⬧EDINBVRGH⬧
THE CITY OF EDINBURGH COUNCIL

Employee Survey 2012 Headline Results and Next Steps

Policy and Strategy Committee

2 October 2012

1 Purpose of report

1.1 The purpose of this report is to present the key findings of the fifth Employee Survey of the Council, prioritise the key areas for attention and identify the next steps.

2 Main report

2.1 The survey aimed to provide a measure of employee satisfaction and engagement, and a comprehensive picture of how employees feel working in the Council.

2.2 Ipsos MORI was commissioned to undertake the survey to ensure employee confidentiality. An internal project team including officers from each service area managed the survey locally.

2.3 The survey content was refined in consultation with employees, managers and the Trade Unions to ensure that the responses can be effectively actioned and analysed at a local level. Core questions were retained to enable trend analysis.

2.4 All Council employees were invited to participate in the survey. From April to June, 1452 employees completed a paper questionnaire and 5258 completed the survey online. Overall, this represents a response of 36% (based on a headcount of 18,703). This is similar to the survey response from other local authority employee surveys.

Working in the Council

2.5 Despite significant change across the Council and a fundamental review of how some services are provided, there is **greater pride** in working for the Council than in 2009. Pride increased significantly from 44% to 55% which is similar to levels of pride expressed by all local authority employees across the UK. Morale is also reasonably high – 48% agree their personal morale is good.

2.6 Statistical analysis, called driver analysis, was carried out to identify the types of issues that are having the most impact on pride.   Confidence in decisions

made by senior management in service area is a key driver of pride as shown in Figure 1. There is also greater support for change and employees more likely to agree services are valued by customers may be reasons behind a stronger sense of pride in working for the Council in 2012.

Figure 1   Drivers of pride

2.7   Overall **job satisfaction** has fallen slightly – over half (58%) say they are satisfied in their present job which is slightly lower than in 2009 (62%) and levels of satisfaction expressed by local authority staff across the UK last year. The analysis links job satisfaction with perceptions of fair treatment and confidence in decisions by senior management in service area.

2.8   44% would recommend the Council as a great place to work, 24% said they would not recommend it and 30% held no opinion. Again, confidence in decisions made by senior management influenced this response, followed by balance between work and private life and fair treatment.

Leadership and change

2.9   **Support for change** is high across the Council and greater than it was in 2009. On the whole 67% say they support the need for change (this varies from 63% in Services for Communities to 79% in Corporate Governance) and 73% understand the need.

2.10 However, the results suggest that employees could have been kept better informed and engaged on how the changes affect them. This might explain the low proportion (28%) who agree change affecting their service area is managed well.

2.11 Just over half feel their service area is managed well while four in ten (39%) have confidence in decisions made by senior management. This might be explained by a lack of awareness of the service's strategic direction (41% are aware of their senior management team's vision) and with just over half agreeing their senior managers are visible.

Attitudes to work

2.12 Encouragingly, employees generally view their work positively. The majority find the work they do interesting (84%), are empowered to show initiative (76%), make the best use of skills and abilities (62%), feel sufficiently challenged (67%) and have a sense of personal accomplishment (69%). However, a lower proportion, feel involved in the decisions that affect their work (60%).
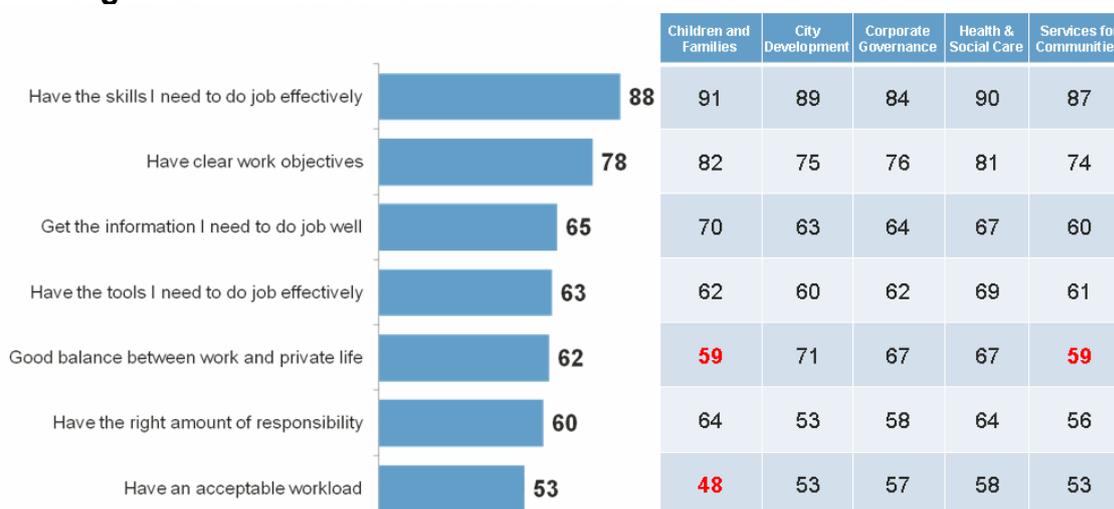
Line management and performance

2.13 Most aspects of **line management** are positively perceived. Around two thirds of employees find their line manager approachable and available, open and honest who listens to them and is open to their ideas/suggestions. To a lesser extent, around half feel motivated to achieve their full potential and agree their line manager delegates responsibility effectively.

2.14 The higher the grade the more likely employees are to speak highly of their line manager. Relatively few manual/craft employees feel valued for the work they do or say their line manager celebrates team success.

2.15 Furthermore, although a majority (72%) received a Performance, Review and Development (PRD) within the past 12 months, a lower proportion (57%) agree their performance is evaluated fairly and 52% receive feedback to improve their performance. This varies considerably by grade. Almost all employees Grade 5 and above have recently received a PRD – compared with a third of manual/craft employees.

Other findings

2.16 As indicated in Figure 2, the majority answered positively when asked about **resources and workload**, making this another area of strength. Although the overall picture is reasonably positive, the vast majority of teachers and principle teachers are less satisfied than other groups.

Figure 2   Satisfaction with resources and workload

		Children and Families	City Development	Corporate Governance	Health & Social Care	Services for Communities
Have the skills I need to do job effectively	88	91	89	84	90	87
Have clear work objectives	78	82	75	76	81	74
Get the information I need to do job well	65	70	63	64	67	60
Have the tools I need to do job effectively	63	62	60	62	69	61
Good balance between work and private life	62	59	71	67	67	59
Have the right amount of responsibility	60	64	53	58	64	56
Have an acceptable workload	53	48	53	57	58	53

2.17 **Working environment** is also regarded positively. A majority (74%) agree they are treated fairly at work and with respect (81%). They are also very likely to agree they feel supported by the people in their team (75%) and that, as a team, they are encouraged to come up with new and better ways of doing things.

2.18 With regard to **communications**, a vast majority of employees (83%) find informal conversations with colleagues most useful followed by team briefings/meetings (70%), the Orb (69%), 'Communications' email to employees (61%) and the Council's external website (57%).

2.19 Although the actions from the 2009 survey were communicated widely to all employees only 15% agreed that **action** was taken. A slightly higher proportion (22%) had confidence that appropriate action would be taken on the results of this survey.

2.20 Finally, when asked what they would like the Council to change in order to make it a **great place to work** the most common themes were around:

- leadership (27%);

- communications (25%);

- management style (23%); and

- resources and workload (21%).

Key strengths and opportunities for improvement

2.21 Line management, working environment and conditions, fair treatment and inclusion are generally areas of strength for the Council. The emphasis here should be on acknowledging the success in these areas and maintaining performance. However, this should be a priority for improvement among manual/craft employees.

2.22 **Confidence in decisions** made by senior management appears to have a strong influence on how people feel about working in the Council and on personal morale. The evidence points to the need for increased visibility of senior management, communications and engagement particularly on change and decisions made, and the strategic direction in each service area.

2.23 There is a need to review our internal **communications** channels ensuring they are two-way and fit for purpose. Developing and implementing a staff engagement strategy should be a priority. This is an ideal time to refresh our communications and link in directly to our corporate transformation programme.

2.24 Furthermore, there is a negative outlook regarding **ability to influence decisions**. Staff involvement and awareness of any action taken in response to the survey and what it has achieved will be key to ensuring success and increased engagement levels in future surveys.

Next steps

2.25   These are:

a. **Communications** – the findings will be communicated to elected members, senior management teams in each service area and division and all Council employees.

b. **Further analysis and consultation** – the data can be broken down further at a local level to explore trends and differences between groups to help target improvement plans. Managers should also engage their teams during team meetings or focus group discussions to explore areas of concern and how to address these effectively.

c. **Improvement planning** - currently each service area has its own People Plan and these will be updated with local actions to reflect the survey findings using the 'you said we're doing' approach. Staff should be involved in prioritising issues and agreeing actions.

d. **Employee engagement** – an annual programme will be developed to ensure regular engagement; track satisfaction; capture issues and suggestions during organisational change; take action on employee feedback and show year-on-year improvements.

3   Financial implications

3.1   The cost of the survey was £33839 and has been funded by existing budgets. Each service area has contributed to the costs of the survey in proportion to the size of the service.

4   Equalities impact

4.1   Every effort was made to make the survey accessible to all Council employees. The results of the survey have also been broken down by demographic characteristics to evaluate impact on equalities groups and areas for improvement.

5   Environmental impact

5.1   The survey was largely carried out online to minimise environmental impact. The communication of the results will also be done electronically where appropriate.

6   Recommendations

6.1   It is recommended that the Policy and Strategy Committee:-

a. Note the content of this report; and

b. Ensure support is given at all levels within each service area to involve employees in improvement planning and ensure commitment to actively taking part in an annual employee engagement programme.

Alastair D Maclean
Director of Corporate Governance

Appendices	1. MORI presentation of the key findings
Contact/tel/Email	Davina Fereday Policy and Public Affairs 529 7040 Davina.fereday@edinburgh.gov.uk Service representatives: Karen Brannan – Children and Families Andrew Miller – Services for Communities Mark Hoolahan – Health and Social Care Steven Wright – Corporate Governance Alison Coburn – City Development
Wards affected	
Single Outcome Agreement	Efficient and effective organisation
Background Papers	