

BROKERING THE DEAL – A NEW PSYCHOLOGICAL CONTRACT?

**Do we need to re-broker a deal for future leaders in the
public sector?**



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1. Executive Summary

This report was prepared as part of the Aspire Business Partner Programme, run by North West Employers in partnership with the CIPD.

Emma Ashworth, (Greater Manchester Police) Catherine Sharples, (Salford City Council) Caroline Halewood and Marria Saleemi (Wirral Council) undertook this research project with the support of a project mentor, Richard Rout, (Halton Borough Council).

The group considered background and theory relating to the Psychological Contract in order to assess whether there is a need to re-broker a deal for future leaders in the public sector. The research examined whether current contextual factors shaping the employment relationship require a change of approach to maintain a healthy psychological contract. In order to identify whether this was the case, a survey was issued to groups of future leaders across various public sector organisations. The outcome of the project research is a set of recommendations. These recommendations include the 'My-Why Deal Tool' which has been developed to be used by managers with future leaders as a form of regular reality check and to build mutual trust through dialogue in order to address the key elements of the psychological contract that our research identified as key to the delivery of the deal.





2. Introduction

Since the appointment of the coalition government in 2010, public sector organisations in the UK have undergone fundamental changes. The Government's focus on eliminating the UK's budget deficit has resulted in significant cuts to public spending and the knock-on effect has been felt across the public sector. Terms such as 'restructuring, de-layering, transforming and redesigning' are now common place throughout the public sector as organisations attempt to meet the needs of citizens whilst trying to balance the books. To add to this the complexity of triggering of Article 50 to begin Brexit negotiations will create a whole new period of uncertainty and instability across the public sector.

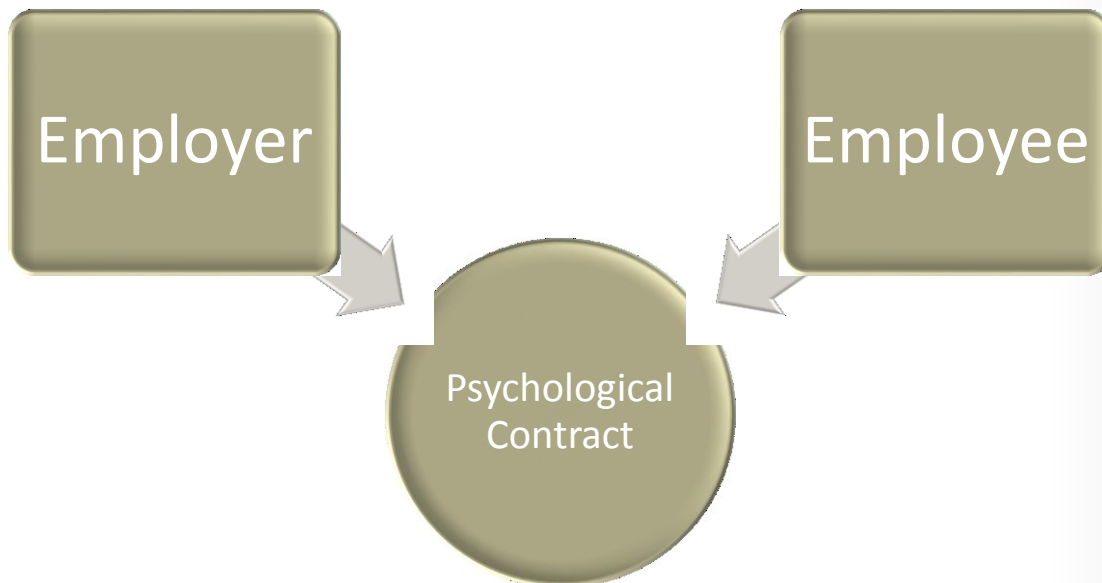
All of the above have huge workforce implications as the environment in which many public sector organisations are operating is often described as volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA). Now more than ever before, motivating and engaging staff to perform is key to transforming and delivering public services. Familiar phrases such as 'go the extra mile' and 'do more with less' highlight increasing expectations and the need to raise levels of performance in the public sector. For this reason, the state of the psychological contract between the employee and the organisation is of great importance.

This research attempts to assess whether there is a need to re-broker a deal for future leaders in the public sector. In particular it examines whether contextual factors shaping the employment relationship with a group of future leaders require a change of approach to maintain a healthy psychological contract.



3. Background

The psychological contract is used to describe the **relationship between the employee and their employer**, with specific reference to **mutual expectations of inputs and outcomes**. It has a key role in understanding organisational behaviour and a violation has individual and organisational consequences.



The Dictionary definition of 'contract' is: *'to enter agreement with (a person, company etc) to deliver (goods or services) or to do (something) on mutually agreed terms'* (Collins English Dictionary) The psychological contract differs to a physical contract or document but rather represents a 'relationship', 'trust' or 'understanding' which can be individual or apply to a group of employees.

The concept in its simplest forms is 'a set of beliefs' regarding what employees are to give and receive with respect to their employer' (Roehling 1997). It could therefore be described as the 'relationship' or 'deal' between an employee and the organisation. In order for this to be successful it needs to be understood as it can drive actions and behaviour.





Origins and History

Much is written about the psychological contract with virtually all writings published in the 1970's or 1980's containing reference to Schein and his book 'Organisational Psychology'

'The notion of a psychological contract implies that the individual has a variety of expectations of the organisation and that the organisation has a variety of expectations of him. These expectations not only cover how much work is to be performed for how much pay, but also involve that whole pattern of rights, privileges and obligations between workers and organisations. Expectations such as these are not written into any formal agreement between employer and organization, yet they operate powerfully as determinants of behaviour'

(Schein, 1965: 11)

Schein also states that ultimately the relationship between the individual and the organisation is interactive, unfolding through mutual influence and mutual bargaining to establish a workable psychological contract. The psychological contract is viewed as changing over time as the organisations' and employee's needs change requiring that the contract be constantly renegotiated.

Outcomes on Behaviour

The Psychological Contract has a key role in understanding organisational behaviour and because of this there are many connections with other behavioural models including:

- Nudge Theory
- Johari Window
- Adams Equity Theory
- General Motivational Theory including Maslow, Herzberg, McGregor
- Transactional Analysis Theory
- Cybernetics
- Adizes Corporate Life Cycle Model
- Erikson's Life Stage/Psychosocial Theory





Indeed there has been much research into the importance of maintaining a positive psychological contract and the effects of breaching this. Guest and Conway (2002) and Wellin (2007) undertook a significant amount of research and concluded that a positive psychological contract enables people to realise their potential and has a positive impact on business performance, improving employee engagement. If the state of the psychological contract is healthy and positive then this will affect the workers behaviour, therefore, you would expect them to be more satisfied, committed and secure and to display higher motivation, higher attendance and less inclination to leave the organisation.

On the other hand, a 'psychological contract breach' is defined as an employee's perception that his or her organisation has failed to fulfil one or more obligations associated with perceived mutual promises (Gakovic & Tetrick, 2003). The CIPD (2017) recognises some of the outcomes on behaviour if the psychological contract is broken as having a negative impact on job satisfaction; on the commitment and engagement of employees; on employee well-being and on employee turnover.

Psychological contract theory supports this view explaining that a violation of the contract can have serious consequences for the employment relationship including resentment and feelings of betrayal, anger, decreased employee motivation, job dissatisfaction, reduced commitment, turnover, employee initiated litigation and unionization efforts (Schein 1980, Cole 1981, Tomar 1988 and Rosseau 1989)

We know that the psychological contracts first emerge during pre-employment negotiation and are refined during the initial period of employment. A background review of literature provides little agreement about the content of the psychological contract at various stages of the employee lifecycle. However, a common theme is the focus on the heart of the psychological contract being a 'philosophy' not a process, tool or formula. It is believed there are three key areas at the heart of the contract and these are:

- 1) Fairness of the Deal**
- 2) Delivery of the Deal**
- 3) Trust in Management to deliver on Promises**



Causes and consequences of the psychological contract



FIGURE 1 TOWERS, 1997

The 'Old' Deal versus the 'New' Deal

There is considerable discussion in literature surrounding the proposition that 'old' contracts have been replaced by the 'new' contract and this is having a negative impact on the employment relationship. Academics describe traditional psychological contracts being related to organisations with stability, security and growth meaning that there was a view that such workforces are permanent, guaranteed long term and secure employment.



Kissier (1994) refers to this as 'The Old Deal' and highlights the following characteristics.

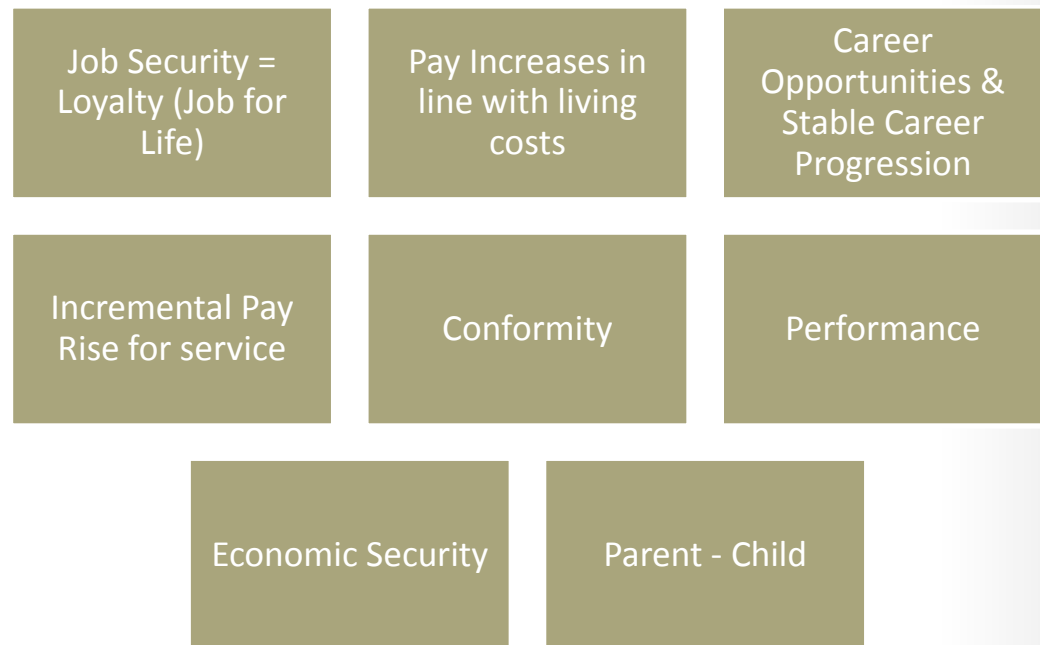


FIGURE 2 KISSIER, 1994

In comparison, today's organisations' have limited opportunities for progression and employees no longer find that job security can be guaranteed even for good performers. This is particularly prevalent in the public sector with the factors affecting 'The Deal' or 'promises and commitments' include:

- Redundancies
- Downsizing
- Austerity
- Pension Reform
- Reorganisations/Restructure
- Technology



There are several theorists who refer to a significant revision in psychological contract provisions with a move away from the exchange of cooperation, conformity and performance for tenure and economic security to a move to employees creating their own opportunities to look after themselves. The 'New Deal' is seemingly characterized by churn and the expectation that individuals will have multiple roles with possibly different organisations with the focus on individual responsibility for developing skills.

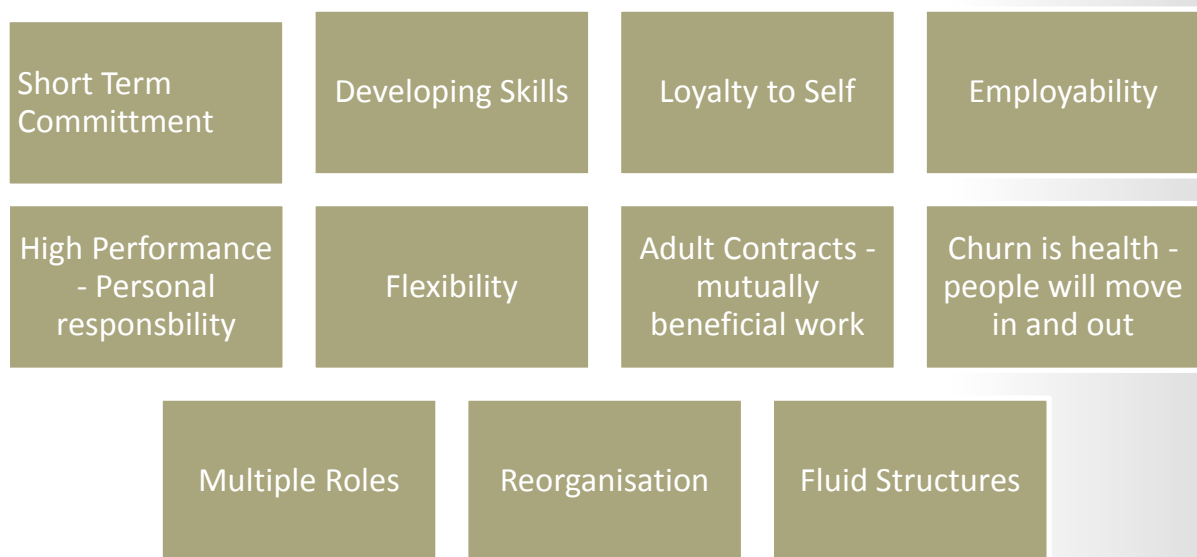


FIGURE 3 HERRIOT AND PEMBERTON, 1997

The expectations, beliefs and obligations on the part of the employer have no doubt changed and are likely to continue to do so. This does not however necessarily mean that the psychological contract has been broken as there is also research to suggest that employees expectations, beliefs and obligations have also shifted. It is easy to find an example of how psychological contracts can vary dramatically, depending on employers business circumstances and





core ideology.

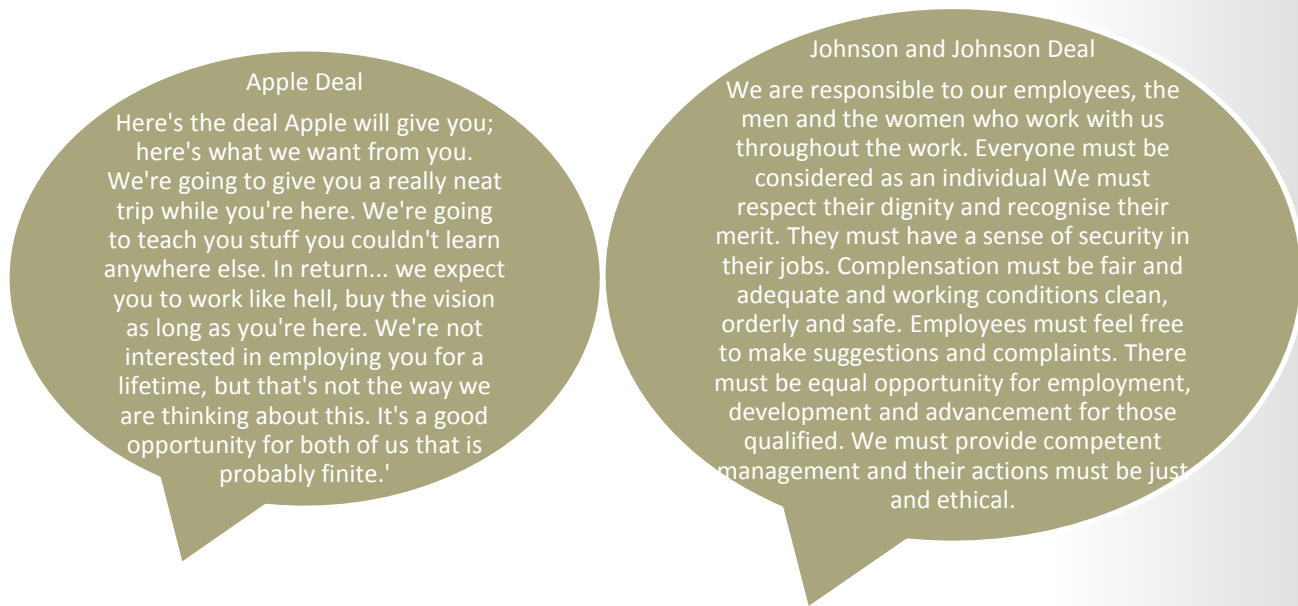
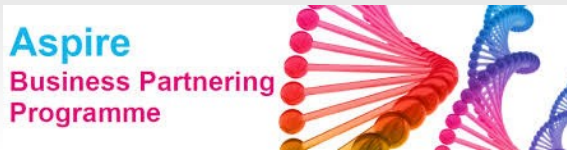


FIGURE 4 APPLE DEAL VERSUS JOHNSON AND JOHNSON DEAL

The CIPD highlights the significance of the psychological contract and that it is not a 'pink and fluffy thing' advising us that 'You need to define it, measure it and close the perception and delivery gaps'. This principle was the basis for exploring perception and delivery gaps in the public sector and asking ourselves whether a 'New Deal' should be re-brokered for our future leaders.





4. Objectives

As outlined earlier in the report, there has been much written about the psychological contract over the last 40 years. Therefore there is a significant volume of research, theory, ideologies, etc. on our chosen project area. It quickly became apparent that there was a requirement for the group to focus on a specific element of this topic '*Future Leaders*'.

In setting clear, specific objectives we considered the original project title – 'Do we need to broker a new deal for Future Leaders in the public sector'. It is thought that the traditional career paths that once existed in the public sector and 'a job for life' are no longer considered common features of working for the public sector.

We also thought it would be important to understand both the current and future shape of the psychological contract and the drivers for this, given the perceived shift in public sector working, values and behaviours.

We considered how research could help us to understand these changes and their impact and how recommendations could be made by the project group to inform future actions by employers. In considering this, we explored the contributions different groups of existing public sector employees could offer to inform this research.

Finally, we considered whether the outcomes of this research could be put to effective use by employers going forward. In summary, the objectives for the project were agreed as follows:-

- 1. To ascertain whether there is a requirement to broker a new deal for future leaders in the public sector given the changing shape of the public sector and traditional career paths.**
- 2. To understand the current and future shape/elements of the psychological contract.**
- 3. To report findings of research undertaken.**
- 4. To make recommendations to inform future actions by employers.**





5. Scope

In this study, we analyse the views of various sections of public sector organisations with the aim of ascertaining whether there is a requirement to broker a new deal for future leaders in the public sector and to understand the current and future shape of the psychological contract.

In order to substantiate our project, questionnaires were compiled and data collected through an anonymous survey open from 21/02/17 – 28/04/17. The questionnaire was circulated using Survey Monkey to:

- 1. Graduates at Wirral Borough Council**
- 2. Graduates at Warrington Hospital**
- 3. Participants of the North West Employers Emerging Leaders programme**
- 4. Managers currently working at Halton Borough Council who have completed the North West Employers Emerging Leaders Programme.**
- 5. Greater Manchester Police New Recruits**

Participants were therefore graduates in two public sector organisations, new recruits to the police service and delivery managers and practitioners of HR with managerial responsibility. The reason for collecting data from this group is that they could be considered to be future leaders in the public sector and therefore we wanted to understand their view of the psychological contract and what this means for employers.

A total of 41 responses to the survey were received which gave a really good cross section of all groups and a substantial base for our findings.

A review was undertaken of relevant literature and research already produced, to identify whether there were any learnings we could take from this. The research informed our approach to focus on the public sector as the private sector has not faced the same levels of austerity as the public sector.





Stakeholders

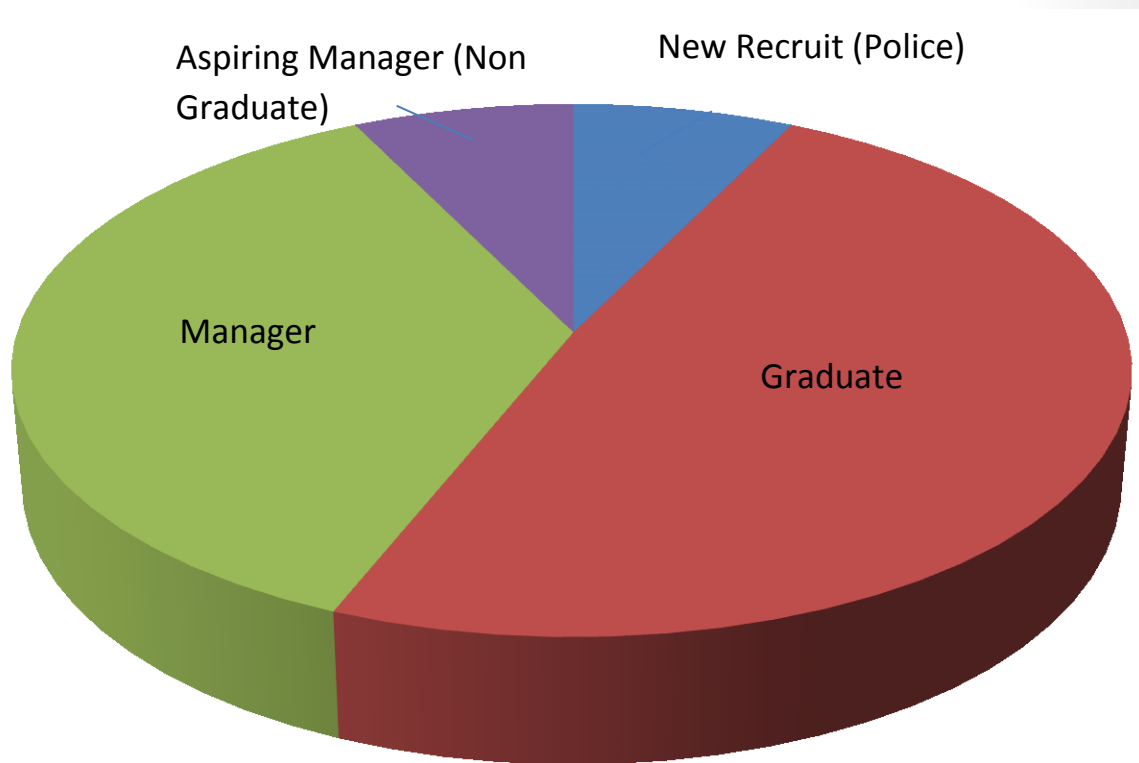
The project mentor is Richard Rout, Divisional Manager: Policy, People, Performance & Efficiency Enterprise, Community & Resources Directorate, Halton Borough Council. The project mentor has provided motivation and guidance required to develop the report and prepare for a formal presentation.



6. Research

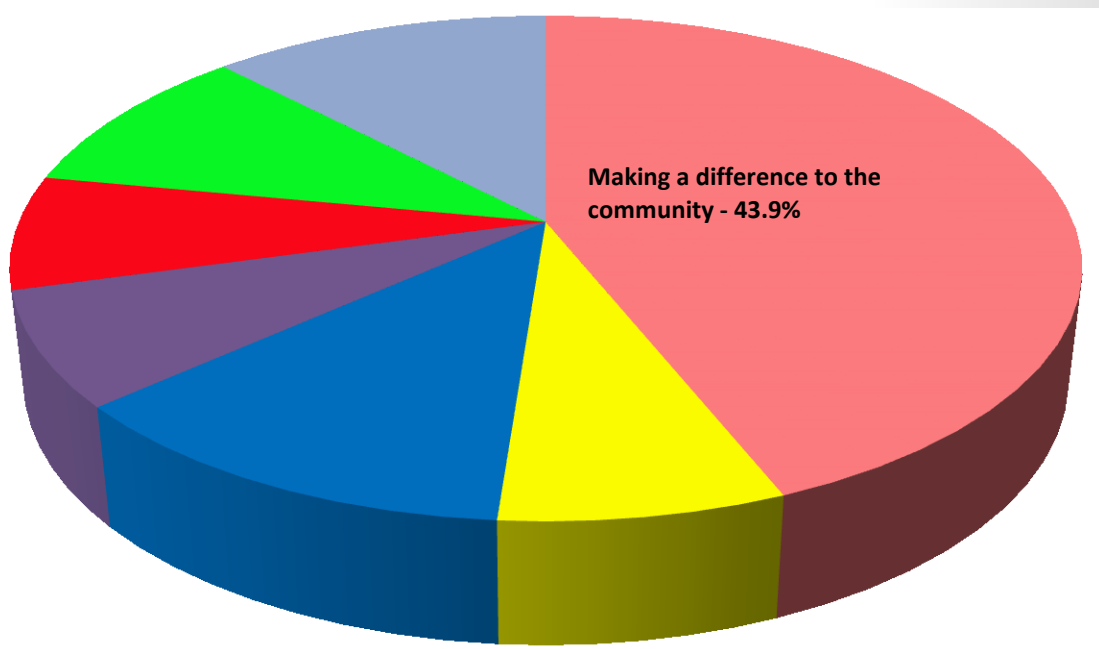
Research findings obtained from responses to the survey questionnaire have been presented and collated below. The survey was completed by 41 respondents from public sector organisations.

Response by level of role



48.78% responses were from graduates. 36.59% were from manager and 7.32% from aspiring managers. 7.32% were from new recruits. Not all questions were completed by all respondents and this is highlighted below.

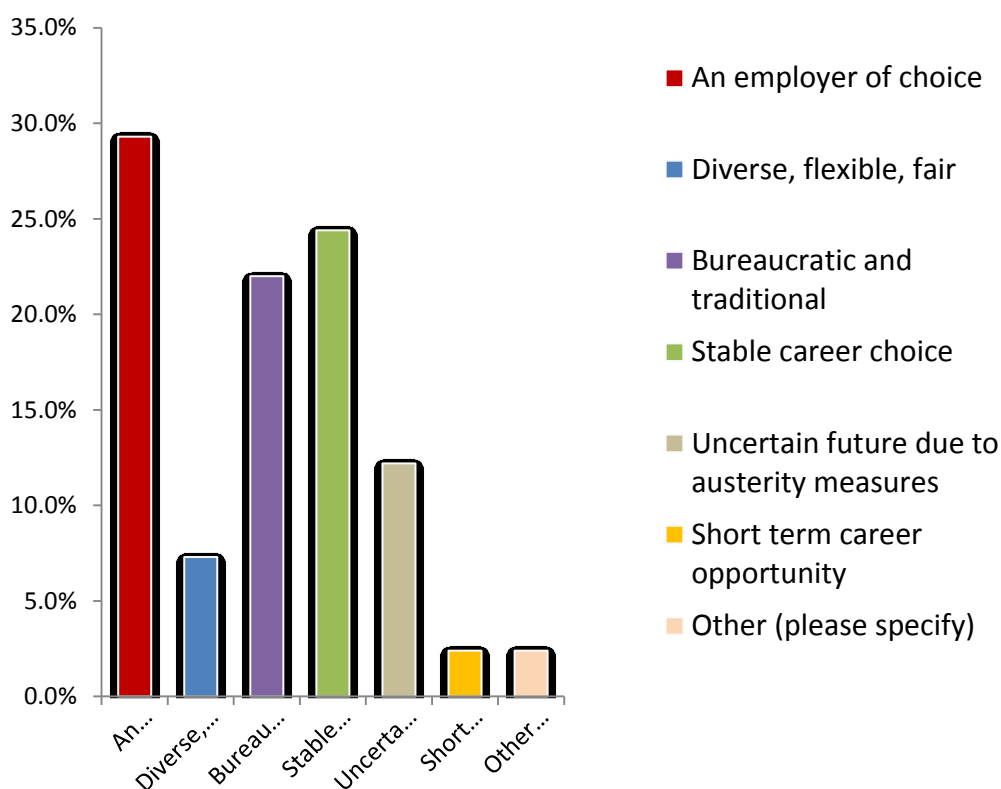
What attracted you to working for the public sector?



All of the 41 participants responded to this question. 43.9% of respondents stated that the reason they were attracted to the public sector was to make a difference in the community. This highlights that a public sector ethos remains and this is still the key reason why people wish to work in this sector. 12.2 % of respondents stated that job security and stability was the key attraction to the public sector, showing that there is still a view that working in the public sector is a secure career choice. On analyzing the data, it was managers with over 10 years' service who chose this answer. A number of graduates and a new recruit cited career progression and developing skills for future employability as their reason for joining the public sector.



What was your view of the public sector prior to joining?



All of the 41 participants responded to this question. The view of the public sector varied but the two top reasons were that it is an employer of choice (29.3%) and that it is a stable career choice (24.4%). There was also a view that the public sector was bureaucratic and traditional (22%).

Of the 29.3% who felt the public sector was a stable career choice, the majority were managers or aspiring managers who had been employed for 6 years or more. The more recently employed graduates and new recruits felt the public sector was an employer of choice.





Were you clear about the intrinsic benefits that your employer was offering (things other than pay, pension, holidays)?

There were 36 responses to this question. 52.78% of the respondents replied yes to this question, and 47.22% replied that they were not clear on the intrinsic benefits that their employer was offering.

The results provide no correlation around the groupings of future leaders and therefore it is likely that the difference in responses relate to different employers and how clear they are from the outset about the intrinsic benefits. For those individuals who were clear around the offer this was mainly around career development and learning.

Has this view of the public sector changed since starting employment?

41.46% responded that their view of the public sector had changed and 51.22% replied that it had not.

Of those who responded that their view had changed the majority felt that this centred around uncertainty due to financial constraints. One individual felt that job security was no longer there and another stated that the organisation they worked for was, 'uncertain and not secure.'



Features of employment in order of importance

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Good leadership/trust in management	6	3	3	9	10	8
2. Skills development for future employability	7	4	7	3	9	9
3. Long term employability/stability	9	1	8	7	4	10
3. Pay and benefits	5	11	7	10	2	5
4. Influence/control over my role	4	11	6	6	9	4
6. Effective communication and engagement	8	9	8	5	6	4

40 participants answered this question

Skills development and future employability was chosen by 18 respondents as their first or second choice for most important feature of employment. Good leadership and trust in management was also important, with 18 respondents choosing this as their first or second feature of employment.

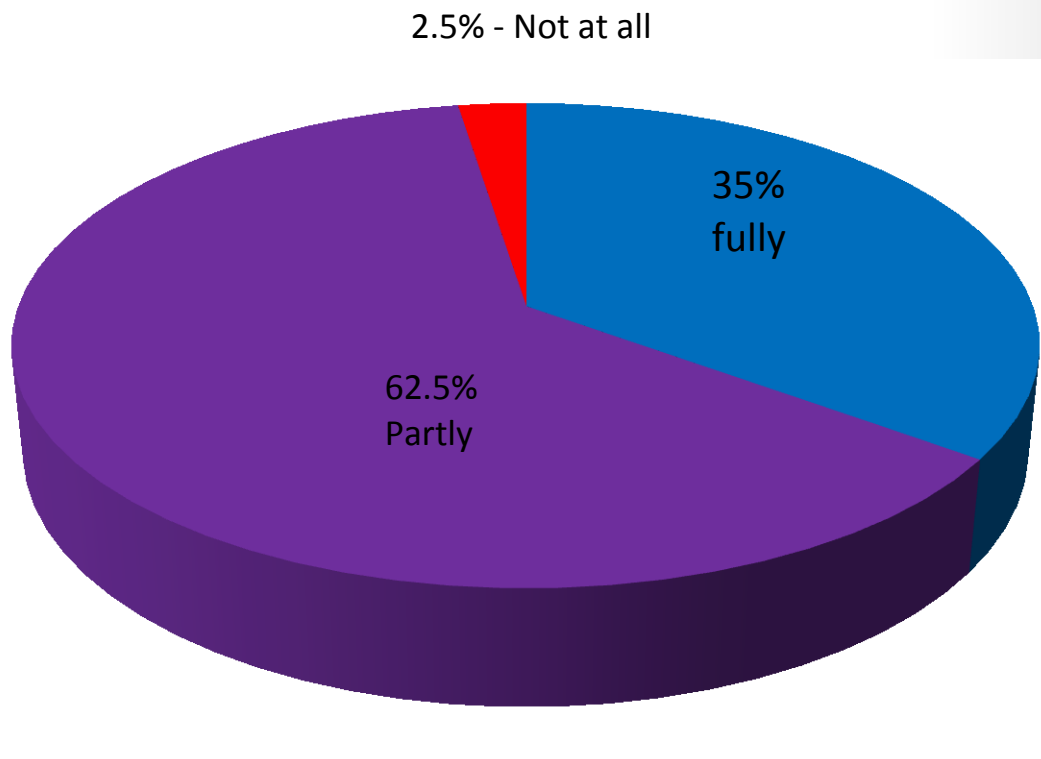
Long term employability / stability was chosen by 10 respondents as their most important feature of employment.



16 respondents stated that pay and benefits were less important to them, placing them at the lowest two choices, and similarly influence/control over ones roles was the least important to 15 respondents.

This question did not provide any real correlation between the groups of future leaders and highlighted the individual nature of what employees value in terms of employment.

How do you feel your employer has fulfilled your expectations since commencing your role?



62.5% of respondents stated that their employer had partly fulfilled their expectations since commencing in the role, with 35% saying they had fully met them and 2.5% stating that they had not been met at all.



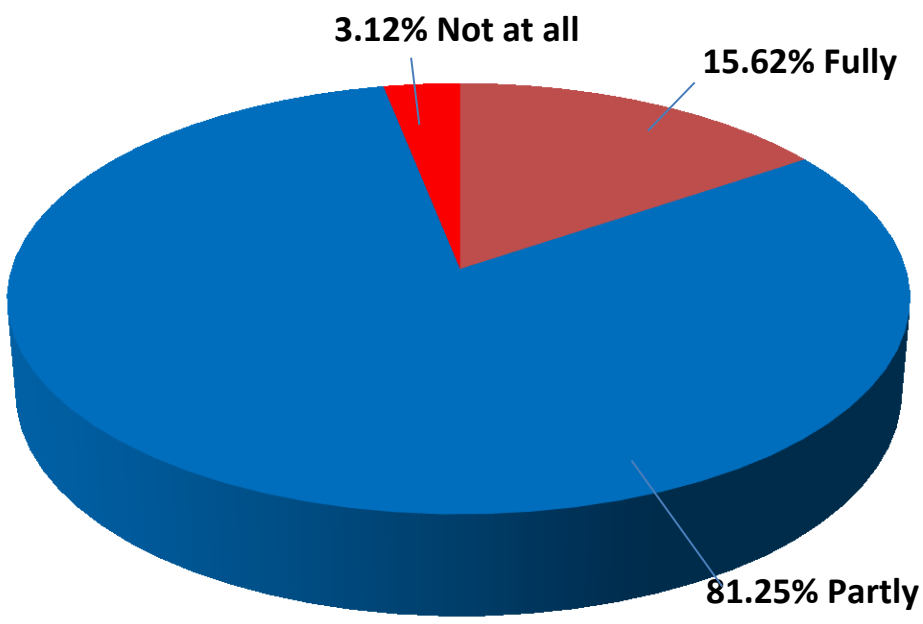


The very low number of respondents who felt that their employer had not met their expectations stated that they had not received what had been promised and had not found the work engaging.

The majority of individuals felt their expectations had been met partly and the reasons for this varied. A lack of engagement was cited by one individual and another felt they were, 'unsure of the role' at times. The final reason given for the employer only partly meeting expectations was around development and support not always being provided.

Of those individuals who felt that their employer had fully met their expectations, the comments made were linked to personal development opportunities provided.

To what extent do you trust your senior management to look after your best interests?



32 responses were received to this question. 81.25% of respondents stated that they partly trusted senior management to look after their best interests,

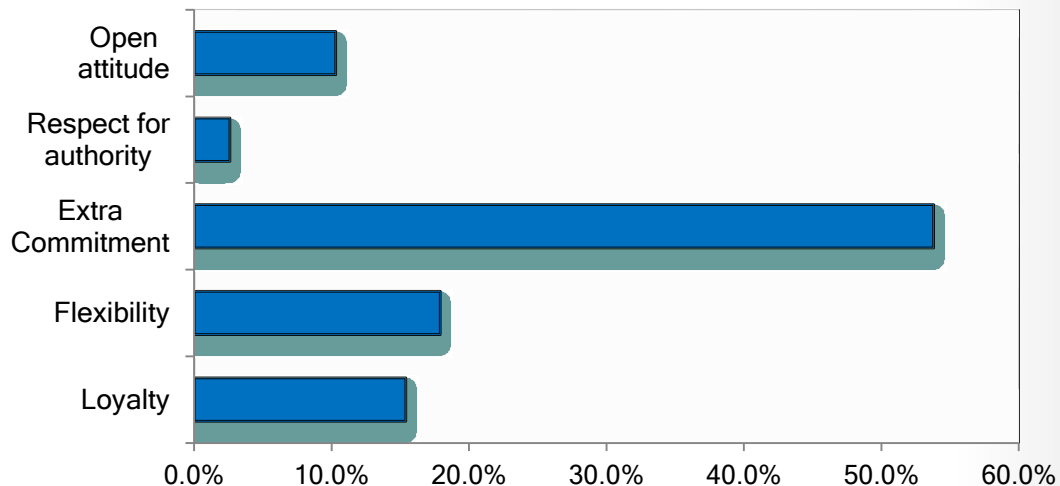




3.12% stated that they did not have trust in senior management and 15.62 % said they fully trusted senior management.

The evidence suggested that whilst there was trust in immediate line management, there was an understanding that senior management's priority was to the business, or the 'bigger picture', rather than individuals (aspiring manager comments). One respondent stated that there was sometime lack of engagement with employees (graduate) and another stated that senior management seem to be out of touch with those 'on the ground' (graduate). One respondent stated that there was 'a gulf between workers and senior management' (manager).

What is the most important thing you are prepared to offer if all of your expected entitlements are met?



39 responses to this question were received. 53.8% of respondents confirmed that the most important thing they were prepared to offer was extra commitment and 17.9% confirmed it was flexibility. The lowest score was for respect for authority.





In your experience in your organisation what are the things you expect from your employer.

Answer Options	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Reasonable demands and manageable workloads	7	6	4	2	6	9
2. Personal Control over work	12	3	9	5	3	2
3. Support from supervisors or colleagues	2	6	1	7	8	10
4. Positive relationships at work	6	3	7	9	7	3
5. Reasonably clear role	4	6	8	5	6	6
6. Involvement in changes affecting you	3	10	6	7	4	4

35 Participants responded to this question.

18 respondents stated that support from supervisors or colleagues was the first or second most important things to them in terms of what to expect from their employer. Reasonable demands and management workloads was also rated highly.

12 respondents stated that personal control over work was the least important thing that they expect from their employer, with only two stating this was the most important.





7. Summary of Findings

There were a number of factors which were highlighted through the survey results as being heavy influences of a positive employment relationship and healthy psychological contract.

The role of the line manager

One of the three key components contributing to the psychological contract is the trust to deliver promises. (Towers 1997) This suggests that the role of the both line managers and senior managers is paramount to maintaining a healthy psychological contract. The survey results indicate that 21% of respondents saying that good leadership and trust in management was the most important feature of their employment.

Job security in the public sector

It is widely accepted that the changing nature of the public sector has resulted in an environment which is more financially unstable and uncertain which in turn has impacted on job security and the notion of a job for life. The results from the survey around the expectations of job security differ between the different groups of future leaders.

In the main, those who stated that they had joined the public sector for job stability were largely the groups who had been working within the public sector for a longer period of time. Interestingly, however, even though many had cited their view of the public sector had changed during their employment, there seemed to be a general acceptance of this as it wasn't cited as being the most important feature of their employment. Only two of the more recently employed graduates and none of the new recruits expected job security or stable employment prior to starting with their organisations. In fact when asked about their perception prior to starting, many stated that they believed there was uncertainty due to austerity measures and their expectations centred more on developing their own skills and learning.

This shows a clear shift in expectations for those staff who have started in employment more recently however also indicates that the expectations of





those who have been employed more longer-term have shifted but not necessarily resulted in a negative outcome.

Public Sector ethos, helping the community

This was overwhelmingly the most cited reason that future leaders were attracted to work in the public sector both for those who had been employed for a number of years and the more recent appointments. In comparison to many organisations in the private sector this is quite a unique selling point that the public sector has to offer. It is therefore important that current leaders and managers understand this expectation and are able to engage and connect future leaders to see how they contribute and make a difference to the communities in which they work.

Individuality of the psychological contract

Whilst there were many trends which emerged particularly from different workforce groups, the survey has shown that expectations are individual and therefore it is important to remember that whilst some generalisations can be made the psychological contract is about the beliefs and mutual expectations between an individual and the organisation and therefore current leaders and managers within the public sector need to understand the expectations of each of their future leaders to ensure the psychological contract remains positive. What is also clear from the survey is that these can also shift and change over time so mechanisms and systems to check this need to be developed and embedded to ensure a healthy employment relationship is maintained.

Learning and development

Herriot and Pemberton (1997) suggest that in terms of the psychological contract, a 'new deal' exists and some features within this are developing skills, employability and loyalty to self. The survey of future leaders provided some evidence of this as 'skills development and future employability' was cited by almost half of respondents as being the most or second most important feature of their employment.





8. Conclusions

The study has explored whether we need to broker a new deal for future leaders in the public sector and whether contextual factors shaping the employment relationships with a group of future leaders required a change of approach to maintain a healthy psychological contract.

From the research conducted, it is clear that motivating and engaging staff is key to the delivery of the psychological contract and the state of the psychological contract is of great importance to employers and employees.

We found that the 'old deal' related to organisations with stability, security and growth meaning there was a view that such workforces are permanent, guaranteed and involve long term and secure employment. By contrast, the 'new deal' involves constant shifts and focusses more on individuals creating their own opportunities and looking after themselves. It is therefore, by nature, more concerned with individualism rather than a more generic psychological contract that applies to all.

What has been clear through our research, is that beliefs on what constitutes a healthy psychological contract has shifted on both the part of the employer and the employee, and can vary dependant on business circumstances. This therefore does not mean that the psychological contract is necessarily broken or needs re-brokering. Our research and findings suggest that on the whole the future leaders who have been working in the public sector for a number of years, did view the psychological contract in the form of the 'old' or traditional deal in that when they joined they viewed it as a stable career choice and potentially a 'job for life' but that this may have shifted over time, but this has not had a detrimental impact on their view of the deal. By contrast those future leaders who have joined more recently have a different view of the psychological contract and one that reflects the current state of the public sector with contextual factors playing a significant part.

Our findings have shown that in order for employers to ensure that the psychological contract is not broken, there are some key factors that they need to consider and implement. Firstly, that there is good leadership and trust in management. Secondly, that current leaders and managers





understand that making a difference in the community is still one of the main reasons why future leaders are attracted to working in the public sector, and therefore they need to be able to engage and connect future leaders to see how they contribute and make a difference to the communities in which they work. They need to ensure that there is a focus on developing skills, employability and loyalty to self, as this is key to the 'new' deal. They also need to understand the expectations of each of their future leaders to ensure the psychological contract remains positive, as our research found that expectations are individual and relate to the individual and the organisation.

As public sector organisations increasingly look towards more integrated place based models of working, it may be inevitable that the offer from employers become more aligned as future leaders are identified for their potential within the public sector rather than within an organisation. The future may be thinking about the psychological contract between an employee and the public sector rather than the employee and the organisation.

What is clear from our study is that although the public sector is changing and will continue to do so, there appears to be an understanding by future leaders of what that change involves and what the mutual employer/employee expectations are. This would suggest therefore that there is no requirement to broker a new deal with future leaders, but it is necessary for employers to ensure they have mechanisms and systems in place to check that there is an ongoing healthy employment relationship.





9. Recommendations

Although the conclusion from the research indicates there is not a need to re-broker a deal for future leaders in the public sector, there a number of recommendations for public sector employers to ensure the psychological contract remains healthy. Our recommendations are based around four key areas.

My Manager

- Public sector organisations need to ensure leaders and managers are aware of the importance of their role in understanding and managing expectations, particularly with future leaders.
- Discussions around these expectations need to be taking place from the first interactions at the recruitment stage and on-boarding, through to supervisions, one to ones and appraisals.
- Managers need to be prepared to listen to employees and two-way communication is essential to undertake a 'reality check' and as a basis for building trust.

My Community

- Given the main reason that future leaders joined the public sector was to make a difference to the community, employers and managers need to ensure there is a constant connect for these individuals to recognise their part in this. Quite often, particularly within support functions, this can be harder to determine but failure to do so could have a detrimental impact for this key group of the workforce.

My Expectations

- During the unstable climate which the public sector now operates it is inevitable that breaches of the psychological contract will occur. It is important that if this happens, discussion takes place so any new deal can be renegotiated, understood and accepted by all parties.





My Skills and Development

- The shift towards the new deal has clearly removed from the notion of 'a job for life'. Many future leaders indicated an expectation from the organisation to develop skills for future employability. Public sector organisations need to respond to this and recognise that investment in personal development may have much more short-term benefit for the organisation, however the offer of this is certainly a recruitment incentive and delivery of this may entice many future leaders to remain in employment.

In order to structure these recommendations around four key areas, our group developed a practical tool called the **'MY-WHY Deal'** Tool. This is a tool that promotes and supports the importance of communication and dialogue in which managers are prepared to listen to employees. It helps managers in the public sector to focus on the the relationship between the employee and the employer and will help to draw out discretionary behaviour. It is aimed at keeping the psychological construct healthy and balanced. (Appendix 1 and Appendix 2)

The 'MY-WHY DEAL' Tool



Appendices

Appendix 1

The 'MY-WHY DEAL' Tool

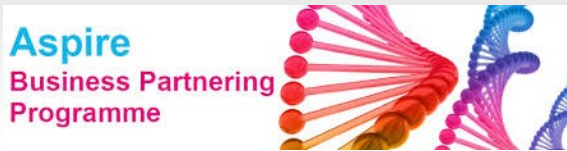


Appendix 2

THE 'MY-WHY DEAL' TOOL

The 'MY-WHY Deal' Tool is an individual tool to help managers focus on the the relationship between the employee and the employer in the public sector. It is aimed at keeping the psychological construct healthy and balanced through encouraging dialogue in which managers are prepared to listen to employees.





The tool can be used as often as needed and has the potential to underpin and help managers to structure discussion and dialogue on a regular basis. It is a visual reminder to help managers focus on the fairness and delivery of the deal and more specifically build trust because it is based on the areas that we know our future leaders value as being most important in the public sector. Using the tool can prompt discussion, focus dialogue and remind managers to check and balance key aspects of the employment relationship on a regular basis. It is based on the principles of our research which is 'if you understand it' you can drive actions and behaviours.

This model can be used for one to one conversations, wellbeing discussions, appraisals or annual performance reviews, recruitment and selection and career planning and development. It is centred on focusing on the 'MY' (I will give or I need) to work out the 'WHY' (I will receive in return). The purpose being if this tool is used on a regular basis, this will enable the manager to adapt to the changing needs of the individual and the dynamic nature of the public sector operating in the VUCA environment. The key principles of the 'MY-WHY Deal' Tool can be used in times of stability, or through change and turbulence to focus on the input and output of the relationship between the employee and the employer. We know this is individual and can constantly shift.

The Four elements of the tool are based on the research and our findings. They are:

- My Manager

Support from supervisors or a colleague was the first or second most important thing in terms of what to expect from their employer identified in our survey. The role of the line manager is paramount to a healthy psychological contract. Reasonable demands and management workloads was also rated highly therefore a discussion that prompts a review of whether the manager can do anything differently or indeed whether the individual needs a different level of help and support will prove significant in an attempt to regularly balance employee and employer needs and wants.

- My Role





Employees needs change requiring that the contract be constantly renegotiated. Structuring a discussion directly with the individual around how they view their role and whether they can clearly see the alignment this has with the vision and strategy of the organisation is in line with the principles of maintaining a healthy employment relationship, it provides the employer with an opportunity to demonstrate support. This is key because we know from our results that a lack of demonstrable support can be a reason for needs not being met.

- My Community

The public sector ethos remains the key reason behind our future leaders career choice. It is imperative that we engage and connect future leaders to help them to continue to see how they contribute and make a difference to the communities in which they work and remind them of the reason for their career choice.

- My Skills and Development

Career progression and the development of future skills enable our future leaders to realise their potential and have a positive impact on business performance. It is expected that through regular focus on this element of the new deal then the perception will be that individuals are supported in their quest to self-develop and equip them with skills for future employability.

Overall asking key questions around these four aspects will help managers to focus on the employment relationship and meeting the expectations of individuals.

