

# Changing Engagement – A local government Journey

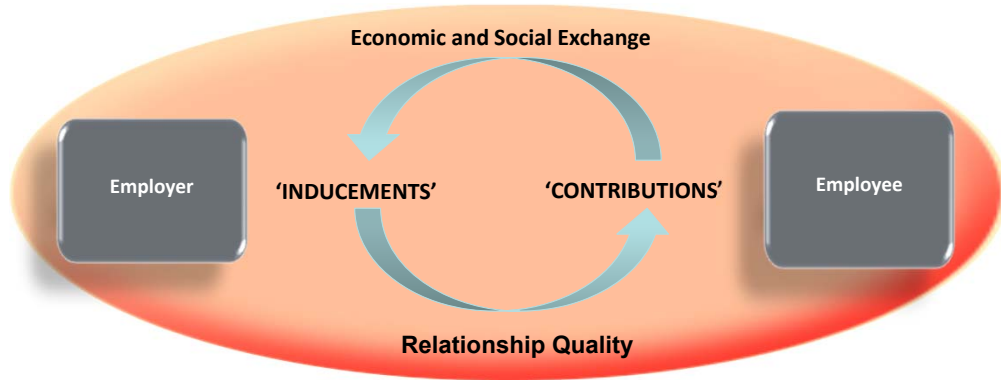
**Nigel Carruthers**

Senior Advisor  
Local Government Association

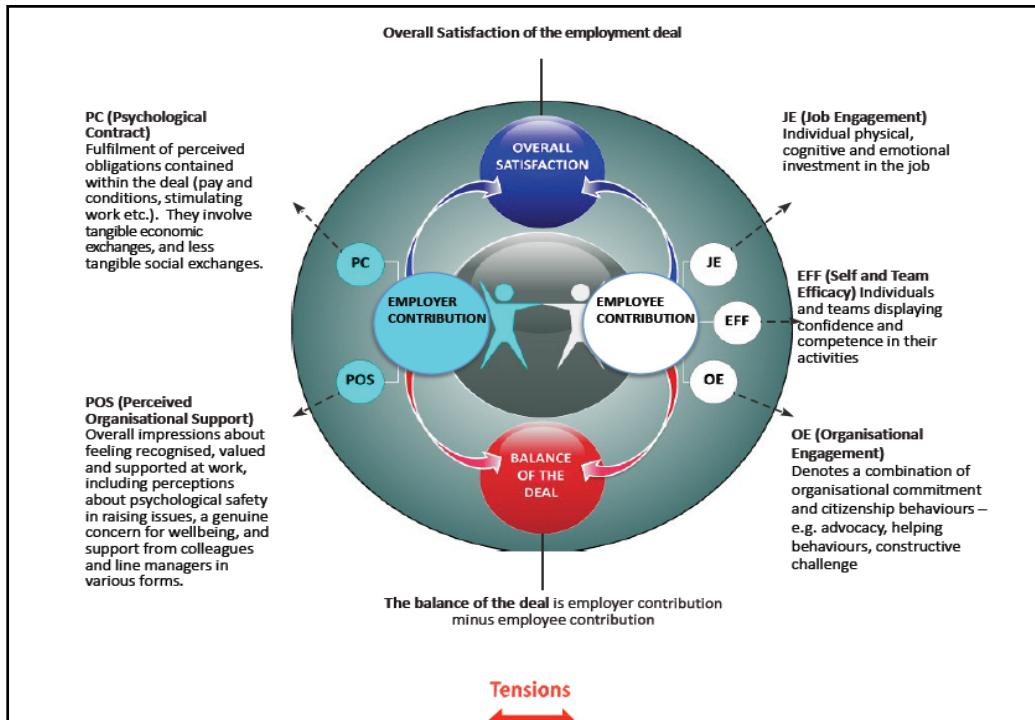
## ‘Balance of the deal’



# Changing Engagement



© Prof Helen Francis and Dr Martin Reddington



## Evidence has shown the key drivers of engagement in LG are:

- Line manager 'conversational practice'
  - Level of role autonomy
  - Positive team dynamics / shared team goals
- 

### Changing Engagement - the local government journey

**Sarah Shirtcliff, Director for  
People  
Ruth Grant, Strategic OD  
Lead**

## Introducing Norfolk and Norfolk CC

- ✓ Strong emerging sectors like biotechnology with agriculture and tourism economic mainstays
- ✓ 348k jobs worth £18 Billion - a well-off county
- ✓ With challenges – poor social mobility, lower than average Level 4+ qualifications
- ✓ Fifth largest shire county in England with population c.1bn in next decade
- ✓ By 2040, 40% of population of dependent age
- ✓ Norfolk CC's budget of £1.4m has increased demand from high end services and inflationary pressures
- ✓ Significant cost savings over 10 years
- ✓ 7,000 + employees
- ✓ In January 2019 moved to an Executive Leader and Cabinet form of government



## Why, What and How of Engagement in our Council?

In 2019, with a new direction we wanted to understand what engagement looked like in the Public Sector

Our plan - “to enable colleagues to be skilled, engaged and well at work”

Our HR Plan identified the need for an evidence base

A previous overall staff survey in 2014 with no actions tracked

We wanted to model engagement in **how** we delivered every part of the survey

- ✓ 'Up stream' engagement with Corporate Board
- ✓ Stakeholder workshop
- ✓ Survey modelling had wide appeal
- ✓ Visible attractive survey communications
- ✓ Fast turnaround of results
- ✓ Presented/discussed results with Directorate Management Teams, HR BPs and UNISON

## The Survey Approach

- |    |   |    |  |
|----|---|----|--|
| 01 | What we didn't want?  | 06 | What we did want?  |
| 02 | Lots of questions   | 07 | Concise and easy to complete for colleagues  |
| 03 | Survey Data Overwhelm that can unintentionally lead to paralysis    | 08 | To understand the Key Drivers of employee satisfaction                             |
| 04 | A heavy reliance on an engagement score without wider understanding | 09 | The narrative to bring the human elements to making sense of the quantitative data |
| 05 | No practical use made of narrative data and expensive               | 10 | Research base, cost-effective and sustainable                                      |

## Survey results

50% completion (in the top quartile for organisations of 5,000 + employees)

Results fell in the top quartile for this benchmarked group

We know our Key Drivers which will make the biggest difference to 'the deal'

We know 'our reds' (risk) and 'greens' (enhance)

Our NCC personality is **Trustworthy**

We can evidence the biggest shifts we need to make to increase **Innovation**

1. My manager recognises that speaking openly about work related issues provides an opportunity to improve things	77
2. There is a clear link between my Performance Development Discussion and my team's goals	68
3. Overall, I am satisfied with the employment deal (what I receive and what I am expected to give in return) provided by NCC	63
4. NCC's Leader and Executive Directors have a clear vision for the future of the organisation	56
5. My manager encourages conversations that enable the team to be more effective in achieving its performance goals	74

## Impact during this Introductory year

- Gained familiarity with a different approach with variable levels of working with the results
- 'Our voice Our council' survey has been an agenda item for discussion at Corporate Board and Directorate Management Teams quarterly
- Provided evidence for HRBPs to shape their priorities
- OD developed and delivered facilitation to share results with staff and manager short sessions
- We now have examples of actions in response to Key Drivers and narrative comments
- Confirmed the importance of work prior to the survey on a Performance Development framework, where these conversations were a key driver
- Survey starting to be used to inform Health & Safety Plan, Workforce Plans, Development offer and responses to external inspection reports

## Next Steps for 2020

Decision to run an annual survey of this type initiated by Corporate Board

Hard to reach groups – widened consent to use private emails to send survey link and agreed time to complete in work time

Branding and visual communications repeated to emphasise consistency of approach

Use the Survey data to understand correlations with NCC people data

Thank you

