



 <p>Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales</p>	<p>Name of Meeting People and Organisational Development Committee</p> <p>Date of Meeting 20 January 2026</p> <p>Agenda item: 8</p>
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Culture Pulse Survey 2025	
Executive lead:	Neil Lewis, Director of People and OD
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Approval/Scrutiny route:	Culture Pulse Survey results have been considered by and discussed with Executive Team on 8 October and 20 October 2025
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Purpose
The purpose of this report is to provide the People and Organisational Development Committee with an overview of organisational results from the Culture Pulse Survey, together with assurance about how we intend to use these results in building a stronger, more inclusive and constructive culture.

Recommendation:				
APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDER <input type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMEND <input type="checkbox"/>	ADOPT <input type="checkbox"/>	ASSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive assurance that Public Health Wales will be using the results of its Culture Pulse Survey 2025 in building a stronger, more inclusive and constructive culture. 				



Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
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Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	EqHIA is not necessary as a decision is not required. We continue to speak to the Local Partnership Forum about our work and accompanying action and to consider feedback received
Risk and Assurance	Positive action in response to staff feedback can assist in addressing Strategic Risk 2 (Organisational Health)
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	Within a positive working environment and the ideal culture to which we are working towards, colleagues feel safe and able to speak up about anything that may get in the way of delivering safe, high-quality care or which negatively impacts patient experience and to share ideas and concerns to improve quality
Financial implications	There are potential financial implications, as a positive working environment has strong effects on overall organisational effectiveness (including financial efficiencies and effectiveness) and on key measures of employee effectiveness, including sickness absence (with potential for business continuity issues) and retention
People implications	Our approach to moving towards our desired “ideal” culture is intended to ensure an inclusive, positive and psychologically safe working environment, in which staff feel highly engaged, valued and motivated



1. Purpose/Situation

The purpose of this report is to provide the People and Organisational Development Committee with an overview of organisational results from the Culture Pulse Survey, together with assurance about how we intend to use these results in building a stronger, more inclusive and constructive culture.

2. Background

Culture is a critical enabler of organisational success. We know that no matter how good a strategy is, people always make the difference, and that culture is important in enabling us to be a great place to work.

In 2023, Public Health Wales used the Organisational Culture Inventory (OCI®), which is the world's most trusted culture survey, to understand our current culture and the desired "ideal" culture our people wanted.

The findings highlighted a gap: our people told us that our existing culture did not fully support contribution, commitment or align with our values and purpose. They expressed a need and desire for a purpose-driven and people-focused culture, characterised by:

- **Increasing constructive behaviours**, particularly around the Humanistic-Encouraging and Affiliative styles – where we resolve conflict constructively; help others to grow and develop; are compassionate and deal with others in a friendly, respectful and pleasant manner; treat people as more important than things; and are clear about what is expected and who is responsible for what.
- **Decreasing defensive behaviours**, particularly around the Avoidance and Conventional styles – avoiding upward delegation of decisions, making popular rather than necessary decisions and shifting responsibilities to others, to avoid blame.

Since then, and in recognition of the gap between where we were and where we want to be, a significant amount of work has been undertaken. This has included the launch of our 'Being Our Best' behavioural framework; development of organisational and directorate-level action plans; our Transforming Leadership Programme; introduction of accredited Cultural Advocates across all directorates; launch of the "Just One Thing" initiative; and refreshing our Cultural Narrative within our People Strategy.

3. Description/Assessment



3.1 Development of our Culture Pulse Survey

Whilst recognising that sustainable organisational culture change will always take time, we wished to assess our progress in moving towards our ideal culture and to understand what impact our action to date has achieved, as an organisation committed to positive cultural change.

We therefore worked with Human Synergistics to develop a Culture Pulse Survey, focusing on:

- Two Cultural Styles - Humanistic Encouraging (*our primary desired "ideal" style in 2023*) and Avoidance (*our primary "current" style in 2023*).
- Three questions around Outcomes of Culture, namely the extent to which people:
 - Clearly know what is expected of them as a member of Public Health Wales;
 - Receive inconsistent messages regarding what is expected of them;
 - Believe the organisation responds effectively to the changing needs of customers/clients.

Running for six weeks between 23 June and 3 August 2025, the survey was widely promoted across Public Health Wales and achieved a 39.5% response rate (852 responses), doubling the 2023 participation and indicating growing engagement with culture.

3.2 Key Findings

Organisational Level

Whilst the results (provided at *Appendix 1*) show we're not yet where we hoped to be, particularly given the collective effort and strong focus on culture across teams, they also highlight a continuing awareness and prioritisation of culture at all levels.

There have been some minor movements when compared with the results of our original Organisational Culture Inventory in 2023, but overall, results suggest that the culture has stayed largely static at organisational level.

In summary:

- There has been only very minor movement within the Humanistic Encouraging style.
- Within the Avoidance style, there have been some small but potentially meaningful shifts since 2023 in that:
 - Respondents report less expectation to '*Push decisions upwards*'; but



- *'Shifting responsibilities to others' and 'never being the one blamed for problems'* have both worsened slightly, suggesting a slight decline in perceptions of safety.
- In terms of the outcome measures, there has been a relative shift in the positive direction around people knowing what is expected of them, indicating an improvement in role clarity. There has been no significant change around consistency of messaging and customer service focus.

These results are largely consistent with those from the national Staff Survey, where we know that though there has been significant action, this hasn't translated across into results as yet.

By Managerial Responsibility

We also looked at the results by managerial responsibility (provided at *Appendix 2*) using the three categories provided within our Being Our Best behavioural framework, namely:

- Colleague – *"I am a team member (no management responsibilities)"*.
- People Manager – *"I directly manage people"*.
- Organisational Leader – *"I lead work and make decisions beyond my own function"*.

Results here show that:

- Leaders view our culture more positively than other groups, reinforcing the need to listen to all voices and experiences across Public Health Wales.
- Within the Avoidance scores, People Managers describe greater expectations to never be the one blamed for problems, to shift responsibilities to others and to push decisions upwards, when compared with both the Colleague and Organisational Leader groups. This suggests there may be a need for greater support for middle managers.
- In terms of the outcome measures, Colleagues are more likely to perceive effective responsiveness to the changing needs of customers, perhaps reflecting their day-to-day experience within more frontline roles.

3.3 Communication of Organisational Results

Members of the Executive Team initially reviewed and discussed the results and reaffirmed their responsibility to fully own and act on them, reinforcing their ongoing commitment to shaping a workplace culture that supports everyone.



The results were then shared at a special “Time with Tracey – Focus on Culture” session in November, developed directly in response to colleague feedback and to which all PHW staff were invited. Many participants welcomed the Executive Team’s focus and commitment to culture, noting that their own experiences of the organisational culture have generally been positive. It is clear however, that there remains some inconsistency in these experiences.

A follow-up news story and organisation-wide communication was then published immediately after, sharing the results, giving a summary of what has been learned, what we are doing and what comes next.

3.4 Directorate/Divisional Results

Results for the Culture Pulse Survey are also available at Directorate level and for the larger Divisions within Health Protection and Screening Services. Whilst organisational results remain static, some of the Directorate results have shown significant changes and progress. Directors were asked to share their results with all their people by the end of November 2025.

3.5 Next Steps

We know that meaningful cultural change will take time, despite significant effort in shifting towards our desired culture. The Integrated Engagement Action Plans, introduced earlier in the year, are still in their early stages but beginning to shape the way forward. Many actions have already been completed since the last OCI survey, showing that change is underway.

Since receiving the pulse survey results, Directors have further committed to:

- Revisit our Cultural High Level Priorities to identify what has been delivered, what needs further embedding and where, based on the results of the pulse survey, we need new focus, including around Psychological Safety, holding to account and the impact of our processes and the way in which we manage people and tasks.
- Publish all directorate and divisional results on SharePoint in January, ensuring transparency and furthering shared learning. The interval in putting all results onto SharePoint is to ensure that colleagues learn of their results directly from their own Director and senior team in the first instance, rather than through a global link.
- Consider local results against local Integrated Engagement Action Plans and to update and build on these in light of the results.



- Incorporating Directorate and Divisional outcomes into mid and end of year performance reviews, helping teams reflect on progress and plan future actions, keeping culture firmly in focus and at the forefront throughout the year.
- Continued development of our Cultural Advocate community – a group dedicated to championing positive change and supporting colleagues across the organisation.
- Supporting line managers and their development, recognising their pivotal role in shaping everyday culture.

4. Recommendation

In conclusion:

- The increased response rate to the Culture Pulse Survey demonstrates strong engagement and prioritisation of culture.
- Whilst culture remains front and centre of the agenda, we know that meaningful cultural change takes time. There has been a significant amount of collective effort, and culture is a real priority for teams, working through and sharing what they are doing locally. This action hasn't yet translated fully into results at organisational level, and this is consistent with the recent staff survey. Whilst organisational results remain static, some of the Directorate results have shown significant changes and progress.
- The pulse survey has served as a valuable checkpoint in our journey, and we are committed to maintaining momentum - to continued Executive leadership, support and advocacy; transparent communication; empowered advocates; and the recognition that we all have the power to influence culture through our everyday behaviour.

The Committee is asked to:

- **Receive assurance** that Public Health Wales will be using the results of its Culture Pulse Survey 2025 in building a stronger, more inclusive and constructive culture.

APPENDIX 1

HUMANISTIC ENCOURAGING

Listed below are:

- 2023, 2025 and ideal item-level raw scores
- Change = (2025 Mean – 2023 Mean)*
- Gap mean = (2025 Mean – Ideal Mean)*

***Positive change and gap scores are desirable**

Style 1: Humanistic-Encouraging

	2023 Mean	Change	2025 Mean	Gap Mean	Ideal Mean
Resolve conflicts constructively	3.38	-0.15	3.23	-1.55	4.78
Involve others in decisions affecting them	3.25	0.00	3.25	-1.41	4.66
Help others to grow and develop	3.65	-0.12	3.53	-1.23	4.76
Show concern for the needs of others	3.66	-0.03	3.63	-1.00	4.63
Take time with people	3.29	0.15	3.44	-0.99	4.43

1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very great extent

AVOIDANCE

Listed below are:

- 2023, 2025 and ideal item-level raw scores
- Change = (2025 Mean – 2023 Mean)*
- Gap mean = (2025 Mean – Ideal Mean)*

***Negative change and gap scores are desirable**

Style 6: Avoidance

	2023 Mean	Change	2025 Mean	Gap Mean	Ideal Mean
Make “popular” rather than necessary decisions	2.37	0.15	2.52	1.26	1.26
Shift responsibilities to others	2.27	0.27	2.54	0.96	1.58
“Lay low” when things get tough	2.03	0.13	2.16	0.94	1.22
Never be the one blamed for problems	2.11	0.18	2.29	0.88	1.41
Push decisions upward	3.14	-0.23	2.91	0.65	2.26

1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very great extent



OUTCOMES OF CULTURE

(Item in parentheses) is negatively worded; therefore, high scores along this item are undesirable

To what extent.....	All Respondents 2023	All Respondents 2025	Change	Historical Average	Constructive Benchmark
Role Clarity					
... do you clearly know what is expected of you as a member of this organisation?	3.51	3.71	0.20	3.90	4.17
Role Conflict					
(... do you receive <i>inconsistent</i> messages regarding what is expected?)	2.52	2.49	-0.03	2.36	1.96
Customer Service Focus					
...does the organisation respond effectively to the changing needs of its customers/clients?	3.03	3.04	0.01	3.48	3.80

1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very great extent

APPENDIX 2

BREAKDOWN BY PEOPLE MANAGEMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Definitions:

Colleague: I am a team member (no management responsibility)
 People Manager: I directly manage people
 Organisational Leader: I lead work and make decisions beyond my own function

Style 1: Humanistic-Encouraging

	Ideal Mean	2025 Mean		
		Colleagues	People Managers	Org Leaders
Resolve conflicts constructively	4.78	3.21	3.24	3.55
Involve others in decisions affecting them	4.66	3.13	3.37	3.70
Help others to grow and develop	4.76	3.42	3.65	3.94
Show concern for the needs of others	4.63	3.57	3.72	3.87
Take time with people	4.43	3.38	3.52	3.73

1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very great extent

Style 2: Avoidance

	Ideal Mean	2025 Mean		
		Colleagues	People Managers	Org Leaders
Make "popular" rather than necessary decisions	1.26	2.54	2.49	2.39
"Lay low" when things get tough	1.22	2.56	2.21	2.44
Never be the one blamed for problems	1.41	2.16	2.34	2.13
Shift responsibilities to others	1.58	2.27	2.47	1.90
Push decisions upward	2.26	2.86	3.03	2.74

1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very great extent

Outcomes of Culture

(Item in parentheses) is negatively worded; therefore high scores along this item are undesirable

To what extent ...	Historical Average	Colleagues	People Managers	Organisational Leaders
		2025	2025	2025
Role Clarity: ... do you clearly know what is expected of you as a member of this organisation?	3.90	3.72	3.69	3.82
Role Conflict: (... do you receive inconsistent messages regarding what is expected?)	2.36	2.45	2.51	2.41
Customer Service Focus: ... does the organisation respond effectively to the changing needs of its customers/clients?	3.48	3.16	2.92	2.96

1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very great extent