

From: Eric Hotson Cabinet Member
for Corporate & Democratic Services

Amanda Beer - Corporate Director Engagement, Organisation
Design & Development

To: Personnel Committee

Date: 12 June 2018

Subject: Employment Value Proposition 2018 Corporate Action Plan

Classification: Unrestricted

Summary: An executive summary of the findings of the 2017 Employment Value Proposition survey, outlining the levels of employee engagement and actions undertaken/ planned in response.

1. Introduction and Results for 2017

1.1 Our 2017 staff survey went out to approximately 3,500 employees covering all directorates and 1,563 useable responses were returned.

It was the sixth year that we have run our EVP staff survey. Participating services are invited to take part over two consecutive years to enable measurement and evaluation of any actions. Participants in 2017 were:

- Strategic & Corporate Services (ST) – Engagement, Organisation Design & Development (EODD) whole division (2nd year); Strategic Commissioning (1st year)
- Growth, Environment & Transport (GET) – Whole directorate (2nd year)
- Children, Young People & Education (EYPE) – Education, Planning & Access (EPA): Special Education Needs & Disability Access & Provision (SEND A&P); Fair Access; Provision Planning; Academy Conversion Team (1st year); SCS whole division (1st year)
- Adult Social Care & Health *ASCH) – Older People & Physical Disability (OPPD): North Kent ACT; Disabled Children, Adult Learning Disabilities & Mental Health(DCLDMH) : Kent Enablement and Recovery Service; Registered Children’s Short Breaks (1st year)

1.2 We continue to see a strong organisational engagement score. However, there has been a continuing gap between the employer contribution score and employee contribution score, which increased by two points when we ran the survey in 2016 and has remained at the same score for 2017. This imbalance of the deal where employees feel they are giving more to the organisation than they receive is not sustainable long-term without impacting on engagement.

- 1.3 There are a number of projects and workstreams already underway that will continue to support engagement priorities and these are set out below in section 3 along with planned new actions.

Table 1. Balance of the deal scores for whole KCC 2012 - 2017

| | 2012 | 2013 | 2014 | 2015 | 2016 | 2017 |
|-----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Employer contribution | 46 | 53 | 55 | 57 | 57 | 57 |
| Employee contribution | 69 | 75 | 77 | 77 | 79 | 79 |
| Organisational engagement | 50 | 58 | 67 | 71 | 75 | 75 |
| Satisfaction with the deal | | 60 | 63 | 61 | 61 | 61 |

2. Pause and review

- 2.1 While there are a number of workstreams in place to address the results of 2017 EVP, there is a wider challenge in that the indicators for Balance of the Deal are not moving significantly and continue to be in the moderate score range.
- 2.2 The staff survey in its current form has taken us through a significant programme of transformation and change over the last six years. The organisation is now experiencing a shift in emphasis, focusing on continuous improvement, business change and effective conversations, coupled with refreshed strategic priorities within the People Strategy and Leadership Strategy. This means there is a need to consider a more dynamic solution-focused approach to finding out how staff feel and are responding to the organisation.
- 2.3 We will pause the EVP survey for 2018 to review its value as a method to gather insight from our workforce. We have started a number of activities to look at how the current process works; what we would want any alternative approaches or products to deliver; and what data we already gather that could help us build that insight.
- 2.4 Whatever approach we take going forward, it is already clear from feedback this year that a key outcome must be actionable data, providing a clear direction for improvement.

3. Our organisational response and actions

- 3.1 Engagement and Consultation have drafted an action plan to build a clear and visible identity for the shared leadership role of CMT and extended CMT, demonstrating collective accountability for the areas of the organisation that affect us all.

- 3.2 In addition, work planned and commissioned across EODD forms a clear action plan to ensure a definite and positive response to the issues being highlighted by the staff survey.
- 3.3 EODD actions:
Our organisational approach to engagement is based on three priorities:
- An authentic voice for the organisation – honest, consistent, timely information and a better understanding of the employment deal.
 - Pride – recognising and celebrating what we achieve as individuals and as an organisation.
 - Good conversations – looking at how high-quality conversations can help us to develop our workforce, provide a strong employee voice and open up opportunities to influence decision-making.
- 3.4 **A communications campaign around the employee package is underway** to help all staff understand what KCC does to recognise and reward its workforce, and what support and options are available to help everyone develop and deliver their best. This includes support that individuals may need in their personal life. We will be asking managers to help their teams make the most of the employee package as part of regular conversations with them and understand the balance of what they give to KCC and what they get in return as an employee.
- 3.5 **To encourage pride among our workforce**, we are planning a review of what makes our staff feel valued and proud of the work they deliver, looking at how we develop and refresh staff awards, the “thank you” feed and our wider *Because of You* campaign. We will be asking managers to recognise and celebrate successes through regular conversations with teams and individuals.
- 3.6 **Through staff groups and peer networks**, we are working to strengthen the voice of our employees, supporting delivery of the Human Resources (HR) commission on staff groups review and working with colleagues across the business to share learning at networks such as T200. Networks such as Project and Programme Management (PPM) are structurally supported through Organisation Development (OD) for capacity building and by Corporate Assurance to align with project and programme management standards. The focus of this work is to give clear routes to share professional expertise and opinion that can feed into our organisation’s decision-making.
- 3.7 **We are linking in to change activity and live projects** across the organisation to support engagement:
- Using targeted channels such as directorate newsletters in GET and ASCH to help connect colleagues to their directorate.
 - Using a new online forum for shared conversations for example, with the EODD culture group and to support engagement with the integration of children’s services.

- Advising and guiding colleagues out in the business to develop their own engagement activity around change, for example supporting the development of engagement tools for the Education Trading Company.

3.8 **We will proactively seek out opportunities to address issues raised through EVP** via business change communications and through established directorate routes. This can include floorwalking, attendance at team meetings and management meetings to have back to basics engagement conversations.

3.9 **We requested a more detailed breakdown of Equality and Diversity data** this time and are sharing that information with OD groups across the organisation as well as staff group chairs to support and inform positive actions at directorate and local level.

3.10 **The change in how we manage performance in the organisation**, using regular, high-quality conversations to support and develop our workforce, will allow opportunity for genuine, two-way discussions that can remove barriers, provide support where it is needed and enable us to make the most of opportunities.

3.11 **Tools to support good conversations have been developed** by Engagement and Consultation in collaboration with managers and colleagues across the business.

Both the change in how we manage performance and the development of conversational practice support a better understanding of how individuals are contributing to KCC's strategic objectives, as well as their team objectives.

3.12 **Changes to the TCP cycle have been agreed** in response to feedback from managers, so that it is an ongoing flexible process, rather than set points on a cycle. Performance linked to pay is just one part of performance management and changes to the cycle will help us focus on the quality of the conversations rather than the process.

3.13 **A Leadership strategy is being implemented.** It will give a clear and consistent approach to the way we want to work with each other and lead our workforce to achieve our strategic objectives.

4. Conclusion

4.1 With a sustained gap between employer and employee contribution there is a risk of drop in engagement with the organisation in future years. As we continue to make difficult decisions across the organisation about the future shape of KCC, it is more important than ever that we have a strong leadership voice, recognise the ongoing achievements of our workforce and empower our staff through genuine conversations.

4.2 We are confident that those workstreams already underway and those that are planned will have a positive impact on the perceived balance of the

employment deal and will directly address the feedback themes that we have seen from this year's results.

Lead Officers

Diane Trollope – Head of Consultation and Engagement

Diane.trollope@kent.gov.uk

Ext 416781

Kate Nowowiecki – Engagement Development Manager

Ext 410287

Kate.nowowiecki@kent.gov.uk

Appendix 1 – Glossary of EVP terms

EMPLOYMENT VALUE PROPOSITION

1. The Employee Value Proposition (EVP) survey is designed to describe the deal offered by the employer and explore what is expected from employees in return. The survey is used as one measure of assessing employee engagement with Kent County Council. The information gathered has been used to inform approaches to employee relations and the management of staff.
2. EVP introduces a means of presenting and understanding how the ‘deal’ offered by an employer is set against what is expected from employees in return. This deal should be viewed in the context of the overall employee relations climate in the Authority as it reflects how the organisation and managers engage with and support employees, as much as it is about terms and conditions of service. The value and perception the employees place on that employment experience, and the contributions expected by the employees, inform how staff engage and perform.
3. The questions asked by the survey are structured in a way that enables employees to rate their experiences against certain categories. Other questions provide staff with opportunity to provide free text answers. Using these questions EVP measures three elements of engagement:
 - Balance of the deal
 - Conversational practice
 - Personification of the Council

Kent County Council also received detailed analysis of responses to free text questions and the key drivers underpinning the most significant elements within the balance of the deal.

4. **Balance of the Deal**

This element of the survey looks at how staff feel about the contribution made by the organisation to the employment relationship compared with what the employees feel they bring to their job and the organisation. There will always be a difference between the two and this works well in terms of levels of employee engagement when the balance is not significantly in favour of one party to the deal.

 - 4.1 The Employer Contribution is made up of:
 - The Contract** – this consists of the employees’ perspective on such things as terms and conditions of service, development opportunities, working environment and whether the employer delivers on its promises in relation to the contract
 - Perceived Organisational Support** – how employees see their organisation valuing their contribution and caring about their well being
 - 4.2 The Employee Contribution is made up of:
 - Job Engagement** – how committed and engaged employees are with

their job role and the service they work in

Efficacy – this element reflects the level of confidence and competence the individual and their team displays in their job role

Organisation Engagement – the level of staff commitment to the organisation and the level of behaviours championing the organisation's aims

5. **Conversational Practice**

This element of the survey measures the quality of conversations between managers and staff to see how employees are engaged by their managers in meeting their job role. It also reflects on the context within which those conversations are had.

5.1 The survey measures:

Solutions focused conversations – idea generation and problem solving conversations

Performance focused conversations – discussions about how solutions and services will be delivered and how ideas/solutions can be put into practice

Job Pressure – a measure of the level of perceived excessive workload

Workplace tensions – measures competing pressures on staff such as delivering more with less and the impact of timescales/deadlines.

6. **Personification**

This part of the EVP survey asks employees to score the organisation against certain traits which then shows how, in the employees' eyes, the organisation presents itself.

6.1 The "traits" that are measured are:

- Supportive
- Directive
- Trust
- Competence
- Innovation
- Conversational

END