

Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel

Agenda Item:

A.4

Meeting Date: 4 April 2013
 Portfolio: Finance, Governance and Resources
 Key Decision: Not Applicable:
 Within Policy and Budget Framework NO
 Public / Private Public

Title: EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY 2013 REPORT
 Report of: Organisational Development Manager
 Report Number: CE 04/13

Purpose / Summary:

Employee opinion surveys have taken place at Carlisle City Council for a number of years. They offer an opportunity to engage with staff and find out their views about working for the City Council. A survey took place earlier this year, and as with previous surveys, the results are reported to Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel. A copy of the survey is included.

Recommendations:

Consider the results of the Employee Opinion Survey.

Tracking

Executive:	
Overview and Scrutiny:	
Council:	

1. Background

- 1.1 The 2013 Employee Opinion Survey was sent to staff on 3 January with a closing date of 25 January. This year, 254 surveys were completed giving a response rate of 42.1% (based on 604 staff at December 2012), compared with 54.7% in 2012. 34 paper copies were received from operational staff and 29 paper copies from staff based at Allerdale and Copeland.
- 1.2 The survey maintained several of the questions from previous years including ones on the City Council as an employer, internal communications and leadership and management. New questions for 2013 included ones on career progression and career development, how informed staff feel about the changes taking place, workloads and bullying at work.
- 1.3 One of the key issues arising from the 2012 survey was that only 46% of staff said they felt valued at work. This year the survey included a question on whether staff feel more valued than last year.
- 1.4 Of the 254 staff who identified which directorate or team they were in 5.5% were in Governance, 19.8% in Resources, 10.3% in Economic Development, 30.4% in Community Engagement, 26.5% in Local Environment and 7.5% in the Chief Executive's Team.

2. Key Findings

- 2.1 This year 53% of staff say they feel valued as an employee of the City Council compared to 46% in 2012 which is a positive result but there is more to do on this. The staff who did not feel more valued had an opportunity to say why and the most popular reason was they felt nothing had changed in the last year.

3. Management and leadership issues and the City Council as an employer

- 3.1 There were several questions in the survey about leadership and management. 59.3% said that the Senior Management Team provided strong leadership, compared with 57.1% in 2012 and 21% in 2011. In terms of communicating the City Council's priorities, 56.6% now say that senior managers communicate them effectively compared with 50.3% in 2012 and 23% in 2011.

3.2 A new question was included in this section this year which asked staff if managers in their department provided effective leadership. 53.4% of staff said managers in their department did provide effective leadership.

3.3 This year 73.9% of staff say their line manager supports them in their role compared with 78.6% in 2012. This year 65.6% say their line manager keeps them in touch with what is going on compared with 70% in 2012.

3.4 A question on how staff rate the City Council as an employer has been included in several previous surveys. This year 89.4% rate the City Council as a good employer compared with 87.6% in 2012.

4. Feeling valued and contributing to the City Council's objectives

4.1 This year, 53% of staff said they felt valued at work which is an improvement on the 46% in 2012 but there is still significant work to do on this.

4.2 This year 74.7% of staff say they understand how their work contributes to achieving the City Council's objectives compared with 76.8% in 2012.

5. Communications

5.1 This year 68.8% of staff said they were satisfied with internal communications at the City Council compared with 65.1% in 2012. The Chief Executive has continued with the quarterly briefings for staff and a weekly blog, both of which have proved popular with staff.

6. Career progression and development

6.1 This year the survey included three new questions on development opportunities for staff. Only 32.1% of staff thought there were opportunities for career progression at the City Council which will be partly related to the transformation programme and the reduction in jobs at the Council.

6.2 76.7% of staff thought there were opportunities for career development (courses and qualifications) and 76.7% of staff said they had more to offer than their current job allowed them to demonstrate.

7. Making savings

7.1 This year the survey included a question asking staff how informed they felt about the changes that have taken place in their area due to the need to make savings. 59.6% of staff said they know what is happening and understand why the changes are needed. 6.9% of staff said they know what is happening but don't understand why the changes are needed. 29% of staff said they don't know what is happening but know why the changes are needed. 4.5% of staff said they don't know what is happening and don't understand why the changes are needed.

8. Tasks, breaks and bullying

8.1 This year the survey included three questions asking about tasks, breaks and bullying. The first question asked staff if they had to neglect some tasks because they had too much to do. 62.7% of staff agreed with this.

8.2 The second question asked if staff were unable to take sufficient breaks and 30.6% of staff agreed with this.

8.3 The third question asked if staff were subject to bullying at work and 11.4% of staff said they were.

9. Health and wellbeing

9.1 Another new question in the survey this year asked staff what the City Council could do to improve their health and wellbeing. Staff thought the City Council offered a good range of health and wellbeing initiatives and suggested ideas for developing this further including more lunchtime activities e.g. exercise classes. Improving the heating in the Civic Centre was raised by a number of staff. More support for staff through the transformation programme was also suggested by some. Improving the personal protective equipment provided to staff e.g. boots and waterproof clothing was mentioned by a small number of staff and this has already been actioned following comments in the Feeling Valued survey which took place last year.

10. Working for the City Council

10.1A question asking what staff consider to be the best thing about working for the City Council has been included in several previous surveys. This year, the most popular response from staff was terms and conditions including flexitime, holidays, pay and pension. Other popular responses were working with good colleagues, providing a service to the people of Carlisle and training opportunities.

11.Improving the City Council

11.1A question asking staff what one thing could the City Council do to improve the council the most has also been included in previous surveys. This year there were a wide range of suggestions from staff including improving communication, listening more to staff, improving the heating in the Civic Centre, reducing silo working and promoting greater partnership working, management to have a greater understanding of workloads, improving the flexitime system and better use of limited resources.

12.Consultation

12.1The results of the Employee Opinion Survey have been considered by the Senior Management Team and the Joint Management Team. The results have been shared with staff through the Chief Executive's briefings and in a report. A report has also gone to the Consultative Joint Committee.

13.Conclusion and reasons for recommendations

13.1 Unlike in 2011 when the key issue arising from the survey was internal communications and in 2012 when it was feeling valued, this year there is not a key issue which all staff are concerned about. There are some issues specific to directorates and those will be considered by the directors with support from the Organisational Development Team.

13.2 Further work will take place to continue to improve internal communication including a new staff newsletter. Health and wellbeing initiatives will continue to take place as they have an important role to play in raising morale and supporting staff both professionally and personally. These will continue to be reported on to Resources Overview and Scrutiny Panel as part of the Organisational Development Plan and Sickness Absence reports.

14. Contribution to the Carlisle Plan priorities

14.1 This report is for information and does not directly relate to the Carlisle Plan.

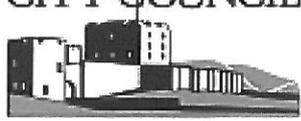
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**Appendices Copy of survey
attached to report:**

Note: in compliance with section 100d of the Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 the report has been prepared in part from the following papers:

- **None**



Employee Opinion Survey 2013

1. Which directorate or team do you work in?

Governance	<input type="checkbox"/>	Community Engagement.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	Local Environment	<input type="checkbox"/>
Economic Development	<input type="checkbox"/>	Chief Executive's Team.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

2. Do you work?

Full-time Part-time

3. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements about leadership and management at Carlisle City Council:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
The City Council's Senior Management Team provides strong leadership.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Senior managers effectively communicate the City Council's priorities	<input type="checkbox"/>				
Managers in my department provide effective leadership.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My line manager supports me in my role	<input type="checkbox"/>				
My line manager keeps me in touch with what is going on	<input type="checkbox"/>				

4. How do you rate the City Council as an employer?

Very good.....	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor	<input type="checkbox"/>
Fairly good	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very poor	<input type="checkbox"/>

5. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I feel valued as an employee at the City Council.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I understand how my work contributes to achieving the City Council's priorities.....	<input type="checkbox"/>				

6. Overall how satisfied are you with internal communications at the City Council?

Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dissatisfied.....	<input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/>	Very dissatisfied.....	<input type="checkbox"/>

7. As a result of our survey last year, the Chief Executive is committed to making staff feel more valued at work. Do you feel more valued at work this year?

Yes, a lot more valued No

Yes, a bit more valued

If no, please say why not

8. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
There are opportunities for career progression	<input type="checkbox"/>				
There are opportunities for career development (courses and qualifications)	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I have more to offer than my current job allows me to demonstrate	<input type="checkbox"/>				

9. Many changes have taken place at the City Council in the last few years due to the need to make savings. How informed do you feel about the changes in your area?

I know what is happening and understand why the changes are needed	I don't know what is happening but I know why the changes are needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I know what is happening but don't understand why the changes are needed	I don't know what is happening and I don't understand why the changes are needed
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

10. Please indicate how much you agree or disagree with the following statements:

	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am unable to take sufficient breaks	<input type="checkbox"/>				
I am subject to bullying at work	<input type="checkbox"/>				

11. What could the City Council do to improve your health and wellbeing?

12. Overall what is the best thing about working for the City Council?

13. What one thing could the City Council do to improve the Council the most?