

Committee: **Corporate Overview Scrutiny Committee**

Date of meeting: **5 December 2019**

Report Subject: **Staff Survey 2019 – Summary Results**

Portfolio Holder: **Councillor N Daniels, Leader / Executive Member Corporate Services**

Report Submitted by: **Michelle Morris, Managing Director
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Reporting Pathway – report deadline 28								
Directorate Management Team	Corporate Leadership Team	Portfolio Holder / Chair	Audit Committee	Democratic Services Committee	Scrutiny Committee	Executive /Committee	Council	Other (please state)
w/c 4/11/19	12/11/19	25/11/19			5/12/19	18/12/19		

1. Purpose of the Report

To present the high level findings of the 2019 Staff Survey and the resulting management actions.

2. Scope and Background

- 2.1 Staff Engagement is about developing productive working relationships and a working environment where employees are willing and able to make the best use of their skills and abilities for the benefit of their employer and themselves. Team leaders and line managers have a vital role which is to motivate and inspire those they manage, to set direction for the team and provide an environment which enables people to work productively together. Organisations where employees show high levels of engagement demonstrate a greater capacity for innovation, experience higher retention rates, less absenteeism and fewer work related accidents.
- 2.2 Staff engagement typically assessing employee's willingness to:
- Go beyond individual job roles to assist colleagues or customers
 - Take advantage of new opportunities
 - Adapt readily to new circumstances
 - Make suggestions for improvements
 - Put forward new ideas
- 2.3 Typically organisations conduct a regular staff survey to assess levels of staff engagement. Since 2014 Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council has undertaken a staff survey every two years as a means of gauging its levels of staff engagement. Employees remain anonymous in completing the survey and are only asked to provide high level details e.g. their work area, and information related to equalities and diversity.

2.3 The 2019 staff survey was conducted between 18th January and 3rd March 2019 and open to all employees (excluding school based teaching staff).

2.4 The data from the survey was analysed and the following activities undertaken:

- High level findings presented to CLT and Wider CLT in May 2019.
- Directorate specific analysis provided to support service area action planning, supported by Organisational Development.
- Action plans discussed with members of WCLT through the performance coaching sessions with particular attention to any specific hot spots.
- A high level overview of the results and findings provided to all staff via the Managing Directors Message.
- Relaunch of a bi monthly revised staff newsletter to share the vision of the organisation and create a shared sense of purpose.
- The introduction of the Manager's Brief to facilitate two way communication. This is published on a bi monthly basis.
- Launch of the Managers Conference in October 2019.
- Commitment to ongoing engagement with managers to encourage participation in decision making.
- The second round of staff engagement events for all staff with political and professional leadership are being planned, following the events held in autumn 2018.
- Commitment to a Leadership Development Programme to include empowering leadership as a topic.
- CLT meetings to take place a various locations across the borough to increase visibility of senior leaders.

3. **Options for Recommendation**

Option 1

That Corporate Overview scrutiny committee endorses the report prior to it being presented to Executive.

Option 2

That Corporate Overview scrutiny committee makes specific comments on the report prior to it being presented to Executive.

4. **Evidence of how this topic supports the achievement of the Corporate Plan / Statutory Responsibilities / Blaenau Gwent Well-being Plan**

4.1 The survey builds on the commitment to staff engagement outlined in the Council's Engagement Strategy, recognising the vital contribution of staff in delivering positive outcomes for the community. Staff engagement provides a sense of satisfaction and meaning in work, a feeling of belonging and the opportunity to develop and use personal skills and abilities to make a contribution that is valued and appreciated.

5. Implications Against Each Option

5.1 *Impact on Budget (short and long term impact)*

There are no specific budget considerations from this report.

5.2 *Risk including Mitigating Actions*

Channels to participate were actively promoted across staff. The findings related to those who chose to respond, therefore is not representative of all staff. The survey is recognised as one method of hearing the views of staff.

5.3 *Legal*

There are no specific legal implications of this report.

5.4 *Human Resources*

The results of the survey are used as part of the Annual Performance Coaching Reviews of WCLT. OD supports directorates in developing actions to respond to the findings.

6 Supporting Evidence Performance Information and Data

6.1 Summary of headline findings from the survey:

- i. An improved response rate of employees participating from previous years. A total of 726 staff members completed the survey giving an overall response rate of 45% which is an improvement on both the 2016 and 2014 surveys (33% and 41% respectively);
- ii. Improvement in staff job satisfaction (those who are very or fairly satisfied with their job) up 4% from 2014 to 76%;
- iii. 81% of staff agree that they 'always' or 'most of the time' feel motivated to do a good job, up from 79% in 2016;
- iv. Some notable positive trends on key relationship issues such as 'feeling valued', 'decision-making' and 'well-being';
- v. Improvement in the perception of the usefulness of team meetings and one to one meetings. The latter are considered by 78% of staff as the most effective way of being kept informed, an improvement from 72% in 2016 and 74% in 2014;
- vi. Improvement in communication within and across teams. 83% of staff were in agreement their team communication is effective up from 78% in 2016 and 52% in 2014;
- vii. Some signs of reduced frequency of monthly performance coaching and team meetings for some staff (compared with 2016);
- viii. More than three quarters of staff (78%) agree or strongly agree their immediate line manager gives them feedback on how they are doing. This shows a successive increase from 2016 (70%) and 2014 (61%);
- ix. 79% of staff stated they are able to strike the right work/home life balance, up from 75% (in 2014 and 2016);
- x. 86% of staff feel inclined to speak positively about the council to others outside of work.

Response rate and breakdown - Fig 1

Department	Overall staff number	No. returned	Response rate
Corporate Services	310	207	66.8%
Education (non-school)	59	30	50.8%
Regeneration & Community Services	615	235	38.2%
Social Services	628	226	36.0%
Multiple departments	-	18	-
Did not specify departments	-	10	-
Total	1612	726	45.0%

Note: 10 respondents did not select their work area and a further 18 selected more than one area. Both types of respondents have been included in the all staff averages but not in the directorate figures.

Completion channels – Fig 2

Method	No. targeted	No. returned	Response rate
Paper	731	186	22.4%
Web	881	540	61.3%
Grand Total	1612	726	45.0%

Options for completion via paper or the web were offered. Those with work email addresses were asked to complete the web version, paper copies were distributed to team leaders/managers of those without. In total 731 members of staff (45.7%) were targeted for a paper survey and 881 (54.3%) for the web version.

The web version of the survey proved far more successful than the paper version with close two thirds of those staff targeted responding (61.3%), whereas less than a quarter of those targeted for a paper survey responded (22.4%).

6.2 ***Expected outcome for the public***

The positive difference well led, engaged employees make to the services they deliver is well established. The results will enable the targeting of support where it is needed. The outcome for the public is in their positive experience when interacting with and receiving services from The Council.

6.3 ***Involvement (consultation, engagement, participation)***

The staff survey was developed through the Staff and Well-being Group which is chaired by the Head of Organisational Development and has representation of staff from across Council Directorates, as well as representation from Unions.

6.4 ***Thinking for the Long term (forward planning)***

Over time the results of the survey enable trends to be identified and more strategic planning to take place e.g. the development of policies and activities to enhance employee engagement and welfare. The data is also used in the Annual Performance Coaching of members of WCLT, with a view to ensuring sustainable improvements in engagement through the management line.

6.5 ***Preventative focus***

Identifying issues through the survey supports positive interventions and actions to enhance staff engagement and well-being.

6.6 ***Collaboration / partnership working***

Not applicable as the staff survey is specific to employees within the Council.

6.7 ***Integration(across service areas)***

The staff survey is an organisational approach and results are presented at both a corporate and directorate level.

6.8 ***EqlA(screening and identifying if full impact assessment is needed)***

High level equality information was collected (sex, age and disability). The data can be cross-referenced against those demographics.

7. **Monitoring Arrangements**

7.1 Monitoring of actions is undertaken within Directorates. The results of the survey are used as part of the Annual Performance Coaching Reviews of WCLT.

Background Documents /Electronic Links