



APPENDIX 1: OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL

This form can be used for either a Task Group or a Short Sharp Review topic proposal.

Completed forms should be returned to scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk – Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council.

Name of Proposer: Cllr Steve Colella	
Tel No: 07758 739901	Email: s.colella@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Date: 21 st September 2016	

<p>Title of Proposed Topic (including specific subject areas to be investigate)</p>	<p>Scrutiny into the Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council 2016 staff survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny of the survey results (Qualitative and Quantitative) and the underlying issues identified. • Scrutiny of the survey process and quality of survey • Investigations into the low response rate and implications • Investigation in to model surveys • Consider the criteria of the previous survey and lesson learned for future surveys. • The work of the Programme Board which is to be chaired by the Chief Executive. • The work to be carried out in respect of the three corporate work streams which have been established and headed up by key officers.
<p>Background to the Proposal (Including reasons why this topic should be investigated and evidence to support the need for the investigation.)</p>	<p>Following a presentation of the 2016 Staff survey to the Overview and Scrutiny Board (19th September 2016) concerns were raised in respect of the low response rate, the implications and possible reasons for such a disappointing outcome.</p> <p>As this was a shared survey and the majority of services are shared with Redditch Borough Council it was suggested that it would be an ideal opportunity</p>

	to carry out a piece of joint working with the RBC Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as the findings of the review could have implications for both Councils.		
<p>Links to national, regional and local priorities</p> <p>(including the Council's strategic purposes)</p>	<p>The importance of conducting robust and regular staff surveys is to demonstrate that the organisation values the voice of its employees, at every level and is responsive to any changes that the results may highlight.</p> <p>Therefore the links are directly related to efficiency of the organisation, staff moral and effective service delivery.</p> <p>In order to achieve the Councils' strategic purposes we need to ensure that staff are motivated and operating in the appropriate culture to meet these objectives.</p>		
<p>Possible Key Objectives</p> <p>(these should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how to increase the response rates in future. • Consider the merits of the questions both in terms of desired outputs and number of questions. • Establish reason for the low response rates • Bench mark survey with other similar organisations and marque organisations • To make Recommendations to the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board and Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 		
Anticipated Timescale for completion of the work.	November 2016 – February 2017		
Would it be appropriate to hold a Short Sharp Inquiry or a Task Group? (please tick relevant box)	<u>Task Group</u>	yes	Short Sharp Inquiry

OFFICE USE ONLY - TO BE COMPLETED WHEN THE TOPIC PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED

Evidence	
Key documents, data, reports	
Possible Site Visits	
Is a general press release required asking for general comments/suggestions from the public?	
Is a period of public consultation required?	
Witnesses	
Officers	
Councillors (including Portfolio Holder)	
Any External Witnesses	

Appendix 2: Potential Joint Working Arrangements

Membership: To be chaired by a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny function from the Council that proposed the topic.

Appoint a Vice Chairman (from the other Council).

6 Members made up of three from each Council. Each Member should be a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board/ Committee on this occasion.

A Quorum of three be in place with at least one Member from each Council present.

Venue: alternate between each Council.

1. Verbal updates be given to the respective Overview and Scrutiny functions by the lead member with the final report being considered by both prior to it being considered at Cabinet / Executive.
2. Consultation with Portfolio Holders – both relevant Portfolio Holders should be invited to attend if considered appropriate.
3. The meetings will be private informal meetings as standard practice at both venues.

APPENDIX 3: BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 14TH OCTOBER 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. Lammas (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman),
C. J. Bloore, B. T. Cooper, R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce,
J. M. L. A. Griffiths, H. J. Jones, L. C. R. Mallett, C. J. Spencer,
C. J. Tidmarsh and L. J. Turner

Observers: Councillor M. A. Sherrey and Councillor C. B. Taylor

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering and Ms. A. Scarce

MINUTE EXTRACT – MINUTE 43/13

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered the Work Programme and discussed the number of reports which were scheduled for the November meeting. There had been a delay with producing the Quarter 1 Write Off Report and Sickness Absence Report and it was agreed that these would be combined with the 2nd Quarter reports to be received at the December meeting.

The Chairman gave Members the opportunity to suggest topics which it was felt may be suitable for consideration by the Board at future meetings. It was suggested that an update on the preventative work carried out in respect of flooding in the District would be pertinent in view of the approach of the winter months.

Members also discussed the recent staff survey and requested that the results of this would be an appropriate subject for the Board to consider. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that officers arrange a presentation providing an update on preventative flooding work within the District from the relevant officer, to be received at the meeting to be held on 16th December 2013; and
- (b) that the Board receive a presentation on the results and findings of the staff survey as soon as practicable.

The meeting closed at 6.35 p.m.

Chairman

APPENDIX 4: BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 16TH JUNE 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), H. J. Jones (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, R. J. Laight, P. Lammas, S. P. Shannon, C. J. Tidmarsh, K. A. Grant-Pearce, J. M. L. A. Griffiths and P. M. McDonald

Invitees: Councillors D. Booth and M. Webb

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Jones, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. A. Scarce

MINUTE EXTRACT - MINUTE 6/14

SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF STAFF SURVEY

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development delivered a presentation which summarised the results of the staff survey conducted in August 2013 (Appendix 1).

Following this presentation a number of points were raised by Members:

- The level of responses that had been received from staff, which represented a third of the employees from both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council.
- The potential to design and promote future versions of the survey in ways that would encourage a larger proportion of staff to respond in future years. Officers confirmed that the survey had been made available both electronically and in paper form for staff to complete.
- The value of assessing responses at a departmental level and the challenges this would present to the Staff Survey Working Group due to the fact that staff were not required to indicate which department they worked in when completing the survey.
- Some of the feedback that had been received in completed surveys, particularly the qualitative data, had been treated as confidential. This was because in some cases the comments submitted by staff could have enabled observers to identify the respondent or a specific team.
- The potential for senior Officers to make themselves available for staff to access across numerous working sites. Members were advised that senior Officers would not focus on one action exclusively but rather would seek to engage with staff face-to-face using a range of methods in order to meet the differing needs across both Councils.
- The Working Group's Action Plan, which was in the process of being developed would be utilised to monitor progress in implementing actions taken in response to the feedback, particularly the top ten recommendations.

- The benefits of face to face communications between staff arising from “No Email” days.
- How the feedback that had been received compared to the responses to previous versions of the staff survey. Members suggested that in future a record should be kept of the responses received in order to ensure that progress with addressing staff concerns could be monitored.
- The importance of 1:2:1 meetings for staff and the need for these to be held regularly. However, it was noted that there needed to be some flexibility across the organisation regarding the frequency of these meetings due to the varying work patterns and demands on staff employed in different services.
- The fact that some staff struggled with change and the challenges this presented at a corporate level during the course of service transformation.
- The failure of some ICT systems and the financial implications that this presented for the Council.

Concerns were expressed in respect of the 14.75% of respondents who had indicated that they had been subject to bullying and harassment while at work. Officers confirmed that there was a policy for managing reports relating to bullying and harassment and this was applied by managers when cases were reported directly by members of staff. Improved training of managers would further enable them to respond to reports of bullying and harassment in a sensitive manner. There were also support groups, such as Phone a Friend, which could provide advice to staff. Members concurred that it was important to demonstrate to all staff that the Council would not tolerate bullying and harassment and it was suggested that this could be highlighted within the top ten recommendations.

The Board also discussed the proposal for the staff finder and phone lists to be updated in order to improve internal communications. Members noted that unfortunately they were not able to access the intranet, where the staff finder facility was located, using their Council IT equipment. However, the Board recognised that it was important to provide all elected Members with access to staff contact details as this could help Members to manage issues raised at both Committee meetings and by residents in a constructive manner.

RECOMMENDED that

1. a statement should be added to the top ten recommendations arising from the staff survey which demonstrates that the Council has a zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment among staff;
2. the contact details for staff, as detailed in the staff finder on the Council’s intranet, should be made available for the consideration of elected Members; and

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 8.53 p.m.

Chairman

APPENDIX 5: BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

16TH FEBRUARY 2015 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore, J. S. Brogan, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, S. J. Dudley, P. Lamma, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon and C. J. Tidmarsh

Invitees: Councillor D. Booth

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Mr D Riley, Ms L Wood, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. A. Scarce

MINUTE EXTRACT – MINUTE 115/14

STAFF SURVEY

The Acting Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager delivered a presentation on the subject of the staff survey. During the delivery of the presentation she raised the following points for Members' consideration:

- The survey, which was circulated in August 2013, had been completed by 40 per cent of staff.
- There had been delays in analysing the data due to the complexity and volume of the feedback.
- Responses had been treated as confidential and every effort had been made to ensure that individual respondents could not be identified.
- There had been a low response rate from Bromsgrove depot, which would be addressed in any future surveys.
- A Working Group, comprising senior Officers, had been established to consider the feedback provided in the surveys.
- Sub-Groups had also been established to consider four key themes, chaired by members of the Working Group.
- The four key themes identified from analysis of the feedback were; management and the need for managers to manage staff in a different way in a changing environment, the need for more effective internal communications, the importance of an appropriate working environment that enabled staff to be a healthy workforce, and failures in ICT support and the impact of IT improvements on wider service delivery.
- Action had been taken in a variety of areas to address the concerns raised by staff.
- The first event relating to the Council's Time to Change pledge would take place at Bromsgrove Council House on 5th March 2015.

- The Council was participating in the Worcestershire Works Well accreditation process.
- A new performance management framework was being piloted in the business transformation team.
- A new induction process, which would include face-to-face support, mentoring and podcasting, was due to be introduced.
- A generic skills matrix was being launched focusing on 25 skills all staff required in addition to any technical and specialist abilities.
- Additional support for staff was being made available in Bromsgrove and the Phone a Friend service was due to be re-launched with new volunteers.
- Monthly updates were being delivered through Oracle newsletters.
- A staff choir had been launched due to identified links between singing and wellbeing.
- In total 11% of respondents had reported that they had experienced some form of bullying from either the public or other officers in the workplace. The Council's Bullying Policy had been promoted in an attempt to address this problem.
- The information available to staff in respect of corporate priorities, performance measures and strategic purposes had been updated and various ICT policies would be rewritten to ensure they were user friendly for staff.
- The new survey would be launched outside the school holiday period in order to maximise the number of responses.
- Officers were intending to use the same questions in the survey to ensure that the feedback could be compared to the data from the 2013 survey.

Following the delivery of the presentation Members discussed a number of points in further detail:

- The need for first aider and fire warden training to be delivered as part of the corporate training programme.
- The current content of the Bullying Policy and the extent to which changes needed to be made to the policy in order to secure a reduction in bullying.
- The type of issues that were considered bullying by staff.
- The training delivered in wellbeing sessions, covering healthy eating, physical exercise, breaks from work and health checks.
- The potential for exit interviews to take place in order for the Council to have an understanding why staff left. (Members were informed that these would be introduced across the organisation and the fact that these could only be undertaken on a voluntary basis.)
- The arrangements for the new Performance Development Review (PDR) framework which would look forward towards achieving objectives rather than backwards at past behaviour.
- Some concerns were expressed about the limited number of PDRs that staff had undertaken in recent years and the impact that this could have on both staff morale and performance.
- The provision of regular one-to-one meetings for staff and the fact that these varied in content and timescales.
- The payment of staff by increments rather than in accordance with an assessment of service performance.

- The number of times members of the Corporate Management Team had attended team meetings and the breakdown of attendances at these meetings.
- The number of new members of staff who would be employed by the Council in the following year.
- The potential value of a podcast in the corporate induction process and the benefits of face-to-face contact when welcoming new staff to the organisation.
- The content of the Oracle newsletters and the potential for these newsletters to be sent to Members alongside the monthly newsletter for Councillors.
- The operation of staff from Redditch Town Hall and the extent to which the working environment in the building was appropriate for shared services.
- The work that had been delivered in accordance with the Council's Equalities Plan.
- The reasons why the review of key behaviours in a customer driven organisation had been superseded. Officers explained that this had occurred as part of the on-going work to transform the organisation.

Members also suggested the following amendments to the survey:

- An additional question on the subject of health and wellbeing concerning the option to work from alternative locations to the standard Office workspace.
- The potential for "paternity" to be added as an additional option as a reason why a member of staff may have been subject to bullying or harassment.
- The potential for the option "lack of belief" to be rephrased as "no religious belief".

Following further discussion the Board

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.55 p.m.

Chairman

APPENDIX 6: BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

29TH FEBRUARY 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), K.J. May (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, C. J. Bloore, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, M. Glass and S. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor C. B. Taylor

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. R. Bamford, Ms. D. Poole, Ms L Wood, Ms P. Smith, Ms. A. Scarce and Ms. J. Bayley

MINUTE EXTRACT – MINUTE 107/15

STAFF SURVEY - UPDATE

The Training and Development Advisor presented an update on the staff survey. During the delivery of this presentation the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- A new edition of the staff survey was due to be issued in April.
- The majority of the questions remained the same (with a small number being amended to allow easier interpretation of the data) as those which had featured in the previous survey to enable the Human Resources team to compare the data from the responses.
- Lessons had been learned from the previous survey and a separate survey focusing on mental health, about how to maximise the number of completed questionnaires received.
- There had been some problems experienced with the previous survey in terms of encouraging staff to complete paper copies. To address this personalised letters would be sent to those staff in receipt of a paper copy.
- Staff had been updated in respect of the actions that had been taken in response to various concerns raised in the survey.
- The responses provided to the new survey would enable the Human Resources team to assess the impact that various actions had had in terms of addressing staff concerns.
- It was anticipated that the data would be reviewed more quickly than previously and support would be provided by the Policy Team which had expertise in respect of recording and analysing data.
- Once the feedback had been analysed a communications plan would be devised to ensure that the outcomes were reported back to staff in an appropriate manner.

Following presentation of the report a number of matters were discussed in further detail:

- The need for both qualitative and quantitative data to be analysed in completed surveys in a constructive manner.
- The reasons for the delays in issuing a second survey to staff. Members were advised that initially there had been an intention to include questions about mental health and equalities issues and, whilst these would not now be included in the final version, this had caused some delays.
- The Board sought assurance that the data arising from completed surveys would be shared with Members in a timely manner. Officers confirmed that it would be possible, but some detail would need to remain restricted in order not to compromise staff confidentiality.
- The action that would be taken to encourage more staff to complete the survey than the previous version. Members were advised that Human resources would be liaising directly with service managers in order to encourage staff to complete the surveys.
- It was noted that a one third response rate for a staff survey was good.
- The role of Human Resources in developing and administering the survey. Members were assured that external consultants would not be involved.
- The potential to make completion of a survey compulsory for staff. The Board was informed that ideally voluntary participation was preferable.
- The improvements that had been made in terms of communicating with staff over IT problems.
- The use of an IT dashboard to inform staff about the number of IT technicians available at any one time to resolve IT problems.
- The number of staff who regularly accessed and used the data recorded on the measures dashboard.
- The continuing development of the skills matrix and the likely timeframes in which use of the matrix would be extended across all teams. The Board was advised that the matrix was being piloted in Customer Access and Financial Support Services. In the long-term the aim would be to use the matrix to develop a training programme which addressed gaps in staff skills.
- The time taken to develop an induction process for new staff.
- The extent to which Human Resources worked with other local authorities to share ideas in terms of staff training. The Board was informed that the Council worked closely with other local authorities, particularly other Councils in the West Midlands.
- The progress that had been made in terms of enabling staff to report concerns about the working environment.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.44 p.m.

Chairman

September 2016

APPENDIX 7: BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

19TH SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), S. A. Webb (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, M. Glass, C. J. Spencer and P.L. Thomas (from Minute Item No. 31/16)

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro, Councillor S. P. Shannon, Hannah Phillips and Dorothy Wilson (The Artrix)

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Mr J. Cochrane, Ms L Wood, Ms. A. Scarce and Ms. J. Bayley

MINUTE EXTRACT – MINUTE 33/16

STAFF SURVEY 2016 - RESULTS AND ACTIONS

The Head of Business Transformation and Human Resources and Development Officer presented a report detailing the feedback provided in the staff survey undertaken in April 2016. Whilst presenting the report the following matters were raised for Members' attention:

- The latest staff survey had followed the format of the previous survey in order to enable officers to compare and measure the results.
- There had been a decline in the proportion of staff completing the survey, from 33 per cent of staff in August 2013 when the survey was last conducted to 25 per cent in 2016.
- Efforts had been made to disseminate information about the survey and to encourage staff to respond, including provision of paper copies to staff who did not have access to a computer.
- When comparing the results it emerged that a number of improvements had been achieved since the previous survey including an increase in awareness of the Council's strategic purposes and underpinning operational purposes.
- The feedback was also encouraging in respect of staff confidence about reporting mental health and wellbeing difficulties. Officers suggested that the significant action taken in the past few years to address this, including the Time to Change initiative, had had a positive impact on this.
- However, some areas had been identified which were concerning including a reduction in staff reporting that they had the skills to do their job well, a decrease in staff reporting that they felt they could meet the needs of their customers and a fall in the number of employees reporting that they had a good working relationship with colleagues.
- A programme board, to be chaired by the Chief Executive, had been established to co-ordinate work to address these problems.
- There had also been 3 working groups established to address people management, meeting customer needs and organisational culture respectively.

- Heads of Service had been provided with data pertaining to staff within their teams, though all responses had remained confidential and had not identified individual respondents.
- The Heads of Service would be expected to identify 3 areas requiring improvement for their service areas and to devise action plans to address these.
- All action plans would need to be presented to the programme board for consideration.

Once the report had been presented Members discussed a number of areas in detail:

- The reasons why there had been a reduction in response rates and the extent to which this was concerning.
- The comparable level of response rates at other local authorities and within the private sector and the potential to obtain benchmarking data.
- The organisational culture at the Council and the impact that this might have on willingness amongst staff to complete the survey.
- The potential to offer incentives to encourage a greater proportion of staff to complete the survey in future.
- The approach that had been taken to comparing responses in 2013 to those in 2016 and the need to take into account the differences in the number of respondents when doing so.
- The inclusion of data from staff employed by both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council in the completed responses. Members were advised that this survey had been conducted jointly as the majority of services were shared between the 2 Councils.
- The number of questions that had been included in the survey and the extent to which this might have discouraged some employees from taking part due to concerns about the time that would be required.
- The potential for different sections of the survey to be circulated on a quarterly basis in order to reduce the number of questions that staff needed to answer at any given time.
- The resource implications of undertaking staff surveys on a quarterly basis.
- The focus of the 3 working groups and whether these would address every area of concern in terms of the organisational structure at the Council.
- The provision of status meetings for staff, the frequency of team meetings and the extent to which this impacted on employees' willingness to take part in initiatives like a staff survey.
- The arrangements in place to ensure a consistent approach across the organisation to Personal Development Reviews.
- The implications of the staff survey results for overall performance at the Council.
- The possibility of using a traffic light system in future reports to help Members assess progress compared to previous staff survey results.
- The potential to set targets to address in respect of the survey feedback, which could be monitored in relation to future surveys.
- The option for the survey to be facilitated by an external independent body and the extent to which this might encourage more staff to complete those surveys.

- The cost implications of working with an external body and the need for any costs to be clarified before taking a decision about future facilitation arrangements for the survey.

During consideration of this item Members discussed the potential suitability of this subject for further scrutiny. Particular concerns were raised about the progress that had been achieved since the previous survey was circulated and the decrease in the number of responses and Members commented that a detailed investigation might help to address some of the underlying issues. The appropriate forum for this investigation was considered and whilst Members acknowledged that the Board could review the matter there was general consensus that a Task Group would be in a better position to review this subject in detail.

The specific focus of an investigation of this matter was also considered. As part of the investigation Members agreed that it would be useful to review the feedback contained in completed surveys. This would include considering the work of the programme board. It would also be useful to consider lessons that could be learned in order to influence future versions of the survey and to improve participation. In line with standard practice the terms of reference would need to be outlined in a topic proposal form.

The relevance of the subject to Redditch Borough Council, due to the shared nature of the survey, was also briefly considered. Members concurred that as this involved staff working for both authorities and a scrutiny investigation could have implications for both Councils the subject might be appropriate for consideration as a joint scrutiny Task Group. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Redditch was due to meet on 25th October and could be invited to consider the Board's suggested terms of reference and to decide whether to take part in this proposed joint exercise. In advance of this date the Chairman confirmed that he would contact the Chair of the Redditch Committee to discuss the matter further.

Following further discussions the Board

RESOLVED that

- (1) A Task Group review of the staff survey be established;
- (2) Councillor S. R. Colella, in consultation with the Democratic Services Officers, complete a Topic Proposal form detailing the proposed terms of reference for the review;
- (3) The proposed terms of reference be circulated electronically for the approval of Members of the Board in early October; and
- (4) Redditch Borough Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee be approached about the possibility of undertaking this review as a Joint Scrutiny Task Group exercise.

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

Chairman

September 2016

