



Gangmasters
Licensing Authority

GLA45/15 Staff Survey Results 2014-15

22 April 2015

Board Paper Reference – GLA45/15 - Staff Survey Results 2014/15

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To report to the Board on the outcomes of the Staff Survey conducted in November 2014.

2. Recommendation

- 2.1 To note the outcomes of the 2014 Staff Survey and University of Derby Research.

3. Reasons for Recommendation

- 3.1 The purpose of the annual Staff Survey is to gain an insight into employee opinions in regards to a number of criteria. The survey is based upon the same questions used in the 2010 and 2013 survey to allow for meaningful comparison. The questions used in the survey were developed by the GLA in consultation with Ararna Limited. The questions cover the following subject areas:
 - Background Information
 - Leadership and Management
 - Learning and Development
 - Engagement
 - Internal Communications
 - Recognition and Rewards
- 3.4 For each question, excluding the initial background questions, there are four possible responses: Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, and Strongly Disagree. The questions are shown at **Annex 1**. The Staff Survey was run by an external company Ararna to provide anonymity. It was completed electronically.
- 3.5 The survey was live for two weeks from the 26 November 2014 to the 10 December 2014. Over the course of this period, 61 responses were received out of 67 giving a response rate of 91% which is a significant improvement on 2010 (73%) and 2013 (77%). All participants were provided with the opportunity to add further comment before submitting the survey. Of the 61 responses submitted, 25 provided further comments. This was reduction from the 35 comments in 2013 but not dissimilar from 2010 where there were 29 comments.
- 3.6 The responses to the questions and comments have been shared with staff. We have also drawn up an action plan which will be subject to scrutiny by the Senior Leadership Team (SLT). Details of the completed actions will be shared with staff at the Staff Seminar in May.
- 3.7 The outcomes of the survey are generally better this year, although there is still work to do specifically on reward and recognition. This was mentioned in several of the

comments made. Attitudes to internal communication have generally remained positive which is encouraging, as there has been a real focus on offering several channels to staff. The introduction of the intranet will hopefully contribute to an improved attitude in this area.

3.8 The detailed results off the Staff Survey are attached at **Annex 2**.

3.9 Alongside the Staff Survey, the L&D team commissioned some research from the University of Derby. The primary objectives of the research were to:

- Assess the current organisational environment in terms of culture, values and leadership challenges;
- Clarify the gap between where staff perceive the organisation to be and where leaders would like it be.

3.10 A sample of 24 members of staff was taken from the population which included all senior leaders and a random sample of other participants. The interviews were conducted either face-to face, on-site in Nottingham or by telephone. The conversations were recorded and analysed for key themes relating to how GLA is perceived by employees, how they describe and respond to the organisation's culture, leadership and HR mechanisms.

3.11 **Annex 3** shows the findings in detail.

4. Summary of Key Points

4.1 The 2014 Staff Survey showed a positive shift in many areas and greater staff engagement. Overall there have been less comments this year than in 2013. Therefore it is difficult to set out a number of common themes. Overall some of the headlines from the comments include:

- Praise for the Chief Executive;
- Pockets of negative individuals or pessimists that see the glass as half empty; also referenced in the University of Derby research;
- Leaders and managers tackling negative behaviour with conviction and carrying out the appropriate action;
- Reviewing the survey and whether additional questions/rephrasing of certain questions may yield different answers;
- Tackling change more effectively so we achieve our aims more rapidly by a) ensuring systems are there to aid efficiency and not create more work if not needed, b) create appraisals that are in line with the objectives, c) communicate more with the workforce and maintain a staff focus through change (especially in line with the Home Office move);
- Workforce and workload optimisation – reviewing the roles of partners and working with them, job evaluation for certain job roles;
- Ensuring that the GLA carries out the dual role of enforcer and regulator.

- 4.2 The key area where staff remained dissatisfied was in relation to reward. Staff felt the bonus system lacked transparency and it was hard to attain a bonus. This is an area where actions have already been put in place to drive up staff understanding of how the system works. We will be looking at running short surveys during the year to test staff engagement.
- 4.3 The findings from the University of Derby research were generally in line with the Staff Survey as they focused on communication; barriers to a one-team approach, career progression and development, leadership and reward. The key difference was the comments around resourcing and workloads. It was suggested that this had resulted in high levels of flexi as the workload was becoming unmanageable within the normal working pattern. Workload is reviewed regularly at tasking for operational staff who generally have higher levels of accrued flexi. This can arise from home-based staff travelling significant distances prior to attending an inspection or activity. There are also difficulties with remote management and monitoring staff activity whilst allowing staff to manage their own workload.
- 4.3 To ascertain if these comments are reflective of what is actually occurring we have put in place a number of management review points:
- Manager's monthly sign-off of flexi sheet
 - Monthly review of flexi dashboard
 - Managers discussing flexi and annual leave position at MYR and end of year.
- 4.4 If this provides evidence that resource levels are incorrect then we would look to approach the Home Office for increased funding. Clearly, this has to be balanced against improving the efficiency of our processes through the use of IT and improved skills.

5. Financial Implications and Budget Provision

- 5.1 Some actions will have a cost attached to them as they relate to staff time but the impact on the budget will be limited.

6. Organisational Risks

- 6.1 The main risk to the organisation is a lack of staff engagement which could result in staff leaving or feeling demotivated.

7. Policy Implications and Links to Strategic Priorities

- 7.1 There are no policy implications but staff engagement is key to meeting the strategic priorities for the GLA.

8. Details of Consultation/EQIA

- 8.1 All staff were invited to contribute to the survey and make comments. The survey was available in an electronic format but could have been made accessible in other ways if required.

9. Background Papers and Relevant Published Documents

9.1 Board paper 39/9.2 – Staff Survey 2013.

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Staff Survey Questions 2014

Leadership and management

1. I understand how my objectives contribute to the corporate objectives for the GLA.
2. I understand what is expected of me in my role.
3. My manager motivates and inspires me to be more effective in my job.
4. I receive regular constructive feedback on my performance.
5. Poor performance is tackled effectively by my manager.

Learning and Development

6. I am involved in identifying my learning and development needs as well as the activities required to meet them.
7. The personal development opportunities that I have participated in over the last 12 months have helped me to do my job.
8. For managers: the people I manage have the right skills to do the job.
9. I receive the appropriate support to develop my skills for the future.
10. I feel encouraged to share my skills, knowledge and experiences with others.
11. I am encouraged to get involved in decision-making that affects my team.
12. I am encouraged to get involved in decision-making that affects the organisation

Engagement

13. I am proud to work for the GLA.
14. I often think about leaving the GLA to work elsewhere (negatively phrased question).
15. I am treated with fairness and respect.
16. I would speak highly of the mission and strategic objectives of the GLA.
17. The senior managers lead by example.

Internal Communications

18. The GLA keeps me informed of changes that will affect me.
19. I understand where I can find information that I need.
20. I contribute to the development of GLA policies and plans.

Recognition and Reward

21. My contribution to the GLA is recognised and valued.

22. I feel that the reward system is fair.

Summary of Staff Survey Results

Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
Leadership and management Questions 1-5	Contributing to meeting corporate objectives	88%	59%	97%	<p>Since the CEO arrived in 2013, he has developed a clear vision and strategy for the organisation. This has been communicated to staff at seminars and reinforced through KIT messages and internal communications.</p> <p>He also instigated a system whereby all managers who reported to him were given objectives that flowed from his own which in turn formed the objectives for staff.</p> <p>In 2014/15 every member of staff was provided with a copy of the GLA strategy document. CEO regularly reports back in KIT messages about progress against objectives. This will account for the majority of staff understanding their role and how they contribute to corporate outcomes.</p> <p>There has been a change in management in the operational teams over the last 12 months. Two experienced managers left and new managers were brought in.</p> <p>There was a period of 6 months where one manager was responsible for all of the enforcement work. This may explain the</p>	SLT to set objectives based in 6 strategic outcomes for the GLA in 2015/16 performance cycle.
	Expectations of my role	84%	98%	100%		Every member of staff has been provided with a professional portfolio which contains the key strategic documents for the GLA as well as appraisal documents and space for recording areas for improvement and achievements.
	Motivated to be more effective	88%	86%	79%		Confidentiality to be maintained - managers to move conversations to meeting rooms or face challenge by staff.
	Regular constructive feedback	75%	73%	74%		Consistency in communications was identified by University of Derby – minutes of SLT to be available for staff so that all have a clear understanding of decisions made by SLT. PB to reinforce messages in KIT and internal communication strategy reviewed and agreed in 2015.
	Tackling poor performance	84%	78%	86%		Performance management system has been reviewed and a new strategy set for 2015/16. Assessment to be based on

Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
					<p>slight downward shift as regards managers motivating their staff. Some staff also commented that they didn't feel able to assess new managers who had only been in post for a short while. They had based their assessment on their previous manager who had left.</p> <p>Staff commented that inappropriate behaviour is not always tackled by managers. There were also comments around appraisals not being completed. This arose as the two managers who left did not complete all of their direct reports despite HR tracking the receipt of reports and regularly chasing up those which were outstanding.</p> <p>The staff representative forum– Workforce Improvement Group (WIG) has worked on the contents of the seminar and the CEO attends their meetings to update them on GLA performance.</p>	<p>achievement of objectives and demonstrating the PROUD¹ principles through behaviours. Mid-year and end of year calibration process to be introduced to improve consistency of performance assessment.</p> <p>HR to set up appraisal tracking system on Carval to ensure that all reports are completed timeously. Will report back at SLT. Tracking will cover end of year and Mid year reviews.</p>
Learning and Development Questions 6-12	Involved in identifying my learning	81%	84%	84%	The responses for Learning and Development were positive, showing some changes from the 2013 survey. Noticeably in the area of support for staff to develop their own skills for the future, where there was an increase of 24% towards strongly agreed and agreed.	Programme of L&D to be in place in response to identified needs in personal development plans and dependent on budget constraints.
	Personal development has helped me do my job	60%	43%	71%		Consider refresher training for Crimson and Intellishare.
	Staff have the right skills to do the job – managers only	82%	73%	93%		Shadowing of linked roles, activities which generate new collective meanings/narratives.

¹ Professional, Respect, One Team, Utmost Integrity and trust, Doing it Differently
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Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
	Support to develop my skills for the future	72%	45%	69%	comprehensive spending review.	WIG to organise next staff seminar in May 2015.
	Sharing skills, knowledge and experience with others	72%	79%	79%	<p>In 2013, a business change team was set up to look at the skills staff required and in 2013/14 a training needs analysis was carried out for all staff. This identified learning and development needs for individuals and teams. The initial focus was on equipping operational staff to meet the requirements of the Modern Slavery bill.</p> <p>Towards the end of 2013 a training programme was designed with the University of Derby to provide investigative interviewing skills for operational staff. PB has also introduced a twice-yearly seminar for staff. The last seminar was organised by the WIG.</p> <p>Operational staff are meeting regularly in their teams and regional team meetings have been set up to encourage the cross-fertilisation of ideas. Office based teams also have regular meetings for updates and cascade of information.</p> <p>There have also been development opportunities in a number of work areas that staff have been able to get involved in such as giving presentations, attending overseas training courses.</p> <p>Job shadowing has been available for staff but has received a low take-up so far. The University of Derby also identified this as an area of opportunity. It will continue to be offered to staff and the L&D team will consider how to increase participation.</p>	
	Getting involved in decision making that affects my team	67%	73%	80%		
	Getting involved in decision making that affects the organisation	40%	65%	61%		

Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
					PB has also encouraged staff to become more involved in shaping the organisation through involvement in WIG and other opportunities.	
Engagement Questions 13-17	Proud to work for the GLA	84%	62%	97%	<p>The responses in relation to how proud respondents are to work for the GLA were particularly positive and show the influence of PB on the organisation since his arrival in early 2013. There is a clear shift from the results in 2013 which occurred only 7 months after PB arrived.</p> <p>Staff are positive about the changes that have been made over the last two years relating to the modern slavery agenda. Although this has to be balanced against the need to ensure that change is so rapid that systems and processes do not have time to bed in. Comments from staff raised concerns about consistency in our approach and processes. This is being addressed through a review of our standard operating procedures.</p> <p>There are still some staff who are considering leaving so we need to explore this with staff more in 2015 to identify why they are dissatisfied with the GLA.</p> <p>The University of Derby and staff commenting on the survey identified a small number of staff who are negative about the GLA and try to derail its activities. This will need to be tackled and inappropriate behaviour dealt with through our people policies.</p> <p>We intend to focus on management skills in 2015/16 and have already rolled out</p>	Review of performance management system to reflect PROUD principles and 6 priorities for GLA by start of the appraisal year.
	Thinking about leaving the GLA	32%	48%	35%		Run small pulse surveys quarterly to measure engagement
	Treated with fairness and respect	67%	80%	80%		Develop proposals for a 360 degree feedback process for SLT.
	Speak highly of the mission and strategic objectives	85%	98%	97%		HR policy review and development of manager toolkits.
	Senior managers leading by example	46%	55%	66%		

Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
					ACAS training in having difficult conversations. A programme of 360 feedback should enable us to identify other areas where managers require development. HR are also reviewing our people policies and developing manager toolkits to assist managers in tackling issues such as poor performance.	
Internal Communications Questions 18 -20	Keeping informed of changes	53%	92%	85%	There was minor variation from the 2013 responses in this section and on the whole the responses around internal communications were positive. The University of Derby highlighted this as an issue and recommended improving the flow of communication. One area for review is a feeling among staff that they are not informed about changes that will affect them. This was a slight downward shift from 2013. It may have arisen as some staff commented that they felt uninformed about the move to the Home Office. The transition has been a slow process and we are still using DEFRA systems and equipment which makes it hard for staff to see themselves as part of the HO. We have begun a programme of work reviewing the standard operating procedures which all staff have been invited to contribute towards.	Introduction of intranet and storage of information on shared drives.
	I know where to find information	70%	84%	76%		Review of SOP's
	Contributing to GLA policies and plans	47%	65%	61%		Developing clearer relational links with individuals, establishing strong team communication practices (both vertically and horizontally) rather than approaching this with systems or process solutions
Reward Questions 21-22	Feeling recognised and valued	65%	67%	68%	There was very minor variation on the 2013 responses showing that any work that has been done in regards to rewards has not yet had an effect on staff.	Change process so that staff will self-nominate. Publish summary of bonuses awarded - anonymised

Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
	The reward system is fair	45%	33%	32%	<p>There were a number of comments that criticised the reward scheme. The key area was the lack of transparency which then leads to staff questioning the equality of the scheme. One comment mentions that staff at the top do better, another commented on the expectations and how different managers benchmarked what would be defined as exceptional, and finally how some work goes unrecognised.</p> <p>The responses for recognition and rewards were mostly negative. We have tried to improve transparency but staff are clearly still unhappy about the process. This issue has been debated in various forums and the main concern is that staff don't feel that they understand how the process works.</p> <p>In recognition of these comments we have moved to a system where staff can self-nominate so that everyone has an opportunity to justify why they should be nominated. If the manager does not agree with the individual then HR will mediate the process.</p> <p>There were managers previously who were more reluctant to nominate staff but they have now left the organisation. We are also instigating the calibration process to look at performance assessment. This should highlight who are top performers are help managers to ensure that the right people are being nominated for bonuses.</p> <p>We are also aiming to improve transparency through a review of the</p>	<p>Re-issue guidance for staff through communication from PB</p> <p>Review bonus criteria post April 2015 for next round in 2016</p> <p>Introduction of new performance - related pay system by 1 April 2015 following buy-out of incremental pay.</p>

Area	Question	2010	2013	2014	Management Response	Action
					criteria for bonus nominations and by publishing anonymised data on the award of bonuses. This should also help to dispel some of the “myths” around who was nominated.	

University of Derby Research Findings

On analysis of the interview data the following themes emerged as being of particular significance according to the amount of discussion relating to them and the level of importance placed upon them by the interviewees. The research identified a number of opportunities that the GLA could take to make improvements.

1) 'Us and them'

There was frequent discussion about the feeling of 'us' and 'them' with regards to the field and office based staff and also with regards to enforcement and compliance workers. Comments which captured this talked of a 'big divide' and 'lack of understanding about what we do'. It was a commonly articulated issue but when questioned further about the nature of this divide it appeared that it may be a perception which is historic and perpetuated rather than evidenced in current attitudes, behaviours and practice. For example some current behaviours relating to busyness and high workloads may be interpreted as unwelcoming to staff entering the Nottingham offices. Of course, there may be exceptions to this.

Opportunities:

Greater team integration, shadowing of linked roles, activities which generate new collective meanings/narratives

2) Communication

Communication and lack of clarity in this regard were key themes. Whilst it is evident that there are particular types of communication and opportunities for feedback which are already in place, there was a common theme that interviewees (particularly in the field) felt that there was a lack of clarity. This was particularly evident in the feelings of isolation and 'being out on a limb' expressed by a number of field based workers. This extended from work-specific communications but also clarity around broader organisational issues. Messages from managers to the wider team were not always felt to be consistent and clear. It may be that meaning and intent was lost somewhat in communication once it had gone beyond the senior team.

Opportunities:

This may be best addressed by developing clearer relational links with individuals, establishing strong team communication practices (both vertically and horizontally) rather than approaching this with systems or process solutions. This would also support the previous point.

3) Reward and progression

Reward:

There was a significant and consistently reported issue with regards to the rewards system. It was described in most cases as being a system which makes people 'resentful and is divisive' where 'some managers don't believe in it and therefore won't nominate'.

There were issues described around clarity of the type of work which warranted reward, the extent to which this was part of the job or beyond the control of the individual in being able to achieve rewards in their role. There were also comments that bonus allocation seemed to contradict the 'One Team' ethos.

Career Progression:

The lack of progression opportunities was seen to be a significant issue for many of the interviewees. The flat structure and scope for development beyond a particular point in role was seen to be problematic in considering medium to long term careers in the organisation. The description of waiting for 'dead men's shoes' was used frequently in relation to this to describe the lack of progression opportunities. Those who were in their second careers were less concerned with this issue but recognised that it was problematic for the long term health of GLA.

Opportunities:

It may be useful to examine the current reward mechanisms and structures in place in relation to progression within the organisation. Staff are consistently highly motivated in relation to the nature of their work and passion for the purpose of GLA. They appear to experience high levels of intrinsic reward from this and extrinsic rewards may be acting as a disincentive for some. Systems may be assessed to check against desired outcomes in relation to motivation/job satisfaction, behaviours, performance and retention.

4) Senior Leaders

Senior Leaders were considered, by a large proportion of interviewees, to be modelling desirable behaviours in line with the ethos of the organisation. Paul and Margaret were considered to be 'a breath of fresh air' and had brought 'a new lease of life to GLA'. Paul was described as being approachable, available and busy. He was also described as being a good role model who had brought a good dynamic to GLA. There was a very small minority within the sample who felt leaders to be unapproachable and unconcerned with the reality of working life for the staff. There was also a concern that there was a disconnect between the rhetoric of valuing staff and how they are treated. It should be noted that this was not representative of the sample as a whole.

5) Harmony

Within the sample of interviewees there was a strong sense of ownership and pride in the organisation and the work undertaken by the GLA. There was also a sense that there are a few members of staff who were described as 'stirring the pot' and 'intent upon creating bad feeling'. It was suggested that this reflected a very small minority who perhaps had a disproportionate effect on the sense of harmony within the organisation.

Opportunities:

The lack of harmony felt in some areas and perception of some employees, regarding their value and the attitudes of leaders, may have been perpetuated by issues relating to communication, clarity and meaning attributed to particular leadership actions.

There is an opportunity to examine how messages are delivered (and received) through the management structure (see previous point regarding communication).

6) Resourcing

One of the themes which emerged throughout the interviews was the feeling that the quantity of work to do was becoming unmanageable which was manifesting itself in high levels of flexi and also unreported hours worked. The comments regarding the amount of goodwill that exists in the organisation and the passion for the job demonstrated a highly committed workforce. This commitment may however veil some issues relating to resourcing and capacity in considering the growth of the organisation.