our current appraisal scheme has been running for the last 5 years. They helps us to drive up performance levels across the organisation, and encourage all employees to 'be their best'. Our aim is to ensure that everyone has a **quality** appraisal that includes a conversation about performance, development and aspirations. The council values sit at the heart of these conversations.

3. Main Issues

Employee Engagement Survey 2017

- 3.1 The survey was conducted during October and November 2017, and was completed by **over 7000 council employees** (49% of all staff). Online and paper based versions of the survey are available to give all staff the opportunity to share their views.
- 3.2 As a council, we achieved **an overall engagement score of 7.6 out of 10**. This was based on answers to a question 'If a friend asked you to give a score from 1 to 10 working for Leeds City Council, what it would be?' All directorates scored over 7 out of 10.
- 3.3 A full summary of the council level results can be found in **Appendix 1**.
- 3.4 Given the tough climate we continue to work in, it's hugely encouraging the see a strong set of results, which show we are getting a lot right. The narrative has been positive for the last 4 years.
- 3.5 We are neither perfect nor complacent though, and we know there are challenges still to work through. Our two lowest performing areas this year are: Appraisals – where only 56% of people agree that their appraisal is a valuable use of time that helps get the best from them and: What I say counts and makes a difference to the way things are – where 57% of staff agree.
- 3.6 We are working hard to look at new ways to engage front line services, and Scrutiny received a report in December 2017 that set out work around a Can-Do approach and Recognition.
- 3.7 We have already conducted some staff focus groups to better understand staff experiences around appraisals, and will shortly be drawing up some options to improve how they work for all.

- 3.8 Whilst each directorate and service will want to take action on their own findings from the survey, this year we are looking to identify 3-5 key themes across the council, and use them as the basis for targeted and concentrated deeper dive focus group improvement work during 2018.
- 3.9 In the 2017 survey, we reintroduced a 'free text' comments box, to capture more qualitative and descriptive information about how staff are feeling, and the things they would like to see change and improve. The analysis of this is currently taking place, and will sit alongside the information in Appendix 1, to aid our improvement planning.
- 3.10 We will also analyse the results by different groups (managers, non-managers, age, carer, religion, sexual orientation, disability, ethnic group, grade and gender). This will help us to pick out the different experiences by group.
- 3.11 Each year, we report a full council position along with directorate and chief officer level reports. At all times we maintain anonymity, to ensure staff trust and confidence. Nobody looks at individual responses.
- 3.12 If there are insufficient completed questionnaires for analysis to be statistically significant, then no report will be provided. This is because we do not want services making decisions on data that it not robust and could lead to changes that are not needed.
- 3.13 For the purposes of this report, only the top level, council wide results are available. The further detailed reports will follow.

Mid-year appraisal results

- 3.14 The completion rates for mid-year appraisals can be found in the table below. This shows that 96% of all council employees completed their reviews on time, in the period Oct-Dec 2017.

Division	Complete Number	Complete %	Incomplete Number	Incomplete %	Total Employees
Adults & Health	1271	96.88%	41	3.13%	1312
Children & Families	1798	83.78%	348	16.22%	2146
City Development	1378	98.92%	15	1.08%	1393
Civic Enterprise Leeds	2582	100.00%	0	0.00%	2582
Communities & Environment	2431	97.51%	62	2.49%	2493
Resources & Housing	3339	97.29%	93	2.71%	3432
Grand Total	12799	95.82%	559	4.18%	13358

- 3.15 We have worked hard as a council over recent years, to stress the importance of appraisals and make sure all employees have the opportunity. Completion rates for both full and mid-year appraisal returns now consistently come in at around 96-98%.
- 3.16 As each appraisal window closes, we still push to make sure that 100% returns are reached.
- 3.17 The **quality** of the conversation remains our key aim, and we know that there is room for further improvement here. As shown in the 2017 staff survey results, 19% of staff do not feel that their appraisal is as valuable as it could be. As already mentioned – review work is underway on this.

4. Consultation and Engagement

4.1 Our staff survey, staff networks and appraisal conversations are valuable routes for gauging staff views and opinion to drive improvement at work.

5. Equality and Diversity / Cohesion and Integration

5.1 Our staff survey and staff network feedback give valuable insight into the real work experiences of different staff groups and employees. We are using this to become a more inclusive workplace.

5.2 As one of the largest employers in the City, the council is working hard with its own workforce to create a work place culture that is truly inclusive. We have a legal duty to eliminate any forms of discrimination, harassment and victimisation

6. Council Policies and City Priorities

6.1 The Council's values underpin what we do and how we work to achieve the priorities outlined in the Best Council Plan – and they sit at the heart of all our work around engagement and appraisals.

6.2 There are real business benefits to be gained from having a high performing, inclusive workforce, not just in terms of unlocking and maximising our own talent, but also through increased customer trust and confidence and improved service delivery and outcomes

7. Resources and Value for Money

7.1 The engagement survey and appraisals are two ways through which we work with our employees to maximise our investment in staffing, and improve the performance of the organisation.

8. Legal Implications, Access to Information and Call In

8.1 The council has a public sector duty under the Equality Act 2010 (the Act) to:

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it
- foster good relations between persons who share a relevant protected characteristic and persons who do not share it. NB the relevant protected characteristics are: age; disability; gender reassignment; pregnancy and maternity; race; religion or belief; sex; sexual orientation.

9. Risk Management

9.1 A big effort is made to ensure that we hear the views of all staff, including those who don't have regular IT access at work. This year, approximately 30% of those staff without regular IT access at work successfully completed paper questionnaires. We need to find more new and different ways for engaging with all staff, but particular those in front line teams without IT access.

10. Conclusions

- 10.1 This report highlights the latest results from our most recent Employee Engagement Survey and Appraisal round.
- 10.2 Appraisal completions rates are consistently high, but more work is required to improve the overall appraisal experience for some employees, and options are being drawn up.
- 10.3 The overall Employee Engagement feedback is positive, as we continue to listen to and work with all staff to create an inclusive, high performing culture and workplace.

11. Recommendations

- 11.1 It is recommended that the Scrutiny Board (Strategy and Resources) note this update on appraisals and employee engagement. Comments are welcomed.

12 Background documents¹

None used.

¹ The background documents listed in this section are available to download from the Council's website, unless they contain confidential or exempt information. The list of background documents does not include published works.