SAFER STRONGER COMMUNITIES SELECT COMMITTEE			
Report Title	Talkback 2015 Action Plan Update		
Key Decision		Item Number	4
Contributors	Andrew Jacobs		
Class	Part 1	Date	26 June 2017

1. Summary

1.1 This report informs the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee of the actions undertaken following presentation of the Talkback Action Plan at its meeting on 15 September 2016.

2. Recommendation

2.1 Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee is asked to note the progress made against the action plan and agree to a review of how we approach staff surveys.

3. Background

3.1 Lewisham's Sustainable Communities Strategy (2008-2020) sets out a vision of a sustainable community which is socially progressive – tackling disadvantage and social exclusion, responding to the needs of its diverse citizens and communities. The staff Talkback survey is an opportunity to establish some of these needs since half of all Lewisham employees are residents of the Borough.

3.2 In addition, the Council has a number of corporate priorities, one of which is particularly relevant to the Talkback survey - Ambitious and achieving; where people are inspired and supported to fulfil their potential.

3.3 On 11 May 2016, the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee considered a report entitled Council's employee survey – Talkback 2015. The Committee was interested in the results of the employee survey, and felt there wasn't enough information about what actions would be taken as a result.

3.4 In particular, the Committee wanted to see that the comments and suggestions by staff in the employee survey were acted on by the Council's management.

3.5 The Committee therefore requested that an action plan be produced that reflects the feedback from staff and set out in detail how this feedback was being addressed, along with an indicative timeline for completion of actions as well as definitions of what would constitute success in each instance.

3.6 On 15th September 2016 the action plan was presented at the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.

4. Talkback Action Plan Update

4.1 The actions in the Talkback survey action plan were grouped into specific work streams, based on the themes which underpin groups of actions. Progress on each work stream is highlighted below.

4.2 The Performance Management work stream has been successful in developing the new desktop environment and back end IT to allow quicker and more stable logins. In addition, extensive piloting of mobile working in CYP and ASC has been effective. Change management sessions held last summer helped identify performance management challenges for managers and the development of managers' abilities to manage performance will be further improved with Core Management support which will be launched in September.

4.3 Within the Communication and Engagement work stream progress has been made across the organisation. A number of examples are included below:

4.3.1 A 'Love Lewisham' event was held for all workers in Environment who were invited to take part in a prize giving ceremony held at Beckenham Place Park, this improved management visibility and exposure to senior management.

4.3.2 In Housing Management & Regulatory Services open events for 3rd tier staff are run around every 8-10 weeks to discuss operational performance. Regular management team meetings are held within teams, as well as 1:1 meetings and PES reviews. An awayday for all Housing Staff looking at 'Working together differently' has been held.

4.3.3 In Children's Social Care they are implementing a comprehensive recruitment and retention strategy. Communication and feedback are key to this strategy and a range of engagement activity is ongoing to further improve, retention, development of our staff teams as well as good outcomes for our most vulnerable children. Engagement activity includes:
- An all staff forum every 6 months with a focus on communication and sharing of developments and feedback within the service.
- A monthly meeting for all CSC managers, focusing in developments and contributions from the whole management team
- Fortnightly team meetings for all teams
- Each worker receives a monthly 1:1 session with their manager, which also looks at progress, feedback and development

4.3.4 In Adult Social Care a staff survey has been conducted to help review working conditions and the tools they have to do their jobs. It also covered views on workload, access to training, supervision and how well supported they felt to do their job. A subsequent skills gap analysis against the professional competency framework for social workers supported the development of a Workforce Strategy. The outcome of this work is being used in service planning.

4.3.5 The engagement of an internal Communications Officer has improved the messaging and co-ordination of news and information across the Council.

4.3.6 The Council's induction is being revised and all new starters will receive more information through a digital channel before they start. The

Council's Welcome to Lewisham session has been redesigned and new starters will receive an invitation to a coffee with the Mayor and Chief Executive which will continue to be held monthly.

4.3.7 The HR team are working with staff forum groups to improve employee engagement.

4.4 In respect of Career Development, an online career portal was found to be prohibitive in cost and complexity, so more relevant, modern and appropriate content is currently being designed and launched through the summer. The Council has also trialled Lunch and Learn sessions which were well received by the people participating. They will be rolled out through the year to provide more easily accessible 'bites' of development activity.

4.5 Comparing the success of the activities above with other Councils is challenging. Councils survey their staff to review areas of specific interest and, as a result, direct comparison of staff engagement is not possible. London Councils, however, do benchmark some key staff measures and Lewisham compares favourably in respect of turnover of staff (11.5%) when compared to other London Councils (14.7%). Similarly, staff absence - a key factor in staff engagement - equates to 8 days for Lewisham, compared to the London mean of 7.9 days.

4.6 London Councils also review the benefits available to staff. In the latest survey in May 2017, the benefits offered to staff in Lewisham is comparable to those benefits offered by other Councils in London.

5. Further Actions

5.1 Further development of the link between individuals' performance and the organisation performance will be reviewed as part of the HR Service Plan for the year and included within management development supporting the more agile ways of working across the Council.

6. Legal Implications

6.1 None applicable

7. Financial Implications

7.1 None applicable

8. Equality Implications

8.1 The Talkback survey report provided information on responses by the protected characteristics. The subsequent action plan has taken these into account.

9. Decision and Recommendation

9.1 That the completed actions contained in the Plan be noted.

Talkback 2015 Action Plan

Key area for improvement: **Performance Management**: Half of the workforce says they have not had an appraisal. These sessions are critical in order to begin to address the priority of developing staff, their careers and their performance. Managers were also identified as a critical factor for improvement.

Recommendations for action	Planned Actions	Progress	Further action
Create greater link between corporate and employee performance management	A clear set of people management accountabilities to be developed and communicated to managers to provide greater clarity on managing performance.	Part completed	Being developed in line with core management development training for managers.
	More specific linkages between service planning, KPIs and PES	Part completed	Included in service planning briefings for 2017/18.
	New desktop environment to be introduced to enable Council staff to have access to the new more modern and reliable remote desktop environment through new 'thin client' devices allowing quicker logins	Completed	
	Upgrade 'back end' IT infrastructure – the upgrade of our network and servers will deliver better performance and greater reliability for our key systems	Completed	
Improve appraisal (PES) usage and monitoring	Regular progress reports to be provided to EMT/Departments	Completed	Through HRBP at DMT meetings
	Further promote PES scheme on intranet at key points during the year	Part completed	Included in service planning briefings for 2017/18.
	Briefings to be scheduled on importance of PES	Not completed	Included in core management development
	Incorporate PES process into Transactional Management and Development Centres activity	Part completed	Included in core management development

Develop managers' abilities to manage performance	Core Management programme for new managers and Development Centres for Service Managers – selection process to be undertaken.	Delivery from September	Focus on core management development and to be reviewed following the core delivery
	Introduction of new remote working solution – all Council staff will have access to a simplified remote working solution that will allow them to access their desktop	Completed	
	Extensive piloting of mobile working in CYP and ASC – staff across CYP and ASC are piloting mobile technology (iPhones and iPads)	In progress	Paperless office and meetings, further mobile rollouts and smarter working.

Key area for improvement **Communication and Engagement**: Employees' have negative perceptions around openness, honesty and transparency in the communications of senior managers and these are not performing well relative to other measures.

Recommendations for action	Planned Actions	Progress	Further action
Improve exposure to senior management team	Email briefings by senior management team Quarterly Directorate wide meetings	Part completed Part completed	Keep progress under review at DMTs
Feedback themes and actions from Talkback	Lunchtime staff briefings by senior management team 'You asked – we did' poster campaigns Talkback findings published on staff intranet and core briefing notes provided to Heads of Service Cross-council discussion groups to action qualitative staff feedback	Part completed Not completed Completed Completed	Lunch and learn sessions delivered and to be scheduled through the year Reviewing the approach with the communication team
Develop regular staff briefings	Monthly/quarterly staff emails, newsletters and bulletins Wider monthly/quarterly team meetings attended by senior management team Twice yearly manager/staff forum events	Part completed Part completed Part completed	Improved communication on the staff intranet Continue improved management visibility across the Council. Continue awayday events and senior managers' engagement with the wider workforce.

Key area for improvement: **Career Development:** Employees feel that they do not have opportunities to develop a career at the Council.			
Recommendations for action	**Planned Actions**	**Progress**	**Further action**
Develop manager's skills and confidence to have the necessary conversations with employees about their career development	Implement Mentoring skills and Career planning workshops for managers and staff	Part completed	Additional staff training to be commissioned
	Core Management programme and Development Centres – selection process.	Delivery from September	Online career development modules by the Autumn
Create an online career development portal for employees to access and utilise	Online career portals to be investigated	Completed	Council's current platform to be extended
Change employee career expectations i.e. focus to be about developing themselves so that they have 'transferable' and 'portable' skills	Repositioning offering of Identifying Staff Development Needs, Being a Great Interviewee and CV writing courses in timing with PES and other Reed courses to be considered.	Part completed	More online and easy to access development activity to be made available
	PES guidance notes and support for managers to be reviewed in assessing development needs and will include focus on career development.	Part completed	Under review as part of the ERP implementation