PeopleInsight

Merseyside Fire and Rescue

Employee Survey Insights

Jan 2025

MERSEYSIDE FIRE & RESCUE SERVICE

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Agenda

1. Survey themes overview
2. Employee engagement score
3. Key drivers
4. Highlights and lowlights
5. Focus and next steps

Survey response rate

41%

422 / 1030

responses

Vs. 32% in 2022

Changes since the last survey that has had a positive impact on people

Knowing that if we needed to **we could work from home** on occasions, and for some who need it can work from home on a regular basis

Training manager within fire control. I feel this role builds my confidence knowing if I needed extra training or didn't feel confident in a particular area that I could go to the training officer. After incidents like Grenfell and Manchester I feel this is a really important role to ensure our training is always up to date and implemented as it should be.

The new **TDA and NR building** has been a huge success and makes me feel really proud of MSFRS

The **organisation listened**, eventually, to concerns around the **duty system in control** and made positive changes.

The **open acknowledgement the culture** could be better. We are improving but the recognition we can be better opens conversations.

Diversity of thought, **more people willing to contribute in discussion**, and providing options, solutions and opinions

The new **Training and Development** site provides more capacity for training.

Higher management are working on ways for improvements to be made. I understand that this takes time.

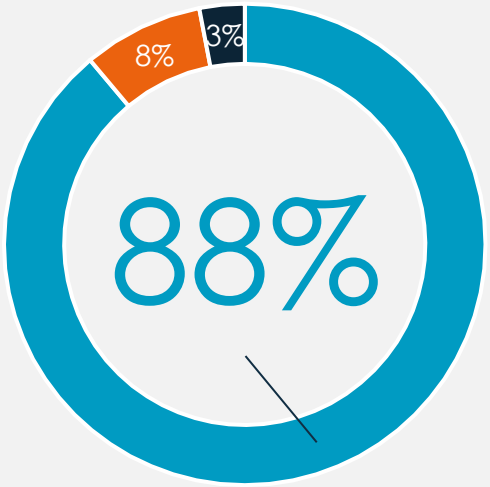
Survey Themes

Back on track results

- Themes primarily jumping back up to some of the strengths we saw a few years ago
- Themes primarily back on being above the FRS benchmark
- Two themes slightly below the external FRS benchmark

THEME	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (favourable / neutral / unfavourable)			VS FRS bmk	Vs. 2022
Goal Clarity	91%	7%	2%	+12	+6
Engagement	88%	8%	3%	+7	+3
My Job	82%	10%	8%	+5	+2
Health and Wellbeing	77%	10%	14%	n/a	+2
Belonging	76%	14%	10%	+10	n/a
Learning & Development	74%	14%	12%	0	-3
Employee Involvement	74%	14%	12%	+6	+1
Teamwork	73%	16%	11%	+3	+7
Culture & Values	72%	16%	12%	+5	+3
Recognition & Reward	70%	18%	12%	n/a	-4
Management Effectiveness	69%	19%	12%	-1	+1
Change Management	63%	24%	13%	n/a	+6

Engagement levels are strong and above the norm

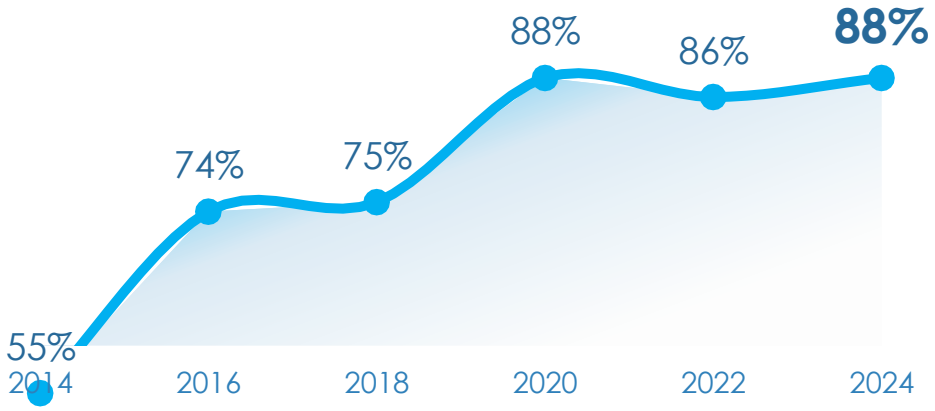


■ Positive ■ Neutral ■ Negative

+8 Vs. FRS benchmark

+3 Vs. 2022

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)	Vs. FRS bmk	Vs. 2022
I am proud to say I work for MFRS	90% 8% 2%	+6	+3
I care about the future of MFRS	96% 4%	+2	0
I would still like to be working at MFRS in two years' time	84% 10% 5%	+6	0
If asked, I would recommend to friends and family that MFRS is a good place to work	82% 11% 6%	+13	+8
Working here makes me want to do the best I can	89% 8% 3%	+7	+2



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Key Drivers

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)			Vs. FRS bmk	Vs. 2022
I have confidence in the future of MFRS	75%	16%	9%	n/a	+15
I feel valued	66%	19%	15%	+10	n/a
MFRS is a better place to work than it was 3 years ago (If you have not worked at MFRS for 3 years, please skip this question)	51%	37%	12%	n/a	+8
Senior leaders make the effort to listen to staff	61%	24%	15%	+12	n/a
The Chief Fire Officer and strategic leadership team provide a clear vision of the overall direction of MFRS	83%	14%	4%	+26	+15

Engagement

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Highlights

Highest scoring

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)			VS FRS bmk	VS 2022
I understand how the work I do helps MFRS to achieve its Purpose	95%	4%	1%	+8	0
I understand our Vision, Our Purpose, Our Aims and Our Values	95%	4%	2%	+12	+7
I am aware of the support services available through the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team	94%		6%	n/a	-2
I know what I should do and what action I should take if I was concerned that bullying and harassment were taking place	94%	5%	2%	n/a	+2
I have a good understanding of MFRS's expectations of staff behaviour	93%	5%	2%	n/a	n/a

Most above the FRS benchmark

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)			VS FRS bmk	VS 2022
The Chief Fire Officer and strategic leadership team provide a clear vision of the overall direction of MFRS	83%	14%	4%	+26	+15
I understand our Vision, Our Purpose, Our Aims and Our Values	95%	4%	2%	+12	+7
Senior leaders make the effort to listen to staff	61%	24%	15%	+12	n/a
I feel valued	66%	19%	15%	+10	n/a
I am able to use my own initiative at work (where appropriate to do my job)	86%	9%	5%	+9	+1

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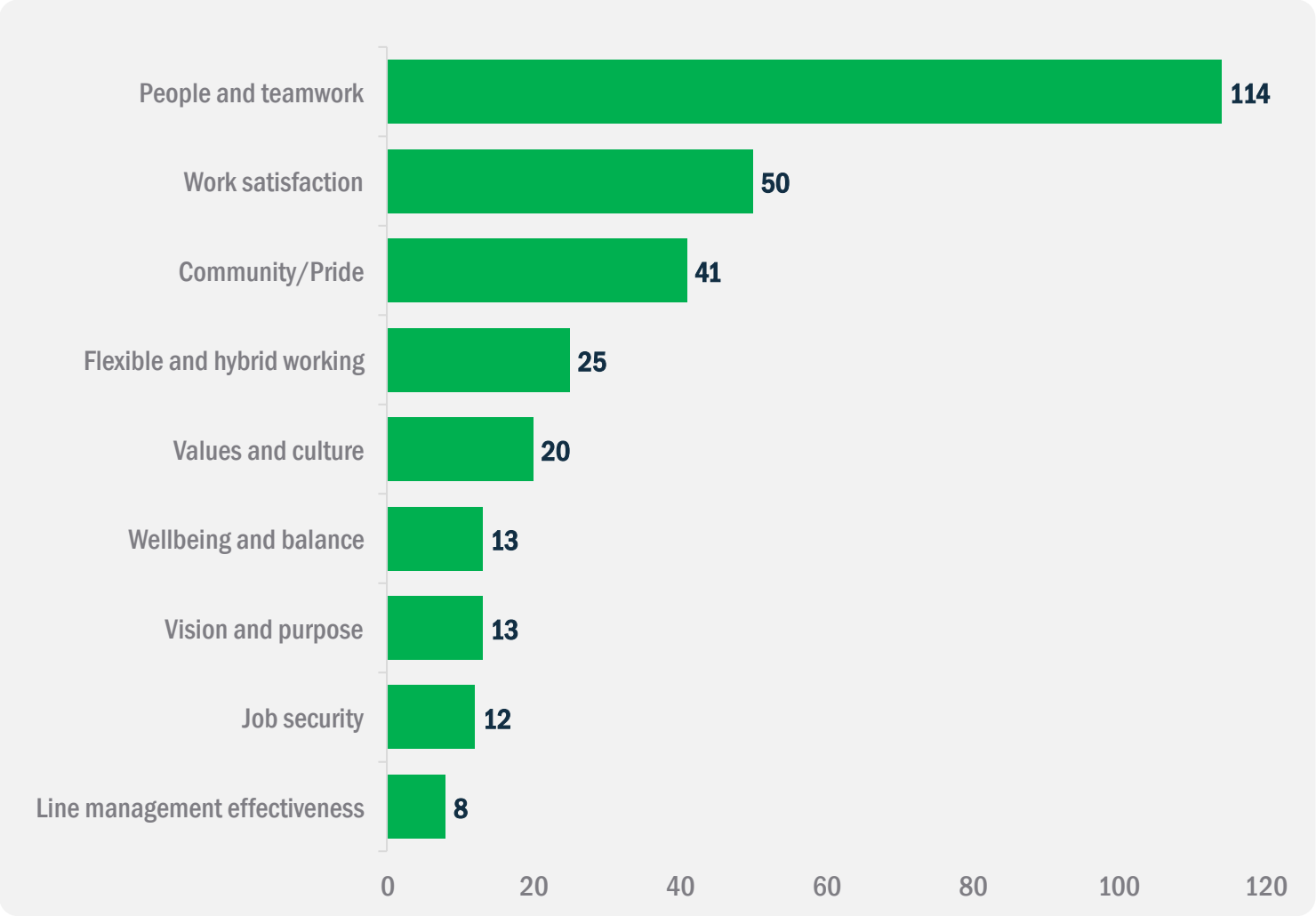
What is the best thing about working here?

> Huge feeling of pride whenever i put the uniform and speak to our communities. they recognise we are a trusted organisation and are happy to engage with us whenever they get the chance.

> There is generally a good atmosphere and providing you engage, there is plenty of opportunity to get involved with things, including community activity, volunteering and development provided it is relevant to ones role

> The people - I enjoy working with my team and the wider team. Everyone supports one another and makes time to listen.

> The job is varied, interesting and exciting at times. There are a lot of decent, moral and honest personnel



Lowlights

Lowest scoring

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)			VS FRS bmk	Vs. 2022
Members of the Fire and Rescue Authority engage well with staff at MFRS	40%	36%	24%	n/a	+1
I feel that MFRS consider the impact on me and other people when making decisions	44%	32%	24%	n/a	0
MFRS helps staff prepare for and cope with change	46%	35%	19%	n/a	+4
Senior managers do what they say they are going to do	49%	32%	19%	n/a	+1
MFRS is a better place to work than it was 3 years ago (only for those that have worked here 3 years ago)	51%	37%	12%	n/a	+8

Most below the FRS benchmark

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)			VS FRS bmk	Vs. 2022
I feel MFRS treats people fairy, regardless of individual differences (e.g. ethnic background, gender….)	71%	14%	15%	-2	-5
My line manager gives me regular feedback on how I am doing	69%	18%	12%	-2	-1
My line manager treats me fairly and with respect	88%	9%	3%	0	-1
I have good quality equipment to help me do my job	69%	18%	13%	0	-9

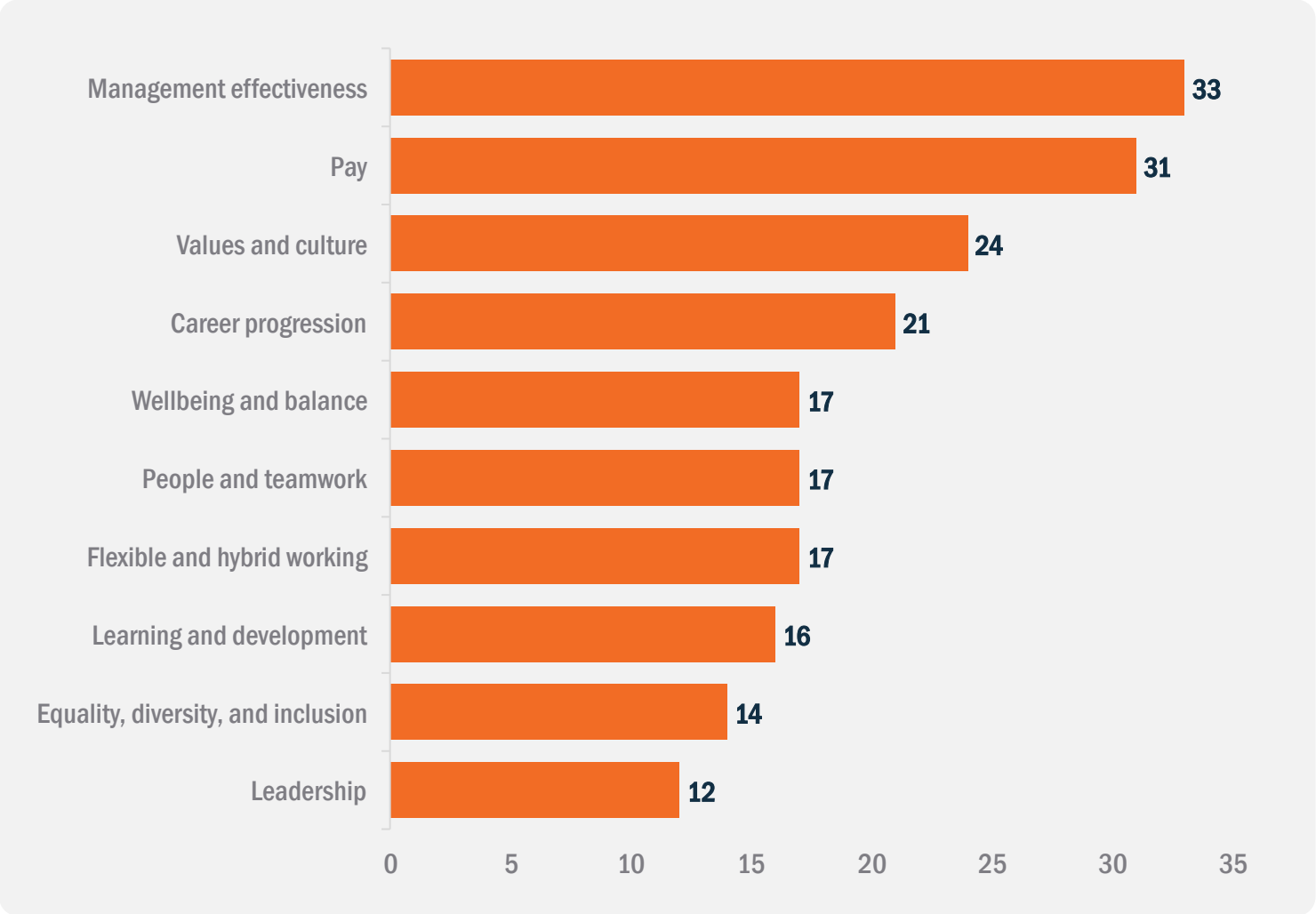
What one thing would you change about working here?

.... that senior managers have better training in people management. Most problems are caused by poor people skills and communication

SM to be in charge of station or function not both. Poor work life balance and conflicting demands from GM's

Pay scales and holiday allocation. These are very dated and need to be looked at again with regards to life/work balance and morale at work. The grading is also very dated.

...reviewing its established way of doing things and communicating with subordinates - directing v enabling, informing v consulting, and being more willing....to explain the rationale behind certain systems, processes and decisions. The culture of explaining things by saying, 'that's just how it gets done', or, 'it's already been decided', or 'don't shoot the messenger' could be done with a tweak or two.



Most improved since 2022

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (favourable / neutral / unfavourable)			Vs. 2022
I have confidence in the future of MFRS	75%	16%	9%	+15
The Chief Fire Officer and strategic leadership team provide a clear vision of the overall direction of MFRS	83%	14%	4%	+15
I am communicated with about change that affects me	72%	19%	9%	+14
We are good at sharing ideas to make things work better	77%	13%	10%	+11
Morale in my immediate team/watch/section is generally high	71%	16%	14%	+11
Change here is well managed overall	58%	26%	16%	+10
I have used the services available through the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team	55%		45%	+10
MFRS promotes a culture of openness and transparency	65%	17%	18%	+9
MFRS is a better place to work than it was 3 years ago (If you have not worked at MFRS for 3 years, please skip this question)	51%	37%	12%	+8

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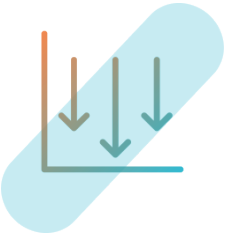
Most declined since 2022



Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (favourable / neutral / unfavourable)			Vs. 2022
I have good quality equipment to help me do my job	69%	18%	13%	-9
I feel valued and recognised for the work that I do by my line manager	74%	16%	10%	-9
Employees at my level are able to communicate their concerns to senior and strategic management	56%	23%	22%	-6
I feel MFRS treats people fairly, regardless of ethnic background, gender (including transgender), religion, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or age	71%	14%	15%	-5
I feel valued and recognised for the work that I do by other team members	81%	14%	5%	-3
I am aware of the support services available through the Occupational Health and Wellbeing Team	94%		6%	-2
My line manager listens to me	83%	11%	5%	-2

Has there been an improvement in the way in which information is being communicated throughout the organisation?

The Portal is informative and communication emails are sent out where relevant, which are good and useful

The portal has improved along with regular emails from The Chief, Principle Officers and Management. Two way communications are also encouraged.

Definitely. PO's briefing sessions are now genuinely a two way conversation; Station and group managers both talk about the future and appear well informed about the CRMP and are able to explain changes and the reasoning behind them.

Its easier to access the leadership message, CRMP, people plan etc. Merseyfire learn has vastly improved with a dedicated person producing the content.

Personally I feel there has been a big improvement when it comes to communicating with Senior officers/Line managers. However I feel like there is a lack of good communication between (HR and Green book staff) (HR and Grey book staff)(HR and Senior Officers)

Have live feed of the operational side of the service visible to the non-operational staff so that they feel a greater part of the service and it's impact.

The Portal is awful and needs to be replaced. We were told this was happening last year, but it seems to be happening very Merseyside slowly. A good functioning intranet would go a long way in communicating internally.

Basic comms is fine. But discretion is poor. The way messages are delivered can be hugely different depending on who is disseminating it.

Emails are not always seen by all staff, particularly those who don't get computer time and so information should be relayed through more regular manager meetings etc.

There are times when too much information is communicated resulting in important information being lost within the overall noise. Communication is good but communicating everything does not increase the benefits and results in people missing the important stuff.

The Culture

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Culture and values section

Question	RESPONSE BREAKDOWN (■ favourable ■ neutral ■ unfavourable)			Vs. 2022
I know what I should do and what action I should take if I was concerned that bullying and harassment were taking place.	94%	5%	2%	+2
I have a good understanding of MFRS's expectations of staff behaviour	93%	5%	2%	n/a
Bullying, harassment and discrimination are not tolerated at MFRS	81%	10%	8%	+1
I know about our staff networks and how to access them	78%	15%	7%	+5
Generally we resolve any differences of opinion amicably	75%	18%	8%	+5
I am able to strike the right balance between my work and home life	74%	12%	14%	+8
I feel MFRS treats people fairly, regardless of ethnic background, gender (including transgender), religion, sexual orientation, disability, pregnancy or age	71%	14%	15%	-5
I feel valued	66%	19%	15%	n/a
MFRS promotes a culture of openness and transparency	65%	17%	18%	+9
I feel able to make decisions without fear of being blamed if things go wrong	58%	23%	19%	-1
I know how to access the confidential reporting service, Safe Call	57%	17%	26%	n/a
MFRS is a better place to work than it was 3 years ago (If you have not worked at MFRS for 3 years, please skip this question)	51%	37%	12%	+8

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What could further improve the culture?

The comments reflect a generally positive sentiment towards the organisational culture, with many employees acknowledging that the culture is good and continually improving. There is an emphasis on the importance of listening to staff and acting on their concerns, no matter how small. Overall, feedback suggests that while progress has been made, there are still undesirable elements within the culture that require attention.

Suggestions for improvement include:

- Enhancing communication
- Providing more opportunities for professional development
- More initiatives that foster a sense of unity and encourage team building
- Transparency and fairness in promotion processes (merit-based approach vs. personal connections/favouritism).
- Generate more confidence in one's opinion being voiced (some feel unable to voice their opinions due to a fear of repercussions)
- More engagement (sincere) from senior management environment.

I still think more could be done on promoting the dedicated confidential telephone service 'Safe Call' for staff to report bullying / harassment etc - as I know many of my colleagues are not aware of the service and I feel that it could be much better promoted and advertised.

We are making great in roads with culture, we just need to breakdown the grey/green divide. As Greenbook is easy to feel less worthy than our grey counter parts. Its not intentional its cultural.

Culture is hard to change, the new generation of firefighters I feel are dragged down by the older generation of firefighters who don't like change. Change is the best strategy for the service, the country is moving forward but people's attitudes in some ways haven't changed

Summary

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Summary and focus

Celebrate great results:

- Retained high engagement score
- Response rate bounce back
- Improved scores since the 2022 survey (especially good given the intense scrutiny and low morale across the sector)

'Keep doing what we are doing'

Continue to create opportunities for dialogue between senior management and staff

Further strengthen the line management approach (e.g. 360 feedback, manager development programmes)

Questions and observations

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