

**Manchester City Council  
Report for Information**

**Report to:** Resources & Governance Scrutiny Committee: HR Sub Group –  
14 June 2018

**Subject:** BHeard 2017 Survey Results

**Report of:** Director of HROD

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**Summary**

This report outlines the results from the annual BHeard Survey which took place in October 2017.

The Appendix provides a high level overview of additional work to respond to the Survey both corporately and within Directorates since the initial publication of this report in March 2018, with the body of the report remaining unchanged.

**Recommendations**

The Sub Group is asked to note this report.

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**Wards Affected: All**

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**Background documents (available for public inspection):**

None

## 1.0 Background and Overview

- 1.1 In October 2017 the Council participated in the BHeard Survey for the third consecutive year with all staff invited to 'have their say' over a three week period from 2 to 20 October. The Survey, managed by 'Best Companies', is the largest employee engagement survey in the UK with a wide span of participants across sectors. The survey asks participants a total of 70 questions to gather intelligence on engagement levels on 8 overall factors which can be analysed in a number of different ways including by grade band and by Directorate and Service as well as Council wide. For each question, factor and overall the Council is provided with both a comparison to its previous years result and a stretch benchmark as a target for future improvement.
- 1.2 The eight factors of engagement are: Leadership, My Company, My Manager, Personal Growth, My Team, Wellbeing, Fair Deal and Giving Something Back.
- 1.3 A range of key People Strategy interventions have been rolled out in response to feedback from the previous survey including:
  - The About You framework for strengths-based performance conversations
  - Strengthened employee wellbeing, with the introduction of the new Employee Assistance Programme in particular
  - New staff-led networks and consultative groups, e.g. the Digital Champions; the Health and Wellbeing Steering Group and Our Manchester Guides
  - Investment in leadership and management with around half our senior community now benefitting from the Our Manchester leadership and management development programmes and a second Leadership Summit
  - The launch of a new enhanced policy on employer supported volunteering
  - The continuation and growth of the Listening in Action sessions, launch of the Our Manchester Experience and new staff email messages 'The Buzz' and 'Team Talk'
- 1.4 In addition a range of Directorate and Service specific activities have also been progressed in response to the detailed results in each area.
- 1.5 This year's survey saw a significant improvement in both the rate of responses and the overall measure of engagement:
  - The Council's response rate of 49% represents a 7% year-on-year increase and is 9% higher than the average for comparable organisations meaning the survey encapsulates the views of 3,355 employees. The response rate for those staff without ICT access also more than trebled this year from 8% to 26%.

- The overall measure of engagement has increased by 15 points to 610.6.

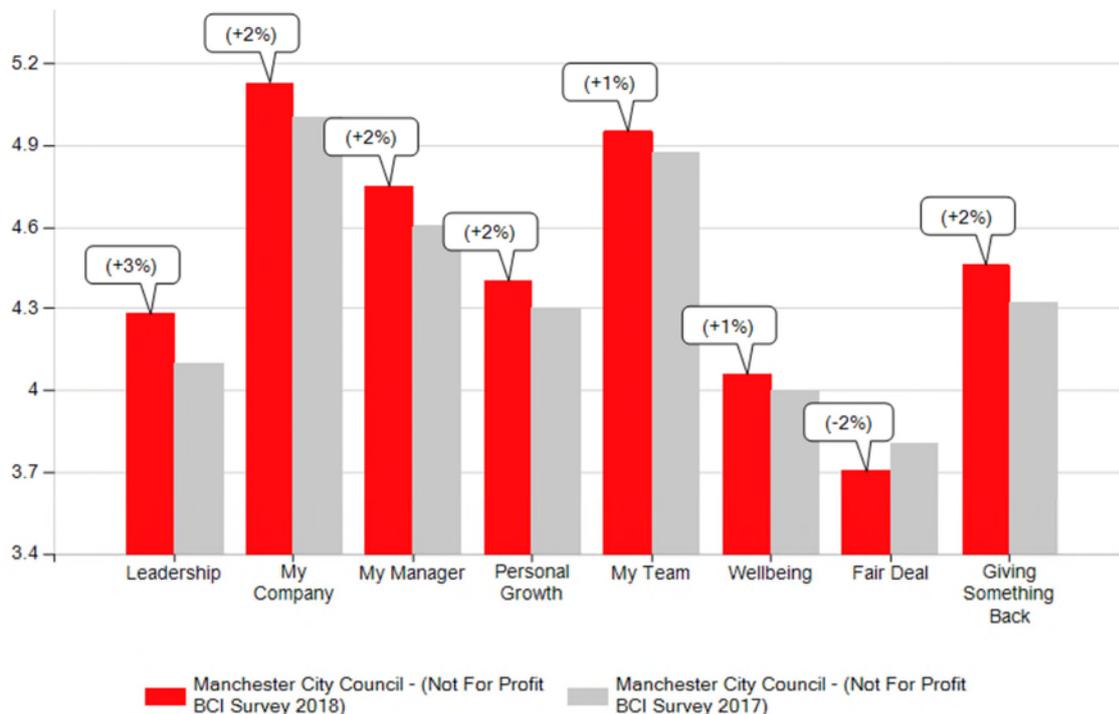
1.6 This statistically significant improvement in levels of employee engagement is a positive endorsement of the early work to develop the People Strategy as summarised above and now accredits MCC on the Best Companies Index of engaged organisations as a 'One to Watch'.

## 2.0 Analysis by Factor, Level and Directorate

### 2.1 Analysis by Factor

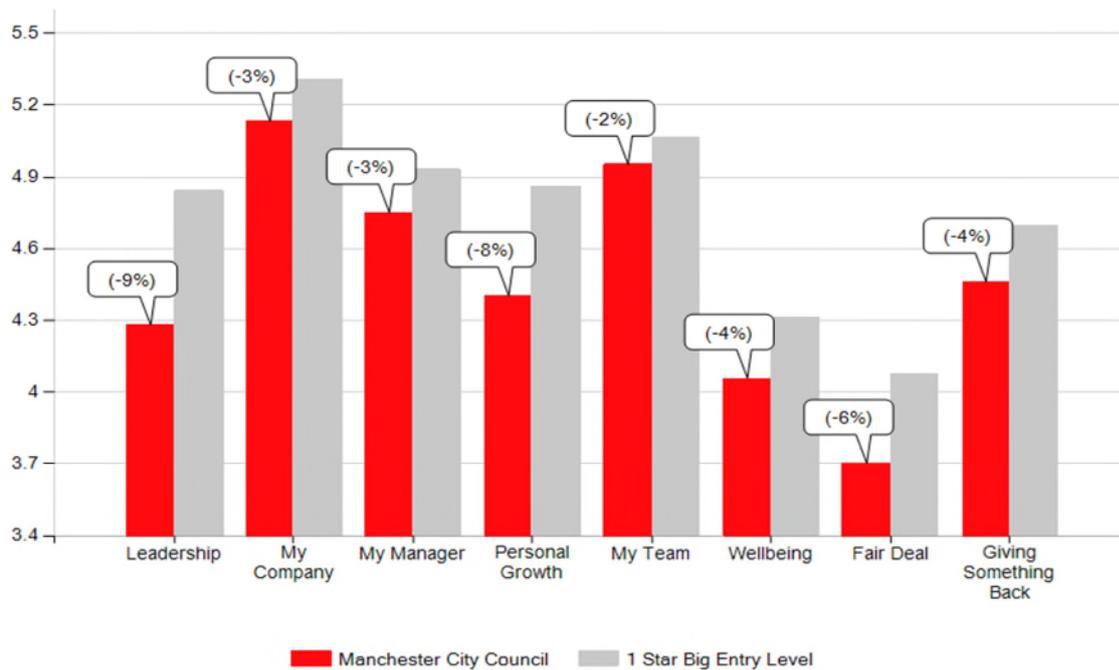
2.1.1 As Figure 1 below shows the Council has improved on all but one of the eight factors of engagement (Fair Deal). With the exception of Leadership the variances here are however 2% or less which, although demonstrating a direction of travel, does not show a statistically significant shift year-on-year. The improvement in Leadership is however statistically significant demonstrating a stronger level of buy-in to the leadership vision of the Council from staff as a whole. - The constancy year-on-year and general improvement across Factors indicates the overall impact of measures taken over the past twelve months and suggests continued and strengthened work in these areas will drive further improvement.

Figure 1: Result Vs Last Year's Survey



2.1.2 When compared against the 'One Star' benchmark (Figure 2), there is a clear evidence base to suggest that Personal Growth and Leadership represent the two areas where the most significant work is needed. This, again, adds weight to the suggestion that focus needs to continue on delivering the People Strategy which has a strong focus across these areas.

Figure 2: Result Vs 1\* Benchmark



## 2.2 Analysis by Level

2.2.1 The Survey splits the organisation into 6 hierarchical levels:

- Team Member - Staff with no line management responsibilities
- Team Leader / Supervisor - Line Managers to Grade 6
- Manager - Line Managers Grades 7-9
- Senior Manager - Line Managers Grades 10-12
- Strategic Manager - Line Managers Grades SS1 & SS2
- Director - Line Managers Grades SS3 and above

2.2.2 There is a clear trend within the results with the greatest levels of engagement in the lower levels of the organisation (both in terms of year-on-year improvement and comparison to the Benchmark). For front line managers (Team Leader / Supervisor and Manager) there are statistically significant levels of improvement (3% or greater) in half of the eight factors.

2.2.3 This position again emphasises the need for a continued and strengthened focus on leadership as part of the People Strategy and our specific response to BHeard this year.

## 2.3 Analysis by Directorate

2.3.1 Overall six of the seven Directorate areas saw a year-on-year improvement, with the only negative movement in Education. On overview of year-on-year change by area overall and by factor is provided at Figure 3 below.

Figure 3: Directorate Results Vs Last Year's Survey

Employment Group Name	No. of Responses	2017 BCI Score	2018 BCI Score	Factors							
				L	MC	MM	PG	MT	WB	FD	GSB
Adults Services	37.48% (548/1462)	588	605.7 (OTW)	4	2	2	1	2	1	-2	3
Children's Services	31.15% (238/764)	579.1	600.0 (OTW)	3	-1	5	1	4	3	-2	3
Education & Skills	30.93% (180/582)	616.3 (OTW)	597.3	2	-1	-4	-2	-6	-3	3	-1
Chief Executives	59.11% (532/900)	589.7	605.7 (OTW)	2	2	4	2	2	0	-2	3
Corporate Services	74.18% (727/980)	572.4	586.8	3	2	3	2	2	-1	-3	2
Strategic Development	70.57% (247/350)	618.3 (OTW)	635.5 (OTW)	3	3	3	1	0	4	-2	2
Growth & Neighbourhoods	48.62% (879/1808)	616.6 (OTW)	634.4 (OTW)	2	3	2	3	1	2	-2	2

2.3.2 When considering changes at a Directorate and Service level it is important to note that the movement of Services and teams across areas makes direct year-on-year comparison challenging in some cases.

2.3.3 Whilst the highest levels of engagement continue to be seen in Growth and Neighbourhoods and Strategic Development it is worth also noting the significant year-on-year improvement in Children's Services and, in particular, the 5% improvement in the My Manager factor. It is worth highlighting however that the wellbeing score here remains significantly behind the benchmark level and is a clear area of required focus.

2.3.4 Detailed analysis as a Service and, where possible, team level has also been undertaken to inform local response plans.

### 3.0 Key Themes and Response Activity

#### 3.1 Key Themes

3.1.1 Following an analysis of the detailed results the key areas for improvement are summarised below:

- Every level of the organisation is seeking greater clarity on organisational objectives, priorities and plans. This includes the strategic managers (SS1 and above) who have reported less faith in the CEX and SMT and a lack of confidence in the plan for delivery.

- “Fair Deal”, which relates to satisfaction with pay and is generally impacted on by overall feelings of wellbeing, is the only factor against which overall satisfaction has reduced from last year, with this shift driven primarily by team members and managers.
- The quality of management varies, with stronger management scores from lower graded staff, which aligns with issues related to feelings of wellbeing, particularly at a more senior level
  - Lower levels of the organisation (below grade 10) are generally reporting greater satisfaction with the skills and style of their manager and consequently levels of wellbeing are improved.
  - At the more senior levels ( SS1 and above in particular) this is less evident, with feedback that senior managers have less confidence than last year in their line manager; they feel under pressure and not cared for and consequently levels of wellbeing are notably reduced. Confidence in the SMT has reduced, with a feeling that SMT members do not live the values of the organisation.

### **3.2 Response Activity**

- 3.2.1 An overview of the results was provided to the organisation on 29 November and detailed Directorate and Service specific briefings have taken place following this. This has allowed each areas to understand the key messages for them and develop or continue response actions which relate directly to the views of their staff with a diverse range of actions being progressed. - There is a clear organisational emphasis on the role of senior leaders in improving employee engagement with this measure included within the suite of metrics which inform senior salary progression as agreed by Personnel Committee in November.
- 3.2.2 Corporately, as noted above, it is worth noting that, in many areas, this year's results indicate a positive direction of travel and endorse existing plans as opposed to necessitating the need for entirely new responses. A one page overview of the key People Strategy activity for 2018 is appended below which will, in effect, represent the emphasis of the corporate response to BHeard.
- 3.2.3 As a core part of the Leadership strand of the People Strategy and in direct response to the results of this year’s survey a programme of leadership development will be commissioned for teams and individuals at Special Grades and above (circa. 100 staff), with the objectives of supporting this group and driving up leadership scores to at least the “One to Watch” levels in the next BHeard survey. It is worth emphasising that, whilst the recipients of this programme will represent only around 1.4% of the workforce, improved engagement levels here and an increase in strong and visible leadership in line with the Our Manchester behaviours will have a significantly disproportionate impact on overall workforce engagement. This programme will include:

- A range of connected activities with SMT to support their personal and collective development with an emphasis on developing a clearer shared narrative and sense of collaborative leadership, developing a culture of workforce wellbeing and the development and application of Our Manchester behaviours in practice. - This work has already begun.
- The creation of a new group for the organisation's 100 most senior leaders, the Senior Leaders Group (SLG) and the development of a range of both physical and digital engagement mechanisms to support increased engagement with and within this cohort. This group has already met twice and consideration is being given to options for more focused activity to support the development of individuals here
- A review and strengthening of our existing leadership and management programmes 'Raising the Bar' and 'The Our Manchester Leadership Programme' which have already been attended by around 50% of managers across the Council

#### **4.0 Conclusion**

- 4.1 This year's BHeard Survey indicates a positive direction of travel in improving employee engagement across the Council and suggests the work undertaken across 2017 as the first phase of implementing the People Strategy is proving effective. The next twelve months will see a continuation of this work and an increase in the pace of improvement and, in particular, a strengthened focus on supporting leadership engagement and development. This corporate activity will be underpinned by Directorate and Service specific responses aligned to the detailed results in those areas.
- 4.2 This year's survey will again take place in October and will provide a further check-point to assess the effectiveness of work in this area and help inform the People Strategy delivery plan for 2019.

## **APPENDIX: Response Update**

### Corporate Activity

As noted above work in response to BHeard, at the corporate level, has been focused on two core strands of activity:

1. The ongoing delivery of the People Strategy
2. Focused work to support Leadership and Management Development and Engagement

Key achievements over the past two months in relation to the first strand include:

- A continued focus on health and wellbeing, including activity during Mental Health Awareness Week in support of the national ‘This is Me’ campaign to de-stigmatise mental health and promote the range of support available to staff. A new employee Health and Wellbeing Strategy is also being finalised with support from experts in this field
- Significant work to strengthen the organisation’s core Learning and Development offer. This has included the full roll-out of a comprehensive ELearning system and activity to strengthen and streamline processes and governance around training, to make access to staff easier. An external review of the Council’s learning content has also been undertaken and is being considered to inform a plan for improvement. - The next phase of this work will focus on talent management, strengthening approaches to succession planning and support which will align with the About You approach to one-to-ones and appraisals and the organisation’s Apprenticeship Strategy
- A review off m people with a strengthened approach to supporting redeployees now live and the next phases of work looking at processes around medical movers and opt-ins
- Ongoing work to embed the Our Manchester Behaviours including the launch of a managers toolkit for supporting team development and the creation of a number of tools specifically focused on supporting employees to understand and work in line with the behaviours.
- An external review of employee experiences in relation to equality and diversity to inform targeted development activity internally
- Ongoing improvements to SAP, directly in response to staff feedback.

In relation to supporting leadership engagement:

- A series of sessions have taken place with SMT focused on developing a clearer shared narrative and sense of collaborative leadership
- A new framework for senior performance management has been launched, with an emphasis on driving the development of a range of objectives which

reflect both service delivery priorities and broader corporate objectives and behavioural deliverables. This work is being linked to activity underway to develop a strengthened Corporate Strategy for the organisation - A session for senior leaders has taken place with the aim of supporting individuals to develop objectives which flow from SMT downwards.

- The Senior Leaders Group (SLG) is now fully established both as a physical group and through a Google+ on-line community. The Group has met on a number of occasions with sessions focused on supporting the Development of the Corporate Strategy and the Our Manchester Behaviours and the forward plan includes facilitated sessions focused on employee wellbeing, flexibility (linked to the Our ways of Working Programme) and personal development. - Sub-groups have also been convened to consider Wellbeing and Development and guide work on the Corporate Strategy
- A review of our existing leadership and management programmes ‘Raising the Bar’ and ‘The Our Manchester Leadership Programme’ has been undertaken and shows a general positive response from across leaders and managers. - In response to feedback, the programme administration has been strengthened and new modules are also being added on managing finance and contracts and public service management. - Additional and extended development opportunities for Leaders are also being further developed.

### **Adults**

Whilst the results of the BHeard survey for the Adults Directorate showed an improvement across 7 of the 8 indicators against the 2016 survey (Fair Deal being the only exception), against the Big Star entry level, the indicators fared much less favourably. The areas highlighted for focus are: leadership, personal growth, wellbeing, fair deal and give something back.

In response to this, the Executive Director arranged engagement sessions across the City to speak directly to staff to harness their engagement and involvement in developing a plan to improve the areas of concern. At present the engagement is taking place at Directorate level. More service focused work will develop from this.

The focus of the sessions was to highlight that senior management were listening to the views and opinions of staff from the survey and to get direct input on how they can work together and develop an action plan for improvements.

The discussion and exercises at these sessions were developed around three questions:-

1. How staff wanted to be engaged
2. What would make them feel more engaged
3. What would make people feel more positive about their Leaders, their Managers and their Personal Growth.

The sessions were also used to ask for views on how to change behaviours in line with OM and a draft new tool was presented to capture individual staff contribution to improving the feedback results.

Staff were also given the opportunity to put themselves forward to become more involved in the action plan and any associated projects and tasks required to progress improvements.

This offer of greater involvement was in conjunction with the same offer across a number of other social care staff engagement sessions that were already in train. As a result there are circa 120 members of staff who have volunteered to become 'Activators' and become involved in the transformation journey.

An 'Activators' conference was run on 20 April 2018, and 65 'Activators' attended, and spent the day deciding how they want to organise themselves and decide which areas of transformation they want to become involved in. High level themes for the day were:-

- new care models
- workforce
- fixing the range of issues identified through staff engagement

Further work is to take place with the groups to develop the next level of detail and agree the scope of what they'll focus on. The first meetings of groups to take place late May/early June.

Also, in response to BHeard, the Director of Homelessness asked for a paper on the different methods of engaging staff and also the ways in which we can support staff who carry out extremely challenging roles working on a daily basis with very complex citizens. This was to support better engagement, but also to ensure that we put wellbeing at the centre of how we enable our staff to deliver effectively and safely within their roles.

An engagement event was held in March and was well received by staff with positive feedback. Staff found it really useful to meet and talk with colleagues across the service that they never ordinarily get to meet.

The array of suggestions and ideas put forward from all staff around reducing demand and improving engagement was refreshing and further events such as this will be scheduled throughout the year.

An annual conference, and quarterly forums are also being arranged across the whole Directorate as a response to BHeard and an online community within Google plus has been created.

### **Children's Services**

Immediately after the Bheard feedback a session with the Directorate Management Development Forum reviewed the findings of the survey, discuss

the shifts since 2017 and explore how individuals and services could collectively work to deliver more impactful change over of the next year.

The Management Forum discussion centred on a number of the key findings from the Survey, particularly:

- What can be done to better understand, improve and develop staff perception of higher and senior managers.
- How can we better use and embed key aspects of the Our Manchester behaviours across our services to support improving sense of fair deal and wellbeing. With a specific focus on being strength based.
- What is the role of the individual in empowering positive change, for the manager, and for the front line employee.

Taking the first example following the survey, the Senior Management Team have begun a new programme of relocation of the monthly Children's Leadership meeting. The meeting is now held at staff locations across the City, with the end of each management team meeting opened up to staff within that office to hold an open conversation and Q&A with the Senior Leadership Team, improving access to and visibility of senior leaders at all levels of the directorate. This has proved successful with sessions well attended with constructive feedback and challenge into the senior management team. One example of impact is that staff from the Multi Safeguarding Hub challenging around being more innovative in delivery models and as a result have become directly involved in A newly established project workstream to redesign the service, in part instigated by direct willingness and desire to improve from the frontline, and facilitated by more active participatory engagement with senior managers.

The Role of middle managers and leadership has been a particular focus in Education Services. Education Services have introduced regular wider leadership meetings with a clear solution focussed agenda and ensuring all leaders and managers have ownership of the directorate business plan. In response to conversations with staff a school's QA team has been established with well received single item solution focussed workshops ensuring middle managers are influencing strategy. Staff feedback, parental voice and school feedback is influencing a restructure of SEND operational services to ensure any change is in line with the Our Manchester approach

The survey also showed that there were some specific issues in services around confidence in management ability to understand and support the wellbeing of frontline workers. A number of the services within the directorate deliver a complex and detailed staff supervision structure; in addition to About Yous, which are used to support staff practically and in their wellbeing. Following the BHeard Results it was agreed that their needed to be more targeted interrogation and analysis of the effectiveness and delivery of these supervisions and a number of services have developed their own focused Supervision Survey's to do this and to target for effective change some of those underlying key areas that came through in BHeard. The findings of these surveys have been shared at joint staff service away days and to increase both managerial and frontline understanding of the supervision relationship, each other expectations and how to improve together. In

Education services managers have met with staff to discuss changes needed following on from Bheard; there has been a change of meeting structures throughout the service to ensure all staff have a clear understanding of leadership decisions.

BHeard highlighted some service specific instances of negativity around change management and in particular the senior and middle management response to managing change in services. Again building on the strength based approach and seeking collaborative solutions to problems identified in BHeard the service utilised group supervision sessions to openly explore the issue with participatory engagement from managers and staff together exploring some of the specific findings of BHeard and each other's opinions. This has led to an action plan being developed in two key areas; improving the skills and competence of team leaders to manage change; and work on development of behaviours and resilience at all levels on supporting staff and ourselves in managing and participating in change.

Whilst these are just some key examples of targeted action taken in response to BHeard by the Directorate there are many more similar examples from across the service and more generally the effort to continually improve understanding, engagement and collaboration across all levels continues through routine engagement and development sessions; and the inclusion into the centrally supported programme of annual full staff away days for each individual service within the directorate. These are embracing the Our Manchester principles of working together, listening and delivering in partnership. At a recent whole staff session, the Directorate Delivery Plan for 2018-19 was shared, specifically, the headline priorities for the year ahead these were designed and agreed in partnership through open discussion between Senior Managers and the frontline to ensure they truly reflected a shared position on the direction of the service over the coming year. There has also been a significant shift from leaders and managers at every level to focus on celebration and achievement. To further embed Our Manchester Principles Our Manchester Behaviours have been central to senior management recruitment in Education and Early Help.

### **Corporate Core**

Across the Core wellbeing and fair deal represent the factors where the biggest need for improvement has been identified. - Key activities to respond to the Survey in Services are summarised below:

Corporate Services held staff conferences including staff of all grades and with nominated BHeard champions attending in order to 'own' the messages and cascade these to colleagues. Capital Programmes have a very strong BHeard Action group that meets on a regular basis as well as sending out a fortnightly newsletter to update the whole service.

Legal Services have reviewed flexible working and are currently piloting a revised approach in support of the Corporate Our Ways of Working programme. In addition to this they have a nominated champion who reviews communications across the service and are planning some work focused on the fair deal factor.

Revenue & Benefits have implemented a new structure following previous feedback about the lack of progression in the service and this has been well received. They have reviewed local T&C's and changed some outdated policies relating to dress code and hours worked, led by the service's staff groups. They are also encouraging and supporting staff to: attend Committee meetings to see democracy in action; shadow linked work areas; engage in volunteering. SSC have set up a staff development group and a number of the team have attended mindfulness sessions to promote wellbeing. Customer have identified and agreed areas of focus and set out 'Our Management Blueprint' which gives the Service's approach to management in line with Our Manchester. The service are introducing a reward and recognition scheme and all staff have also attended Mental Health Awareness Training.

Communications have implemented a new structure which has picked up on the pay and workload issues that were raised. Listening to what the staff wanted, staff conferences have also been set up to engage with the staff on a more regular basis.

HROD have established a group of Change Champions who have worked with staff to establish a set of service behaviours flowing from the Our Manchester behaviours and coordinate engagement activity across the Service through monthly Huddles. The Service has held an away-day to create a sense of collective pride in HR achievements and ownership of the Service Plan and People Strategy delivery plan for 2018/19. There has also been a focus on mental health, with an afternoon event for the Service as part of Mental health Awareness week and a focus on supporting individuals through flexible and supportive management.

A PRI staff group are focusing on "Developing a Stronger Team Plan". This is about creating a greater sense of shared priorities and increasing awareness of what different people across the team are working on. The staff group present feedback to the management team and they have now agreed to trial some new ways of working including more opportunities for agile working.

A number of services areas have held social and charity events as well as team lunches/after work drinks etc to support the services getting to know each other, relax and have some fun.

### **Growth & Neighbourhoods and Strategic Development**

Following receipt of BHeard results for the two Directorates at the start of the year, a session was held with the G&N and SD Wider Leadership team to provide an overview of results and prompt discussion and action that builds on the work that has already started to become embedded in the way the Directorates work. The discussion focused on four key themes: leadership, management, personal growth and wellbeing. The outcome of this session has been used to support activity at a Directorate wide level. In addition each member of WLT was asked to make a pledge that would be their commitment to driving this work forward and continue to improve staff engagement. The Directorates will be asking for

feedback on where colleagues are up to with delivering against their pledges over the coming weeks.

The directorates continue to focus on workforce development as a priority for staff. In 2017/18, the workforce development budget was fully spent (slightly overspent in fact) for the first time in a number of years. The focus of activity has been to develop leadership capability, offer a range of development activities for employees such as learning lunches, training and work shadowing, maximise apprenticeship opportunities where appropriate standards are available (including higher level apprenticeships), improve team working and ensure all health and safety training is delivered.

In addition we continue to promote development opportunities for colleagues. The staff conferences that we hold each year are a great example of this. For the most recent conferences we recruited a working group that helped shape and design the session allowing them to develop existing skills and learn new ones. A series of DMT huddles is being planned to allow members of DMT to get out and meet different staff groups and encourage a two way conversation on a series of topics.

Finally, we have recently asked staff to let us know what things get in the way of them doing their job in the most effective and efficient way. We asked them what they would like to see more of, less of, what could be better and what could be different. We've had some really good responses from staff and these are currently being collated.