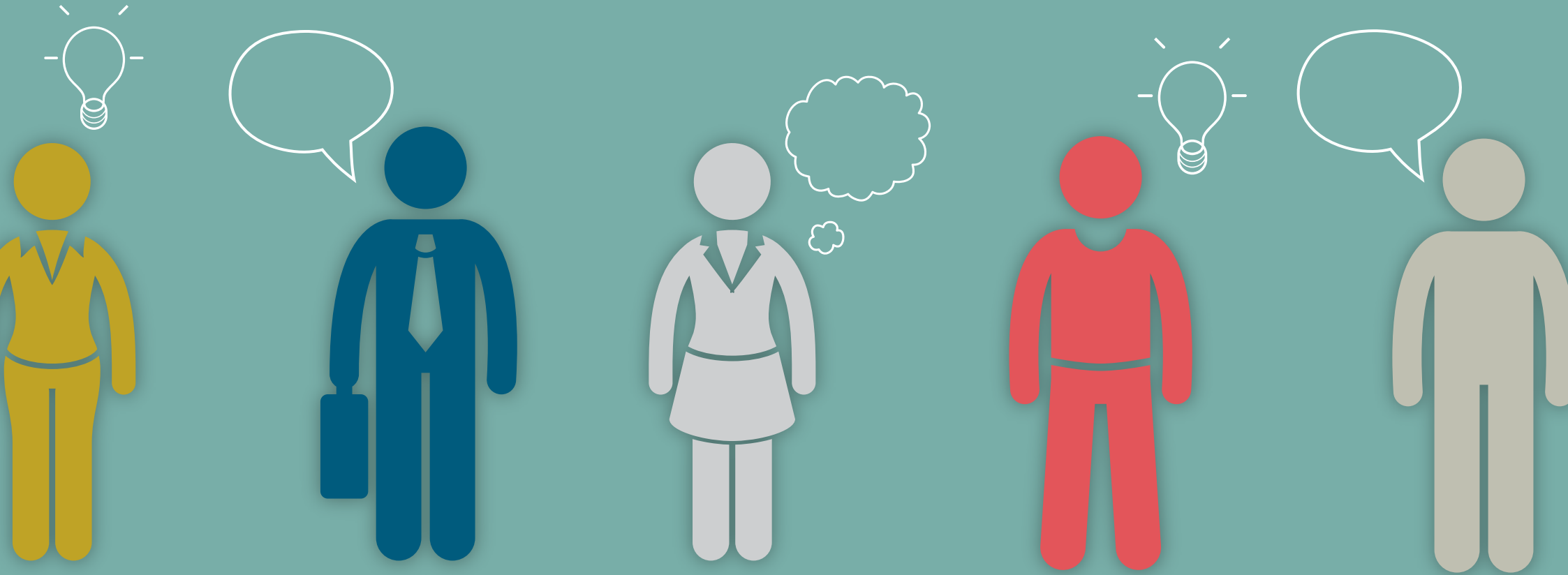


Employee Engagement Strategy 2015-18



The Strategy

1. What is employee engagement?

Employee engagement is a workplace approach designed to ensure that employees are committed to their organisation's goals and values, motivated to contribute to organisational success and are able, at the same time, to enhance their own sense of well-being. Engagement is therefore a tool for organisational success:

"This is about how we create the conditions in which employees offer more of their capability and potential."

David MacLeod, *Engaging for Success* report

Indeed the MacLeod Report found that "high levels of engagement are associated with better outcomes in the public sector"¹

Engaged employees will:

- Experience a blend of job satisfaction, organisational commitment, involvement in the direction of their own job and a feeling of empowerment when at work.
- Be advocates for their organisation and the work it does, by recommending it as a place to work or be a customer of.
- Have a motivation to perform well, a desire to improve the way things are in their organisation and to make a difference to people's lives.
- Work well in teams, encouraging and facilitating the development of others to achieve positive outcomes.
- Think, behave and act in a positive way.
- Be enabled to be innovative and contribute ideas that are listened to and acted upon.

It is suggested that engagement is developed when the workforce is fully aware of business context and understands the line of sight (or golden thread) between their own job role and the purpose and objectives of the organisation. Leaders and line managers have a critical role in creating a culture of employee engagement and enabling staff to make a difference to the lives of their customers.

2. Strategic context within Warwickshire County Council

The Employee Engagement Strategy aims to increase the staff survey response rate and engagement score and to support the development of a more engaged workforce who can deliver the One Organisation Plan and Workforce Strategy 2014-8. Engagement itself is not the end goal, it is however business critical as a more engaged workforce can support the delivery of the organisations goals in the context of transformation.

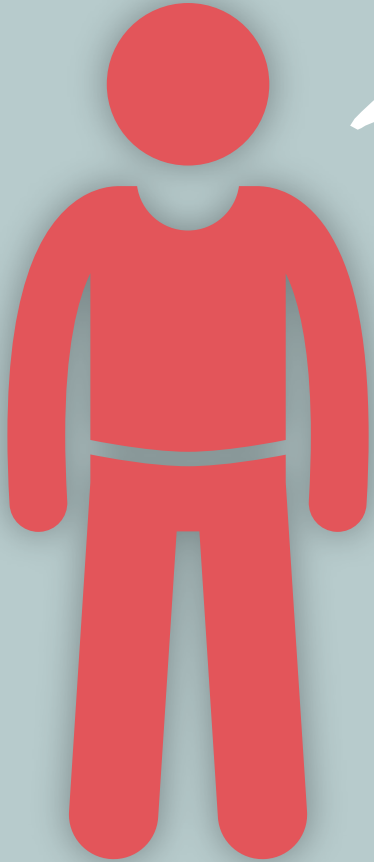
2.1 Workforce Strategy 2014-8

This Employee Engagement Strategy will support the achievement of the Workforce Strategy 2014-8 which sets out the direction for our approach to making the most of our staff and their talents. Focusing on engagement is highlighted as one way to deliver against the Efficiency key theme.

Engaged individuals are also more likely to be demonstrating the behaviours defined in the Working for Warwickshire competency framework.

2.2 One Organisational Plan (OOP)

A more engaged workforce supports the organisational aims and ambitions as laid out in OOP and are integral to its delivery, that is, by being "highly skilled and supported" they can contribute to the outcome of "resources and services are targeted effectively and efficiently whether delivered by the local authority, commissioned or in partnership".



3. Why is employee engagement important?

Research shows that improving employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on organisational performance, including productivity, financial performance and efficiencies.

Evidence has been found in public, private and voluntary sectors of a direct correlation in organisations between highly engaged staff and:

- Productivity
- Financial efficiencies
- Customer satisfaction
- Innovation
- Revenue generation
- Absence
- Wellbeing
- Retention
- Health & Safety

Warwickshire County Council can therefore benefit from engaged employees because, as well as being happier, healthier and more fulfilled, they deliver improved performance. There are nuances in the drivers and outcomes of employee engagement, but the basic link is that if we improve employee engagement we will see improvements in organisational performance.

There is a risk that failure to focus on this could increase disengagement at a time when the council needs its employees' contributions more than ever. The CIPD states that "As well as productivity losses, organisations may lose their best people and face huge difficulties when embedding organisational change if employees are not on board. Disengagement also threatens effective collaboration, innovation and human capital management, as employees will not be inclined to use their tacit knowledge and skills for the good of the organisation."²

This Employee Engagement Strategy is also aligned to work on workforce planning, talent management and leadership development.

4. The benefits to employees

In addition to the benefits for business performance, engagement also benefits the employees themselves, for example:

- A positive state for the individual which is a precursor to success
- Feeling happier, healthier and more fulfilled
- Greater motivation and morale and therefore productivity
- More commitment to the organisation's goals and therefore sense of purpose



5. What are 'Enablers of Engagement'?

Four common themes emerged from the extensive research captured in the MacLeod Report.

1. Visible, empowering leadership providing a strong strategic narrative about the organisation, where it's come from and where it's going.
2. Engaging managers who focus their people and give them scope, treat their people as individuals and coach and stretch their people.
3. There is employee voice throughout the organisations, for reinforcing and challenging views, between functions and externally, employees are seen as central to the solution.
4. There is organisational integrity – the values on the wall are reflected in day to day behaviours. There is no 'say –do' gap.



6. How is employee engagement measured?

The Staff Survey is a tool to allow us to find out how engaged our people are, to address our particular issues and to analyse the factors behind successes.

In 2014, engagement scores were calculated for the first time from the results at a corporate, Group and Business Unit level. In order to generate our engagement score we have used a recognised model provided by ORC (international research and benchmarking organisation) which identifies six specific questions from the staff survey.

For the County Council the Engagement Score has been calculated by looking at the net positive responses to these six questions. The score for 2014 is 66.9% a slight increase from 65.8% in 2012. There is of course, variation within the results between Business Units and Groups, and these have been communicated to Strategic Directors and Heads of Service directly.

This engagement score of 66.9% compares favourably to local government and the public sector on comparable questions according to ORC research:

Table 1

	WCC % positive	Public Sector benchmark	Local Government benchmark
I am proud to work for WCC	66	66	67
Overall I am satisfied working for WCC	73	69	72
I believe I have the opportunity for personal development and growth whilst at work in the CC	51	55	51
The County Council is a good employer	72	61	61
My immediate manager encourages me to propose new ideas and to improve the quality of our services to our customers	74	72	74
I think it is safe to speak up and challenge the way things are done at work	67	43	44
Overall score (average)	67	61	62

The response rate to the staff survey in 2014 was 49.8% of non-schools workforce. This means that a considerable proportion of the workforce is not contributing their views and we are unable at present to measure their engagement score.

The Staff Survey is an important part of the process, but only part

of it. Further ways to measure engagement on an ongoing basis include using focus groups, pulse surveys and employee forums

There is an expectation within WCC that all managers demonstrate engaging behaviours and are champions of the 'Enablers of Engagement', staff survey and action planning.



7. What outcomes will be delivered?

The business focused outcomes that will be delivered by this strategy are:

- **More engaged workforce** – highlighted by improvements in engagement score which in turn should create tangible benefits including:
 - Improved productivity
 - Improved financial performance
 - Higher levels of customer service and advocacy
 - Increased innovation
 - Increased staff retention and reduced recruitment costs
 - Improved morale and wellbeing
 - Improved H&S performance

In addition to changes in our staff survey results and engagement score, we will also therefore be able to monitor changes in our organisational performance such as:

Table 2

WCC (excluding schools)	*2014-15 Information
Staff retention/labour turnover	13.6% per FTE
Sickness Absence	10.13 days per FTE

* Data taken from Workforce Report 2014-15

An appropriate measure is needed for productivity as it is a priority area of focus.

8. Engagement strategies and initiatives - Action plan

This strategic plan outlines the strategies and initiatives to support enhanced employee engagement at Warwickshire County Council and achieve the vision of an engaged workforce.

We will:

Table 3

	Initiative	Actions	Who	When
8.1	Staff survey	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Operate the full staff survey on a once every 2 years basis with the next survey in summer 2016 using the Observatory to manage the survey. • Set a target response rate of 54.8% (an increase of 5% on 2014 survey). • Survey design – review questions and how demographic data is used, Engage with Group Employee Forums. • Branding of survey - Develop a visual identity and title to reflect engagement focus. • Responses - Identify how best to engage with hard to reach sections of the workforce i.e. remote workers. • Data analysis - Continue to generate the engagement score- an organisational target of a 3% increase has been set to 69.9% in 2016. Also review data and opportunities for improved analysis. 	HROD, SICM & Group Employee Forums	For June/ July 2016 staff survey
8.2	Pulse surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce pulse surveys to ascertain progress against actions or views on topical issues. This will also enable us to target hotspots and measure engagement on a more regular basis. 	HROD & SICM	Starting in June 2015
8.3	Action planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to operate corporate and local level action planning, building on what works well at the moment. This local focus will support the opportunity for employees to have a voice through employee forums and to be central to the solution. 	All managers	Ongoing
8.4	Introduce engagement as service measure on scorecard	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To explore having an agreed engagement target score for each Business Unit that they are measured against. The measure will be provided through HR&OD & SICM using the Staff Survey and pulse survey engagement scores so that they have this information on an annual basis. 	HROD & SICM	From October 2015

	Initiative	Actions	Who	When
8.5	Employee voice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Utilise existing groups and forums such as the Group employee forums, staff networks (e.g. LGBT, Disability) and 'CEDG - Corporate Equality & Diversity Group to act as sounding boards, sense checks, critical friends, champions and to recommend solutions to improve performance at a local level. Work with the Group Employee Forums, providing them with tools to help drive response rates and engagement at a local level and to support line managers. Review the opportunities for corporate listening/focus groups to provide a different perspective. Promote the Staff Feedback and Suggestion Scheme to give staff the opportunity to submit comments and suggestions at any time, not just through the regular staff survey. 	HROD, Group Employee Forums & Internal Comms	Ongoing
8.6	Communications strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop a robust communications strategy based on the "You Said, We Did approach" to ensure employees know that action will be taken as a result of the surveys. Communicate what staff value about working for WCC and ensure that good practices are maintained. 	Internal Comms	April 2015 onwards
8.7	Identifying good practice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and share best practice of areas of the organisation that are doing well in terms of engagement e.g. through case studies. 	HROD & Internal Comms	Jan 2016 onwards
8.8	Engage for Success Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore workshops to support our managers to improve the engagement of their teams. 	OD team	Jan 2016 onwards
8.9	Developing employees strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use "R2 Strengths Profiler" approach within the organisation to focus on strengths, for example as part of talent management, as research has established a compelling connection between strengths and employee engagement in the workplace, whereby focusing on both can accelerate organisational performance. 	HR&OD	Ongoing
8.10	Wellbeing	<p>As part of the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Strategy, there is a commitment from WCC to have a Workplace Health & Wellbeing Action Plan so as to integrate and encourage synergies between health and safety with occupational health and wellbeing. There are a number of activities in place to support the wellbeing of WCC employees and to assist the Leadership Team in achieving their statutory and strategic obligations.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development and implementation of relevant occupational health and wellbeing related policies/arrangements (such as stress), Holding a H,S & Wellbeing Forum Reviewing Occupational Health/sickness/accident trends/ statistics Delivering relevant OH and wellbeing communications to inform managers about their roles Provision of a wellbeing event Revamped learning and development activities. 	HS&W	Ongoing
8.11	Recognition, affirmation and celebration of success – Employee Awards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Warwickshire STARS (Staff Thanks And Recognition) were launched in April 2015. Following consultation with staff panels and managers, we have refreshed the criteria and made this a more open process so that it is inclusive and staff are encouraged to nominate others. There are team and individual awards which allow us to highlight those who make extra effort and exemplify the behaviours we need to deliver good services. WOW Awards - We will continue to participate in The WOW! Awards, a UK wide staff recognition scheme, celebrating outstanding customer service. 	Internal Comms	Ongoing



9. Engagement programme – focused on 2014 Key Driver Analysis in response to the staff survey

In 2014, we used the Key Driver Analysis tool to identify what drivers in WCC will have the biggest impact on engagement. This is being used to provide a focused action plan for driving improvements in engagement, in addition to the localised action planning.

Four main areas form the focus for corporate activity 2014-16:

1

9.1 The opportunity to contribute my views to changes affecting my job

We are strengthening our approach to supporting managers to manage change. A review identified that managers need more opportunity to network and learn together from others. HR Business Partners and the OD team have piloted a semi structured process of management huddles to enable this. Feedback has been positive, so we will extend our support of this way of working and learning - encouraging dialogue between managers and staff during times of change.

2

9.2 Effective leadership by senior management

The role of the line manager is key in enabling and building engagement. Activities to provide support include:

- The **Personal Leadership Programme** promotes a culture of open leadership, developing engaged and engaging managers who treat their people as individuals, coaching everyone to take responsibility for their own actions and stretching their potential.
- Further work will be undertaken to propose a development strategy for Corporate Board and Leadership Team.
- The West Midlands Coaching Pool and a newly developed internal coaching pool, provide leaders with the opportunity to access coaching to support their development. There are also activities on the corporate menu to develop the coaching skills of managers.

3

9.3 Work morale is good

There are a plethora of factors which contribute to good morale including the importance of 'employee voice' throughout the organisation, reinforcing and challenging views and being solution focussed. To support this, we are undertaking the pulse surveys and focus groups with employee forums to understand what are the most important motivators and contributors to morale and use this intelligence to shape our responses.

4

9.4 Satisfaction with opportunities at WCC

We will continue to promote the variety of development opportunities available including through WILMa, linked to identified needs through the appraisal scheme and competency framework.

The work to embed the Working for Warwickshire Competency Framework launched in April 2014, brings focus in appraisal discussions to an individual's development priorities and therefore options. These messages also highlight the development opportunities in WCC including:

- Secondments/Shadowing
- Coaching and mentoring
- Continuous Professional Development opportunities
- Career pathways for Social Workers.
- Elearning
- Face-to-face learning

Additionally, we are investigating how we can be more effective in matching the skills of those staff at risk of potential redundancy with internal recruitment opportunities.

Following the results of the 2015 Pulse Survey and the 2016 Staff Survey, we will review the Key Driver Analysis again to measure any improvements in results and to identify priorities to drive engagement for 2016-18.

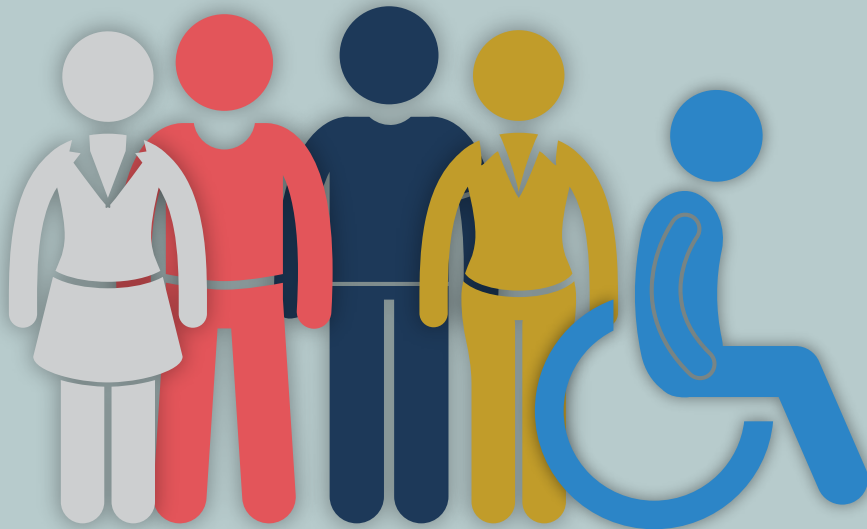
10. Monitoring and Review

The Employee Engagement Strategy will be monitored by:

- Corporate Board
- Engagement Working Group
- Group Employee Forums

The indicators of success will be:-

- Results of Pulse Surveys Sept 2015
- Staff Survey Response rate June 2016
- Employee Engagement Score 2016 June 2016
- Impact on business outcomes 2016 & 2018



Further Information

Workforce Strategy 2014-8

One Organisational Plan

For queries or feedback please contact:

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