



People, Performance and Development Committee
29 October 2015

Employee Engagement Campaign - Update

Purpose of the report:

This report is being brought to the People, Performance and Development Committee to provide an update on the progress of the employee engagement campaign that launched in March 2015.

Recommendations:

It is recommended that:

- a. the Committee note the achievements to date;
- b. the Committee support the further events being suggested, and
- c. officers report back to the committee in March 2016 with an update on the campaign and outcomes from the survey.

Introduction:

1. Employee engagement is key to developing a committed, positive workforce and a high performing and customer focused organisation. ACAS and CIPD research support that committed employees take less time off, are happier and perform better than employees who are disengaged and report stronger advocacy rates when asked about the work they do for their employer.
2. In March 2015 both the Communications and HR and Organisational Development teams were asked to create an engagement strategy to support the organisation in becoming better connected to its residents, staff and Members. It was recognised that improving the experience our residents have when they come into contact with our staff is the primary aim of the engagement strategy. When staff are motivated, well-trained and rewarded fairly, they are happier at work and this affects how they interact with residents and customers.

3. To support this the Council has introduced a strategy to make Surrey a better place to work by ensuring our staff are better connected, better supported and have a better leadership team.
4. The strategy was agreed and would focus on a range of initiatives and improvements designed to:
 - a. Deliver Great Management and Leadership - by developing in-house leadership programmes; increasing the opportunity for leaders to attend coaching programmes and bringing Members and officers together to work collaboratively.
 - b. Enable involvement in decision making – by committing to a three year employee survey and by providing everyone with the opportunity to ‘have their say’ through reviews and open forums.
 - c. Supporting Personal Development - by training and supporting 120 managers in the art of engagement and supporting the completion of appraisals; defining performance levels and applying 360 feedback universally.
 - d. Ensuring every role counts – by connecting people both in terms of technology and in celebrating and recognising successes;
 - e. Promoting a safe and health work environment – by investing in a restorative approach to conflict, by investing in fairness champions to support staff and by introducing health checks across all of the Council’s offices.
5. The Head of Customer and Communities would work with both Members and officers in developing a new Customer Service Strategy.
6. A renewed focus on the values has been emphasised by regular messages from the Chief Executive. In the re-shaping of the pay system, the values are also being embedded more prominently in the performance management system with a proposal to link to reward.

Campaign Progress

7. Since March 2015 the Communications Team have created a new look and feel to the campaign with bright colours, clear messaging and an upbeat tone.
8. Conversations have been undertaken with the facilities teams in the Council’s main offices across Surrey to implement the new look and feel and help improve engagement. There are now campaign posters in these locations.
9. New graphics on the intranet home page and in corporate emails have been introduced.
10. Work has been done with a number of people across the organisation to develop case studies that link to the Chief Executive’s Six Monthly Review and continue to tell the Council’s strategic story.

11. Case studies have been promoted via the s-net homepage and through the Chief Executive's all-staff email. Views to the case studies were higher than average and feedback about the new look and feel has been positive.
12. The Seven standards of Public Life have been available across the county, along with copies of the Corporate Strategy and Customer Promise which are now available in all meeting rooms, across the county.

The Line Manager Role

13. One of the most important ways the Council can better engage with all staff is through an inspirational leadership team and managers. To support managers in engaging with their staff the following steps have been taken since March:
 - a. Two 'Leading with Confidence' events for 120 managers. This event was to tutor managers in the art of engagement, through the use of storytelling. They were given a toolkit to take away and use with their teams to identify challenges and how they can influence change. They were also given the opportunity to ask members of the senior leadership team questions around key issues relating to the organisation and its goals/challenges.
 - b. An s-net page was developed and uploaded for the Leading with Confidence network in April 2015. The page has links to videos, the toolkit, checklist and resident and officer stories.
 - c. A comprehensive feedback report was also provided on all the questions and answers that were posed during the event.
 - d. In May the 120 managers that attended the event were given the opportunity to work with a 'buddy' to develop a coaching relationship. This relationship was to support managers in using the toolkit and sharing key messages with their teams.
 - e. In July a review session for 60 managers was hosted which focussed on the impact of the toolkit; an opportunity to network and knowledge share; and focus on living the organisation's values.
 - f. Following the session in July delegates were asked again how the toolkits have gone and for hints and tips on how to use them. The s-net pages were then updated with information for managers on how the toolkits were being used.
 - g. Feedback to date has been positive, with a quarter of those colleagues who have attended the Leading with Confidence events feeling they had a better understanding of Surrey's journey; feel connected to Surrey's Values and understand how their role supports the residents of Surrey.
14. Another set of events are to be delivered to a further 280 managers in February 2016, which will provide the organisation with a large-scale

network of leaders who feel engaged and better connected to the organisations goals and strategies.

15. Further engagement will be undertaken early 2016 with staff on the results of the staff survey.
16. In collaboration with the Digital Team, explorations are underway into procuring an on-line collaboration system, which will initially be piloted to the Leading with Confidence network at the end of 2015. This system will eventually be available to the wider organisation and will enable the Council to better connect staff to each other and to key messages.

How will we know if this has been successful?

17. The impact and success of the strategy will be measured through a series of actions:
 - a. An increase in employee advocacy. An increase in the number of people saying they are proud of the work they do for Surrey's residents is anticipated- increase advocacy rate from 41% to 55% by 2016 and 71 % by 2018.
 - b. A decrease in employee turnover.
 - c. A decline in short term sickness absence.
 - d. An increase of resident satisfaction with Surrey staff.
18. The results of the staff survey will be announced in January 2016 and we will work with Members and our Extended Leadership Team on communicating the results.

Conclusions

19. Strong research evidence and the practices of all the top businesses in the Times Best Companies list demonstrate that an engaged workforce is higher performing and happier, which in turn has direct benefits for improved resident experience.
20. The County Council has invested significantly in its workforce over the last five years in particular, and this strategy is aimed at ensuring all employees understand and can take advantage of what is on offer.
21. Managers are pivotal to achieving better engagement with the workforce and we need to inspire and support managers around this key aspect of their roles.
22. This Engagement Strategy is a response to the above and is ultimately aimed at improved resident satisfaction and staff advocacy.

Financial and Value for Money Implications

23. The events in April were supported by an external company (procured through a full procurement process earlier in 2015), and the same

company will support the events in November. All other events will be designed and facilitated by the in-house team. The costs of this initiative will be found within the existing training budget.

- 24. It is anticipated that this strategy will contribute to efficiency and increased productivity as an expected outcome is expected to be more confident and resilient staff who take fewer days off work for stress.
- 25. The staff survey will be paid for by existing budgets and provide us with the key information we need on how our employees are feeling. Any other mini- surveys and temperature checks will be designed and delivered by in-house teams.
- 26. The costs of the pilot for the collaboration tool will also be found from existing budgets. Should the roll-out of the system move to the rest of the organisation a business case will be collated, in conjunction with IMT, Procurement and Digital Teams.

Equality and Diversity Implications

- 27. The majority of staff who have no log-ins and/or those who tend to work remotely, reablement workers for example, are part-time female employees. It is imperative that Surrey takes these steps in order to ensure that female staff are not disadvantaged through inadequate engagement and connectivity.

Risk Management Implications

- 28. This strategy is part of the mitigating actions listed in the Leadership Risk Register – reference L9 i.e. staff resilience to change and demand pressure.

Next steps:

- 29. Design and develop the next round of Leading with Confidence events.
- 30. Undertake the staff survey and work with Members and the Extended Leadership Team on the communication and engagement to staff on the results.
- 31. To provide an update on outcomes and next steps following the staff survey in February / March 2016.

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