

# COUNCIL EMPLOYEE OPINION SURVEY 2008

## PORTFOLIO RESPONSIBILITY: CORPORATE AND CUSTOMER SERVICES AND HUMAN RESOURCES

**CABINET**

**22 JANUARY 2009**

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### **Wards Affected**

None.

### **Purpose**

To note the contents of the attached report as presented to Joint Management Team on 1 December, 2008 and also note that the corporate action plan will be published at the end of January 2009.

### **Key Decision**

This is not a Key Decision.

### **Recommendation**

**THAT the decisions of Joint Management Team on 1 December 2008 regarding the Council Employee Opinion Survey be noted.**

### **Reasons**

- 1 To ensure Cabinet remain informed.

### **Considerations**

- 2 This year's Council Employee Opinion Survey ran throughout October and closed on 7 November.
- 3 It was the Council's eighth survey and achieved an overall response rate of 50% including 31% on line) as against a 53% response in 2007. The average response rate for local government for the last two years is 48.7% (according to the Opinion Research Corporations [ORC] database). The survey runs for all non school-based employees.
- 4 The Environment and Culture Directorate undertook a pilot whereby employees were expected to complete the survey online, unless they specifically requested a paper copy. The Directorate achieved a 43% response rate; 77% of which was online and 23% of which was on paper. Due to reorganisation, there is no directly comparable figure for responses in 2007, but in that year, the response rate for the Environment Directorate was 69%, with 39% for Cultural Services.

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Further information on the subject of this report is available from  
Liz Wallace – HR Manager on (01432) 383384

- 5 The level of disagreement that action will be taken in light of survey feedback has continued to rise this year – 42% compared with 36% last year.
- 6 Whilst survey responses may be viewed as a snapshot in time, this employee feedback provides valuable data as a basis on which to develop improvement actions corporately. A suite of reports providing directorate and service level data will follow, to enable employees to have sight of their feedback as against that for directorates and services. The reports also enable directorates and services to identify actions to be included in service plans, and to take action as a result.
- 7 In 2007, the Resources Directorate introduced a Communications Group comprising six frontline employees whose remit was to communicate with their teams on the survey feedback, to make recommendations for action to the Directorate Management Team and to report on progress on an on-going basis. This year, the Resources Directorate achieved the second highest response rate (56% over 241 employees; the highest rate being 91% from the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive and HR, over 64 employees).
- 8 Taking action on the feedback from the Employee Opinion Survey relates specifically to a number of the organisational improvement and greater efficiency commitments in the Annual Operating Plan. Survey responses also, to some extent, furnish an update on the extent to which elements of the Investors In People Standard are being upheld in practice, as, for example, question 2.17 'My Staff Review and Development (SRD) was a worthwhile discussion'. This year, 59% of respondents agreed that it was, as against 66% in 2007. Furthermore, this response can be understood in a context where only 65% of employees participated in an SRD in 2008, as against 97% in 2007.
- 9 A joint approach to surveying employee opinion was agreed by JMT (28<sup>th</sup> April, 2008) and a report covering both Council and PCT responses to common questions in the two surveys will be available for JMT consideration in March 2009.
- 10 Following consideration of the full report, the decisions of JMT were as follows:
  - JMT approved the Headline report for publication;
  - JMT agreed that for the first time the key corporate themes for action should be captured and addressed in the action plan of the Organisation Development strategy for 2009/10;
  - JMT approved the model adopted by the Resources Directorate for communications and action planning resulting from Employee Opinion Survey feedback, for implementation by all directorates;
  - JMT advised directorates of the need to take action to address employee feedback in those areas showing significant deterioration in responses from the 2007 survey.

## **Legal Implications**

- 11 There are no legal implications.

## **Financial Implications**

- 12 There are no specific financial implications.

## **Risk Management**

- 13 The Corporate action plan and Directorate actions are critical to ensure that staff see that action is being taken on the issues raised.

## **Alternative Options**

- 14 There are no Alternative Options.

## **Consultees**

- 15 All staff receiving a copy of the survey.  
Joint Management Team

## **Appendices**

- 16 Employee Opinion Survey 2008 – Headline Report.  
Comparison with Opinion Research Corporation (ORC) benchmarking data.

## **Background Papers**

- 17 None identified.