

Action	To approve
Purpose	The 2021 Staff survey will be the fifth undertaken as part of the yearly cycle we moved to in 2017. This report provides an update on the development of the 2021 survey and proposed timings.
Decision trail	Not applicable
Recommendations	<p>a To note the planning for the development of the 2021 survey.</p> <p>b To agree that the 2021 staff survey goes live in July.</p>
Annexes	None
Author contacts	Andrew Bratt , Assistant Director – HR, andrew.bratt@gmc-uk.org , 0161 923 6215
Sponsoring director/ Senior Responsible Owner	Neil Roberts , Director of Resources neil.roberts@gmc-uk.org , 0161 923 6230

Background

- 1 We undertake an annual staff survey to track our levels of employee engagement and our progress against our action plans on issues raised by colleagues. The survey plays an important role in tracking our progress and identifying priorities as an employer. These include those that fall within our Investors in People work programme and, increasingly, our progress in equality, diversity and inclusion. The survey will become an important part of our ED&I performance tracking, the second year we will have an inclusivity index score.
- 2 Our processes supporting the survey work well and we have high levels of participation. We expect the format and scope for the 2021 survey remains broadly similar to 2020. This allows us to track progress and benchmark externally, but we retain the flexibility to make some adjustments to our question set each year.

Pre survey engagement

- 3 As part of the survey development process, we will engage with the following on the survey questions:
 - Senior management and leadership teams
 - Staff forum
 - 2020 survey work-stream leads
 - Freedom to Speak Up Guardian
 - The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team
 - Strategy team

Finalising survey questions

- 4 Feedback received through pre survey engagement will be factored in to the final questions used in the 2021 survey. However, we are not proposing to make significant changes to the questions used in 2020.
- 5 We are not proposing to include any questions relating specifically to the organisation's response to the pandemic and lockdown as we cover these in separate all staff pulse surveys. The third is due to take place in March 2021.

Survey timing

- 6 In 2020 we delayed the staff survey as we adjusted priorities in response to the pandemic. In considering timings we can be confident that we will have good response rates so long as we avoid the survey being open across late July and August. Other considerations include allowing a sufficient period from 2020's survey to progress our work-streams and communicate this to colleagues. We ideally need to ensure that we can report to Council during 2021.
- 7 In 2020 the impact of the pandemic was a consideration, and we used pulse surveys to get feedback on the issues directly affecting colleagues. In 2021 it is possible that the later we leave the survey, the more likely it is to cover a period where we might be out of lockdown, but whatever the context the survey operates in will be different from last year. It is also possible that any survey timing could coincide with significant changes in our working arrangements, with more colleagues retuning to our offices.
- 8 The Board is asked to decide on the timing of the 2021 survey from the following three options:
 - **Option 1 - bring the survey forward towards our previous timetable.** This could be considered if the Board wanted to get the survey back into an earlier annual cycle. There are no practical issues with bringing the survey forward; the Board should note however, that bringing the survey forward would give a shorter period for actions from the 2020 survey to be addressed in what has been a challenging year for colleagues. There is also a risk that we do not see the improvements that we would have expected to see in a 12 month period. Should the Board decide to bring the 2021 survey forward we could run the survey in June, this would then allow us to move to May next year be that this should be no more than one month. Our established cycle was April/May the main advantage is that we receive reports before the summer period.
 - **Option 2 - retain a similar survey period as 2020.** The 2020 survey ran from 6 July to 03 August. There were no issues with staff engagement on the 2020 survey as the response rate was the highest we've have had. The main thing for the Board to consider is we start receiving survey reports in late August for consideration and action in September. This timetable still allows reporting to Council in 2021 and can inform our planning for 2022. This is our preferred option from a planning and implementation process. It allows a full engagement and communications process before we go live – and a

further period to progress the 2020 actions. We'd aim to run the survey during July.

- **Option 3 – short delay to the survey.** A further option is to move the survey cycle to a new later slot on a permanent basis. This avoids the impact of the summer holiday period in terms of participation and receiving the reports. It also gives a slightly longer period to make progress on the 2020 survey which colleagues may find helpful given the impact of the pandemic survey but would push back Council reporting into early 2022. If this option was preferred, we would retain September as the 'live' period for future surveys.

9 Indicative timescales for options 2 and 3 can be found at Annex A.

Next Steps

10 Once the Board have confirmed their decision on the timing for the 2021 survey the planning process will commence, and full pre survey timescales and milestones confirmed.

Annex A

Option 2 survey timing

Activity	Date
Pre survey engagement	Mid-March to end of May
SMT to finalise survey questions	By 14 June
Pre survey comms commence	w/c 14 June
Survey launch	5 July
Survey close	30 July
Topline, engagement and inclusivity index reports available	w/c 16 August
SMT presentation available	w/c 30 August
Full report available	w/c 30 August
Post survey comms commence	w/c 30 August
Directorate and section reports available	w/c 6 September
Focus Groups	TBC – dependent on Executive Board decision on survey priorities

Option 3 survey timing

Activity	Date
Pre survey engagement	Mid-April to end of July
SMT to finalise survey questions	By 16 August
Pre survey comms commence	w/c 16 August
Survey launch	6 September
Survey close	01 October
Topline, engagement and inclusivity index reports available	w/c 18 October
SMT presentation available	w/c 1 November
Full report available	w/c 25 November
Post survey comms commence	w/c 25 November
Directorate and section reports available	w/c 8 November
Focus Groups	TBC – dependent on Executive Board decision on survey priorities