



# OUR Conversation

Our staff have had to work very differently over the past few months. At the end of May 'Our Conversation' launched; an organisation-wide engagement activity with the aim of capturing direct feedback from staff about their recent working experience. This has provided insight which will shape the future of working practices at the council as we move towards being a more agile and adaptable organisation. The findings in this pack have come from...

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**Workshops**



**Participants**



**Survey Respondents**

Workshops included sessions for specific teams or groups (e.g. Members, BAME and other network groups as well as at service level where there was significant interest) to further understand the unique challenges faced by these groups.

# Online Survey Statistics

Directorate	Number of responses	% total responses
Chief Executive's Office	20	1%
Children, Families & Learning	872	38%
Community Protection Group	144	6%
Environment, Transport & Infrastructure	315	14%
Adult Social Care	481	21%
Resources	306	13%
Transformation, Partnerships & Prosperity	185	8%
<b>Total</b>	<b>2323</b>	<b>100%</b>
No directorate selected = 107 responses		

## Overall respondents

2430 = approx. 25% of in scope workforce

1983 (82%) = online

447 (18%) = paper

# Positive highlights and themes

*Inclusive of workshops and survey*

## Purpose



Common purpose

Sense of focus

Clarity of outcomes

## Culture



65% feel happy at work nowadays/  
proud to work at SCC

## Collaboration



82% feel well connected with  
colleagues

74% find it easy to collaborate with  
colleagues and partners

Better partnership working

Relationships with new people

Broader, cross-organisational  
networks

## Leadership



76% say they have a supportive  
manager who cares about their  
wellbeing

91% say they have a manager who  
treats them like adults

More trusting and empowering

Less scrutiny and micromanagement

More visible and human

More devolved

# Positive highlights and themes cont...

*Inclusive of workshops and survey*

## Pace



Quicker decisions

More focused meetings

Quicker to adapt

## Environment



Reduced travelling

Reduced energy consumption

Reduced printing

## Working Practices



80% know where to go for wellbeing support if needed

Greater flexibility/not 9-5

## Systems and Tech



People have embraced technology more

Non-reliance on paper

### Summary of positive highlights:

- Improved worklife balance (no commute, greater flexibility)
- Improved collaboration with colleagues and partners

### How we feel about the organisation

- Generally happy/positive/feel proud to work for SCC
- SCC has coped/responded well to COVID-19
- Supportive organisation/listens to staff

# Areas of Concern – highlights and themes

*Inclusive of workshops and survey*

## Collaboration



Lack of face-to-face interaction

Staff without access to SCC kit feel 'left out'

## Systems and tech



**39%** feel they haven't had technology and/or simplified processes to free up time and make the best use of their skills

## Leadership



**47%** feel the council can improve upon how it provides an inspiring vision and encourages an agile, creative and collaborative culture

**42%** say they're not coached regularly, building a strong sense of personal responsibility and resilience

**30%** say they don't have clear, outcome-focused work objectives, reviewed on a regular basis

## Working from home



Isolation – issues for mental health

Missing the human interaction and social side of work

Balancing home/family and work – feelings of guilt

Missing the work routine

Not having the right home working environment

# Areas of Concern – highlights and themes cont...

*Inclusive of workshops and survey*

## SCC Offices



No longer fit for purpose

Reinforce outdated culture and practice

## Workload



**25%** feel they do not have a realistic workload

Relentless and exhausting

Overwhelming

Not sustainable

Danger of burnout/feel pressurised

'Always on' – hard to switch off

## Meetings



Too many

Some lack focus

Back-to-back – far more tiring when virtual

Just replicating the office, but at home

Promote virtual 'presenteeism'

## Diversity



**25%** male respondents

Out of total survey respondents, BAME, LGBTQ+ and disability groups were **less than 10%** (each group)

**On the whole, whilst concerns are significant and strongly felt, there have been far more positive responses**

# Cross-council actions

## Collaboration



- Teams twinning - knowledge sharing and mixed team learning
- Opportunities for collaborative working

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## Systems and tech



- Optimise use of software
- Improve basic IT literacy and self service learning
- Improve accessibility to software
- Adapt to new ways of working that is sustainable

## Leadership



- Improved communications – impact, relevance, length, audience, timely
- Build on Adult to Adult management style
- Endorse, embed and role model agile working principles
- Strong, outcome focussed, performance management
- Situational leadership and role modelling
- Positive behaviours and resilience
- ‘Lean’ ways of working principles

## Working from home



- Agile working principles

## Diversity



- Mandatory unconscious bias/anti racist training, reverse mentoring, inclusive leadership and ways of working

# Actions cont ...

## SCC Offices



- Create opportunities for more and easier collaborative working

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## Meetings



- Improve meeting etiquette and culture:
  - Reduce number of meetings
  - Too much screen time = screen fatigue

## Team Working



- Completion of Team Charters Autumn 2020 to include:
  - Wellbeing Conversations
  - Agile ways of working - principles
  - Workspace risk self-assessment
  - Managing workload
- Innovation Hub – sharing of projects and ability to collaborate
- Better use of cross organisational networks
- TED Talks – empower and develop

## Workload



- Less prescriptive job descriptions
- Easy movement across council, increased matrix working, etc.
- Refreshed/relaunched Performance Conversations framework

**Some actions are already in plan/in progress**

# Our Conversation Survey- next steps

## Communication and Next Steps

Detailed survey findings will be provided to CLT shortly and communicated to all staff within the next few weeks.

## Management Action Planning Pack

Will include results at team/service level, with signposting to support materials such as action planning guidance and resources for managers and teams to use.

## Leadership Ownership

Leadership teams are responsible for analysing and responding to their results; working collaboratively to engage and motivate their teams to take part in change and improvement initiatives – being part of the solution.

## Support

HROD Business Partners will support directorate leadership teams in analysing survey results and action planning in response.

The 'Culture Influencers' staff group's role is to influence and support the organisation by championing new ways of working that advocate change positively. The group will support leaders to interpret results into actions. They will also monitor progress across the council.

## Ongoing cross-organisation Pulse Surveys

Will launch January 2021 – ¼ of the workforce to be surveyed every quarter, providing year on year comparative insight for ongoing improvements.

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