

The Vale of Glamorgan Council

Cabinet Meeting: 23 January, 2017

Report of the Leader

Staff Charter - Update from Employee Survey

Purpose of the Report

1. To update Members of the Cabinet on the results from the recent 2016 Employee Survey and related activity as part of the promotion of the Staff Charter.

Recommendations

1. That the results from the 2016 Employee Survey as set out in [Appendix 1](#) be noted alongside related activity as part of the Council's Staff Charter.
2. That the updated action plan as attached in [Appendix 2](#) be noted and endorsed.
3. That the report be referred to Scrutiny Committee (Corporate Performance & Resources) for consideration.
4. That the report be circulated to all Members for information

Reasons for the Recommendations

1. To update Members of the Cabinet on current levels of employee engagement and as a baseline to measure the success of future 'Staff Charter' development work.
2. To ensure that Members are content with the ongoing staff engagement work and its congruence with the objectives of the Staff Charter.
3. To enable the Scrutiny Committee to maintain a continued focus on this key area of workforce planning activity.
4. To ensure that all Members are aware of progress in relation to staff engagement.

Background

2. Members will be aware that the Council's first Staff Charter was launched on the 19th September 2016.
3. The Charter was launched as an important part of the Council's Reshaping Service Programme. Its aim was to set out the basis (and related expectations) of a new 'employment relationship' in response to current financial and service challenges.

4. The Charter was designed following a year-long engagement process involving both trade union representatives and over 1800 employees in a number of briefing sessions, conferences and working groups.
5. The aim of the Charter is to provide clarity about the expectations of our employees in a reshaped world (in terms of flexibility, performance and contribution) but also to be clear about those things that employees can expect from their managers in terms of trust, support, clarity of expectation and respect.
6. A copy of the updated action plan to support the implementation of the Staff Charter is set out in [Appendix 2](#). This sets out current progress in relation to the main areas of activity including communications, staff development, leadership and engagement.
7. Members will note that the Charter is a key action in the Council's 2016-20 Workforce Plan (action 9 and 10) and aims to internalise and 'give life' to the values set out in the Council's Corporate Plan (Ambitious, Open, Together and Proud).
8. As part of the launch of the Staff Charter it was important to undertake an employee survey. This was necessary in order to set a benchmark for current staff engagement levels and against which future Staff Charter related activity could be measured.
9. The employee survey ran for a six week period between the 19th September and 30th October 2016 and was sent to some 2563 employees across the Council's four directorates. 61% of the surveys were sent out electronically via e-mail and the remaining 39% were sent via hard copy to home addresses.
10. As part of the survey employees were asked to score each of the 20 expectations within the Charter using the following scale: 1 (Strongly Agree), 2 (Agree), 3 (Neither Agree nor Disagree), 4 (Disagree) and 5 (Strongly Disagree).

Relevant Issues and Options

11. A detailed analysis of the results from the employee survey is set out in the document at [Appendix 1](#) to this report. This included an analysis of engagement levels by directorate, service area, length of service and grade.
12. As can be seen, there were 1240 responses to the survey equating to an overall return rate of 48%. This was an encouraging rate of return, exceeding industry standards for such engagement exercises.
13. The Council received a 30% return rate from those employees who received 'hard copy' surveys and 60% from those who accessed the survey through email.
14. Return rates were relatively even across the four directorates ranging from 38% (Learning and Skills) to 60% (Resources Directorate).
15. A selection of the key outcomes from the employee survey are set out below:-
 - The overall average response rate to the 20 expectations within the Staff Charter was 71% (i.e. strongly agreeing or agreeing). This is an encouragingly high score and will set the benchmark for future engagement work and subsequent surveys.
 - The level of positive responses was relatively high across all Directorates ranging from 68% in the Learning and Skills and Environment and Housing Directorates to 76% in the Managing Director & Resources Directorate.

- The level of positive responses from within the 17 service areas was slightly more diverse ranging from 58% in Visible Services and Transport to 94% in the Director's Office within Environment and Housing Services.
 - The highest overall positive response rate related to the assertion "I am trusted to get on with my job". Some 91% of employees responded positively to this statement. It is particularly interesting to note that this statement attracted the highest score in all Directorates and in 12 out of the 17 service areas.
 - The above statement also attracted the highest positive response rates in each of the length of service categories and in all but one of the salary grade categories.
 - The next two highest responses were in relation to "I have regular contact with my manager" (81%) and "I am treated with respect" (81%). This is, again encouraging and will provide a strong basis for further development as part of the Staff Charter.
 - The lowest level of positive response (albeit still relatively high) related to the assertions "I feel supported in achieving my potential" (64%), "I am kept informed about the wider work of the Council" (61%) and "I am helped to understand my contribution to the wider Council" (51%).
 - The responses relating to personal development and the degree to which staff understand their wider contribution were reflected across all Directorates and also in the grade and length of service categories.
16. As indicated a more detailed analysis of the employee survey results is set out in the report at [Appendix 1](#).
 17. The staff engagement work over recent months has, to a degree, anticipated the need for further work in relation to some of the Staff Charter areas and particularly in relation to employee development, communications and the continuous need to connect employees to the broader objectives of the Council.
 18. The above has included the launch of a new staff appraisal scheme (#itsaboutme), current work to launch a 'passport to training' scheme and a review of the Council's strategy in relation to the identification and delivery of development needs.
 19. Members will also note progress in relation to other areas of the Staff Charter commitments including the strengthening of the Council's Leadership Café, the development of a revised Management Competency Framework and the launch of a CMT/Staff Engagement Group and Core Brief Editorial Group.
 20. A progress update in relation to the delivering the 15 Staff Charter commitments is set out in [Appendix 2](#). This will serve as a continuing action plan in response to the employee survey results.
 21. It is clearly important to continue to invest in the staff engagement process as the Council continues to reshape its services and the contribution and flexibility of our employees becomes ever more important.
 22. It is suggested that it is perhaps not a matter of coincidence that levels of absence and voluntary employee turnover has reduced over the past 12 months as the work in relation to the Staff Charter has developed.
 23. The employee survey will be repeated in 2017 and then annually thereafter. The 2016 results will provide a clear baseline against which the Staff Charter (and related activities) can be measured.

Resource Implications (Financial and Employment)

24. The need to continue to maintain high levels of engagement, contribution and attendance will be important as the Council responds to ongoing financial pressures and seeks to implement the Reshaping Services Programme.

Sustainability and Climate Change Implications

25. There are no sustainability or climate change implications directly arising from the content of this report.

Legal Implications (to Include Human Rights Implications)

26. There are no legal implications directly arising from this content of this report.

Crime and Disorder Implications

27. There are no crime and disorder implications directly arising from the content of this report.

Equal Opportunities Implications (to include Welsh Language issues)

28. In progressing the Staff Engagement Strategy the Council will remain compliant with its obligations under the Equality Act.

Corporate/Service Objectives

29. The Staff Engagement Strategy and implementation of the Staff Charter are congruent with the values as set out in the Corporate Plan.

Policy Framework and Budget

30. This is a matter for Executive decision.

Consultation (including Ward Member Consultation)

31. Progress and activity relating to the Staff Charter is a regular item for consideration at the monthly trade union Change Forum and at scheduled meetings of the Corporate Joint Consultative Committee.

Relevant Scrutiny Committee

32. Corporate Performance & Resources

Background Papers

None

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Officers Consulted

Corporate Management Team

Responsible Officer

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