

RIBBLE VALLEY BOROUGH COUNCIL REPORT TO PERSONNEL COMMITTEE

Agenda Item No.

meeting date: WEDNESDAY, 10 JUNE 2015
 title: EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2015
 submitted by: JANE PEARSON – DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES
 principal author: MICHELLE SMITH – HEAD OF HR

1 PURPOSE

1.1 To report on the Employee Survey 2015.

1.2 Relevance to the Council's ambitions and priorities:

- Community Objectives - } Well informed, trained, happy, healthy, well
- Corporate Priorities - } managed and motivated employees are
- Other Considerations - } essential to the Council achieving its priorities.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 In line with the national best practice for Human Resource Management within local government, an Employee Survey was conducted amongst the employees of Ribble Valley Borough Council during February and March 2015. The survey built upon previous surveys conducted in 2012, 2010, 2008 and 2006, and was amended slightly in order to add more clarity to the questions and to try and improve response rates. For information the Action Plan from the last survey in 2012 is attached at Appendix A, it shows work carried out since the last survey.

2.2 Following concerns in the past regarding response rates and anonymity, it was agreed to again conduct the survey with the help of an external organisation - 'In:fusion' who are a research company based within Pendle BC. We have a partnership arrangement with them for the delivery of surveys and subsequent analysis. It was hoped that this would help to reassure staff as to its anonymity.

2.3 A self-completion questionnaire methodology was used in this research, with Snap survey software being utilised. The survey was made available to complete online and those employees who did not have access to a PC, or who were on leave when the survey was launched, were sent a paper questionnaire by post. The process proved to be highly efficient with manual data entry being considerably reduced as a result of most responses being submitted electronically. There has been widespread support for the online methodology in that it was "easy to complete", and "well laid out".

2.4 The survey was launched on 27 February 2015 and the deadline for responses was 13 March 2015. A copy of the survey is attached at Appendix B. The survey was also publicised in the staff newsletter – Backchat.

2.5 The key issues explored in the research were:

- Communication - communication issues such as formal communications, the Intranet and staff newsletters;
- Customer Focus;

- The Council as an Employer - examining issues such as pay, organisational pride and job satisfaction;
- Management Style - both line management and the relationship of employees with senior managers;
- Training and Development;
- Workloads and Wellbeing – including exploring the causes of work-related stress and levels of physical health; and
- Suggestions for Improvement.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH

3.1 The research has several important strategic applications within our organisation and provides:

- Contextual information to be used in the continual development of managers and Heads of Service;
- 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 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.

4 RESPONSE RATES

4.1 The overall response rate was 54% - which is a positive increase on the 49% response rate achieved in 2012 and our highest response rate to date.

	2015 (Total staff 235)	No of responses	2012 (Total staff 227)	No of responses	2010 (Total staff 262)	No of responses	2008 (Total staff 284)	No of responses	2006 (Total staff 302)	No of responses
Council	54%	126	49%	111	47%	123	38%	108	52%	156
Chief Executives	36%	17	47%	21	30%	11	68%	20	51%	17
Community Services	24%	29	20%	24	25%	31	17%	23	39%	66
Development			*		26%	13	33%	15	53%	21
Resources	48%	31	48%	30	46%	25	36%	25	54%	33
Unknown		49		36		43		25		19

*note the Development directorate was removed from the establishment following an organisational re-structure in 2012.

4.2 Individuals can choose to respond to the survey anonymously, as indicated by the 'unknown' category in the table above.

5 ISSUES

- 5.1 A summary analysis is provided at Appendix C with the detailed report at Appendix D.
- 5.2 This analysis was presented to CMT on 20 May 2015. They are now considering the next steps which may include running a series of focus groups of staff with a view to members of staff helping to develop and shape an action plan based on improvements that could be made. I will report back on the final Action Plan and any actions taken at the next meeting. The full report, analysis and action plan will then be made available to members of staff on the Council's intranet and highlighted at future Staff briefings.

6 RISK ASSESSMENT

- 6.1 The approval of this report may have the following implications:
- Resources – There may be some small resource implications depending upon steps taken in the Staff Survey Action plan.
 - Technical, Environmental and Legal – No implications identified.
 - Political – No implications identified.
 - Reputation – Taking account of staff views and acting upon where possible/appropriate will serve to enhance our reputation as good employer.
 - Equality & Diversity – It is important that all staff have the opportunity to express their views/opinions via a fair and simple process that affords them anonymity and ensures that their views are given serious consideration by CMT, Heads of Service and Members.

7 CONCLUSION

- 7.1 Note the report

MICHELLE SMITH
HEAD OF HR

JANE PEARSON
DIRECTOR OF RESOURCES

For further information please ask for Michelle Smith, extension 4402.

REF:MS/PERS/100615

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

The following action plan has been drawn up based on the results of the survey and comments made at follow up Team Meetings.

AREA	ISSUES – what’s working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
A Communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Different services communicate well with each other • I feel regular team meetings should replace departmental staff briefings 	Heads of Service hold regular team meetings and invite their Director to attend Discussed with Heads of Service and agreed to leave specific arrangements at the discretion of Head of Service. Some Heads of Service already have regular team meetings others communicate regularly with staff on an on-going basis.	From September 2013	Heads of Service Corporate Management Team
		Each Director to hold 1 full directorate meeting per year Directorate staff briefings scheduled throughout the year	November 2013	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am aware of what the Council is striving to achieve for the borough (its priorities and objectives) 	Each Head of Service to do a Backchat feature on their section’s work and their staff on rotation throughout the year Have been 3 articles to date and others will follow during this year	Monthly from October 2013	Heads of Service
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I find the Intranet interesting and informative 	Backchat to be issued with payslips Completed	Monthly from October 2013	Michelle Smith
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hear things first through ‘rumours’ • I find Backchat 	Contact Centre to be kept informed of key activities or issues likely to affect customers on a regular basis Completed	Ongoing	Heads of Service

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

AREA	ISSUES – what’s working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
	<p>interesting and informative</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • My head of service regularly holds team meetings 	<p>Heads of Service to circulate CMT minutes to their staff Heads of Service now receive electronic and paper copy of minutes each week to be circulated to their staff</p>	<p>Weekly</p>	<p>Heads of Service</p>
<p>B Training and Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council invests in training and development 	<p>Continue to support individual development through the appraisal system Training needs discussed at appraisal. Heads of Service have each have budget provision to support training. Personnel will co-ordinate any council wide training needs that arise.</p> <p>HR to look at regular IT training to keep staff up-to-speed on generic software (eg Microsoft packages) CMT agreed a Corporate Training Plan that included provision for IT training. Training has been started and will continue through to April 2015.</p>	<p>Ongoing Ongoing</p>	<p>Heads of Service Michelle Smith</p>

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

AREA	ISSUES – what's working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
C Council as an Employer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The work of my service area is valued by Councillors • Employees at different levels, and across departments, in the Council help each other • Time is set aside for review and improvement at work • The pay I receive is fair for the job that I do • I feel that the Council would not want to lose me 	<p>Circulate positive comments from Councillors via email and in Backchat Feedback from Councillors or Committees recorded in minutes, circulated via email or featured in Backchat</p> <p>Encourage regular discussion on updating/reviewing processes, or improving ways of working at team meetings Ongoing</p> <p>Head of HR to meet with Heads of Service to agree set of actions to achieve more collaborative working within, and across, departments Meeting has taken place and issues discussed which has led to better understanding and awareness of departmental activities and priorities.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Michelle Smith</p> <p>Heads of Service</p> <p>Michelle Smith/Heads of Service</p>
D Customer Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I receive feedback on levels of Customer satisfaction 	<p>Provide more feedback on customer satisfaction and performance (regular item in Backchat) Customer comments featured as and when they arrive</p>	<p>October 2013</p>	<p>Michelle Haworth</p>

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

AREA	ISSUES – what's working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
E Management Style	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am given supportive feedback on the work I do • My manager is motivational 	<p>Training on HR matters to be provided for Managers/Supervisors Heads of Service have attended training and this is currently being cascaded to Managers/Supervisors by HR. Sessions taking place are as follows:</p> <p>Introduction to HR and Employment Law Tues 20 Jan 9am – 1pm Wed 4 Feb 9am – 1pm</p> <p>Discipline and Grievance Tues 17 Feb 9am – 1pm Wed 4 Mar 9am – 1pm</p> <p>Absence Management Fri 13 Feb 9am – 1pm Thurs 12 Mar 9am – 1pm</p> <p>Recruitment and Selection Thurs 26 Feb 9am – 1pm Thurs 26 Mar 9am – 1pm</p>	Ongoing	Michelle Smith
		<p>Heads of Service and Managers to motivate staff Has been discussed at CMT/Heads of Service meetings</p>		

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

AREA	ISSUES – what's working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
F Workloads and wellbeing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When changes are made at work I am clear how they will work out in practice • Change at work is planned and implemented properly 	<p>Any changes at work to be introduced using a staged approach that will include discussions with any staff affected. Ongoing as and when changes arise.</p> <p>CMT to consider changes to the flexi-time system. Changes made to the system to extend carry over limit at period end. Also introduced an option to convert 1 days leave to lieu in January 2014 for a 12 month trial period. This has been reviewed by CMT and they have confirmed that we will continue to offer the option to convert 1 day leave to lieu per leave year with effect from 1 April 2015.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>October 2013</p>	<p>Heads of Service</p> <p>Corporate Management Team</p>
G Recession and its impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Council has made me aware that there might be an impact on me and the duties I carry out 	<p>Continue to provide members of staff with as much information as possible on budget developments – regular emails following BWG/Policy and Finance Regular emails from Jane Pearson on the budget and latest financial position. Jane delivered detailed briefing on budgets and finance for Heads of Service in March 2014.</p>	Ongoing	Director of Resources
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I don't believe that I will be affected by any further budget cuts • I think my employment is relatively secure 	<p>Regular updates on financial position at staff briefings. Financial update provided as a regular feature on the agenda as appropriate.</p>	Ongoing	Director of Resources

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

AREA	ISSUES – what's working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
General comments	Poor response rate	Re-design the survey and look for ways to make it more pro-active e.g more scope for staff to contribute suggestions for improvement The survey has been reviewed and reduced in size.	Before conducting next survey due in 2014	Michelle Haworth
	Feelings by some staff that they don't have most up to date equipment to enable them to do their job	Upgrade IT systems and software to have the appropriate (up-to-date) tools to do the job. Heads of Service will ensure that staff have the appropriate software and systems to do their job. Heads of Service to develop a rolling programme in their budgets to keep PC's up-to-date in order to ensure that staff have the correct tools to do their jobs effectively. Highlighted at CMT and Heads of Service meetings.	Ongoing	Heads of Service
	Non-uniform approach to answering phones and responding to emails	Working group to be established to look at answering phones, responding to emails etc as an addendum to our Customer Service Standards. Customer Care Policy was reviewed and approved by CMT in January 2015.	October 2013	Michelle Smith/Michelle Haworth/Toni Bates

Employee Satisfaction Survey 2012 – Action Plan

AREA	ISSUES – what's working less well?	PROPOSED ACTION	DUE DATE	RESPONSIBLE OFFICER
	'We need to work smarter as we can't work harder'	Facilitate and encourage the use of electronic systems – using outlook to its full extent, completing forms electronically eg self-certification, training requests <i>All Heads of Service have been asked confirm who the systems administrator is for their own service specific ICT systems. The administrator role is to develop systems use and request any software upgrades to improve functionality.</i>	Ongoing	Michelle Haworth/PAs



Ribble Valley Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

Our seventh Employee Survey launches this week. As you know, we carry out the survey every two years and it is an important part of our staff engagement strategy.

The purpose of the survey is to establish an overall picture of how you feel about working for the Council and to compare results with previous years so that we can identify any trends. It isn't just a management exercise. CMT value your views and, where possible, what you say will make a difference. We want to know what you think, how you feel, what is important to you and how we can work together to make the Council a good place to work and an organisation that delivers the best service it can to the residents of Ribble Valley.

We continue to work closely with UNISON who have been consulted on the survey and are supportive of the exercise.

The survey can be accessed by the following link: [Staff Survey 2015](#). If you don't have access to a PC, or would prefer a paper copy of the survey, then copies are available on level B Reception and at our off-site locations. When completed, paper surveys can be left in the envelopes provided at level B reception in the Council Offices, with Helen at the depot, or posted.

I want to re-assure everyone that your responses are absolutely confidential. All completed surveys, both paper and electronic, go directly to our Joint Consultation Co-ordinator who is based at Pendle BC, to analyse responses and prepare a report for CMT. This has happened for the last three surveys and no electronic information or paper copies have been kept here.

It is really important that as many of you as possible complete the survey and let us have your views. If you don't tell us what you think we can't do anything about it and the more people that complete the survey, the more we have an accurate picture of overall staff opinion.

Please complete your survey as soon as possible and if you have any queries, further information is available from Michelle Haworth on 414421.

The deadline for responses is 13 March, after which your responses will be analysed by the Joint Consultation Co-ordinator who will then report results to CMT in April/May 2015. As happened after the last survey, if there are any areas of concern identified we will organise some small focus groups, which will be representative of staff, to discuss these areas and to help us develop an action plan. We will then share results of the survey and the action plan with you in June/July 2015.

Thank you for your co-operation and if you have any concerns please discuss them with your Head of Service/Director or Michelle Smith.

Improvement

Q10 Do you have any comments to make, changes you'd like to make, or perhaps some suggestions for improvements in internal communications, training and development, or customer service etc...?

About You

We are committed to ensuring that all our employees are treated fairly. The following set of questions will enable us to gain a better understanding of whether there any views which are common to specific areas.

You do not have to answer the questions in this section - you may prefer to tick '*Do not wish to answer*'.

Q11 In which Department of the Council do you currently work?

Community Services Resources Chief Executives Do not wish to answer

Q12 Which council building do you mainly work from?

Council Offices, Church Walk Other Council buildings Do not wish to answer

Q13 What is your current grade?

Manual/ Craft Grade Senior Officer (SO) Do not wish to answer
 Scale 1 - 6 Principal Officer (PO)

Q14 What is your age?

Under 20 40-49 years Do not wish to answer
 20-29 years 50-59 years
 30-39 years 60+

Q15 Are you?

Male Female Do not wish to answer

Thank you very much for your time. The results of the survey will be reported soon.

Employee Survey 2015 Research Report



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

in:fusion
inspiring positive change

Report prepared by Adam Pearson
Infusion Research
On behalf of Ribble Valley BC
adam@infusion.org.uk
01282 661614
www.infusion.org.uk
May 2015

Contents

1	Executive Summary	3
2	Methodology	5
3	Who Responded?	7
4	Communication	8
5	Customer Focus.....	10
6	Council as an Employer	11
7	Management	13
8	Training and Development	14
9	Health and Wellbeing	15
10	Key Driver Analysis – Job Satisfaction	17

1 Executive Summary

- **126 employees** responded to the 2015 Employee Survey, a **response rate of 54%** (up from 49% in 2012).
- 6 of the 7 statements within the **communication** section have improved compared to 2012. However, a lower proportion of employees feel communication at team and staff meetings has improved over the last three years.
- 4 of the 6 **sources of information** are considered more useful to employees than they were three years ago, particularly the Council website and staff noticeboards. This perhaps reflects changes made to the Council website and efforts made to keep noticeboard tidier and up-to-date.
- Agreement levels with all 4 **customer focus** statements have increased over the last three years. Four out of five employees feel customers receive a good quality of service from staff displaying a good attitude towards them.
- 7 of the 11 statements relating to **the Council as an employer** have improved since 2012. Overall job satisfaction has risen from 46% in 2012 to 53%, but this is still below other councils in the county where satisfaction levels range from 55% to 78%.
- Analysis of the **key drivers of job satisfaction** reveals that feeling valued by the Council is most likely to influence the level of satisfaction, followed by being proud of the organisation and good morale within the service area.
- There has been a noticeable drop in the proportion of **employees worried about further budget cuts**, with 30% currently worried or very worried compared to 48% in 2012.
- Of the nine **management** statements, three have improved since 2012, five have broadly stayed the same and one has deteriorated. The personal touches seem to have improved (encouragement, saying thank you, showing respect and consideration) but comments made indicate that there could be some issues within teams around effective communication from management.
- 4 of the 5 **training and development** statements have improved since 2012, but still fall short when compared to other councils in the county. 52% agree that they receive the training they need to do their job well, up from 43% in

2012. But only 36% of employees feel the Council invests in training and development (29% in 2012) which is well below other councils in the area (ranging from 63% to 71%).

- Of the 11 statements relating to **health and wellbeing**, 4 demonstrate signs of improvement, 5 have remained at a similar level and 2 are showing signs of deterioration. Morale within teams appears to have improved (41% agree that morale is good compared to 31% in 2012).
- Findings suggest that **stress levels** have increased slightly over the last 3 years with 23% feeling under a large amount of stress at work compared to 19% in 2012.

2 Methodology

The 2015 Employee Survey was set up online and paper copies were distributed to manual staff, those on leave and any staff member who requested a paper copy. Both electronic responses and paper copies were sent directly to Infusion for data entry.

The survey was sent out to staff on 27 February and closed on 20 March 2015 with reminders sent out during the fieldwork period.

In total **126 responses** from 235 employees, up from 111 responses in 2012. This equates to a response rate of 54%. The following responses were received from the different departments within the Council:

- Chief Executive's = 17 responses (36%)
- Community Services = 29 responses (24%)
- Resources = 31 responses (48%)
- Unknown = 49 responses

The response rate of 54% is higher than the last four employee surveys undertaken at Ribble Valley. It is likely that the reduced length of survey and increased efforts to engage with off-site staff has contributed to this rise in responses.

49 of the 126 respondents did not identify a department. Given the high number of unknown responses it is difficult to draw any conclusions from departmental response rates. It is also an interesting finding in itself that an increasing number of employees did not feel inclined to reveal the department they work in.

Figure 2.1: Response rates over time

	2015	2012	2010	2008	2006
Council	54%	49%	47%	38%	52%
Chief Executives	36%	47%	30%	68%	51%
Community Services	24%	20%	25%	17%	39%
Resources	48%	48%	46%	36%	54%

Percentages reported in tables within this report, unless stated otherwise, relate to those employees who selected 'strongly agree' or 'agree' for a particular statement or question. Moreover, 'don't know' selections have not been removed from the

analysis unless stated otherwise as these are considered a valid response and reflection of opinion.

If the wording of a question or statement has changed compared to previous years then this is referenced. Even subtle changes of wording can have a significant impact on the validity and reliability of any comparison.

This report is split into the sections contained within the employee survey and where possible comparisons will be made with previous results and other councils. Please note that due to the reduced nature of the survey any sweeping comparisons of whole sections have been avoided as the statements within each are different to both previous Ribble Valley surveys and other employee surveys undertaken across the county.

37 comments were made within the responses. These can be found within the Appendix and are used throughout the report to add further insight and context.

3 Who Responded?

A significant proportion of employees did not wish to answer a range of 'about you' questions such as the department they work in grade of their position. As such there will be minimal cross-tabulation analysis, with the exception of Council department where differences appear significant. However, any departmental analysis should be treated with caution given the low counts and likelihood of selection bias. Overall, those who did not wish to divulge 'about you' information appear more likely to disagree with the statements contained within the survey, and therefore the departmental analysis could appear more positive than it actually is.

Figure 3.1: About you information

	2015		2012 (%)
	Count	%	
Department			
Community Services	29	23%	22%
Resources	31	25%	28%
Chief Executives	17	14%	19%
Do not wish to answer	48	38%	31%
Building			
Council offices	74	60%	76%
Other Council buildings	10	8%	6%
Do not wish to answer	40	32%	19%
Grade			
Manual/ craft	1	1%	Not asked
Scale 1-6	37	31%	
Senior Officer (SO)	6	5%	
Principal Officer (PO)	9	8%	
Do not wish to answer	67	56%	
Age			
Under 20	0	0%	0%
20-29 years	5	4%	8%
30-39 years	10	8%	16%
40-49 years	26	21%	22%
50-59 years	17	13%	15%
60+ years	7	6%	7%
Do not wish to answer	61	48%	32%
Gender			
Male	30	24%	51%
Female	47	37%	27%
Do not wish to answer	49	39%	21%

4 Communication

Six of the seven statements within the Communication section of the survey indicated positive change since 2012. Encouragingly, 62% of Council employees agree that they are given sufficient information to do their job properly, up from 49% in 2012. However, this is still lower than some other councils in Lancashire who asked the same question (67% in South Ribble and 73% in Lancaster).

The only communication deterioration over the last three years is agreement with the statement that communications such as team and staff meetings have improved (30% compared to 38% in 2012). When analysed by Council department, 61% of Resources staff feel communications have improved compared to 18% of employees within Chief Executives.

Community Services staff appear less aware of both the Council's and their service's priorities and objectives than those employees in Resources and Chief Executives. Indeed, only half of Community Services staff are aware of their service priorities compared to 87% of employees with Resources.

Those employees who work away from the main council offices appear to feel less isolated and ill-informed than in 2012.

Around a third (34%) of employees hear things first through 'rumours' compared to 25% in Pendle and 48% in Burnley.

Figure 4.1: Level of agreement with communication statements

	2015	2012	Change
I am given sufficient information to do my job properly	62%	49%	↑
I am aware of what the Council is striving to achieve for the borough (its priorities and objectives)	58%	52%	↑
I am aware of my service's priorities and objectives	69%	60%	↑
Working away from the main council offices leaves me feeling isolated and ill-informed*	18%	41%	↑
Different services communicate well with each other	21%	14%	↑
I hear things first through 'rumours'	34%	41%	↑
Over the past three years I feel that communications (eg team meetings and staff meetings) have improved	30%	38%	↓

**Don't know/ not applicable excluded*

The Communication section also asked employees whether they find a range of information sources available to them useful. Like the more general communication statements, the overall view is one of positive movements compared to 2012. There are no information sources that employees find less useful than three years ago.

The source of information Council employees find most useful is the Council website. 74% agree that this is a useful source, up from 65% in 2012. Employees within the Resources department find it most useful (93%) and it fairs favourably when compared to other council staff surveys (54% in Pendle, 58% in Burnley).

The most notable change in level of agreement relates to staff notice boards, with half of employees agreeing these are a useful source of information compared to a third in 2012. Again, Resources staff find the notice boards more useful than other departments do.

The staff intranet, whilst improving as a source of information for employees (49% agree), still has some catching up to do with other councils (54% in Burnley, 58% in Pendle and 72% in Wyre).

Figure 4.2: Level of agreement with useful sources of information

Useful Sources of Information	2015	2012	Change
The Council website	74%	65%	↑
Departmental staff briefings	54%	55%	↔
Backchat - staff newsletter	61%	55%	↑
Team meetings	49%	48%	↔
Staff notice boards	50%	33%	↑
Staff intranet	49%	41%	↑

5 Customer Focus

There have been some particularly noticeable improvements around customer focus based on the findings from this survey.

82% agree that employees show a good attitude towards customers, up from 64% in 2012. A further 16% feel that employees sometimes show a good attitude.

Moreover, four out of five employees agree that the Council's services are of a good quality (64% in 2012). Chief Executives staff (94%) appear more likely to agree with this than Community Services staff (63%).

The findings suggest that employees at the Council increasingly agree that they can respond flexibly to customer needs. However, caution should be applied here as the wording in 2012 specifically referred to changing the service they deliver. Chief Executives staff appear more likely to agree that they can respond flexibly (82% agree compared to the overall employee figure of 75%).

The current agreement levels relating to customer focus are broadly in line with other councils in the county.

Figure 5.1: Level of agreement with customer focus statements

	2015	2012	Change
The quality of the Council's services is good	80%	64%	↑
Employees show a good attitude towards customers	82%	64%	↑
I am able to respond flexibly to meet customer needs*	75%	53%	↑
I am aware of our customer complaints policy	77%	73%	↑

**Different wording in 2012- 'I am able to change the service I deliver to meet customer needs'*

6 Council as an Employer

Generally this was another positive section for the Council compared to the 2012 results. Seven of the eleven statements have seen a positive movement in agreement level, including overall satisfaction with the job rising to 53%.

In terms of percentage change, the most noticeable improvement relates to employees at different levels and across departments helping each other. 39% agree with this statement compared to 24% in 2012. Coupled with the finding in the Communication section that departments are increasingly communicating well with each other, this suggests working relations across the Council are on the up. Chief Executives staff are less likely to agree though – 30% compared to 43% and 48% in Community Services and Resources respectively. Looking at other councils in the county, whilst there are variations in wording of the statement, 34% agree in Pendle and 54% in Rossendale.

The one statement which has seen a drop in the level of agreement is the Council providing a safe and healthy work environment. This has fallen by 5 percentage points since 2012 to 69%. Community Services staff and those who did not wish to say were less likely to agree.

The most positive response to a statement within this section relates to the Council dealing well with the recession and its impact on the Council. 79% of employees agree with this, 100% within the Resources department. However, it is difficult to provide a true comparison with 2012 here as the statement changed from 'The Council is dealing with the recession and its impact on the Council to the best of its abilities'.

There was also a positive response to the Council keeping employees fully informed of the impact of further potential cuts. Three out of four employees agree with this, although this drops to 48% within the Community Services department.

29% of employees agree that they feel valued by the Council. This is up from 22% in 2012 but is still lower than a number of other councils in the area (35% in Rossendale and 39% in Burnley).

Figure 6.1: Level of agreement with Council employer statements

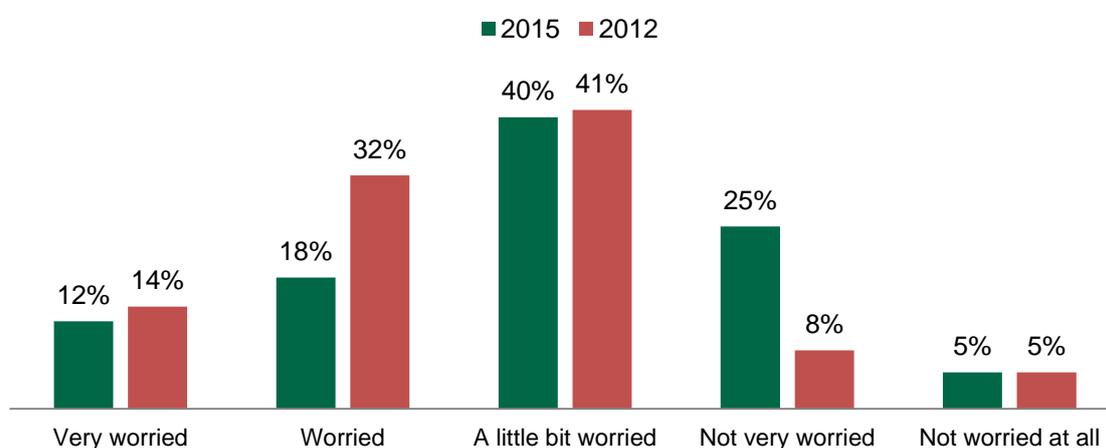
	2015	2012	Change
The Council provides a safe and healthy work environment	69%	74%	⬇️
My Head of Service/manager explains risk assessments to keep me safe at work	39%	38%	↔️
Employees at different levels, and across departments, help each other	39%	24%	⬆️
The Council is a good organisation to work for	59%	62%	↔️
I feel proud to work for the Council	58%	51%	⬆️
I feel valued by the Council	29%	22%	⬆️
The pay I receive is fair for the job I do	36%	30%	⬆️
The Council needs to change in order to improve	57%	57%	↔️
The Council has kept me fully informed of the impact of further potential budget cuts*	75%	60%	⬆️
The Council is dealing well with the recession and its impact on the Council*	79%	58%	⬆️
Overall I am satisfied with my job	53%	46%	⬆️

**Different wording in 2012 - 'The Council has kept me fully informed of the threat it faces of further budget cuts' and 'The Council is dealing with the recession and its impact on the Council to the best of its abilities'*

30% of employees are very worried or worried about further budget cuts, down from 46% in 2012. One in four of employees are now not very worried about further budget cuts, compared to 8% three years ago.

There do not appear to be any differences in the level of worry across the different departments at the Council.

Figure 6.2: How worried employees are about further budget cuts



7 Management

The management section of the survey reveals a more varied range of agreement levels from employees. Of the nine management statements, three have improved since 2012, five have broadly stayed the same and one has deteriorated.

70% of employees agree that their manager shows them respect and consideration, up from 66% in 2012. This is highest in the Resources department (93%). Moreover, the number of employees who indicated that their manager encourages them and says thank you for a job well done has increased.

The one statement which has shown a drop in agreement level relates to the ability of a manager to communicate with staff and keep them informed. However, the statement in 2012 did not refer to 'keeps me well informed' which could contribute to the falling level of agreement.

55% of employees agree that they are happy with the way in which they are managed. There is significant variation across departments with 80% of Resources staff agreeing compared to just 37% of those who did not identify the department they work for.

52% of employees agree that their manager says thank you for a job well done, up from 46% in 2012. Looking across the county, of those councils who included this statement, both South Ribble and Wyre have a higher agreement level (73% and 62% respectively).

Figure 7.1: Level of agreement with management statements

My manager...	2015	2012	Change
Keeps me and my section focused on objectives and targets (through Performance Appraisals)	49%	49%	↔
Lets me know how I am performing	48%	48%	↔
Encourages me at work	55%	45%	↑
Says thank you for a job well done	52%	46%	↑
Has the ability to communicate with all staff and keeps me well informed*	51%	57%	↓
Shows me respect and consideration	70%	66%	↑
Provides support and guidance	57%	55%	↔
Is a motivational and effective team leader^	43%	N/A	↔
I am happy with the way in which I am managed#	55%	55%	↔

*Different wording in 2012 - 'Has the ability to communicate to all staff'

^Two separate statements in 2012 - 'Is motivational' and 'Is an effective team leader'

#Different scale in 2012 - always and often

8 Training and Development

Four of the five training and development statements have seen an increase in agreement levels between 2012 and 2015.

52% of employees agree that they receive the training they need to do their job well, up from 43% in 2012. 71% of Resources staff agree with this statement compared with only 29% of those who did not identify the department they work in. However, this is the lowest agreement level in the county for this statement (of those councils where data is available). These levels range from 61% in Pendle to 77% in Burnley.

The results suggest that managers are more likely to discuss personal development in a performance appraisal compared to three years ago. But this does seem to vary across departments with 81% of Resources staff agreeing compared to 27% in Community Services.

The proportion of employees agreeing that they have had a performance appraisal in the last 12 months has dropped from 61% to 48% over the last three years. 48% of employees in Community Services indicated that they have not had an appraisal in the last 12 months and 17% do not know.

36% of employees agree that the Council invests in training and development, up from 29% in 2012. This is considerably lower than comparator data in Pendle (63%) and South Ribble (71%).

Figure 8.1: Level of agreement with training and development statements

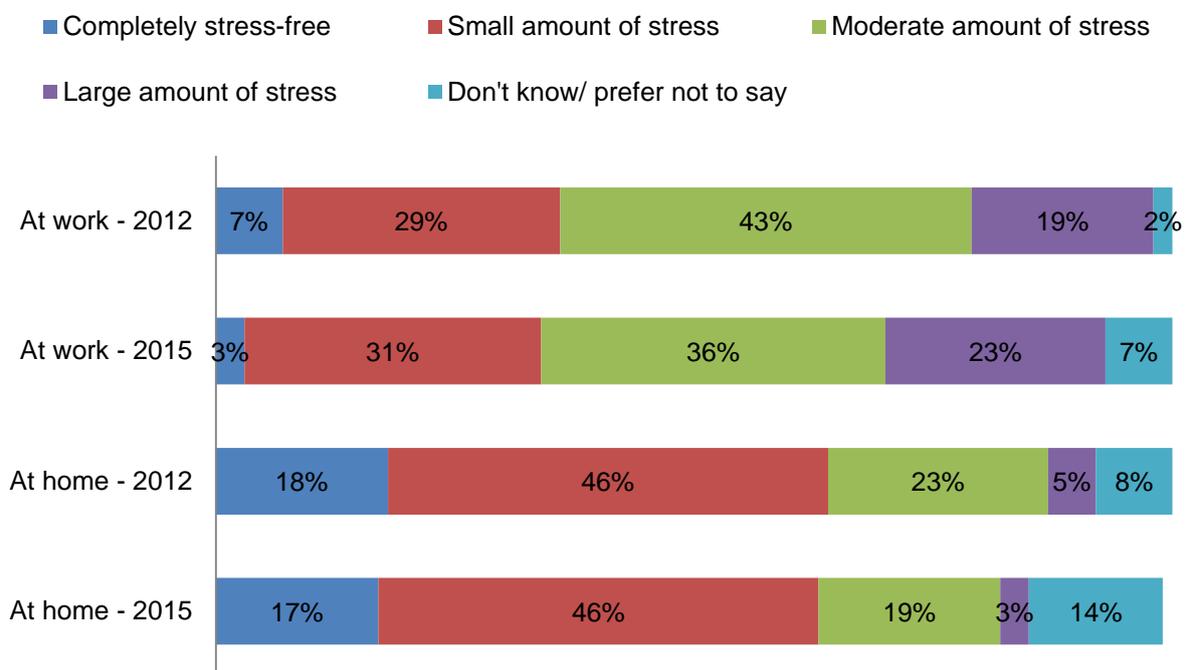
Training and Development	2015	2012	Change
I receive the training I need to do my job well	52%	43%	↑
The Council invests in training and development	36%	29%	↑
My Head of Service/manager encourages my training and development	43%	38%	↑
My personal development is discussed as part of my appraisal	54%	49%	↑
I have had a performance appraisal in the last 12 months	48%	61%	↓

9 Health and Wellbeing

23% of employees consider themselves to be under a large amount of stress at work, compared to 19% in 2012. The findings suggest that Chief Executives is the most stressful department to work in with 36% of staff in this department under a large amount of stress.

Stress levels at home have remained fairly similar but with an increase in the proportion of employees preferring not to say.

Figure 9.1: Level of stress at work and at home



Of the 11 statements relating to health and wellbeing, 4 demonstrate signs of improvement, 5 have remained at a similar level and 2 are showing signs of deterioration.

In terms of workload, 28% of employees feel that different groups at work demand things that are hard to combine. This has fallen from 37% in 2012. Coupled with a fall in the proportion of employees feeling they have too many tasks to do, the findings suggest that workloads are becoming more manageable. However, nearly half of Chief Executives staff (47%) feel it is hard to combine work demands from different groups.

Both having a choice in deciding how to do work and being clear of what is expected at work have seen falling levels of agreement between 2012 and 2015. In particular,

employees within the Community Services department and those who prefer not to reveal their department are least clear about what is expected of them at work.

Figure 9.2: Level of agreement with health and wellbeing statements

	2015	2012	Change
I have a choice in deciding how I do my work	62%	66%	↓
Different groups at work demand things from me that are hard to combine	28%	37%	↑
I have unachievable deadlines	16%	14%	↔
I have too many different tasks to do	26%	30%	↑
I am pressured to work long hours	12%	13%	↔
I am subject to personal harassment in the form of unkind words or behaviour	10%	10%	↔
Work problems are solved efficiently in my service	38%	36%	↔
Relationships at work are strained	17%	24%	↑
I am clear what is expected of me at work	74%	79%	↓
My working time can be flexible	56%	55%	↔
I think morale is good in my service area	41%	31%	↑

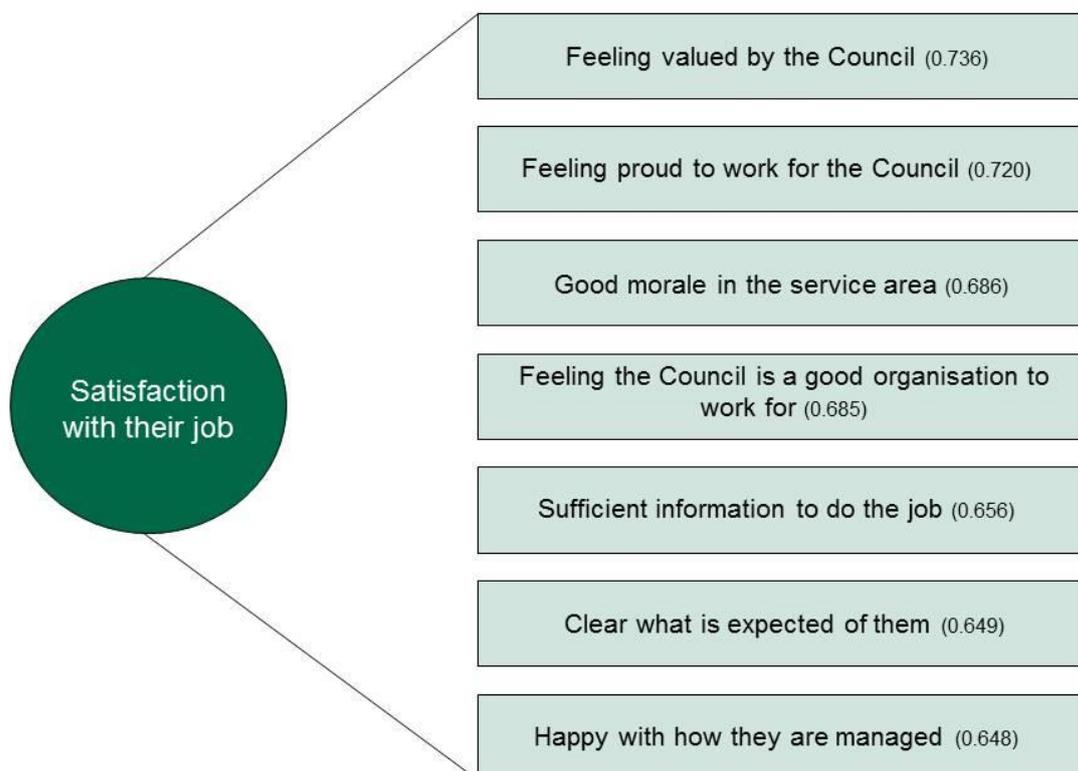
10 Key Driver Analysis – Job Satisfaction

Key driver analysis is a statistical technique used to identify the main influencing variables on satisfaction. In this survey, we have explored the relationship between 'overall I am satisfied with my job' and all the other variables within the survey (using 2015 data only).

The diagram below summarises the results of this process. The number within the bracket identifies the strength of the correlation between the two variables (1 being a perfect correlation and 0 being no correlation at all). The diagram only identifies the strongest correlations.

Employees are most likely to be satisfied with their job if they feel valued by the Council and are proud to work for the organisation. Good morale within their service area is also important, as is having sufficient information and expectations relating to the work they do.

Figure 10.1: Key driver analysis for job satisfaction



Employee Survey 2015

Adam Pearson, Infusion Research

adam.pearson@pendle.gov.uk

01282 661614



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Methodology

- Survey set up online and paper copies distributed to manual staff and on request
- Survey sent out 27 February and closed on 20 March, one reminder sent during that time
- In total, 126 responses from 235 employees (54% response rate)
 - Chief Executive's = 17 responses (36%)
 - Community Services = 29 responses (24%)
 - Resources = 31 responses (48%)
 - Unknown = 49 responses
- Higher response rate than the last 4 surveys undertaken (length of survey, level of engagement could be factors)



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Response Rate Comparison

	2015	2012	2010	2008	2006
Council	54%	49%	47%	38%	52%
Chief Executives	36%	47%	30%	68%	51%
Community Services	24%	20%	25%	17%	39%
Resources	48%	48%	46%	36%	54%

- More staff responding, but more not wishing to disclose the department they work in
- Hence why departmental response rates look lower
- Should consider this when looking at departmental analysis



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Background

- Significantly shorter survey than in previous years
 - Positive impact on response rate
- Main report avoided sweeping comparisons of whole sections
 - Different questions, not comparable internally or with other councils
 - Instead it focuses on individual statements within each section
- High proportion of 'anonymous' respondents makes it difficult to analyse by department
 - Low sub-samples
 - Clearly not wholly representative of that department
- Differentiation between statement agreement levels and comments
 - Comments tend to be more negative by their nature
 - 37 comments from 126 respondents (29%) and 235 employees (16%)



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Overall Picture

- 56 statements were included in the survey, with the level of agreement compared to the 2012 survey:
 - 33 statements have improved
 - 6 have deteriorated
 - 17 stayed the same
- Percentages here on in refer to combined 'strongly agree' or 'agree', unless stated otherwise
- Following slides look at each section in turn



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Communication

- 6 of the 7 statements improved since 2012
- Higher levels of agreement that staff are given sufficient info to do their job (62% compared to 49%) – closing in on other councils (South Ribble 67%, Lancaster 73%)
- Communication in staff and team meetings the only statement to deteriorate (30% down from 38%) – analysis suggests more of an issue in Chief Executives than Resources
- Community Services less aware of Council and service priorities/ objectives, but at the same time feeling less isolated and ill-informed than in 2012
- Less of a rumour mill than in 2012



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Information Sources

- Overall positive movements compared to 2012
- Council website the most useful information resource for staff (74% agree), and more useful than in other districts (Pendle 54%, Burnley 58%)
- Staff noticeboards has seen the most significant increase in agreement, particularly for Resources
- Staff intranet is improving (49% agree), but still behind other councils (Burnley 54%, Pendle 58%, Wyre 72%)



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Customer Focus

- Significant improvements in 3 of the 4 statements (and improvement in the 4th too)
- 82% feel employees show a good attitude towards customers (Lancaster 57%, Burnley 78%, South Ribble 95%)
- Four in five believe the quality of the Council's services is good, higher from the perspective of Chief Executives staff (94%), lower in Community Services (63%)



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Council as an Employer

- Another positive section on the whole with improvements in 7 of 11 statements
- Overall job satisfaction up from 46% to 53% but still lower than other districts (South Ribble 78%, Burnley 66%, Pendle 55%)
- Staff generally feel the Council is dealing well with the recession and keeping them informed about further budget cuts, and are less worried about further cuts than 3 years ago
- Biggest improvement in employees helping each other (39% compared to 24% in 2012)



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Management

- Mixed direction of travel across the 9 statements
- Managers showing staff more respect, encouraging more and saying thank you for a job well done
- But managers' communication with all staff and keeping them informed has dropped
- 55% are happy with how they are managed (same as in 2012), predictably lower (37%) for those who did not identify their department



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Training and Development

- 4 of the 5 statements have improved over the last 3 years
- Agreement that they receive the training needed to do the job well has improved (52%), but still lower than other districts (61% Pendle, 77% Burnley)
- Discussing personal development in an appraisal has improved compared to 2012, but mixed across departments (81% Resources, 27% Community Services)
- The % who have had a performance appraisal in the last 12 months is down from 61% in 2012 to 48% in 2015



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Health and Wellbeing

- Mixed direction of travel across 11 statements
- Stress levels fairly similar to 2012
- Employees less likely to find the different work they do hard to combine or feel they have too many tasks to do
- But staff feel they have less choice in deciding how to do work or being clear what is expected of them



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Drivers of Job Satisfaction

1. Feeling valued by the Council
2. Feeling proud to work for the Council
3. Good morale in the service area
4. Feeling the Council is a good organisation to work for
5. Sufficient information to do the job
6. Clear what is expected of them
7. Happy with how they are managed



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Selected Comments

Great place to work, everyone is so helpful. It would be nice to see the management team walking the floor and talking to staff now and again.

Training is absolutely vital, but the impression I get is that staff here are not given the opportunity to train and are actively discouraged from applying for training courses.

In relation to our corporate objectives as an organisation, I feel that they could be better communicated to the staff on the ground.

I feel if everyone was rowing in the same boat instead of dinghies and pedalos the authority would benefit as a whole. Ribble Valley is a great authority to work for but cracks are appearing as in "its not my job".

Communications have improved recently in the department I work in, which is very important to somebody that works part time.

Not had appraisal for over 1 year and feel unable to ask for training when there is a cost involved. I would like more feedback and support from my manager.

Positive comments from the top, filtering down through the Head of Services/Manager to staff - feel at the moment doom & gloom.



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Note: selected comments identified to capture some of the 'issues' being raised by staff

Profiling Departments



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Resources

- Generally more positive than other departments about most things
- More aware of priorities and objectives
- Feel team and staff meetings have improved
- Pay is fair for the work they do
- Job satisfaction
- Positive about management



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Chief Executives

- Prefer to find information from Backchat
- More likely to use internal communication sources for information than other departments
- Can respond flexibly to meet customer needs
- But different demands at work can be hard to combine
- More likely to be stressed at work



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Community Services

- More likely to hear things first through rumours
- Lower awareness of customer complaints policy
- More choice in deciding how they do their work
- Safety more of an issue at work
- Feel they get the training they need to do the job properly
- Less likely to have had a performance appraisal in last 12 months



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Prefer Not To Says

- As you would imagine, more likely to be negative
- Low morale in their service area
- Departments do not communicate well with each other
- Less pride in working for the Council
- Feel the Council needs to change in order to improve
- Less likely to be positive about management
- 21 of 48 (44%) are subject to unkind words or behaviour at least sometimes



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Summing Up



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Conclusions

- Clear and encouraging progress made since 2012, particularly around communication and customer focus
- Still areas to work on like communication from management and regularity of performance appraisals
- Momentum to be carried on across the board to gain on other districts (job satisfaction still lower)
- Some specific areas across different departments which could be looked at, e.g. stress in Chief Execs, rumour mill in Commercial Services
- A significant chunk did not want to be identified in any way (and tended to be more negative)



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

Next Steps

- Follow up with focus groups to get underneath some key emerging issues? – are there any areas in particular we should be looking at on the back of these results and action plans developed?
- Disseminate key findings to staff. There are some positive findings which tie in with improved communication
- Feed results into corporate plans and ensure the positivity of 2015 is a trend and not an anomaly



Ribble Valley
Borough Council