Inverclyde council

Report To:	**Policy and Resources Committee**	**Date:**	**25 March 2014**
Report By:	**Acting Head of Organisational Development, Human Resources and Communications**	**Report No:**	**HR/03/14/CR**
Contact Officer:	**Carol Reid**	**Contact Nos:**	**2022 / 4721**
Subject:	**Employee Survey 2012 - Actions Update**		

1.0 PURPOSE

1.1 The purpose of this report is to update Members on the progress that has taken place following the last Council wide Employee Opinion Survey carried out in 2012, specifically with regard to the action points raised by the employee focus groups.

2.0 SUMMARY

2.1 An employee survey was carried out during the spring of 2012 and reported to the Policy and Resources Committee in August 2012. Three focus groups were established in October 2012 covering:

- Frontline employees not desk based
- Team leaders/supervisors
- Service managers

Action points were raised through these discussions and solutions were sought to rectify the issues raised:

- Communication
- Performance Appraisal
- Training and Development
- Policy Documents

2.2 This report provides further detail of the actions taken by the Council to address the points raised.

3.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 It is recommended that Committee:

- Note the feedback given of action taken and action ongoing.

- Note that the next Employee Survey is spring 2015.

Head of Organisational Development
Human Resources and Performance

4.0 BACKGROUND

4.1 The purpose of establishing the focus groups was to identify areas where improvements could be realised to improve employee satisfaction. This was undertaken against a background of a great deal of positive feedback about the Council as a place to work, which emerged from the employee survey and the focus groups. The following themes were raised by the focus groups:-

4.2 Communication

The following areas were raised from the employee survey:

- Introduce an employee newsletter.

- Flow of transfer of information could be improved.

- Explore other methods of communication with employees that could be introduced, for example, text messaging, instant messaging, video conferencing and pre-recorded messages.

- Investigate creating an interactive staff forum on ICON to enable employees to make suggestions and share views and ideas.

The following actions have been taken to address these points:

- Employee newsletter – the first edition will be circulated in June 2014.

- Transfer of information - ensure that Heads of Service cascade information from the CMT and Directorate Management Teams throughout their services and where possible introduce team briefings.

- Exploring other methods of communication – some employees already use instant messaging, services have to make a business case for it to ICT service who can install the required software. ICT currently use Sharepoint, this communication tool will be reviewed to investigate if it could be used more widely across the Council.

- Interactive staff forum on ICON – Glasgow City Council has implemented an interactive forum and this will be looked at as a possible solution.

4.3 Performance Appraisals

The following areas were raised from the employee survey:

- Understanding purpose of performance appraisals.

- Limited information available about performance appraisals to employees.

- Team leaders/supervisors suggested that there should be more recognition given to employees who receive a good performance appraisal outcome.

The following actions have been taken to address these points:

- Understanding purpose of performance appraisals - to overcome the limited scepticism concerning Performance Appraisals a new Performance Appraisals Employee Guide was created and distributed (June 2013) to explain what the process is designed to achieve.

- Limited information available about performance appraisals - this will improve over time and addressed pro-actively in the bullet point above.

- Recognition given to employees who receive a good performance appraisal outcome - this matter is the subject of further consideration and forms part of the reason why a Training Matrix and Succession Planning have been introduced.

4.4 Training

The following areas were raised from the employee survey:

- Access to training can be problematic for frontline employees.

- A record is sometimes not kept in services of the courses that employees attend and the dates they attend them on. This can result in employees missing out on refresher courses and in qualifications lapsing.

- Several participants in the focus group said that front line employees don't know what qualifications they need in order to progress.

- Lack of funding for external training places for team leaders/supervisors.

- It was suggested that the Council should contribute towards the cost of professional qualifications, especially if it is a requirement for the job.

The following actions have been taken to address these points:

- Access to training can be problematic for frontline employees who are non pc users - the roll out of portable training devices introduced in April 2013 will help to make it easier for employees to undertake training courses. It means that employees will be able to carry out training outwith the formal training route. The soon to be available Port Glasgow Corporate Training Suite will be used to encourage non pc users to come along to undertake brightwave based training and development.

- Training records - the Council's HR21 system has the capability of providing a training database and this is currently being rolled out.

- Front line employees don't know what qualifications are needed to progress - aspirations for career progression are an integral part of performance appraisal.

- External training for team leaders/supervisors – specialist external training of team leaders/supervisors by the Chartered Management Institute with Certificate and Diploma courses has been funded for 3 years to cover 2012 – 2015.

- Professional qualifications – external training is an option however not always the appropriate method.

4.5 Policy Documents

The following areas were raised from the employee survey:

- Frontline staff told us that they would like policy documents such as the SOA to be broken down into areas that are relevant for each service and then interpreted with regard to specific jobs.

- Frontline staff also provided feedback that they receive very little information about

departmental plans and developments.

The following actions have been taken to address these points:

- Case studies will be published on ICON to demonstrate how specific jobs contribute to the achievement of the SOA. Performance appraisals contain information about key policy documents such as the SOA and help employees to understand how they contribute to the Council's strategic outcomes.

- Feedback on departmental plans should be provided through management meetings.

4.6 HR would like to thank the members of the focus groups for their input and that such groups will be established again after the next survey.

5.0 IMPLICATIONS

Finance

5.1 Finance

One proposal within this report has a cost implication:

- The introduction of an employee newsletter which will be absorbed within the Corporate Communications budget.

Financial Implications:

One off Costs

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	Budget Years	Proposed Spend this Report £000	Virement From	Other Comments
N/A					

Annually Recurring Costs/ (Savings)

Cost Centre	Budget Heading	With Effect from	Annual Net Impact £000	Virement From (If Applicable)	Other Comments
N/A					

Legal

5.2 There are no legal issues connected to this report.

Human Resources

5.3 Human resource issues are dealt within the report.

Equalities

5.4 Training methods have been adapted to incorporate various training resources to meet the needs of different employee groups.

Repopulation

5.5   The employee survey highlighted that we are an employer of choice, hopefully this will assist in attracting new employees to our organisation and retain existing skilled staff.

6.0   CONSULTATIONS

6.1   Feedback from employee focus groups, OD, HR & Communication Service Managers informed this report.

6.2   The actions taken in this report will be issued to all employees via our employee newsletter.

7.0   CONCLUSIONS

7.1   N/A

8.0   LIST OF BACKGROUND PAPERS

8.1   Employee Survey Results - Policy and Resources Committee - 14 August 2012