

North York Moors National Park Authority

19 March 2018

2017 Staff Survey Results

1. Purpose of the Report

- 1.1 To present an overview of the results and key findings of the 2017 Staff Survey.

2. Background

- 2.1 The NPA undertakes regular staff surveys to help understand staff perceptions of the Authority as an employer. The last survey was completed in 2014 and, recognising that the organisation has undergone a period of rapid change (including significant recruitment of new staff) since then, Officers decided that it was timely for the survey to be run again in December 2017.
- 2.2 As well as getting an overall view of the Authority as a place to work, Officers were interested to use the staff survey as a tool to learn more about:
- Perceptions of **management support and performance** – following on from the leadership development programme that was implemented in 2012-14.
 - Employee's **work life balance**, in the context of an increased focus on fundraising, new projects and changing ways of working.
 - The opinions of **staff who have recently joined the Authority** – their experience as 'new' employees, their understanding of the Authority, and the level of communication they receive.

3. Survey Design and Level of Response

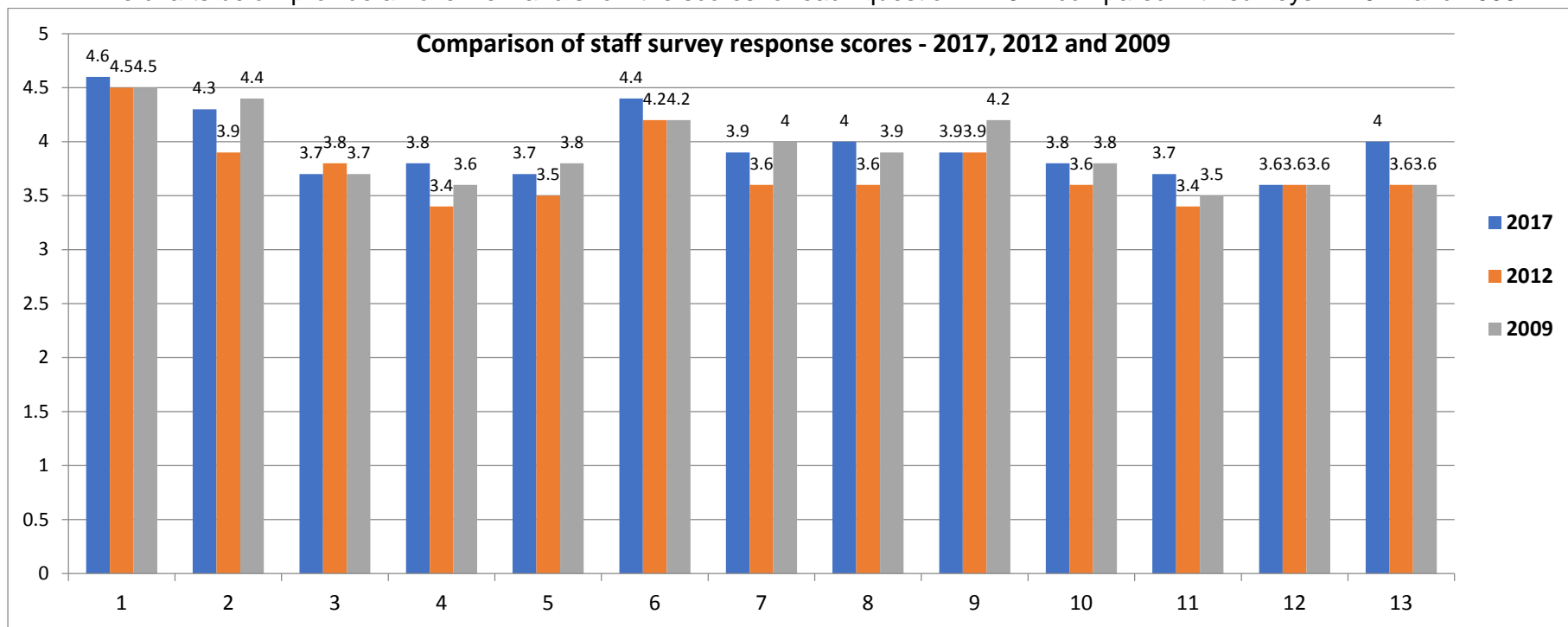
- 3.1 The 2017 staff survey was completed by 93 staff. The overall response rate was 66%. This compares with 55% in 2014 and a Local Government average of 62%.
- 3.2 Compared with previous years a smaller number of questions were asked (30 in the 2017 survey and 43 in 2012) – covering the same issues and with an option at the end for additional comments. 28 people completed this open question.
- 3.3 The survey was set out as a number of statements with participants selecting their level of agreement with each one. Each question is given a weighted score (with 5 being the maximum) to show the level of agreement with the statement.

4. Overall Results

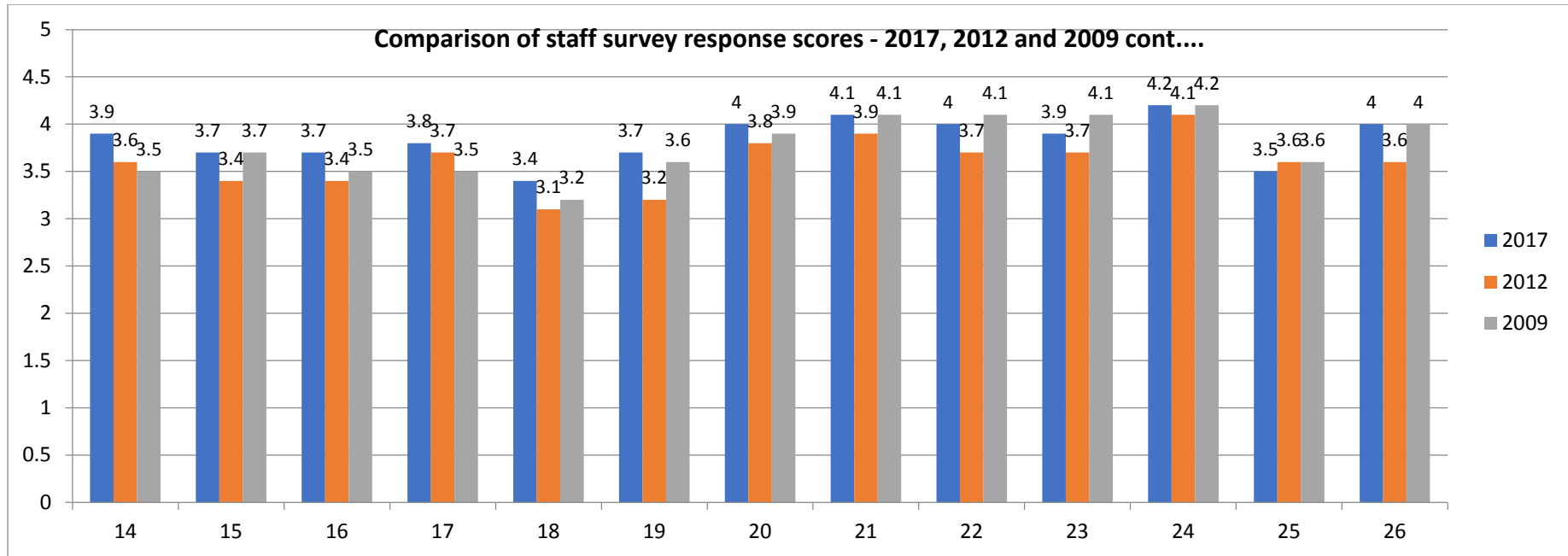
- 4.1 Overall the results were positive, with the sum of scores (i.e. level of 'positivity') showing an increase compared with the previous two surveys. The table below demonstrates - using the sum of scores from 26 questions for comparison between 2017, 2012 and 2009. The 2014 survey was organised by the company who ran the Leadership Programme and the data supplied as part of this was limited to an assessment of the questions related to the outcomes of the Programme

Staff survey total scores		
2017	2012	2009
101.3	95.4	99.8

4.2 The charts below provide an overview and show the scores for each question in 2017 compared with surveys in 2012 and 2009.



1. I am proud to say that I work for the National Park (the 'place').
2. I would recommend the organisation as a good place to work
3. Members are appropriately involved in decisions that affect the Authority and its members of staff
4. Managers give a clear and consistent picture of the Authority's direction and priorities
5. I am satisfied with the information available to me about what's going on in the Authority.
6. I trust my line manager to support me in my role.
7. I have the opportunity for personal development and growth within the Authority
8. My line manager works with me to identify and agree work targets on a regular basis.
9. My work targets are realistic and achievable
10. My line manager gives me regular and constructive feedback that helps to improve my performance.
11. In the Authority there is an attitude that encourages collaborative working within and across teams
12. Cooperation across the Authority works well in practice
13. In the Authority there is an attitude that encourages me to come up with new and better ways of doing things



- 14. In the past 12 months I have had the opportunity to feed in ideas about how the Authority could improve the way in which it works.
- 15. If I try something new and creative and it does not work, I am not concerned about being judged poorly.
- 16. In the past 12 months I have had the opportunity to share with others in the Authority my experience of what has worked well and what hasn't.
- 17. I fully understand which decisions need to be made by line managers, the Senior Management Team and the Authority respectively.
- 18. Sufficient effort is made to get the opinions and thinking of people who work for the Authority before decisions are made.
- 19. I feel involved in decisions that affect my work.
- 20. I feel satisfied with the balance between my work and life outside of work.
- 21. I feel able to take my holiday entitlement.
- 22. I feel motivated in my present role.
- 23. The Authority makes good use of my skills and abilities.
- 24. My line manager recognises my efforts and achievements.
- 25. The overall package of benefits (pay, pensions, terms and conditions, flexible working, sick pay etc) is reasonable for my role
- 26. I feel I am valued and supported as an employee

- 4.3 Scores show a dip between 2009 and 2012 – believed to be a result of the major restructure/redundancies and a period of certainty caused by the cut in the NPA’s grant from DEFRA. The scores have now returned to their 2009 levels across the majority of questions.
- 4.4 In relation to **management support and performance**, questions about providing opportunities for the development of ideas and providing opportunities to find better ways of doing things have scored well. Findings from the evaluation of the 2012-14 leadership development programme corroborate with this result.
- 4.5 The question on **work life balance** produced a score, which was similar to previous years. However, in relation to having realistic and achievable work targets the score for this doesn’t show an improvement compared to 2012. All other areas which showed a dip from 2009 to 2012 have recovered at least partially, but this one hasn’t. This tallies with anecdotal evidence from staff across the organisation and Directors’ view that the organisation remains stretched at times, particularly in some core areas, to an uncomfortable point.
- 4.6 A new question in the survey for 2017 was asked in relation to how long staff have worked for the Authority. When the results were filtered by this this question, it revealed that – across all questions - newer staff scored slightly higher. This is in line with the results of similar surveys carried out elsewhere and didn’t reveal any major differences on specific issues between newer and more established staff. However, this is something to bear in mind for the future in considering the ways to ensure that staff who have been at the Authority longer continue to feel equally positive with the NPA as their employer.

5. **Open Ended Comments**

- 5.1 Respondents were invited to add ‘any other comments’ at the end of the fixed questions. 28 people responded to this with a wide range of comments. The survey was completed anonymously by all staff, so it isn’t possible to respond to every individual’s comment. Officers have reviewed all of the comments though and will give staff the opportunity to speak to a colleague to follow up any issues that they have highlighted.

6. **Comparisons with other Organisations/Other Data**

- 6.1 While comparisons can be difficult, the Civil Service People Survey of 2017 asked some similar questions to our survey and the comparators are set out below. There is just one measure where the NPA scores lower than the Civil Service survey and that’s in relation to opportunities to try new ideas and be creative.

North York Moors NPA	% agree	Civil Service People survey	% agree
I feel involved in decisions that affect my work	69%	I feel involved in the decisions that affect my work	58%
I am proud to say that I work for the National Park (the place)	93%	I am proud when I tell others I am part of my organisation	62%
I would recommend the organisation as a good place to work	86%	I would recommend my organisation as a great place to work	55%
My work targets are realistic and achievable	77%	I have an acceptable workload	61%
If I try something new and creative and it does not work, I am not concerned about being judged poorly	69%	I believe I would be supported I if try a new ideas, even if it may not work	71%
I feel involved in decisions that affect my work	69%	I feel involved in the decisions that affect my work	58%
I feel satisfied with the balance between my work and life outside of work	75%	I achieve a good balance between my work life and my private life	68%
I feel I am valued and supported as an employee	77%	I feel valued for the work I do	66%

6.2 During November and December 3 ‘new starter’ focus group sessions were held to gather feedback from staff on their first impressions of working at the National Park Authority. A broad range of issues were noted in response to the questions ‘*What does the NPA do well?*’ and ‘*What could the NPA do better?*’. Staff were generally very complimentary, with much more emphasis being placed on the positive. The themes that were raised most frequently were:

Areas where we do well

- Demonstrating a welcoming and supportive working culture.
- Supporting staff to achieve a good work life balance through annual leave / flexi time etc.
- Delivering an excellent apprenticeship programme.

Areas where we could do better

- Joined up working between departments.
- ‘Clunky’ administrative processes and systems.
- Managing meetings.

6.3 At these sessions new staff were keen to point out that the areas where the NPA did well were very important to them, while the areas for improvement were relatively minor. Officers are keen to continually improve, however, and will work to address these points.

7. Financial and Staffing Implications

7.1 None.

8. Contribution to the National Park Management Plan

8.1 NPA staff all play a role in contributing to the aims and objectives of the National Park Management Plan

9. **Legal Implications**

9.1 None arising directly from this report.

10. **Recommendation**

10.1 That Members note the contents of the report.

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