

**RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL
REPORT TO
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE**

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: 1 June 2011
 title: Report on the Employee Satisfaction Survey 2010
 submitted by: Chief Executive
 principal author: Michelle Haworth – Principal Policy and Performance Officer

1 PURPOSE

- 1.1 To report on the Employee Satisfaction Survey 2010. This report is in support of a formal presentation of the results by the Joint Consultation Co-ordinator from CRACS (Collaborative Research and Consultation Service), of which the Council is a partner.

2 RELEVANCE TO THE COUNCIL'S AMBITIONS AND PRIORITIES:

- Council Ambitions: Well informed, trained, happy, healthy, well
- Community Objectives: managed and motivated employees are essential to
- Corporate Priorities: the Council achieving it's priorities.
- Other Considerations:

3 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 In line with the national best practice for Human Resource Management within local government, an Employee Satisfaction Survey was conducted amongst the employees of Ribble Valley Borough Council during November 2010. The survey built upon previous surveys conducted in November/December 2008 and October/November 2006, and was developed in the following ways:
- A number of questions were added to gauge employee perception of how the Council is handling the impacts of budget cuts;
 - A large number of questions were cut from the survey, especially in areas where there was some duplication, in order to reduce the length of the questionnaire;
 - The demographic questions were reviewed – this group of questions asks the respondent which service area they work in, whether they are office-based or work in external sites, how long they have worked for the Council etc...
- 3.2 CMT were concerned with the poor response rate achieved in the last survey in 2008, despite the reduction of the demographic questions. It was suggested, and agreed, that the survey could be conducted with the help of the CRACS as part of the partnership arrangement we have with them and the services we receive. It was hoped that this would help to reassure staff as to its anonymity.
- 3.3 A self-completion questionnaire methodology was used in this research, with SNAP survey software being utilised to email the survey. Employees who did not have access to a PC were sent a paper questionnaire by post.
- 3.4 The process proved to be highly efficient with manual data entry being considerably reduced as a result of most responses being submitted electronically.
- 3.5 There has been widespread support for the online methodology in that it was "easy to complete", "clear" and "well laid out". Initially two weeks were allowed for completion of the survey, however,

this was extended by a further two weeks, with a reminder being sent out by email to staff in a bid to increase the response rate.

3.6 The key issues explored in the research were:

- The Council as an Employer - examining issues such as pay, organisational pride and job satisfaction;
- Management and Leadership Style - both line management and the relationship of employees with senior managers;
- Flow of Information - communication issues such as formal communications, the Intranet and staff newsletters;
- Human Resources and Payroll - satisfaction with the Council's Personnel Services;
- Training and Development;
- Customer focus and customer satisfaction;
- Health and Wellbeing – including exploring the causes of work-related stress and levels of physical health;
- Change - employees involvement in change;
- Recession and it's impact on the Council; and
- Suggestions for Improvement.

3.7 The survey was conducted before the changes made in the recent restructure were implemented.

4 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

4.1 The research has several important strategic applications within our organisation and will provide:

- Contextual information to be used in the continual development of managers;
- Intelligence on the culture of our organisation that can be measured against previous surveys to show change over time;
- Information on the effectiveness of particular schemes such as flexible working hours and our official communication methods; and
- An opportunity for employees to feedback to Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Heads of Service on key organisational issues that impact on their working environment.

5 RESPONSE RATES

5.1 The overall response rate was 47% - a big increase on the 38% achieved in 2008, but still low compared to what is achieved elsewhere.

	2010	2008	2006
Council	47%	38%	52%
Chief Executives	30%	68%	51%
Community Services	25%	17%	39%
Development	26%	33%	53%
Resources	46%	36%	54%

5.2 Comparisons with other East Lancashire authorities' most recent surveys show that the average response rate to the last survey conducted by other authorities is 55.6%.

Authority	Response rates to latest survey
Ribble Valley (2010)	47%
Burnley (2008)	55%
Hyndburn (2007)	62%
Pendle (2009)	55%
Rossendale (2009)	59%

6 ISSUES

- 6.1 The questionnaire, completed with responses as percentages, can be found at Appendix A. Kris Barker, from the CRACS partnership, will make a short presentation to this committee on the key findings. Responses on the whole are positive, with marked improvement in some areas.
- 6.2 Comprehensive analysis of the survey was presented to Corporate Management Team (CMT) in early February 2011. It was agreed that departmental results would be discussed at each relevant departmental staff meeting, with a view to members of staff developing an action plan based on 'what is working less well'. The proposed action plan (Appendix B) was developed around the key messages coming out of the survey before being reported to CMT for approval.
- 6.3 The full report and analysis has been made available to members of staff on the Council's intranet. The approved action plan, and regular updates, will be clearly communicated to all staff.

7 RISK ASSESSMENT

7.1

- Resources: May have some small impact depending on the recommendations agreed.
- Technical, Environmental and Legal: None
- Political: None
- Reputation: None

8 IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT COMMITTEE

- 8.1 Note the report and identify any further actions that aren't included in the action plan.

Michelle Haworth
Principal Policy and Performance Officer

For further information please ask for Michelle Haworth, extension 4421