

acas working for everyone
to resolve and prevent
workplace problems

Feedback to
Ryedale District
Council
February 2018

Rich Jones



- Staff welcomed the opportunity to provide confidential feedback
- Four half day focus groups (two at each site)
- Spoke to 23 staff of various levels and disciplines
- Open questions asked about what worked, what didn't and ideas for improvement
- Four areas identified: The restructure, staffing issues, communication and consultation and potential health and safety issues

The restructure



- The need to restructure was recognised by staff but they felt it was poorly planned and implemented too quickly
- Now need to identify work priorities from the top down (but there are issues regarding the interim nature of the CEO and the role of elected members)
- Accurate job descriptions need to be developed
- Selection using PROUD values has placed many staff in posts for which they now desperately need training, but lack of cover inhibits this – the IT team in particular
- Summary – staff feel abandoned, overworked, stressed and constantly firefighting. Backlogs, out of grade working and lower morale

Staffing issues



- **Recruitment and selection – many vacancies remain unfilled, leading to the use of overtime. Need to attract more applicants and improve induction**
- **Job descriptions – there is an imbalance in workloads which affects customer service and provides issues with resilience on some teams**
- **People management - training for managers is needed to tackle concerns regarding grievance investigation, micro-management, a perceived blame culture and bullying**
- **There is a need to devise a strategy for addressing GDPR requirements**

Communication and consultation



- Previous staff survey findings “buried” – something which must not happen to this piece of work. Decide how to publicise findings, develop an action plan and review progress
- Elected members need to find out more about what staff do and the impact of the restructure
- Day to day communication could be better - particularly at the depot. Inconsistent use of team meetings
- Feeling that PROUD values have sometimes been used against staff. The organisation needs to view constructive criticism in a more positive light
- Develop a longer term communication and consultation strategy to improve staff engagement

Potential health and safety issues



- There is a need to clarify the future plan for Ryedale House.
- In the meantime consider what improvements could be made and provide more information and notice regarding staff moves
- Concerns about staff shortages at the depot leading to two person jobs being carried out by just one
- Concern that proposed contract changes at the depot may make jobs too physically demanding. Further consultation required

Specific staff suggestions



- Share this report with staff and elected members
- Undertake a review of the restructure
- Repeat focus groups in six months time to review progress
- Undertake more genuine consultation with staff
- More team meetings / face to face communications
- Conduct exit interviews with staff

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