



Staff Survey 2023

Summary Report

May 2023



HEREFORD & WORCESTER
HWFR
FIRE AND RESCUE SERVICE

Introduction

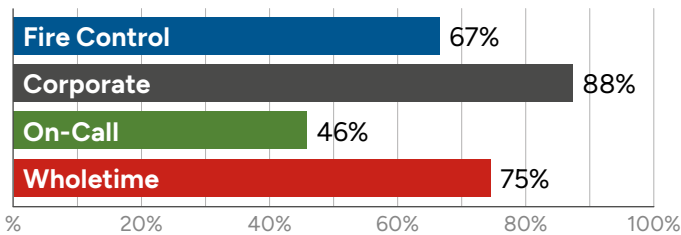
Fantastic response rate



Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service (HWFRS) values feedback and the opinions of its workforce to plan future development. The results from the staff survey will feed directly back into ensuring the Service is a great place to work, in line with the Core Code of Ethics.

The staff survey was conducted from 16th January 2023 until 3rd February 2023. It asked Service staff about their experiences of working for HWFRS – the full question set is available in Appendix A. Following a successful comprehensive communication about the launch, all employees were sent an email containing a link to the survey. The survey could also be accessed via a link on SharePoint or a QR code displayed on posters throughout Service locations. The survey was developed and administered by an external provider, People Insight, on behalf of the Service.

There was a fantastic participation rate with 65% (440) of employees taking part in the survey. This is higher than the average Fire and Rescue Service (FRS) sector response rate, which is between 50-55%. The majority of responses were from Wholetime (176), followed by On-Call (133) and then Corporate staff (113), which reflected the size of the differing work groups. The chart below shows the percentage of staff who responded by workforce group.



Technical Details

Summary indicators have been created from the responses to survey questions. These indicators are scored on a scale that ranges from 0 to 10, where a higher score always equates to a more positive outcome.

Results for individual questions may be reported as the sum of two response options. HWFRS scores are compared to a FRS Sector benchmark. The data reflects 18 Fire and Rescue Services who have completed 41 staff surveys with People Insight since 2014.



Survey Indicators

The survey used the PEARL model, which informs the questionnaire design and reporting. The organisational characteristics that drive engagement are represented by 5 global factors: Purpose; Enablement; Autonomy; Reward and Leadership. These, added to the 5 key indicators of engagement: Pride; Advocacy; Endeavour; Longevity and Care, form a comprehensive, actionable, and lean model of engagement.

Within the global factors, specific questions identify the BELONG Index, which indicates the level that staff feel that they belong to an organisation.

PEARL Model



5 global factors

10 key factors underpin each global factor

34 survey questions

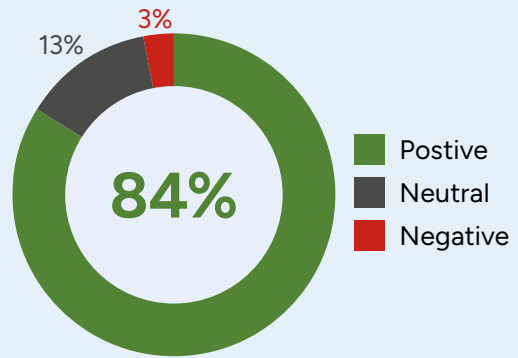
Engagement Score

Highly engaged workforce, higher than FRS Sector benchmark

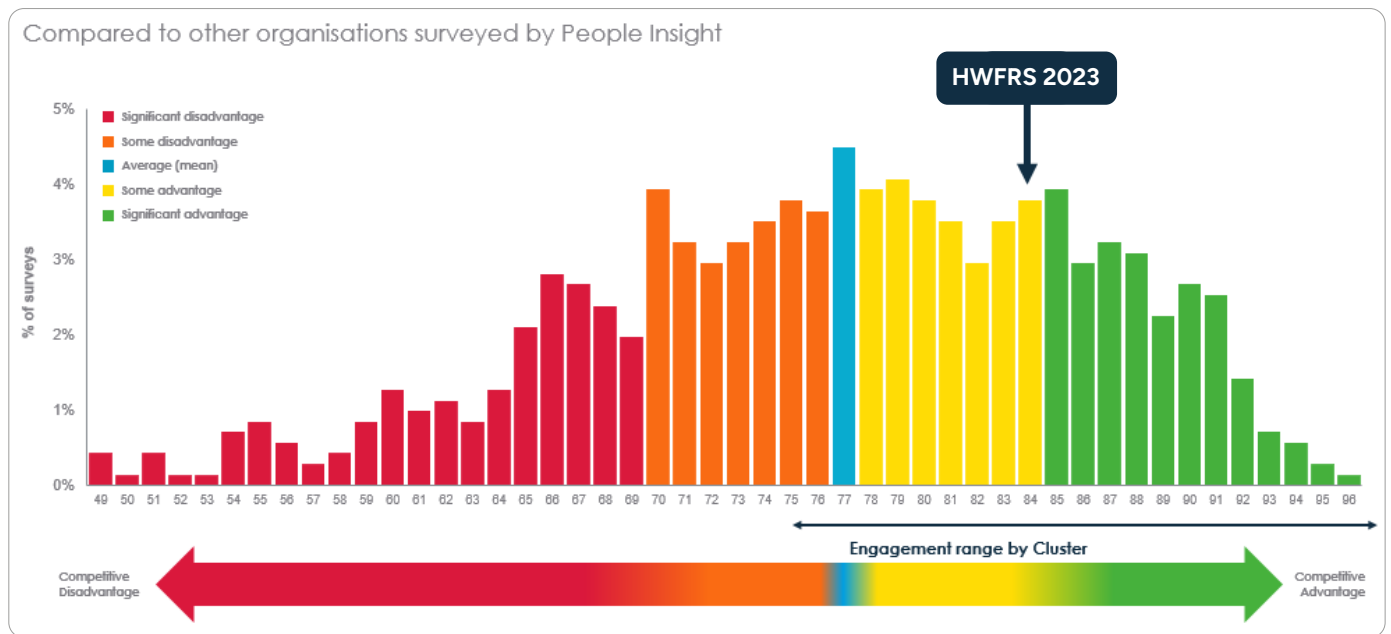


The engagement score measures overall staff engagement. This is a calculation of the average score for the 5 indicators of engagement questions. As the core areas of Pride; Advocacy; Endeavour; Longevity and Care are most likely to measure engagement.

The workforce at HWFRS is highly engaged, with an employee engagement score of 84% which is +5 above the FRS benchmark.



HWFRS performed well when compared to all other organisations surveyed by People Insight, including Public and Private Sector companies. HWFRS engagement score (indicated below) was significantly above the average and at the top of the 'some competitive advantage range', only 1% off being deemed as having a 'significant competitive advantage'.



Engagement Score

Employees have a strong commitment to HWFRS



HWFRS received excellent engagement results, with advocacy (recommending HWFRS as a good place to work) and feeling proud to work for HWFRS performing most favourably when compared to the FRS benchmark. There is strong employee commitment with 95% of employees caring about the future of HWFRS and 81% intending to still be working at HWFRS in 2 years' time.

The following survey questions have the strongest relationship with engagement. Improvements in these areas are likely to enhance engagement scores:

	HWFRS Score	FRS Benchmark
I feel like I belong at HWFRS	66%	n/a
Senior leaders make the effort to listen	49%	n/a
The Strategic Leadership Board is open and transparent	34%	-2
I feel I can be my true self at work	70%	n/a
HWFRS provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas and opinions	56%	n/a

The responses to the openness and transparency of the Strategic Leadership Board were mostly neutral (48%) rather than unfavourable, and the result is aligned to the FRS Sector benchmark.



Survey Themes

HWFRS is creating a positive employee experience



Theme scores demonstrates that HWFRS is creating a positive employee experience, with the majority of scores well above 60%. Higher results were achieved than the FRS sector benchmark, most notably around autonomy and reward. There are **high levels of engagement**, a **strong sense of purpose** and **high satisfaction with governance**. Leadership is the least favourable theme, however has the largest 'sitting on the fence' response group.

Themes	Response favourability			Survey Overall	FRS Benchmark
	Favourable	Neutral	Unfavourable		
Purpose	76%	15%	9%	0	0
Enablement	65%	21%	15%	0	+5
Autonomy <small>n=440</small>	65%	20%	15%	0	+7
Reward	63%	22%	15%	0	+7
Leadership	44%	36%	20%	0	+1
My Manager	79%	13%	8%	0	+5
Governance	81%	8%	11%	0	n/a
BELONG	66%	24%	11%	0	n/a
Engagement	84%	13%	3%	0	+5




Relative Strengths


Employees care about HWFRS future



The questions below were scored the highest, reflecting extremely positive responses to a question within engagement, governance, reward and line manager factors.

 Highest Scoring	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	I care about the future of HWFRS	+3	95%
	I know how to report inappropriate behaviour	n/a	95%
	I find my work interesting and challenging	+3	89%
	I am proud to say I work for HWFRS	+7	88%
	My line manager treats me fairly and with respect	+3	88%

The questions below scored the highest in comparison to the FRS Sector benchmark. Numerous scores are significantly higher, with the most favourable scores for reward, engagement and enablement factors.

 Most Above Benchmark	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	I have opportunities to learn and develop at work	+20	75%
	I would recommend HWFRS as a good place to work	+14	75%
	Different parts of HWFRS are trying to work better together	+12	57%
	I feel the work I do is valued and recognised	+10	59%
	People try to communicate openly here regardless of position or level	+10	54%



Employees have opportunities to learn and develop




Relative Weaknesses


HWFRS' lower scores are aligned to the FRS Sector Benchmark



The questions below were scored the lowest, mainly from the leadership factor, although more responses to each question were rated neutral than unfavourable, and the results are aligned to the FRS sector benchmark..

 <p>Lowest Scoring</p>	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	The Strategic Leadership Board is open and transparent	-2	34%
	I believe action will be taken as a result of this survey	+7	34%
	The recruitment and promotion processes at HWFRS are transparent	n/a	37%
	The strategic Leadership Board provides a clear vision of the overall direction of HWFRS	-3	49%
	Senior leaders make the effort to listen to staff	0	49%

The questions below scored least in comparison with the FRS Sector benchmark, however the scores are roughly aligned with minimal difference, ranging from -2 to -5. The range of scores HWFRS achieved most above the benchmark had a greater variance, with +10 to +20.

 <p>Most Below Benchmark</p>	Question	FRS Benchmark	HWFRS Score
	I know what I need to do in order to progress my career within HWFRS	-5	55%
	The strategic Leadership Board provides a clear vision of the overall direction of HWFRS	-3	49%
	I can get the training and development I need to do my job	-2	67%
	The Strategic Leadership Board are open and transparent	-2	34%
	I understand the three core Service Strategies of HWFRS	-2	81%



Culture

Employees stated three words to describe the culture. The most commonly used descriptors were extremely positive, including inclusive, supportive, professional and driven, as shown below:



Qualitative Feedback Themes: Best Thing



Most employees stated that the best thing about working for HWFRS was their colleagues. This was reported by 44% of responders, with responses such as "Collaboration with like-minded community focused team members". This was followed by 15% stating 'type of work' and 7% stating 'working patterns'. Responses concentrated on a few topics, with 'colleagues' significantly the most frequent response.

Qualitative Feedback Themes: One Thing to Change



A range of responses were provided to the question on the one thing that employees would like to change at HWFRS. The most frequent response was 'Processes/Systems', which was reported by 10% of employees. This was closely followed by 10% stating 'Technology / IT', 9% stating 'Leadership and Management, and 8% stating 'Career and Development'. Responses were more evenly distributed across all areas, with minimal difference in the response rate to the most frequent answers.

BELONG Index

Most employees feel like they belong at HWFRS and can be their true self



Question	Response breakdown		
	Favourable	Neutral	Unfavourable
I feel like I belong at HWFRS	66%	24%	10%
I feel I can be my true self at work	70%	19%	11%
People with backgrounds like mine are able to succeed at HWFRS	62%	28%	10%

HWFRS has an overall BELONG Index score of 66%, which suggests that most staff feel like they belong at HWFRS. 24% of responders provided a neutral response and 10% responded unfavourably. The BELONG Index scores for individuals from underrepresented staff groups were generally aligned to the overall score, with the following results:

- Females – 76%
- Ethnic minority groups – 67%
- Staff who declared that they have a disability – 59%

The staff who had the lowest BELONG Index scores (41-45%) opted to not disclose any equality monitoring information.



Results in Action

Using your feedback

Overall excellent feedback has been received. Key areas where HWFRS can make further improvements are outlined below:

Leadership and Communication



You would like...

- Increased openness and transparency of SLB
- Further engagement opportunities, where SLB can listen to staff
- Clearer vision of the overall direction of HWFRS
- Enhanced understanding of Core Service Strategies

We are improving...

- Engagement opportunities with SLB e.g. 'Ask the Chief' live session
- Communication methods e.g. triple play rolls screens are being rolled out throughout the Service
- Opportunities for staff to engaged at a Service wide level e.g. staff networks and working / steering groups



Innovation and Psychological Safety



You would like...

- To believe that action will be taken as a result of the survey
- To feel that you belong at HWFRS and can be your true self
- Improvements to processes and Technology / IT

We are improving...

- Organisational culture – through conducting a Cultural Audit, forming a Culture & Ethics Steering Group
- The range of methods for staff to make a report i.e. a third-party staff reporting line provider (Say So)

Conclusion

Overall an extremely positive staff survey, with an excellent participation rate and an exceptional overall employee engagement score. HWFRS consistently scored higher than the FRS sector benchmark and performed significantly above the average for all other organisations surveyed by People Insight. The results demonstrate that HWFRS is considered a good place to work, creating a positive employee experience, and that employees are highly committed and proud to work for HWFRS. Employees enjoy working with colleagues and most feel that they belong at HWFRS, including employees from under represented staff groups.

The feedback will be used to further develop engagement within the workforce, linking into wider cultural organisational development work. The key focus areas for improvement are Leadership and Communication, Innovation and Psychological Safety, as well as maintaining the excellent 2023 outcomes. The survey will be repeated in 2 years (2025) to re-assess engagement levels.



Appendix A

Full Question Set

PEARL	Items
Purpose	I understand the three core Service Strategies of HWFRS
Purpose	I know how the work I do helps HWFRS to achieve the three core strategies
Purpose	HWFRS tries to ensure that all people are treated fairly and equally
Purpose	I feel like I belong at HWFRS
Purpose	I believe the behaviours of everyone at HWFRS is of a high standard
Purpose	HWFRS is committed to doing high quality work that puts the community first
Purpose	The Service Values and vision aligns with my own values
Enablement	I can get the training and development I need to do my job
Enablement	I have the equipment and resources I need to do my work properly
Enablement	I know where to go to access general information and updates from HWFRS
Enablement	The processes we have enable effective working
Open text	If the above is disagreed with: 'What could be done differently to help you work more effectively?'
Enablement	I am satisfied with my physical work environment
Enablement	We are open to new ways of thinking and doing things
Enablement	People try to communicate openly here regardless of position or level
Enablement	Different parts of HWFRS are trying to work better together
Autonomy	At a local level, my opinion is sought on decisions that affect my work
Autonomy	I have the professional flexibility I need to get on with my job
Autonomy	HWFRS provides an environment for the free and open expression of ideas and opinions
Autonomy	I am comfortable to speak up and constructively challenge how things are done
Autonomy	I feel I can be my true self at work
Autonomy	I feel my workload is manageable
Autonomy	I feel enabled to manage my wellbeing at work
Open text	For those who disagree to the above: What do you feel stops you at work from managing your wellbeing effectively?
Reward	I feel the work I do is valued and recognised
Reward	The recruitment and promotion processes at HWFRS are transparent
Open comment	If the above is disagreed: 'What could change to make recruitment and promotion processes at HWFRS more transparent?'
Reward	I find my work interesting and challenging
Reward	I feel I get the right training and development to make me an effective manager/leader (please skip this question if you are not a manager)
Reward	I have opportunities to learn and develop at work
Reward	I know what I need to do in order to progress my career within HWFRS
Reward	People with backgrounds like mine are able to succeed at HWFRS
Leadership	The Strategic Leadership Board provides a clear vision of the overall direction of HWFRS

Appendix A

Full Question Set

PEARL	Items
Leadership	The Strategic Leadership Board are open and transparent
Leadership	Senior Leaders make the effort to listen to staff
Leadership	I believe action will be taken as a result of this survey
Leadership	Senior Leaders at HWFRS are accessible
Open text	What could be done differently to help create more opportunities for people to speak up and share their views?
My manager	My line manager treats me fairly and with respect
My manager	My line manager takes time to support me and develop my skills
My manager	My line manager gives me regular feedback on how I am doing, as necessary
My manager	If I were to make a mistake, my manager would be supportive in helping me learn from it
Governance	I know how to report inappropriate behaviour
Governance	If I reported inappropriate behaviour I believe appropriate action would be taken
Governance	Have you witnessed or experienced inappropriate behaviours in the workplace in the last two years?
Governance	If yes: What happened next?
Open text	If reported through another route: Please provide further details
Governance	I feel my concerns were listened to
Governance	If you did not report or raise the matter locally, why did you not do this?
Open text	HWFRS may wish to follow-up on your responses to the questions on inappropriate behaviour directly with you. If you are happy to be contacted in confidence, please provide your name and email address below and People Insight will pass on your details
Engagement	I am proud to say I work for HWFRS
Engagement	I would recommend HWFRS as a good place to work
Engagement	Working here makes me want to do the best work I can
Engagement	If I could, I would still like to be working at HWFRS in two years' time
Engagement	I care about the future of HWFRS
Open comment	What is the best thing about working for HWFRS?
Open comment	What is the one thing you would change about HWFRS?
Open comment	What three words would you use to describe the culture here?



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