

Actions from Support Services OSP November 2009

Objectives identified in CIP 13 – Supporting Staff to Perform Better - directly address Corporate priorities identified from the staff survey around:

- **Managing Change Better**
- **Ensuring fairness at work**
- **Enhancing key areas of management skill (listening, motivation and feedback).**
- **Communicating better**

The latest update on CIP13, which can be made available to Scrutiny, provides information on progress. In addition, the following illustrates specific improvements implemented to date around the areas with the poorest scores. In addition, individual departments have separately developed action plans to address specific issues in their areas.

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Description - Overall group followed by individual statements which reflected a negative score.	Action Taken to date
<p>Your Job (Overall -5): Employees felt</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council could make better use of their skills and abilities and did not always feel they had enough information to do their job well. ○ They did not get a sense of personal achievement from their work and felt that morale was low where they worked and job security was poor. ○ They were dissatisfied with their physical working conditions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Job Evaluation exercise explored and clarified job roles. As at 31st October 2009 65% role profiles were written. 100% role profiles should be completed by 31st December 2009. ○ The Council has commenced a skills audit and this will ultimately capture skills, qualifications and technical competencies for roles and compare against actual to establish learning needs and identify transferable skills which will enable to Council to make better use of employee skills and abilities. ○ A knowledge room is being developed which will improve access to information for all staff including managers. ○ Appraisals provide a powerful opportunity for a manager to explore with an employee their personal achievements. Managers have recently undertaken training on conducting appraisals which has been received favourably. This training programme focused on giving and receiving feedback - both positive and negative. There is now a strong focus on embedding appraisals and it is anticipated that 100% appraisals should be completed by the end of January. ○ Whilst maintenance issues are being picked up, the Council is reviewing its' accommodation strategy. Once implemented this will address issues around physical working conditions.

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Your Manager (Overall -5):

- Employees did not necessarily feel that their manager recognised when they did their job well or inspire them to be more effective on communicates their thoughts and feelings upwards.

- In addition to appraisals, Hannah Metson has drafted a simple reward scheme, which is due to be shared with members shortly and this provides managers with an opportunity to recognise and reward employees who deliver excellent customer service.
- The Competency framework contains a competency around effective leadership, and managers will be appraised against this competency and will be expected to evidence motivation of employees.
- Richard Longford has drafted and is now consulting on an internal communications strategy which will include a section on actions to embed this strategy. This will be shared with members shortly.
- In addition, the competency framework contains standards around communications which will support embedding of good communications.

Senior Management (Overall -6): Employees felt that:

- Senior Managers were not always open in their communication and did not have an awareness of the issues affecting them.
- Senior managers should be more visible, provide better leadership and manage change more effectively.

- The competency framework includes a competency around adapting to change and at the higher levels this competency focuses on effective change management.
- The Communications Strategy and Communications Competency should assist to make expectations clear for Senior managers and measure delivery.

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Communication (Overall -3):

- Employees are dissatisfied with the information received from management on what is going on in the organisation and feel unable to challenge the way things are done.
- See earlier comments around Communications Competency and development of communications strategy which will focus on embedding communications.
- The competency framework supports challenge - where appropriately done - and the reward programme being developed by Hannah Metson will support innovative and value for money ideas.

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Learning and Development (Overall -6):

Employees did not feel that:

- The requirements for their new role were fully explained or that they were afforded support to enable them to become effective in their job quickly.
- Their development needs were identified appropriately and did not feel there were sufficient opportunities for them to receive training and to improve their skills in their current job.
- The training they received was relevant to their job role.

- The Council has reviewed and implemented its' revised induction programme for both staff and managers. Initial feedback is positive however results are being closely monitored and will be reported to managers and members in due course.
- The competency framework dedicates two areas to employee development (Self development for staff and Managing Others for managers). Employees who join the organisation are asked for feedback on their induction at the end of their probation and again results will be closely monitored.
- PCC has revised its' appraisal process and the development section of the appraisals form and the learning and events module of HR SAP is being further developed to improve processes.
- The Council is about to sign up to the Skills Pledge and commit to all employees being developed to NVQ level 2 or equivalent and is currently exploring priorities for this authority, taking business need into consideration. Whilst the Council has not agreed firm timescales for achievement of this ambitious goal, this shows a strong commitment to developing staff.
- The Council is about to launch its' E-Learning programme to managers and will emphasise that developing people is NOT about going on courses, but may be around new activities, e-learning, coaching, research etc., This tool will enable the council to identify transferable skills.
- The Council is working in close partnership with the CFE and other training providers to discuss learning needs for the Council and explore potential funding opportunities for training which could be taken up by PCC.

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<p>Pay and Reward (Overall -1):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees did not regard the organisation as a good employer in relation to the general terms and conditions of employment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Job Evaluation exercise has been concluded to ensure that its' pay and grading structure is fair and conducts regular bench-marking to compare against other employers.
<p>Working together to provide a good service (Overall -5):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees felt that co-operation was not always good between teams and that their service did not always obtain feedback on how satisfied internal and external customers were with the service they received. ○ Where feedback was gathered employees did not feel that this was always acted upon. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The competency framework includes a competency on customer focus and team-working. ○ The Council has developed and has implemented two one day training programmes around Customer Services - one for managers and one for employees. The content of the programme for managers has been reviewed and explores external surveys and feedback from customer.
<p>Equality and Diversity (Overall -2):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees felt that they were not valued for what they could offer or treated fairly and with respect and were worried that if they reported bullying and harassment they would be treated in a negative way. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The Council's mandatory Equalities Awareness programme is ongoing and aims to cover all staff including managers. ○ The Bullying and Harassment policy has recently been reviewed and the recent appraisals programme explored how to give feedback in an appropriate way. ○ Procedures are in place to flag where an employee has witnessed bullying and harassment. ○ The competency framework contains a competency dedicated to Equalities and staff are appraised against and must satisfy the standards included.

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Perceptions of this Council (Overall -7):

- Employees were not proud to work for the Council and indicated they would not tell people that this is a good place to work.
- The Competency Framework contains a competency which aims to encourage employees to be supportive of the work of the organisation.
- It is anticipated that the above actions coupled with the drive and demonstrated commitment to achieve excellence will improve morale and employee perceptions of the Council.