

Feedback from Employee Engagement Events

Appendix 1

A series of employee engagement events were held across the county over the summer and autumn months of 2018. Over 10% of the workforce took the time to attend the events or provide their opinions through other routes on what it is like to work for the Council. The events were intended to seek colleagues' views about the proposed changes to terms and conditions, what colleagues value most about working for the Council and also what they would like to be done differently.

The workshops provided invaluable feedback for the Chief Executive and Corporate Leadership Team. We intend to continue this level of dialogue and engagement with colleagues to inform future strategies and plans for how the council will continue to deliver high quality services and remain an "employer of choice" in a continuing financially challenging environment. Further details will be shared on how this will continue throughout the coming months.

Many colleagues welcomed the opportunity to contribute to these events and it was good to hear how committed and conscientious you are in providing quality services to the people of Nottinghamshire. There were lively discussions about what motivated colleagues to come to work and it was fascinating to learn what you considered important.

Set out below is a broad summary of the feedback we received. Many of the suggestions colleagues made are receiving active consideration.

What people value

- Many colleagues commented on how supported they feel by their colleagues and manager and consider the Council is a good place to work
- Significant numbers of you take pride in providing services to people and believe you make a real difference
- Colleagues welcomed the honest approach taken and the opportunity to talk to the Chief Executive and have their views listened to - both positive and negative
- A number of colleagues commented on the opportunities to develop their careers and to continue learning
- A number of examples were given of where good practice has been shared although generally colleagues felt that the Council should do this more
- Those colleagues who can, enjoy working flexibly both in terms of location and how hours are worked
- A number of comments were made about other councils changing their employment packages to the statutory minimum required and colleagues were pleased that was not being proposed
- There was a clear appetite for more engagement and colleagues welcomed the opportunity to shape policy and contribute to how efficiencies can be made in future

There were also a number of comments and suggestions which demonstrated there are clearly areas we can improve on and these continue to receive consideration and will form part of our ongoing dialogue.

What needs to change

- Consistency and fairness of decision making was highlighted by a significant number of colleagues. This included decisions on working hours, flexible working and application of a range of employment procedures.
- There was a suggestion that some people could have been supported more in challenging times. The Council will be relaunching the Leadership Development Programme to ensure that everyone has the support they need
- Colleagues working away from County Hall felt remote and unable to influence decisions which impacted on them and their service areas
- A number of comments were received about layers of bureaucracy and the time it takes for decisions to be considered and implemented
- There was a general feeling that the Council should make our partnerships stronger with particular reference made to the NHS
- Colleagues expressed some frustration about the reliability of equipment and also the physical working environment in some buildings. The continuing rollout of smarter working will go some way to address these areas of concern

Terms and conditions proposals

Having considered and reflected on all the feedback, the package has been revised to recognise what colleagues told us is most important to them. During the workshops there was discussion about the potential for retaining basic annual leave entitlement as it is but making reductions to staffing budgets to deliver the savings from efficiencies. This seems to strike a balance between delivering the required saving whilst still maintaining an employment package which is attractive to new recruits and which values and enables the Council to retain its existing workforce. This is what the Council is now proposing to do.

It is still proposed to phase out the 5/6 days additional leave provision protected for some employees since 2010. Many colleagues felt it was inequitable and unfair for colleagues to receive significantly different amounts of leave. By implementing this over three years rather than two and introducing an annual leave buyback scheme the Council has tried to mitigate the impact of this change.

More detailed feedback on each part of the proposed employment package and changes made is set out in Appendix 2.

Some colleagues identified other possible changes to terms and conditions such as reducing sick pay as a way of saving money. The Council didn't feel it was right to target colleagues who were ill or have long term health issues so we are not intending to pursue this.