



NOTTINGHAMSHIRE
Fire & Rescue Service
Creating Safer Communities

Nottinghamshire and City of Nottingham
Fire and Rescue Authority
Human Resources Committee

OUTCOMES OF EMPLOYEE SURVEY

Report of the Chief Fire Officer

Agenda Item No:

Date: 19 April 2013

Purpose of Report:

To inform members of the outcomes of the employee survey undertaken in September 2012.

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1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 An employee survey was issued in September 2012 to all service employees. The survey is undertaken every two years.
- 1.2 The survey questions asked for employee feedback on:
 - Their job and the support received to undertake their role effectively
 - The effectiveness of training and development
 - Line Manager/Senior Manager support
 - The effectiveness of internal and external communication
 - Service priorities
 - Ways in which the Service has improved
 - Equality and diversity issues
 - Feedback on Fire Cover Review, budget reductions and re-structuring

2. REPORT

- 2.1 The last employee survey was undertaken in 2010 in the form of an electronic, e-mail based survey co-ordinated by an independent company (Questback). The results were reported back to CMB and an action plan agreed and shared with employees and representative bodies. Feedback on progress against the action plan has been provided, via the intranet. The latest version of which was published in June 2012.
- 2.2 The 2012 survey followed a similar method of data collection and was circulated in September 2012. The questions broadly followed the format of the 2010 survey to enable comparisons to be made with the previous survey outcomes. Some additional questions were asked in relation to equalities and feedback on the Fire Cover Review, budget reductions and re-structuring. The survey was sent to each member of the service via email, and they were given 3 weeks to respond. The survey questions, and median results, are attached as Appendix A.
- 2.3 The majority of questions were posed in the form of statements and employees were asked for their views from a category of responses ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 6 (strongly agree). A few questions were posed as "Yes", "No" responses.
- 2.4 Compared to 2010, the return rate reduced from 49% (2010) to 39.7% (2012) of the workforce. It is disappointing that fewer employees chose to respond this time. However the response rate is fairly typical for this type of survey.
- 2.5 Appendix A sets out the median scores for each question/statement, with a comparison to the 2010 outcomes. It is encouraging to note that most results fell within the median range 4 or 5 which would indicate that employees are broadly satisfied with their experience in those areas outlined in paragraph

1.2. In 12 cases, the median response was higher than previously, which would indicate that the Service is perceived as improving in these areas.

2.6 The lowest scoring response was to question 12 “On the whole, how would you assess morale across the service? The median response was 3, compared to a median score of 4 in 2010. Given the impact of issues dealt with in the last couple of years – including the fire cover review, budget reductions and re-structuring – the fact that employee morale is perceived as lower than 2010 is perhaps not surprising. However both individual and team morale are reported as unchanged which would suggest that this is a perceived downturn i.e. respondents believed this was true of others rather than themselves.

2.7 The issues raised by employees in their written responses have been grouped into recurring themes, and action to address these issues will be addressed by senior managers as part of an Action Plan that will be shared with the organisation, and will be subject to discussion with representative bodies.

2.8 Overall, the survey results are positive, with scores of 4 (out of 6) and above for the majority of questions. There have been improvements in several areas and only a couple of areas where responses were worse than in 2010. The comments accompanying the scored responses are both negative and positive and areas that have been identified will be used to seek further improvement in the way we do things and how we engage with our employees.

2.10 The next survey will be due in 2014.

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct financial implications arising from the report. A 12 month licence was purchased from Questback, at a cost of £2,500, to conduct the survey and this will allow for other surveys to be carried out within the year. The cost of the licence was budgeted for.

4. HUMAN RESOURCES AND LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IMPLICATIONS

The Service seeks to engage with its employees and their representatives to enable feedback on range of employment and service delivery issues on an ongoing basis. The two-yearly employee survey provides one channel by which employees can present their views to senior management and provides an opportunity to address any issues raised in a constructive and participatory way.

5. EQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

As this is not a policy or service provision there is no requirement to undertake an Equality Impact Assessment. However, within the survey a number of specific

questions were asked regarding perception of equalities issues and these show a high level of satisfaction with the awareness about equality and diversity issues, treatment at work, flexible working opportunities and commitment to eliminate bullying and harassment in the workplace.

6. CRIME AND DISORDER IMPLICATIONS

There are no crime and disorder implications arising from this report.

7. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no legal implications arising from this report.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific risk management implications arising from the report.

9. RECOMMENDATIONS

That Members note the report.

10. BACKGROUND PAPERS FOR INSPECTION (OTHER THAN PUBLISHED DOCUMENTS)

None.

Frank Swann
CHIEF FIRE OFFICER

APPENDIX 1

Summary of median scores

Critical issue (score 1)

Not satisfactory (score 2-3)

Satisfactory but could be improved (score 4-5)

Excellent – no improvement required (6)

	Question /Statement			
	MY JOB	2010	2012	Change +/-
2.1	On the whole I enjoy my job and it provides me with job satisfaction	5	5	
2.2	I know and understand what is expected of me in my job	5	5	
2.3	On a day to day basis my manager/supervisor gives me helpful support and feedback on my work performance	4	5	+
2.4	I feel that the work I do is valued	4	4	
2.5	I understand how my job contributes to the overall aims of the service	5	5	
2.6	I receive the training I need to do my job effectively	4	5	+
2.7	I understand the competencies required to do my job effectively	5	5	
2.8	My manager make me aware of the development opportunities available if I wish to take them	4	5	+
2.9	The resources I need to do my job effectively are readily available	4	4	
	MORALE			
4.1	On the whole, how would you assess your own morale	4	4	
4.2	On the whole, how would you assess morale in our team	4	4	
4.3	On the whole, how would you assess morale across the service	4	3	-
	PRIORITY AREAS			
5.1	We deliver a professional and efficient emergency response to the public	5	5	
5.2	We are contributing to the community safety agenda by raising awareness of the causes of fire and injury in the home	5	5	
5.3	We are working effectively with our partners to make our local areas safer	4	5	+
5.4	We are working effectively with young people	4	5	+
5.5	We are supporting you to ensure a safe working environment	4	5	+
5.6	We are providing our employees with the skills they need to do their job	4	4.5	+
5.7	The senior management team	4	4	

	communicates the service priorities well			
5.8	The senior management team consults effectively with employees on service priorities	3	4	+
	Internal communication			
7.1	I have regular access to technical/professional updates i.e. in relation to equipment, systems of work, changes to regulations or legislation relevant to your job	5	5	
7.2	I have team meetings at which changes and updates are discussed	4	5	+
7.3	I have one-to-one meetings with my line manager	4	5	+
7.4	Within my team, we communicate effectively	5	5	
7.5	I feel that I have the opportunity to express my views and opinions on issues affecting my job and the work of the team	5	5	
	I regularly read the weekly service bulletin	5	n/a	
	I find the service bulletin informative and relevant	5	n/a	
	I read the quarterly Response magazine which is sent to my dept/section	5	n/a	
8.1	I regularly read the intranet home page and news items	n/a	5	
8.2	I find the current methods of keeping employees up-to-date and informed about current events/issues are effective	4	5	+
8.3	I am able to find the information I need to be able to do my job effectively and safely	4	5	+
	External communication			
10.1	We are effective at communicating important messages to the community	4	4	
10.2	We are effective at promoting the work that the service does to the wider community	4	4	
10.3	We are effective at promoting the positive success stories through the media	4	4	
	PAY AND BENEFITS			
12.1	How satisfied are you with pay	4	4	
12.2	How satisfied are you with employee benefits	4	4	
12.3	How satisfied are you with your terms and conditions	4	4	
12.4	How satisfied are you with flexible working options	5	5	
12.5	How satisfied are you with health and safety	5	5	
12.6	How satisfied are you with occupational health	5	5	
12.7	How satisfied are you with training	4	4	
12.8	How satisfied are you with development opportunities	4	4	
	EQUALITY & DIVERSITY			
17.1	The service has been effective in raising awareness of equality and diversity issues	5	5	

20.1	I am treated fairly and with respect by my line manager	5	6	+
20.2	I am treated fairly and with respect by senior managers	5	5	
20.3	I am treated fairly and with respect by my immediate work colleagues	6	5	-
20.4	I am treated fairly and with respect by other colleagues	5	5	
	IMPROVEMENTS – in the last year do you think the service has improved in the following areas:			
26.1	Service delivery	4	4	
26.2	Systems of work	4	4	
26.3	The way we work together	4	4	
26.4	The working environment	4	4	
26.5	The way we share information	4	4	
26.6	The way we work with partners and other agencies	4	4	
26.7	Employee relations	4	4	
26.8	Ensuring that employees have the skills, knowledge and competencies to do their job effectively	4	4	
26.9	Equalities	4	4	
	Recent changes			
42.1	Has the Service kept you informed of the proposed changes to fire cover?	n/a	4	
42.2	Has the Service fully explained the reasons for making the changes to fire cover to staff	n/a	4	
44.1	Has the Service explained why budget reductions have been implemented?	n/a	4	
44.2	Do you feel informed about the measures that are being taken to reduce expenditure?	n/a	4	
46.1	Do you feel informed about why the Service is restructuring its departments?	n/a	4	

	Yes/No responses	Yes	No	Don't know
		%	%	%
14	Would you recommend the Service as a good place to work?	76.9	8	15.2
18	Do you feel that the service could do more to support its employees at work to deal with issues relating to their:			
18.1	Gender	9.8	66.5	23.7
18.2	Ethnic origin	7.4	66	26.6
18.3	Disability	9.4	65	25.7
18.4	Sexual orientation/gender identity	7	66.5	26.5
18.5	Religious beliefs	7.2	64.8	28
18.6	Family commitments	21.3	56.5	22.1

22	Do you feel that the service has a positive commitment to eliminate, and act upon, instances of bullying, harassment and discrimination in the workplace?	72.4	11.8	15.8
24	Are you satisfied with the opportunities available for you to work flexibly to meet your personal commitments?	75.6	15.1	9.3
	Narrative responses			
28	Which of these phrases best describes how you talk about the Nottinghamshire Fire and Rescue Service to others outside the organization?			
A	I am critical of the service if I am asked	9.8		
B	I am critical of the service without being asked	1.6		
C	I am neutral	18.3		
D	I speak highly of the service when asked	38.7		
E	I speak highly of the service without being asked	31.6		
15	Would you describe the Service as			
a	A poor employer	5		
b	Neither good nor bad	27		
c	A good employer	68		
43	How have you learned about the proposed changes to fire cover?			
a	Intranet	73		
b	Staff Briefing Papers	79.9		
c	Managers feedback	54.8		
d	Trade unions	50		
e	Other	8.6		
45	How have you learned about the proposed changes to budgets?			
a	Intranet	71.3		
b	Staff Briefing Papers	78		
c	Managers feedback	57.5		
d	Trade unions	47.7		
e	Other	6.8		
	How have you learned about the restructure proposals?			
a	Intranet	69.7		
b	Staff Briefing Papers	75.8		
c	Managers feedback	59.8		
d	Union feedback	40.2		
e	Other	5.8		