

<b>Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee</b>		
Title	Talkback 2015 Action Plan	
Contributor	Head of Human Resources	Item 3
Class	Part 1 (open)	15 September 2016

## **1. Summary**

- 1.1 This report informs the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee of the comments and views arising from Mayor and Cabinet meeting discussions held on the officer report entitled 'Council's employee survey – Talkback 2015 Action Plan' at its meeting on 29 June 2016. This followed a referral from Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee.

## **2. Recommendation**

- 2.1 That the Select Committee notes the views of the Mayor and Cabinet on the Action Plan, as set out in Section 4, and that all the actions contained in the Plan will be implemented.

## **3. Background**

- 3.1 On 11 May 2016, the Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee considered a report entitled Council's employee survey – Talkback 2015. The Committee resolved to advise Mayor and Cabinet of the following:
- 3.2 The Committee was interested in the results of the employee survey, but felt there wasn't enough information about what actions would be taken as a result.
- 3.3 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.
- 3.4 The Committee therefore requested that a detailed action plan is produced that reflects the range of concerns expressed by staff and sets out in detail how these concerns would be addressed. The plan would need to indicate a timeline for completion of actions as well as definitions of what would constitute success in each instance.

## **4. Talkback Action Plan**

- 4.1 A detailed action plan was subsequently created which was submitted to Mayor and Cabinet on 29 June 2016.
- 4.2 Mayor and Cabinet approved the actions contained in the action plan in respect of the quantitative questions asked of staff, approved the actions in

respect of the qualitative questions asked of staff and asked that the Safer, Stronger Communities Select Committee be informed that the Action Plan be accepted in full.

- 4.3 The Talkback 2015 survey asked staff a set of quantitative direct questions, as well as qualitative suggestions on their perspectives on how they were managed, how budget reductions were managed, as well as their suggestions for improvements.
- 4.4 The results of the quantitative questions asked of staff, have led to the recommendations below:

#### **Career Development**

- Develop manager's skills and confidence to have the necessary conversations with employees about their career development.
- Create an online career development portal for employees to access and utilise.
- Change employee career expectations – i.e. focus to be about developing themselves so that they have 'transferable' and 'portable' skills.

#### **Performance Management**

- Create greater link between corporate and employee performance management
- Improve appraisal (PES) usage and monitoring
- Develop managers' abilities to manage performance

#### **Communication and Engagement**

- Improve exposure to senior management
- Feedback themes and actions from Talkback
- Develop regular staff briefings

The full detail of the action plan is included in Appendix A.

- 4.5 The feedback from the qualitative questions has led to the recommendations below:

#### **Organisational performance**

- Identify areas where improvements to the working environment may be undertaken through a more reliable remote desktop environment
- Improve the 'back end' IT infrastructure
- Link individual performance with organisational performance more explicitly
- Use data more effectively to manage performance of teams and services.
- Improve the quality of workforce management, especially absence and performance management

#### **Change**

- Improve the communication of change throughout the Council, paying particular attention to groups based away from the Catford complex.

- Increase staff involvement in the decision making regarding change across the Council
- Communicate change more effectively and transparently

### **Making savings**

- Improve equipment (e.g. IT), training and other resources / Increasing the use of online methods
- Support more collaborative and partnership working with both internal and external partners to create efficiencies and cost savings
- Consider suggestions made by staff in the Talkback survey

### **Senior Management engagement**

- Develop more open channels of communication for employees with senior management teams including:
  - Meetings
  - Briefings and information
- Increase senior manager general presence, visibility and availability

The full detail of the action plan is included in Appendix A.

4.6 The action plan reflects the range of issues expressed by staff and the initiatives that are being undertaken to address these. Quantitative feedback has been referred to lead officers and timescales identified for each of the actions. In the case of the qualitative feedback they have been referred to the relevant corporate groups for actions.

## **5. Legal Implications**

5.1 None applicable

## **6. Financial Implications**

6.1 None applicable

## **7. Equality Implications**

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

## **8. Decision and Recommendation**

8.1 It is recommended that Safer Stronger Communities Select Committee note the views of the Mayor and Cabinet of the Action Plan and the actions contained in the Plan be agreed.

**Appendix A**  
Talkback 2015 Action Plan

Key area for improvement: <b>Performance Management</b> : 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	Achievements / Planned	Lead/s (Function)	Timescale	How we will measure / evaluate
Create greater link between corporate and employee performance management	<b>Planned</b> A clear set of people management accountabilities to be developed and communicated to managers to provide greater clarity on managing performance.	HR/SPIG	September	Impact on performance
	More specific linkages between service planning, KPIs and PES	HR/SPIG	October	Direct feedback from managers on usefulness of approach taken.
	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	Transformation Board	End June	Numbers of staff who have signed off the new environment
	Upgrade 'back end' IT infrastructure – the upgrade of our network and servers will deliver better performance and greater reliability for our key systems	Transformation Board	End September	Performance of systems
Improve appraisal (PES) usage and monitoring	<b>Planned</b> Regular progress reports to be provided to EMT/Departments	HR/IMT	July onwards	Increased completion of PES
	Further promote PES scheme on intranet at key points during the year	HR	July onwards	Feedback from managers on impact on performance
	Briefings to be scheduled on importance of PES	HR	July onwards	

	Incorporate PES process into Transactional Management and Development Centres activity	HR/SPIG	September	
Develop managers' abilities to manage performance	<p><b>Planned</b> Core Management programme for new managers and Development Centres for Service Managers – selection process to be undertaken.</p> <p>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</p> <p>Extensive piloting of mobile working in CYP and ASC – staff across CYP and ASC are piloting mobile technology (iPhones and iPads)</p>	<p>HR/SPIG</p> <p>Transformation Board</p> <p>Transformation Board</p>	<p>September</p> <p>End June</p> <p>End September</p>	<p>Direct feedback from managers on usefulness of approach taken.</p> <p>Initial user acceptance evaluation forms Impact on performance</p> <p>Measuring number of remote logins Feedback from pilots</p>

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	Achievements / Planned	Lead/s (Function)	Timescale	How we will measure / evaluate
Improve exposure to senior management team	<p><b>Planned</b></p> <p>Email briefings by senior management team</p> <p>Quarterly Directorate wide meetings</p>	<p>Executive Directors/EMT</p> <p>Executive Directors/EMT</p>	<p>October</p> <p>December</p>	<p>Positive feedback from staff to approach</p>
Feedback themes and actions from Talkback	<p><b>Planned</b></p> <p>Lunchtime staff briefings by senior management team</p> <p>'You asked – we did' poster campaigns</p> <p><b>Achievements</b></p> <p>Talkback findings published on staff intranet and core briefing notes provided to Heads of Service</p> <p>Cross-council discussion groups to action qualitative staff feedback</p>	<p>Transformation Board/EMT</p> <p>HR/Communications</p> <p>HR/Communications</p> <p>SPIG/Transformation Board/Lewisham Futures Board/EMT</p>	<p>August</p> <p>October</p> <p>March 2016</p> <p>March onwards</p>	<p>Positive feedback to approach from staff</p>
Develop regular staff briefings	<p><b>Planned</b></p> <p>Monthly/quarterly staff emails, newsletters and bulletins</p> <p>Wider monthly/quarterly team meetings attended by senior management team</p> <p>Twice yearly manager/staff forum events</p>	<p>EMT</p> <p>EMT</p> <p>EMT</p>	<p>October</p> <p>November</p> <p>December</p>	<p>Positive feedback to approach from staff</p>

Key area for improvement: **Career Development:** Employees feel that they do not have opportunities to develop a career at the Council.

Recommendations for action	Achievements / Planned	Lead/s (Function)	Timescale	How we will measure / evaluate
Develop manager's skills and confidence to have the necessary conversations with employees about their career development	<p><b>Planned</b></p> <p>Implement Mentoring skills and Career planning workshops for managers and staff</p> <p>Core Management programme and Development Centres – selection process.</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>December</p> <p>September</p>	<p>Through feedback mechanisms implemented</p> <p>Direct feedback from managers on usefulness of approach taken.</p> <p>Initial user acceptance evaluation forms.</p>
<p>Create an online career development portal for employees to access and utilise</p> <p>Change employee career expectations i.e. focus to be about developing themselves so that they have 'transferable' and 'portable' skills</p>	<p><b>Planned</b></p> <p>Online career portals to be investigated</p> <p><b>Planned</b></p> <p>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.</p> <p>PES guidance notes and support for managers to be reviewed in assessing development needs and will include focus on career development.</p>	<p>HR</p> <p>HR</p>	<p>December</p> <p>September</p>	<p>Impact on ability to identify learning needs</p> <p>Further discussions on career development by managers</p>