

Nottingham City Council

Colleague Opinion Survey 2018



Safer, cleaner, ambitious
Nottingham
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Nottingham
City Council

1.0 EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- 1.1 There has been a fall in response rates from previous years, 49% in 2015, 43% in 2017 to 38% in 2019, despite additional promotion, encouragement and alternative methods being made available.
- 1.2 Response rates had fallen across all departments, suggesting an organisational issue, rather than a departmental specific one.
- 1.3 The primarily reason given for not responding was a view that little was done with the feedback provided in 2017.
- 1.4 The headline stable and positive results are:
 - Job Satisfaction up 4%.
 - Job Security up 6%.
 - Satisfaction with basic pay up 5%
 - Satisfaction with current workload up 6%
 - Perception of collaboration between teams up 1%
 - Belief that NCC values a diverse workforce stable at 80%.
- 1.5 The headline areas of deterioration all relating to line management are:
 - Holds regular team meetings drop of 4%
 - Holds regular supervision drop of 3%
 - Gives me feedback on how I'm doing down 4%
 - Encourages the team to be ambitious down 4%
 - Manages change competently down 7%

2.0 BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

- 2.1 The Colleague Opinion Survey has been run internally since 2015, using SNAP survey software. It has been conducted in 2015, 2017 and 2018, with the next one scheduled to take place in March 2020. It is open to all colleagues, encouraging them to take the survey using laptops, mobile devices, or paper forms. The survey explores colleagues' opinions on job satisfaction; culture and leadership; equality, diversity and inclusion; and line manager performance.
- 2.2 SNAP software provides Level 3 or AAA compliance with the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines, including options to provide plain text versions and other equivalents designed to encourage completion by staff members with disabilities.
- 2.3 Engagement with staff to encourage completion was undertaken via email and intranet messages to staff, cascade via management teams, plasma screens in relevant buildings and some face-to-face engagement sessions in Joint Service Centres and depots.

- 2.4 Analysis of the results was undertaken using reports from SNAP survey software by the HR Management Information Team. Basic analysis of the qualitative comments was undertaken by the Internal Communications and Engagement Consultant using Interpris software.

3.0 KEY FINDINGS

- 3.1 Overall, results from those who responded to the 2018 survey have been positive, with improved scores in many areas, however there has been deterioration across all 'manager activity' scores.

3.2 About your job

The results show consistent or improved scores from 2017, though the lower response rate suggests that colleagues who complete the survey are fairly engaged but the challenge is to reach the rest of the workforce.

- 67% of respondents are satisfied with their job, a rise of 4% from 2017.
- 50% are satisfied with their job satisfaction, a rise of 6%
- 50% are satisfied with their workload, a rise of 6%
- 61% feel valued at work (a new question in 2018)

3.3 About your line manager

Scores have declined across all areas; reasons for this could be the large number of restructures in the previous year which impacted change management, as well as giving managers bigger teams and less capacity for the basics of line management.

- 67% agree holds regular team meetings (drop of 4%)
- 68% agree holds regular supervision (drop of 3%)
- 63% agree gives me feedback on how I'm doing (down 4%)
- 53% agree encourages the team to be ambitious (down 4%)
- 56% agree manages change competently (down 7%)

3.4 Leadership and Culture

Results in this area remain consistent with results the same as previous years or with marginal changes of 1-2%.

- 38% agree that there is good collaboration between teams in the Council
- 38% agree that they have confidence in CLT, with a further 38% neutral about this question.
- 81% agree that providing good customer service is at the heart of their work
- 59% feel able to speak up about problems in their service

3.5 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

One new question was added to this section, around manager behaviour in EDI issues. On the whole results were consistent or positive from previous years.

- 80% agree that NCC values a diverse workforce; however when broken down by protected characteristics:
 - 62% BME colleagues agree
 - 69% LGBT colleagues agree
 - 78% disabled colleagues agree*
- 70% agree that their manager actively demonstrates a commitment to a diverse workforce
- 78% agree that they are treated fairly regardless of my individual circumstances
- 81% agree that they are able to access the support they require for their individual circumstances

3.6 Keeping Citizens at the Heart

This question asked for suggestions of changes to the way services currently work that may help the Council improve services to citizens. The responses were themed using Interpris software.

- The most popular comments were to do with managers. Not all comments were negative. Many concerned overwork and a lack of contact with their managers, or managers' capacity.
- Other areas for improvement included:
 - Communication, including across the organisation, as well as between teams and within teams
 - Collaboration – staff suggested they would like more opportunities to collaborate and find out more about other areas of the organisation
 - A desire to progress and develop in the organisation
 - IT – comments expressed concern over the offer from IT services, but several also wanted to request better technology and equipment to improve services.

3.7 Any other comments

This question was separated from the main survey to ensure anonymity of responses. The responses were themed using Interpris software.

- Many comments were concerned with workload issues, including high workload rates and low staffing resources. All were concerned with how workload impacted on service provision.

*Response rates for these characteristics BME is lower proportionally while LGBT and Disability response rates are proportionally higher. This breakdown does not include people who do not wish to declare or leave the question blank.

- Budget issues were also popular for commenters here, including how decisions were budget driven and less people driven. Again, the impact on service provision was a key concern.
- Many colleagues expressed a desire for a long-term strategy and vision for the Council, with clear priorities, and a step away from the short-termism of budget cuts.

3.8 Benchmarking response rates

Many councils run an Employee Opinion Survey, receiving similar response rates to that of Nottingham City Council. The following provides a summary of the comparisons:

Council	Response rate
Birmingham City Council	31%
Leicestershire County Council	41%
Amber Valley District Council	37%
Charnwood District Council	35%
Cardiff City Council	51%

4.0 NEXT STEPS

4.1 Taking action with the findings

Departmental Leadership Teams (DLTs) spent time analysing and further interpreting the results of the COS for their departments and put forward their top three priorities / areas of focus to Corporate Leadership Team (CLT).

CLT reviewed the findings, themes and departmental priorities and agreed to focus on the following:

- Leading the organisation: creating a vision
- Leading people: developing our leaders
- Employee development and equality, diversity and inclusion
- Collaboration and communication

Feedback has been provided to employees with regard to the findings and the action to be taken, and an ongoing communication and engagement plan has been formulated to keep employees informed of developments. DLTs continue to work on their own priorities and are taking further actions with their results.

4.2 Lessons learned

Following a review of the 2018 process and practices, engagement methods, methodology and timings of the next Colleague Opinion Survey are all being explored and considered.