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(Please note that "Information Only" reports do not require Integrated Impact Assessments, Legal or Finance Comments as no decision is being taken)

Title of meeting:	Communities & Central Services Portfolio Meeting
Subject:	Staff Wellbeing Survey
Date of meeting:	22 February 2022
Report by:	Director of Corporate Services
Wards affected:	N/A

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to present the findings of the recent Staff Wellbeing Survey.

Throughout the pandemic the council has undertaken staff surveys to engage with staff to support their health and wellbeing. The purpose of engaging with staff in this way is to comply with the council's duty of care as employer, and importantly, to maintain a healthy workforce able to continue to deliver services to residents and those most vulnerable in Portsmouth communities (noting that over just over 50% of the workforce are also Portsmouth residents).

2. Background

All staff were invited to take part in a short wellbeing survey between 9 and 26 November 2021. This follows a similar survey that was conducted in February 2021.

Issues covered in the survey included working arrangements, how satisfied with work and how supported staff feel, and access to wellbeing support and advice. Staff were also asked about the ways they receive information currently, and how they would like to do so in future to help us develop our internal communications to better meet the needs of staff, and to make use of developing technology.

All staff had the opportunity to complete the survey, and paper copies were available for those without access to email. In total, 1630 staff (42%) took part and the sample is broadly representative of the total staff population. Results from the survey in February 2021 also allow us to compare how staff are feeling at the end of 2021, compared with the beginning of the year.

3. Summary analysis

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The survey shows that most staff who responded remain overall satisfied with their work, feel supported by the council, know where to access wellbeing support and advice and don't feel internal communications needs to improve.

Staff however are feeling slightly less satisfied with their work and supported by the council when compared with the survey response from February 2021. Whilst this is perhaps not surprising given the significant challenges presented by the ongoing pandemic to the work and home life of staff and reflects national wellbeing indicators, it is important we use the findings to inform our work both at a directorate and corporate level to support staff as best we can.

4. Key findings

- Some 41% of respondents are currently working from home and at a workplace, 29% only at home, and 25% only at a workplace. There is a significant 26 percentage point decrease of staff working solely from home compared with the February 2021 survey.
- Just under two-thirds of staff are satisfied with their work, this is a three-percentage point decrease since February 2021. Staff working exclusively at home are most satisfied (72%) whilst those working exclusively at work are least (22% are dissatisfied).
- Having a high workload was the most common reason for staff being dissatisfied, negatively impacting their work (44%). Struggling to work from home or in the office also featured as a common reason for staff feeling dissatisfied with their work (30%). Some staff feel that they are not getting enough support from their team or manager (23%).
- Whilst most staff feel supported by the council (62%) this has reduced since February (-six percentage points). Staff working exclusively at work feel least supported.
- The vast majority of staff know where to access wellbeing support (78%); although this has reduced since February by seven percentage points.
- Most staff (59%) are able to strike the right balance between work and personal time; however, a fifth still do not feel they are able to achieve this.

General comments

Staff were asked to comment if there is anything more they feel the council could do to support them now. Many respondents would like better support for their wellbeing in their work environment, both working from home and in the office (16%). Reducing expectations on workloads and working hours would also help staff feel more supported. This includes emphasis on only working contracted hours (12%). Many staff would also like to continue or enable greater flexibility of ways of working (11%). More contact and support from management would also better support some respondents (10%). Some staff would like the council to show a better appreciation and recognition of staff, as well as some clarity about future ways of working (9% each).

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5. Conclusions

It will be important for the council to continue to monitor and address staff wellbeing and attendance levels among the workforce as a key enabler of business continuity. Workforce wellbeing is a key driver of staff productivity and engagement enabling delivery of the council's plan for recovery and renewal.

6. Actions and Next Steps

Directors are working with senior managers on the directorate specific analysis to review the feedback from their areas, understand the issues and develop action plans that address the specific issues in their teams.

We will develop and improve our communications with managers, picking up on the outcomes from this survey, reflecting the role of managers in leading change and managing wellbeing.

We will review access to wellbeing support and refresh the communications to staff around this. Staff who are working solely in the workplace are least likely to know where wellbeing support is available and feel least supported, and we will work with managers of these staff to target communications.

Visible commitment from the senior leadership team affects the culture and can ensure health, safety and wellbeing is further embedded across the council. It can also encourage people to have the courage to discuss any health concerns in the knowledge that they will be listened to and receive support. We will develop the visibility of the support for this by senior managers.

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Signed by Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services

Appendices:

Background list of documents: Section 100D of the Local Government Act 1972

The following documents disclose facts or matters, which have been relied upon to a material extent by the author in preparing this report:

Title of document	Location