



People, Performance and Development Committee

25 July 2017

Staff Survey Results

Purpose of the report:

This report provides an update to members of the People, Performance and Development Committee (PPDC) on the results of the Staff Survey. This is a follow up to the report provided to the Committee in February 2017, looking specifically at the services scoring below the 'ones to watch' category in 2015 and 2016 to better understand the work and actions being proposed in these service areas.

Executive Summary:

1. In 2015, Best Companies was appointed by Surrey County Council (SCC) to administer a three year programme of annual employee surveys. Best Companies are recognised as being associated with 'The Sunday Times Best Companies' report and providing expertise in the areas of employee engagement and advocacy which was felt to fit well with the organisation's values and culture. The first survey was undertaken in October 2015 with the second survey a year later.
2. 49% of employees responded to the survey in 2016, which is above the average response rate for a similarly sized not-for-profit organisation, and provides the best evidence we have of how staff are feeling. Overall, Best Companies has again allocated Surrey County Council to their "Ones to Watch" category. This means that the organisation has achieved an accredited status and a rating of "good" by Best Companies standards. The accreditation of companies follows the principles of 'Ones to Watch' is good, and One, Two and Three Star ratings indicate organisations which were very good, excellent and outstanding respectively.

3. In February 2017, Members were presented with a full report of the staff survey results for the 2016 staff survey. At this meeting, the committee requested a further report on those services who had scored below the 'Ones to Watch' category in both 2015 and 2016 surveys to understand the results in more detail and the actions being proposed.
4. The areas which scored below 'Ones to Watch' in 2015 and 2016 can be seen in the table below. The 'Ones to Watch' category begins with a score of 600.

Group	2015 BCI*	2016 BCI*
ASC Operations	586.1	596.5
Fire & Rescue	574.2	547.4
Cultural Services	594.7	594.3
Orbis - Business Ops	590.5	573.6
Orbis - Property	595.1	596.2

*BCI means Best Companies Index – a unique summary engagement score

5. The results from the five services detailed above have common themes. Leadership, Personal Growth, and Communication are identified as key themes in three of the five services. The theme of Wellbeing has been identified as a key concern for all areas excluding Orbis.
6. Members are asked to review the key findings in the report and the areas identified for further focus.

Recommendations:

The People, Performance and Development Committee notes the work underway to respond to the staff survey results in the service areas identified.

Introduction:

7. In 2015, Best Companies was appointed by Surrey County Council (SCC) to administer a three year programme of annual employee surveys. The first survey was undertaken in October 2015 with the second survey a year later. This report focuses on the most recent survey and those services scoring below "Ones to Watch" in both years.
8. The survey is made up of 70 questions or statements. The majority of these are categorised against one of the eight areas detailed below, with each area having between 4 – 12 questions or statements assigned to it. The remaining questions look at general feedback and don't contribute to the overall engagement score.

9. The survey results are grouped into eight areas as follows:
- i. **Leadership** – measures how staff feel about the head of their organisation, the senior management team and organisational values.
 - ii. **My Company** – focuses on how much employees value their organisation, how proud they are to work there and whether they make a difference.
 - iii. **My Manager** – measures whether staff feel supported, trusted and cared for by their immediate manager.
 - iv. **Personal Growth** – examines whether employees feel challenged by their job, whether their skills are being utilised and there are perceived opportunities for advancement.
 - v. **My Team** – includes encouraging team spirit, having fun and feelings of belonging within a group of direct colleagues.
 - vi. **Well Being** – measures stress, pressure, the balance between work and home life as well as the impact of these factors on personal health and performance.
 - vii. **Fair Deal** – includes how well employees feel they are treated and how their pay and benefits compare to similar organisations.
 - viii. **Giving Something Back** – explores to what extent staff think their organisation is socially responsible and whether they believe this effort is driven by appropriate motives.
10. Best Companies collects the data from the survey and provides the council with analysis of the results at an organisation level as well as Directorate, service and team level. To protect anonymity, there is a requirement that five or more people complete the survey before a report can be produced for any area. The detailed reports have been shared and allow the organisation to identify those services whose performance in the survey results have improved, lowered or remained stable. It is also possible to compare the results to other services and to external organisations.

2016 Staff Survey Results:

Findings

11. The overall response rate for the County Council was 48.94%, a significant increase on last year's rate of 34.46%. According the Best Companies, large (3.500+ employees) not-for-profit organisations have an average response rate of 40.44% and large private sector organisations, 49.49%.

12. The table below indicates the response rate for both years of the survey for the identified groups. All show an increase in response rate in the second year and are now in line or well above the average response rate for a large not-for-profit organisation.

Service	2015 Response Rate	2016 Response Rate
ASC Operations	43%	67%
Fire & Rescue	22%	43%
Cultural Services	36%	40%
Orbis - Business Ops	64%	77%
Orbis - Property	44%	63%

13. In answering the questions in the survey, individuals are asked to rate each question on a scale from strongly disagree to strongly agree. These are then given a score by Best Companies on the following scale:

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Slightly disagree	Neither agree not disagree	Slightly agree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

14. Each of the eight factors receives an 'average' score based on all responses to the questions or statements that relate to that factor. The table below shows the distribution of scores for Surrey County Council and the identified service areas. For those services within Orbis, it should be noted that both Surrey County Council and East Sussex County Council employees were included in the survey distribution. This is in line with Orbis's ambitions to create an integrated team across the organisations but may mean that some individuals approached the survey from the perspective of their sovereign organisation, which would impact on factors such as My Company.

	Leadership	My Company	Personal Growth	My Team	My Manager	Wellbeing	Fair deal	Something Back
Surrey County Council	4.04	4.94	4.62	5.1	4.89	4.13	3.77	4.23
ASC Operations	4.14	4.87	4.74	4.68	5.04	3.73	3.7	4.17
Fire & Rescue	3.08	4.78	4.54	4.34	5.0	3.74	3.16	3.8

Cultural Services	3.8	4.85	4.69	4.35	5.02	4.42	3.57	4.08
Orbis Business Ops	4.02	4.6	4.59	4.25	4.91	4.12	3.23	4.21
Orbis Property	3.96	4.93	4.71	4.38	4.99	4.2	3.49	4.3

15. All five service areas scored above the council average for My Manager, one of the council's strongest factors. This is positive as it shows strong team management within these services areas, with individuals feeling they have the support they need.
16. Three out of the five services (ASC Business Operations, Cultural Services and Property) also scored above the SCC average for Personal Growth, with Cultural Services and Property then scoring above the average against a third factor (Wellbeing) and ASC Operations against Leadership.
17. All five services scored below the SCC average for My Company, My Team (the council's two strongest factors), Fairdeal (the council's weakest factor) and Giving Something Back.
18. In addition to the 70 multiple choice questions, there are two free-comment questions – "*What makes this a great workplace*" and "*What would make this a better workplace*". Best Companies analyses the themes arising from these responses.
19. The three largest themes for the organisation relate to the team, management and My Company, with the following coming out as the key areas to address:
- One Team: avoiding duplication of work; improving communication; understanding what we can achieve together.
 - Management: listening and accepting everyone's views; more contact with teams; timely decisions; open and honest communication.
 - My Company: Clear direction and goals; less uncertainty about the future; more proactive rather than reactive approach.
20. From a similar review of the identified service areas and further work these teams have done to understand the results in more detail, the themes are consistent particularly around communication and understanding future direction. The actions services are taking to address these areas are outlined in the section below.
21. For this group of services, fair deal is also a strong theme and a number of the teams found in their wider discussions on the results that the pressures of work and the uncertainty of the environment we are working in is having a significant impact. Given the current financial pressures and challenges, there is a risk that satisfaction in this area may continue to decline as resources come under more pressure and teams potentially feel more stretched to deliver.

Service Action Plans

22. Each Head of Service has now had time to understand and share their results with their Management Teams and wider groups. Some services have also used the results as an opportunity to look at ways of doing things differently and undertaken more in-depth discussions with their service to gain a better understanding of what the results mean. In addition, Heads of Service have met with David McNulty, Chief Executive, to discuss their service's results and subsequent actions to ensure that any support needed is in place and themes arising from services are being picked up more widely as need be. This demonstrates the importance which has been placed on the staff survey results and the insight it provides about how people are feeling about working for Surrey County Council.
23. All of the services mentioned in this report have developed action plans and colleagues are being actively encouraged to help shape future changes which have come out of the staff survey results.
24. The below table provides a summary of the key priorities for each of the five services and the actions they are taking to address the concerns raised. This is not an exhaustive list but provides the committee with an overview of the activities taking place.

Service	Priority area	Actions
Cultural Services	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase opportunities for Senior Managers to attend local meetings / hold drop-ins. – Increase the involvement of frontline teams in the co-design of services and policy.
	Personal Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Invite people from others services and externally to speak at team meetings to make staff more aware of different opportunities, how their skills might be transferable etc. – Work with key groups of managers to support them in their role
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – More proactive and regular communication and engagement with staff (face to face, staff bulletins etc). – Libraries also held a 'common moral purpose day' to work on a consistent vision and business plan, which was successful. – Focus in Surrey Arts on celebrating success, which is receiving positive feedback.
	Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Look at upskilling (e.g. IT) to improve efficiency and reduce stress. – Continue work to promote the Wheel of Wellbeing to staff.
Orbis (Including Business Ops and Property)	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Create a consistent Leadership Development approach to develop 'one integrated team'. – Clear set of expectations now developed. – Work with Senior Managers in service areas to develop a common understanding of the culture and gain buy-in to support this.
	Personal Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Ensure access to meaningful development and career opportunities that have a real personal impact.
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Engage and involve colleagues with

		<p>delivering the Business Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Develop a clear communication and engagement strategy to integrate teams across Orbis (Surrey, East Sussex and Brighton & Hove.)
Adults Operations	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – 12 staff sessions with Adult Leadership Team (ALT) members from March to April 2017 with approx. 235 staff attending. – Informal open-door sessions with ALT in 5 locations from November 2016 - January 2017.
	Personal Growth	<p>Following feedback from the dedicated workforce team set up to look at this issue, the following proposals have been made:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Introduce training leads in teams across county – Introduce career pathways for specified roles – Ensure opportunities under the new Apprenticeship Levy are maximised.
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – On-going communication of the results using newsletters, the internal fortnightly 'ebrief', email from the Strategic Director and cascade at management meetings.
	Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Team Wellbeing Sessions held with 13 teams (with the aim of covering all teams) based on the corporate wellbeing team toolkit. These sessions encourage teams and individuals to identify the issues that have the most impact on their wellbeing and come up with a team action plan to support these. – Informal network of wellbeing contacts set up to help promote wellbeing messages and information across the Directorate.
Fire & Rescue	Leadership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Chief Officer Group to review leadership style and actively promote to improve clarity of approach. – Ensure leadership and coaching considered as much as technical

		competencies in all appraisals.
	Personal Growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Increase level of joint training opportunities with partners such as Surrey Police and SECAMB. – Review existing promotion and selection processes to ensure they are transparent and provide equal opportunity.
	Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Face-to-face communications plan being developed allocating senior staff to specific teams to ensure they are consistently engaged in key issues. – Re-introduce ‘Commanders Question Time’, or equivalent, for all middle managers and above and make available to all staff.
	Wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Continue to develop welfare initiatives and promote them to support teams with their health and wellbeing. – Review support for Middle Management tier, consider additional ‘Time and/or Stress Management Input’ to help cope with new expectations and workloads.

25. Each service has been allocated an Organisational Development colleague to support the service’s work in delivering these actions. In addition, the Communications Team is briefed on the survey results and have been proactively including relevant updates and progress on results using the established communication methods.

26. As well as service-led initiatives, the results support the wider corporate work which is taking place to develop a new Leadership Development programme (due to launch in September 2017.) This programme will include Leadership options for current and potential Managers and will include focus on positive role-modelling, managing performance, coaching and having difficult conversations. All of these areas were identified as needing further support in the staff survey.

27. In addition, there is further work on Wellbeing with a focus on healthy workplaces, which is being led by the Strategic Director of Adult Social Care and Public Health. This will be supported by an in-house programme providing specific interventions to help managers tackle stress amongst team members.
28. There has been considerable work over the past 12 months to support the 'One Communications Team'. It is hoped that this will enable more consistency in communications across services and reduce duplication across areas. It is recognised that communication is a common theme for improvement in all of the teams identified in this report and this is something which is being supported corporately.

Conclusion:

29. This report focuses on the services who have scored below the accreditation level in the staff survey in 2015 and 2016 and the identified themes and actions which have arisen as a result.
30. Surrey County Council is aiming to achieve accreditation scores for all services and teams and for results to improve year on year, based on the organisation's ability to make changes as a result of feedback from the survey. The improved response rate has allowed the council to have greater confidence in the staff survey results for 2016 and to have clear results on areas where accreditation has not yet been reached.
31. All the identified services have spent time understanding the results and engaging with their teams to gain further clarity. For services within Orbis, this work extends to colleagues in East Sussex who also contributed to the survey. Following these discussions, the services have produced action plans and shared them with their teams.
32. It is hoped that these improvements will be delivered and result in improved scores for the next survey in October 2017, whilst being mindful of the amount of change and uncertainty within the current context and the impact this will continue to have on teams across the organisation.
33. A corporate programme is being developed to continue to develop and support leadership across the organisation as this remains a lower scoring area. This will be launched in September 2017 and the development of the programme has been closely aligned with the results of the staff survey.
34. There are also corporate initiatives to support the lower scores for wellbeing and communication, which are detailed in this report.

Financial and value for money implications

35. There are no financial and value for money implications associated with this report. All additional support being provided to services to respond to the

staff survey is through a prioritisation of existing resources and part of the current offer or budget allocations for leadership development.

Equalities Implications

36. In engaging Best Companies to undertake the staff survey, the council is using an experienced and established methodology which has been rigorously tested to ensure a fair and consistent approach which does not discriminate or differentiate against any known protected characteristic.

Next Steps:

- i. Services will continue to progress their action plans, working with OD Leads and HR Relationship Managers as appropriate to support the delivery of the identified improvements.
- ii. Individual teams have been encouraged to continue to use the data and have conversations to understand their own strengths and areas for improvement.
- iii. The next survey will be undertaken in October 2017, providing a further opportunity to compare results year-on-year.

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Sources/ background papers:

Item 9 - Staff Survey Results: People, Performance & Development Committee, 17 February 2017.

Item 6 – Staff Survey Results: People, Performance & Development Committee, 5 April 2016.