

Report To:	Policy and Resources Committee	Date: 21 May 2019
Report By:	Head of Organisational Development, Policy and Communications	Report No: HR/05/19/SMcN
Contact Officer:	Gillian O'Neill, OD Advisor	Contact No: 2760
Subject:	Employee Opinion Survey – 2018	

1.0 PURPOSE

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to advise the Committee of the results of the latest 3 yearly Council wide Employee Opinion Survey carried out in October 2018.

2.0 SUMMARY

- 2.1 A Council wide Employee Opinion Survey is carried out every three years; this latest edition was carried out with the support of Lowland Market Research who are recognised as specialists in the field. A detailed presentation on the outcome of the survey has been arranged for Members immediately prior to the Committee meeting on 21 May.
- 2.2 The Employee Opinion Survey results on the whole present the Council in a good light. While a detailed comparison with other Councils is not possible it is, however, fair to comment that the survey results place Inverclyde amongst the best performing of Councils based on Lowland's Market Research knowledge of other Councils' performance. The survey response at 32% is within the anticipated range for such surveys, and it is significantly higher than our 2015 response rate, which was 26%.
- 2.3 As you would expect there are areas to which particular attention should be paid with a view to encouraging improvement. An Action Plan (Appendix 1) has been devised for areas where there is room for improvement, which will be supported by the workforce planning and development group which meets quarterly. This group provides the ideal platform to take forward such issues.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.1 It is recommended that the Committee:
- notes the positive outcome of the Employee Opinion Survey Results;
 - notes that the Employee Opinion Survey results will be issued to Council employees via an ICON message from the Chief Executive – ensuring that the communication finds its way to notice boards and the like for non PC users. The Insider publication may be utilised for this;
 - notes the Action Plan (appendix 1) to address the key actions of the survey, including feedback to employees on progress of the plan.

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The Council undertakes Employee Surveys, on a three year cycle basis, to gain feedback on our performance as a (good) employer. This enables us to measure employee satisfaction, the effects of change within the organisation, and to compare employee responses over time, with a view to continually improving. The survey is developed in conjunction with Lowland Market Research who are recognised specialists in the field.

4.2 The survey is developed to ensure that it covers a good cross section of key issues for employees across the Council, as well as certain areas the Council welcomes feedback on, and that it can be compared with the 2012 and 2015 editions. The scope of the survey, therefore, was to measure the effects of organisational change and how the Council's aspiration to be seen as a good employer measures up, by gaining feedback on:

- The Council as my employer
- Me and My job
- My performance, development and recognition
- My working environment and wellbeing at work
- Supporting Attendance
- Communication across the Council
- My supervisor/manager and me
- Senior Management
- Policies and Procedures (new to 2018 survey)

4.3 The Employee Survey was launched on 29 October 2018 and every Council employee was given the opportunity to complete a questionnaire. Employees who are desk based and have access to a PC were sent a link to enable them to complete the questionnaire online. Employees who are not desk based were sent a hard copy of the questionnaire to their home address. A number of interventions were made to increase the response rate:

- The closing date for employees completing the online survey was extended by a week.
- Reminders were sent to all employees encouraging them to participate.

4.4 32% of employees (1270) responded to the questionnaire. Employees responded as follows:

- Postal survey questionnaire (101)
- On-line Survey Monkey Questionnaire (1169)

Lowland Market Research advised that response rates for employee surveys generally range from 25% to 40%. Our response rate of 32% provides us with a good number of quality responses and is comparable with most other Councils' employee survey response rates. However, as the majority of responses were from desk based employees, its recognised that encouraging others to take part remains the challenge.

4.5 A number of very positive results have emerged from the survey, for example:

- Employees have a clear understanding of the aims and objectives of the Council (88%)
- Employees understand how their performance affects the Council's performance (90%) and understand the purpose of their job (91%)
- Employees are aware of the Council's e-learning training programme (88%)
- Employees are satisfied with their physical working conditions (81%)
- Employees are satisfied with health and safety precautions (89%)
- Employees agree that their supervisors/managers are approachable (93%) and

- they support and help them to do the best job they can (86%)
- Managers are confident in their skills and abilities to manage their teams (97%)
- Of the 46% of employees who had a sickness absence in the last 12 months, 78% of them had a return to work interview when they returned
- Overall, job satisfaction was higher than many other Councils (80%) and the majority of respondents said that their work gives them personal achievement (85%) and that they had they had the skills and knowledge to do their current job (87%)
- Scores above 70% indicate that we are performing very well as an employer. Anything below 70% indicates issues that we need to look to improve for employees. For example only 60% said that they had received recognition or praise for their good work, therefore improvements could be made with little effort and at no cost in our general work culture for managers to acknowledge employees' hard work and efforts more

4.6 As you would expect from such a survey there are also a number of areas where particular improvements can be realised, for example:

- Making employees aware of Local Outcome Improvement Plans, Corporate Plans and Directorate Improvement Plans.
- Improving communication with non PC users.
- Offering praise for job well done.
- Informing employees that they can log into e-learning from home and on their tablets and smartphones, this is currently done via Induction and Insider magazine, however can also be added to payslips.
- Although it was low, 1% of employees experience sexual harassment in the form of offensive language from colleagues/managers. The new Dignity and Respect at Work will raise awareness and provide an avenue to raise formally.
- 10% of all respondents never have team meetings, the terminology may need to be confirmed as some areas call them toolbox talks however services should be reminded to meet their employees regularly.
- 50% of employees hear about important things from gossip, a working group could look at news ways to communicate with all employees especially those with no access to ICON.
- Remind managers to apply the Supporting Employee Attendance Policy and Procedure and carry out Return to Work interviews, this will be supported with the introduction of a RTW leaflet.
- Only 54% of senior managers take time to meet their staff, this could be solved with senior managers occasionally attending team meetings. Suggestion to have employee pictures on emails and in organisation charts.

Feedback from the employee survey will be provided to all our Senior Managers at a Leadership Development event scheduled for 25 June.

5.0 PROPOSALS

5.1 It is proposed that the Committee:

- notes the positive outcome of the Employee Opinion Survey Results;
- notes that the Employee Opinion Survey results will be issued to Council employees via an ICON message from the Chief Executive – ensuring that the communication finds its way to notice boards and the like for non PC users. The Insider publication may be utilised for this;
- notes the Action Plan (appendix 1) to address the key actions of the survey, including feedback to employees on progress of the plan.

6.0 IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Finance

There are no financial implications as the budget has been allocated from the Workforce Development Fund.

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Year	Proposed Spend this Report	Virement From	Other Comments

Financial Implications – Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments

6.2 Legal

N/A

6.3 Human Resources

Areas for improvement will be taken forward areas via the workforce planning and development group which meets quarterly. This group provides the ideal platform to take forward such issues.

6.4 Equalities

Has an Equality Impact Assessment been carried out?

YES (see attached appendix)

NO - This report does not introduce a new policy, function or strategy or recommend a change to an existing policy, function or strategy. Therefore, no Equality Impact Assessment is required.

6.5 Repopulation

N/A

7.0 CONSULTATION

7.1 N/A

8.0 LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1 Appendix 1 – Action Plan

Survey Results 2018 (copies are available on request from the Head of OD, Policy and Communications).

Appendix 1 - Action Plan

Areas of Improvement	Proposed Action
Make employees aware of Local Outcome Improvement Plans, Corporate Plans and directorate Improvement Plans.	Action via performance appraisal that is a combination of re-issuing supporting documents, which include summary of corporate goals and objectives and via the actual appraisal interview. Promote documents on ICON and where they are saved so they are accessible to everyone. Utilisation of "Insider Publication" to promote.
Communication with non PC users.	Consider forming a working group to explore ways to communicate with these employees. Update home email addresses for all employees so they can be made aware of news.
Offering praise for a job well done.	Encourage managers to be more forthcoming via formal performance appraisal and also informally as and when required, for example, thanking team or individuals at regular team meetings. This will be covered at leadership events later this year.
Informing employees that they can log into e-learning at home.	Promote this during the on-going rebrand of e-learning platform and also via payslips. A message could also appear in the Insider magazine.
For those who have experienced sexual harassment in the form of offensive language from colleagues/managers.	Ensure we encourage reporting of such incidents which the new Dignity and Respect at Work policy will raise awareness of and provide an avenue for employees to raise formally.
Consistent team meetings as 10% of all respondents have never had any.	The terminology may need to be confirmed as some areas call them toolbox talks however services should be reminded to meet their employees regularly.
Communication channels, as 50% of employees hear about important things from gossip.	Consider forming a working group which could explore new ways to communicate with all employees especially those with no access to ICON.
Carry out Return to Work interviews and apply the Supporting Employee Attendance Policy and Procedure.	Remind managers to apply the Supporting Employee Attendance Policy and Procedure and carry out Return to Work interviews. Training is offered to managers and is mandatory as part of the training matrix. A Return to Work interview information leaflet is being produced which will be promoted to managers.
Senior managers should take time to meet their staff.	This could be solved with senior managers occasionally attending team meetings. Suggestion to have employee pictures on emails and in organisation charts.