

Staff Survey:

Essex Probation

Executive summary 2010

Every two years, Essex Probation staff respond to a survey designed to take the temperature of employee engagement, satisfaction, and knowledge. Analysis of their insight and perceptions help us plan the way ahead, improving the way we operate and communicate, so as to enhance the way we all do our job on behalf of the community.

Essex Probation

Cutting Crime • Protecting the Public • Working in Partnership

ESSEX PROBATION EMPLOYEE SURVEY 2010

Executive Summary

The Essex Probation Employee Survey 2010 was carried out between the 14th June and 9th July with the all the responses being recorded on Survey Monkey. The majority of questions throughout the 16 subsections of the Survey asked participants to specifically rate statements with a response of **STRONGLY AGREE; TEND TO AGREE; TEND TO DISAGREE** or **STRONGLY DISAGREE** and the performance of each section was determined through the proportion of **STRONGLY AGREE** and **TEND TO AGREE** responses across all questions. 14 sections had such questions and will be discussed throughout this summary from the highest to lowest performing. The remaining sections will be dealt with separately.

The Survey was issued to 471 staff members of which 298 responded. At 63.3% this is a lower response rate than 2008 (70.4%) and 2006 (67.7%). In terms of location, Cullen Mill had the highest response rate (92.4%) and West Essex had the lowest (33.3%). At 100%, **INTERVENTIONS (TUTOR/ETE)** had the highest response rate of the functions with **COMMUNITY PAYBACK (SUPERVISOR/UWRO/CPC)** representing the lowest (30.2%).

The **ALL ABOUT YOU** section shows that the Survey is generally representative of the staff groups within Essex Probation although proportionally there were fewer members of staff aged 45 and over who completed the Survey. It was also shown that more staff were willing to state their sexual orientation in the Survey than on standard monitoring forms.

For staff joining within the last 12 months, there was a high level of satisfaction for both central and local inductions at 95.9% and 92% respectively.

66.7% of staff describing themselves as having a disability stated that they had had, or were in the process of having, their barriers to work addressed and 70.7% of staff believed that Essex Probation were effective in meeting its commitments to the single equality scheme.

Section	Agree	Disagree	% Agree
Managing Diversity	4126	238	94.5%
Working for Essex Probation	2182	276	88.8%
Organisation Identity	3334	437	88.4%
My Role	7090	1521	82.3%
Teamworking	1610	364	81.6%
Job Satisfaction	2096	504	80.6%
Work/Life Balance	1362	385	78.0%
Health & Safety	4555	1291	77.9%
Workload	1686	552	75.3%
Communication & Staff Involvement	3442	1147	75.0%
Training and Development	1558	566	73.4%
Survey Results	393	177	68.9%
Terms & Conditions	388	177	68.7%
Managing Change	2130	1580	57.4%

TABLE 1: SURVEY SECTIONS RANKED BY % OF RESPONDENTS WHO AGREED OR STRONGLY AGREED TO STATEMENTS PROVIDED

TABLE 1 details the Survey Sections ranked by their performance and shows that **MANAGING DIVERSITY** was the highest scoring section of the Survey achieving a 94.5% agreement level. The Survey revealed that Essex Probation acts fairly in terms of both recruitment and career progression with high levels of agreement across staff groups. It was also felt amongst staff groups, such as disability and part time workers, that Essex Probation did not discriminate against them, and in terms of age the youngest and oldest staff members did not feel that there was discrimination. Of those who felt that they had been discriminated against in the last 12 months, 43.6% of cases related to allocation of work or being left out of communication.

WORKING FOR ESSEX PROBATION scored 88.8% and was the second highest performing section of the Survey. No statement scored below 80% and there was an overall sense that Essex Probation and the teams within it provide a good quality service to the users. 81% of respondents feel that Essex Probation is a good employer and 80.6% of respondents believe that they get job satisfaction. There was a similar level of agreement to the **ORGANISATIONAL IDENTITY** section which scored 88.4%. Here it was found that operational staff were more likely to disagree with statements such as **WE ARE RECOGNISED FOR OUR WORK WITH RAISING THE EDUCATION STANDARDS OF OFFENDERS** or **WE ARE KNOWN FOR OUR EXPERTISE IN PUBLIC PROTECTION**. There was a strong belief amongst respondents regarding Essex Probation being able to contribute to reducing re-offending in Essex and supporting the victims of crime.

The **MY ROLE** section shows that staff have a clear understanding about their role; what is expected of them and the expected standards of performance and behaviour. When asked what they could improve, respondents stuck to themes of wanting, for example, more time, more work life balance, better IT systems, better communication, fewer changes and clearer role boundaries. This section highlighted a good level of co-operation amongst staff with 88.5% stating they found colleagues willing to help each other.

The **TEAMWORKING** section reinforced both the idea that roles are clearly defined, this time however on a team level, and that there was good co-operation amongst staff members within teams. It did highlight that only 64% of teams met regularly and that only 63% of respondents believed that the usual level of staff within the teams was enough to provide a quality service (the **DMSS/SSO/LMTA** and **OFFENDER MANAGEMENT/HLO** function displayed the lowest level of agreement).

The overall score for the **JOB SATISFACTION** section was 80.6% with 87.6% of respondents specifically stating that they get satisfaction from their job. 17.4% of staff are actively seeking employment outside Essex Probation with reasons such as career progression; work life balance and lack of job security (54.8% of respondents stated that they had job security with Essex Probation).

The **WORK LIFE BALANCE** section, which scored 78% overall, covered a number of aspects and showed that over three quarters agreed that they had a good balance between work and home life, and that 85.2% agreed that managers supported staff to find a good balance. There was a good general awareness of support mechanisms and support schemes provided by Essex Probation, however, the survey does highlight some gaps in knowledge in a number of locations and for certain schemes overall.

The **HEALTH & SAFETY** section highlighted that Health & Safety Representatives are not widely known in their locations with South Essex showing the highest awareness at just 44%. Three quarters of respondents in North East Essex stated that their building was not suitable for their needs. 90.5% of all respondents believed that discrimination was dealt with effectively (this was 100% for BME staff).

Regarding **WORKLOAD**, 71.8% of respondents stated that they could take breaks at regular intervals and 66% worried about work away from the workplace (this was as high as 93.8% in West Essex). Nearly three quarters of staff reported that they lost **TOIL** with this most prevalent in the **MANAGEMENT** function. 12 respondents indicated that their workload had

decreased in the last 12 months, two thirds of which belonging to the **OFFENDER MANAGEMENT/HLO** function.

COMMUNICATION & STAFF INVOLVEMENT was an area highlighted for improvement in 2008. In 2010, with 75% of staff in agreement with this statement, there is now a good level of communication across the organisation. Overwhelmingly staff felt that communication is relevant and in forms that are accessible to them but were less enthusiastic regarding timeliness, presentation and its clarity. Team meetings were seen as a useful method of communication and it was shown that for the majority of respondents (57.5%) these were on a monthly basis. It was also highlighted that 20% of respondents had no regular meetings.

Two statements with the lowest levels of agreement in the **TRAINING & DEVELOPMENT** section relate to line management discussion before and after training events with an overall score of 49.7% and 50.9% respectively.

The **SURVEY RESULTS** section highlighted that more respondents believed that this was a good method of communication (73.1%) compared to those who had confidence in SMT addressing the issues raised and acting upon them appropriately (64.8%).

It was seen in the **TERMS & CONDITIONS** section that nearly two thirds of staff felt that they were fairly paid for the work that they do and that the topic of car parking was prevalent when staff were asked to suggest pay/non pay benefits.

The **MANAGING CHANGE** section was the lowest scoring in the Survey at 57.4% and of the 7 statements which elicited agreement levels of below 50%, 4 of them were from this section. It was not all negative however with 96.3% of respondents understanding the need for change and 63.2% of staff stating that they have seen some positive changes in recent months.

HARRASSMENT & BULLYING does not appear in the rankings however, 3.7% of respondents stated that they were currently being harassed or bullied at work the majority of which (2.3% of respondents) were internal. 2.1% of respondents reported their harassment or bullying incidents.

Overall, the results for this Survey are very good. The level of agreement to questions and statements has increased from 54% in 2008 to 80.7% in 2010. With results ranging from 75.7% in North East Essex to 88.2% in Cullen Mill, even the lowest scoring locations have over three quarters of positive responses.

Location	Agree	Disagree	% Agree
Cullen Mill	6630	883	88.2%
Hostel	671	129	83.9%
Mid Essex	3878	1138	77.3%
North East Essex	5201	1674	75.7%
South East Essex & Southend	7193	1942	78.7%
South Essex	4527	1221	78.8%
Thurrock	4362	755	85.2%
West Essex	2076	502	80.5%
Total	34538	8244	80.7%

TABLE 2: PERCENTAGE OF POSITIVE RESPONSES