

Exit Questionnaire Analysis for those employees who left the council between 1 April and 31 August 2017

This report analyses exit questionnaire data for leavers between 1 April and 31 August 2017.

1.0 Background

1.1 Turnover for Quarter 1 2017/18 (April – June 2017) was high and therefore the projected turnover for the year 2017/18 is 23.4% against a target of 10%. Exit Questionnaires have therefore been analysed for leavers who left the council between 1 April and 31 August 2017 to identify whether there are any trends.

2.0 Summary

2.1 Between 1 April and 31 August 2017 there were 33 leavers (voluntary and involuntary) in total. 10 leavers (30%) completed the exit questionnaire.

2.2 Leavers worked in a variety of services including the Planning Service (3), Strategic Finance & Property (2), Housing & Health (1), Legal & Democratic Services (1), Revenues & Benefits (1), Operations (1), and Communications, Strategy & Policy (1). They had a variety of grades: 1 x Grade 10, 3 x Grade 9, 2 x Grade 7, 3 x Grade 5, and 1 x Grade 3.

2.3 Overall, leavers generally had a positive experience of working at East Herts Council. 100% of leavers stated that they completely or partially enjoyed their time at East Herts, 90% of leavers rated the council as a 7 or above out of 10 employer and 80% of leavers would recommend others to join the council.

2.4 Most leavers provided positive responses with regard to their job description and duties. 100% of leavers agreed (completely or partially) that their duties were clearly defined, 90% agreed (completely or partially) that their job description was accurate and 90% agreed (completely or partially) their work was the sort of work they expected. 70% of leavers stated that their workload was about right, 20% said it was too much and 10% said it was easy.

2.5 The vast majority of leavers reported positive relationships with colleagues and their manager (90% and 80% respectively reported relationships were either 'good' or 'excellent').

2.6 Results were mostly positive with regard to views on the performance of their manager in terms of holding regular one to ones (80% said 'always' or 'often'), PDRs (100% said 'always' or 'often'), giving help and advice (80% said 'always' or 'often'), listening to their idea and suggestions (80% said 'always'

or 'often'), giving praise/recognition where due (70% said 'always' or 'often'), and knowing and following council procedures (90% said 'always' or 'often').

- 2.7 Leavers' responses on induction and learning and development were generally positive. 80% of leavers agreed (completely or partially) that they had an effective induction and 90% agreed (completely or partially) that they had received adequate training and coaching.
- 2.8 Of note is that more than half (60%) of respondents stated that prospects for promotion/advancement were either 'poor' or 'very poor'.
- 2.9 Leavers generally reported positive responses on the council's pay and benefits. 80% agreed (completely or partially) that their pay and benefits were reasonable for the work undertaken. 60% of respondents stated that pay was 'good', 100% reported that the pension scheme was 'good' or 'very good'. With regard to the flexi-time scheme and flexible working options, respondents were positive (90% and 80% respectively stated they were 'good' or 'very good'). Responses were less positive in relation to car allowances and the long service award however responses were generally low in these areas.
- 2.10 When asked what they liked most about working for the council, the most common responses referred to the support of colleagues and variety of work. The responses on what they liked the least were more varied and included amongst others difficult car parking, dealing with the public, concern with lone working, and overly bureaucratic processes. These were individual responses and not given by more than 1 respondent. Please see paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 for further information.
- 2.11 Suggested areas for improvement from leavers were also varied and included, amongst others, reviewing the pay structure, more support from managers, working from home, and the option to sell back annual leave. Apart from responses on reviewing the pay structure (2 respondents mentioned this), most were individual responses and were not given by more than 1 respondent. Please see paragraph 3.4 for further information.
- 2.12 Only 4 respondents gave comments on how the general working environment could be improved: 2 respondents said the working environment was generally pleasant however, other comments included problems with the temperature, not enough space and noise levels. Please see paragraph 3.8 for further information.

3.0 Detailed analysis of responses

3.1 Job Description and Duties

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| | Yes, completely | Yes, partially | Not really | Not at all |
| Enjoy time at East Herts? | 3 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Duties clearly defined? | 5 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Job description accurate? | 4 | 5 | 0 | 0 |
| Sort of work expected? | 3 | 6 | 1 | 0 |

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|-------------|----------|
| | Easy | About right | Too much |
| How did you find the workload? | 1 | 7 | 2 |

3.2 What did you like most?

- “Great colleagues, good flexible working”
- “Working with a great team of people, in an interesting and varied job.”
- “I liked the supportive nature of my managers. As this was my first job after finishing university, I have felt extremely supported by all my colleagues.”
- “Interesting and varied job. Liked utilising my local knowledge and attention to detail skills.”
- “Liked team work the most, as worked together to complete tasks”
- “Generally I enjoyed my time at East Herts and, had I been leaving the Authority about one year earlier, I would have ticked the 'completely' box. However, the manner in which changes to the department have been imposed through the re-structure and approach of the Leadership Team; the lack of support and acknowledgment of the hard work that [job title deleted to protect identity] and staff have put into the service have been very disappointing and weighed reasonably in my decision to leave the Authority”
- “I most enjoyed the variety of work and high workload that was allocated to me. I equally value the strong sense of team work in the department and help/support/encouragement from my Line Managers”
- “I have generally enjoyed my time and work in DM at East Herts - the work, experience and training that I have received has been vital in progressing my career to date. I enjoy the people that I work with and the support and knowledge that I have gained from colleagues and Line Managers has been invaluable.”
- “I liked my working with my colleagues and dealing with the public.”

- “The team are great at the theatre which makes the working environment enjoyable.”
- “I have enjoyed my time working for EHDC and for [[deleted to protect identity]. I was welcomed warmly by the team and overall feel I completed my duties and role to a high standard and in a positive way.”
- “Varied job with quite a lot of autonomy and strong partnership networking”

3.3 What did you like least?

- “Difficult car parking”
- “Dealing with the public can sometimes be very trying with some very intolerant, narrow minded, selfish and unreasonable people (fortunately in the minority”
- “My principle reason for leaving E Herts is to gain experience in a differing Authority to further develop my career in [deleted to protect identity]. However, in making the decision to leave, I did factor in the poor level of reumeration at the Authoirty; the manner in which the new structure has been imposed on staff including the lack of proper 'consultation'; the lack of any proper recongition of the hard work that [job title deleted to protect identity] have been given and; the approach of the [deleted to protect identity] and certain Members in their decision making.”
- “I do not like the endless inputting and indexing and scanning that has become a major part of my workload in recent months”
- “The indexing of minor applications can take hours”
- “I am now mostly clerical /admin with no time to be technical”
- “The only concern would be lone working - personal alarms have been introduced but when in the building on my own at night, although there were no problems, there were times of feeling slightly vulnerable.”
- “Unfortunately, the lack of career progression led me to look for work elsewhere, along with the work hours allocation. At interview it was indicated that evenings and weekends would be equally split between the team. Whilst I was happy to take on weekends as there was a financial benefit, I don't feel there was a fair split and I feel this needs to be addressed for the next person fulfilling this role. I am grateful for the opportunities I have had at EHDC and wish the Council and the team the very best in the future.”
- “Council processes are sometimes overly bureaucratic”

3.4 Suggestions for improvements

- “More teamwork and support from management at all levels. Clearer direction from management.”
- “Consideration in terms of flexible working options for those looking after sick or elderly family members. Perks such as working from home should be made

available to all with commitments, not just for those with children, and those on management grades”

- (regarding pay and benefits) “colleagues and I have, on numerous occasions advised HofS of the poor level of remuneration for the post when considered against other nearby Authorities and other Authorities in the region. I have taken a similar post where I will be earning more than at E Herts.”
- “Review pay structure”.
- “Options to sell back a/l to Authority.”
- “Get rid of the indexing from the Technician role it would make an enormous difference to the efficiency of the office”
- “A more equal split of evening and weekend work would be an improvement - obviously most hours in *[deleted to protect identity]* will be anti-social but I felt I was carrying out more than my share of those shifts. Also, there seemed to be a regular occurrence of all senior managers taking annual leave at the same time which is not useful when there are big decisions or occasional problems to be dealt with.”

3.5 Relationships with line manager and colleagues

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | | |
|------------------------------|--------------------|------|------|-----------|
| | Excellent | Good | Poor | Very Poor |
| Relationship with colleagues | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Relationship with manager | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|-------|--------|-------|
| | Always | Often | Seldom | Never |
| <i>Did your manager:</i> | | | | |
| Have regular 1 to 1s with you? | 5 | 3 | 1 | 1 |
| Conduct PDRs with you? | 9 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Give adequate help and advice? | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Listen to your ideas & suggestions? | 6 | 2 | 1 | 1 |
| Give praise/recognition where due? | 5 | 2 | 3 | 0 |
| Know & follow council procedures? | 5 | 4 | 1 | 0 |

3.6 Training and Development

| Question asked: (1) | Leaver's responses | | | |
|-------------------------------------|--------------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| | Yes, completely | Yes, partially | Not really | Not at all |
| Had an effective induction? | 4 | 4 | 0 | 0 |
| Received adequate training/coaching | 4 | 5 | 1 | 0 |

(1) Some respondents did not provide an answer

| Question asked: (1) | Leaver's responses | | | |
|---------------------------------------|--------------------|------|------|-----------|
| | Excellent | Good | Poor | Very Poor |
| Prospects for promotion/ advancement? | 1 | 2 | 4 | 2 |

(1) Some respondents did not provide an answer

3.7 Pay and Benefits

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | | |
|---|--------------------|------|------|-----------|
| <i>How would you rate the following pay and benefits provided by the council? (1)</i> | Very good | Good | Poor | Very Poor |
| Remuneration | 0 | 6 | 1 | 1 |
| Pension | 4 | 6 | 0 | 0 |
| Flexi – time scheme | 2 | 7 | 0 | 0 |
| Flexible Working Options | 4 | 4 | 1 | 0 |
| Car Allowance | 0 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| Child Care Vouchers | 0 | 3 | 0 | 0 |
| Kaarp Benefits | 0 | 2 | 0 | 1 |
| Long Service Award | 0 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Life Assurance | 1 | 2 | 0 | 0 |
| Occupational Health/ Employee Assistance Programme | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |

(1) Some respondents did not provide an answer

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | | |
|---|--------------------|----------------|------------|------------|
| | Yes, completely | Yes, partially | Not really | Not at all |
| Did you feel that your pay and benefits were reasonable for the work and responsibility undertaken? | 1 | 7 | 1 | 1 |

3.8 Comments about general working environment

- “Sometimes too hot in the summer and cold in the winter”
- “Poor - the Office is cramped, desks are too close together with limited storage or space to open hard copies of plans. The Office gets extremely hot in Summer months which is compounded by the number of people in the office and number of computers / etc generating heat.”
- “General working environment is pleasant .But the office is noisy and over-crowded (less so now that everyone is leaving)”
- “It's a safe and pleasant working environment”

3.9 Other

| Question asked: | Leaver's responses | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------------|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 |
| On a scale of 1-10 how would you rate East Herts council as an employer (1 being poor and 10 being excellent)? | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 0 |

| Question asked: (1) | Leaver's responses | |
|---|--------------------|----|
| | Yes | No |
| Would you recommend other to join East Herts council? | 8 | 1 |

(1) Some respondents did not provide an answer