



EMPLOYMENT COMMITTEE: 3 DECEMBER 2020

WELLBEING SURVEY – RESULTS AND ACTION PLAN

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF CORPORATE RESOURCES

Purpose of report

1. The purpose of this report is to inform the Employment Committee of the outcomes of the second Staff Wellbeing Survey undertaken in October 2020 and present a comparison with the findings of the first Survey undertaken in May 2020.

Policy Framework and Previous Decisions

2. Staff wellbeing is a key part of the Council's People Strategy 2017-2020 and will continue to be so in the new People Strategy 2020-2024.
3. At its meeting on 17 September 2020, the Employment Committee was informed of the actions undertaken by the Council to support staff wellbeing during the Covid-19 pandemic, and this included details of the outcome of the first Wellbeing Survey undertaken in May 2020.

Background

4. The first staff Wellbeing Survey was undertaken in May 2020 to help the Council understand and assess the impact that coronavirus and the lockdown was having on employees. The results from over 3,000 responses demonstrated that staff had several concerns over the economic impact of the outbreak, the health of their friends and family, plus practical issues such as the provision of technology and other equipment to assist them with working from home. These results were considered further as part of the Council's approach to recovery with follow-up actions including:
 - i. A one-off working from home payment of up to £200 was made available for the purchase of necessary office equipment to enable staff to continue to work from home safely.
 - ii. Over 1,000 suggestions from staff on how to help wellbeing have been shared in a Book of Wellbeing, which includes other ideas, tips, stories, quotes, images and videos and is available on the intranet for staff to access at any time.
 - iii. Development of a Managers' Charter to set out how managers would be supporting their teams, especially while working remotely, and the Charter has also been embedded into a range of learning and development activities.

5. The Wellbeing Survey was re-launched over the Summer and closed in October. The results have enabled the Council to monitor the impact of the support that has been provided and assess what further assistance may be required.

Survey results

6. The second Wellbeing Survey saw responses from 2,234 individuals (33% of the total workforce). Whilst this was a reduced response rate compared with the first survey (which saw 3,019 respondents), submissions were fairly distributed amongst all departments of the Council. The results below show a comparison of the response rates for both the first and second Staff Wellbeing Surveys.
7. Overall staff feel that the Council's response to the pandemic, and the communication with them, has been very positive and that as a result they feel well informed. Staff satisfaction levels were very high in the first round of the survey for this area, but subsequent actions that have been undertaken have further increased the overall positive result. The table below details these results and shows a comparison between the outcome of the first and second Surveys.

	Very and Fairly Well Informed	
	Round 1	Round 2
How well do you feel informed about the Council's overall response to coronavirus?	92.6%	94.8%
How well do you feel informed about coronavirus related staffing and operational issues that relate to your role?	86.4%	87.1%

8. The top three concerns and worries that staff have at the moment remain the same as shown in the first survey; but the actual levels of concern have started to reduce. It is likely that this is a result of the communication and support that has been put in place within the Council, but it could also reflect the increased positivity that staff felt at the time about the external environment. The table below details these results and shows a comparison between the outcome of the first and second Surveys.

	Very and Fairly Worried	
	Round 1	Round 2
The wider economy	88.5%	87.3%
Health, safety and wellbeing of friends and family	87.4%	78.3%
Community and service users	83.4%	73.0%

9. General satisfaction levels amongst staff have seen a small number of increases in most areas, therefore it can be presumed that the actions that were put in place following the first survey have had a positive impact. The level of satisfaction over the availability of tools to help staff to undertake their duties, has seen a positive increase following provision of the working from home allowance. Improvements to IT provision have also resulted in an increase in staff satisfaction over their ability to connect to the Council network. Satisfaction levels related to connections and social contact with colleagues have seen a decrease though. This could be expected due to social interactions being kept to a minimum, and it is likely this will not increase in the short-term as a result of the new national lockdown which occurred after this survey closed. The highest scoring questions in the area of staff satisfaction can be

seen in the table below which also shows a comparison between the outcome of the first and second Surveys.:

	Very and Fairly Satisfied	
	Round 1	Round 2
Wellbeing information and support available to you	80.1%	81.7%
Support from your line manager	82.9%	82.2%
The tools and equipment that available for you to do your job effectively	67.8%	75.0%
Speed and stability of the connection to the County Council network from home	55.7%	58.8%
Feeling connected and/or social contact with colleagues	67.8%	59.2%
Your ability to work a schedule that supports your work/life balance	72.9%	74.1%

Next steps

10. Whilst these survey results are very positive, a number of actions will still be undertaken to ensure that the focus on staff wellbeing continues. These include:
 - i. Providing staff with examples of good practice on how they can manage their personal wellbeing whilst working remotely;
 - ii. Ensuring that the approach to wellbeing is consistent and appropriate, regardless of whether staff are working remotely, or in front line roles;
 - iii. Further embedding the Managers' Charter and reiteration of the importance of all managers undertaking wellbeing conversations with their staff. This will help improve managers' understanding of their team's workload levels and any pressures they may have;
 - iv. Acknowledging that the latest lockdown may create more uncertainty, but re-emphasising the support that is available to staff to help support them through these times;
 - v. Focussing on the level of support that new starters to the County Council may require, and ensuring that they integrate with colleagues who may be working remotely;
 - vi. Encouraging flexible hours and working styles where it is appropriate;
 - vii. Continuing the roll-out of staff training on Microsoft Teams to help people become more productive and confident;
 - viii. Departments and services to consider how they respond to support their own workforce, for example, the Environment and Transport Department have set up their own 'Wellbeing Board' which is designed to promote corporate and local wellbeing initiatives and messages;
 - ix. Departmental Wellbeing Co-ordinators and Champions to be responsible for promoting corporate wellbeing initiatives/messages;
 - x. The development of a revised Wellbeing Strategy which concentrates on the four key themes of stress management, depression, anxiety and bereavement.

11. Wellbeing will continue to be a key focus for the Council, and its importance will be reflected within the new People Strategy 2020-24. These actions above will build upon the current activities that are already in place to reduce sickness absence and

will also ensure that support is available for those staff who are required to work from home for extended periods of time.

12. Future updates on wellbeing will be included within the report on Absence Management that is presented to the Employment Committee.

Conclusions

13. The second round of the Staff Wellbeing Survey has shown an increase in satisfaction levels following a variety of activities which have been undertaken recently to support staff wellbeing. These activities have enhanced the level of support that is available for staff and the management of their wellbeing. Plans are also in place to ensure that this degree of work is continued, and that staff wellbeing remains a key focus throughout the Council.

Recommendations

14. The Employment Committee is asked to note the outcome of the Staff Wellbeing Surveys and the future next steps outlined to further support staff wellbeing.

Background papers

15. None.

Circulation under the Local Issues Alert Procedure

16. None.

Equality and Human Rights Implications

17. None.

Officer(s) to Contact

Gordon McFarlane
Assistant Director (Corporate Services)
Corporate Resources Department
0116 3056123
gordon.mcfarlane@leics.gov.uk

Mark Foote
HR/OD Business Partner
Tel: 0116 3056447
Email: mark.foote@leics.gov.uk