

Mark Isherwood MS  
Chair of Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee  
Senedd Cymru  
Tŷ Hywel  
Cardiff Bay

6 May 2023

Dear Mark

When I wrote to you previously with regard to the Commission's response to the Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee's recommendations made in the Report on the Scrutiny of Accounts 2021-22, I committed to providing further information in relation to Recommendation 5 when it became available, and stated that I would write to you in relation to Recommendation 1 after the year end. This information is set out in **Annex 1**.

I hope this is useful information for your Committee.

Yours sincerely





**Manon Antoniazzi**  
**Prif Weithredwr a Chlerc y Senedd / Chief Executive and Clerk of the Senedd**

cc Senedd Commissioners, Ed Williams



Croesewir gohebiaeth yn Gymraeg neu Saesneg. We welcome correspondence in Welsh or English.



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## Annex 1 - Public Accounts and Public Administration Committee Recommendations

### Recommendation 1

**The Committee would like to hear from the Commission on an annual basis with a breakdown of the projects actioned as part of the project fund and the funding allocated to these individual projects. This information should be provided ahead of the Committee's annual scrutiny of the Commission's Accounts.**

The Commission agreed to outline the breakdown of the projects actioned as part of the 2022-23 project fund and the funding allocated to these individual projects, following the end of the 2022-23 financial year. That information is provided below.

Project / Item	Budget Assigned £000
Customer Relationship Management & Online Engagement Tools	£66
Project and Programme Management System	£69
Service Level Agreement: Police vehicle replacement and equipment upgrade	£65
Post-pandemic return to the estate – re-equipping of desks in Ty Hywel	£37
Pierhead toilet refurbishment works	£45
Senedd door security upgrade	£30
Ty Hywel Block 1A return to estate adaptation works	£70
Cyber security enhancement project	£154
Rolling Ty Hywel fire door replacement (Phase 5)	£80
Rolling energy saving LED office lighting upgrade	£100
Senedd Building Management System replacement feasibility study	£20
Senedd Siambr LED lighting upgrade	£45
Senedd smoke detection equipment renewal	£20
Senedd UV water treatment system repair	£50
Professional advice on future strategic options for Senedd estate	£50
Cost of living payment to Commission staff	£97
Replacement Broadcast Encoders and Social Media Streaming System to continue live-feed of Senedd proceedings	£62
<b>Total</b>	<b>£1,060</b>

### Recommendation 5

**The Commission should share a summary of the results of each pulse survey, when available, with the Committee with a focus on mental ill health, indices of mental ill health and staff absences more generally. The Committee also looks forward to reviewing the results of the annual staff survey for 2022.**

The annual Commission staff survey for 2022-23 has been undertaken by the Executive Board. Shortly afterwards the most recent of the regular 'pulse surveys' was also undertaken. A summary of findings from each are included below.

# Senedd Commission People Survey 2022-2023 Summary of Findings

## Overview

This Senedd Commission people survey took place in March 2023. With a survey response rate of 71%, the overall score was 75% against the Six Steps to Workplace Engagement.

Theme	Average Score %	Difference to previous survey %
<b>Engagement Index</b>	<b>75</b>	-
Reward and Recognition	<b>74</b>	-2.9
Information Sharing	<b>73</b>	+0.4
Empowerment	<b>74</b>	+0.3
Wellbeing	<b>72</b>	-0.2
Instilling Pride	<b>78</b>	-1.1
Job Satisfaction	<b>78</b>	+0.5
My Manager	<b>75</b>	-1.7
Leadership and Managing Change	<b>64</b>	+1.3
Learning and Development	<b>66</b>	+1.2
The Senedd Commission and its Culture	<b>79</b>	+1.6
My Team	<b>83</b>	+1

# Snapshot



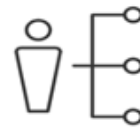
Workplace Happiness Index Themes	Senedd Commission Themes
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**74%**  
Reward and Recognition  
(-3%)



**73%**  
Information Sharing  
(0%)



**75%**  
My Manager  
(+2%)



**64%**  
Leadership and Managing Change  
(+1%)



**74%**  
Empowerment  
(0%)



**72%**  
Wellbeing  
(0%)



**66%**  
Learning and Development  
(+1%)



**79%**  
Organisational Culture  
(+1%)



**78%**  
Instilling Pride  
(-1%)



**78%**  
Job Satisfaction  
(0%)






**83%**  
My Team  
(+1%)

# The Six Steps to Workplace Engagement

The Six Steps to Workplace Engagement is a framework that encompasses the six key drivers of employee engagement, happiness and well-being: Reward and Recognition, Information Sharing, Empowerment, Well-being, Instilling Pride and Job Satisfaction.

## Six Steps to Workplace Engagement Scores

The Six Steps are the six categories you need address and work on to engage your staff and improve workplace engagement.

 Reward & Recognition		Good Score!
 Information Sharing		Good Score!
 Empowerment		Good Score!
 Wellbeing		Good Score!
 Instilling Pride		Good Score!
 Job Satisfaction		Good Score!

## Wellbeing Survey March-April 2023 Summary of findings

The findings, as with previous surveys, remain generally positive across most areas. A number of areas show some slight improvements against the last survey in September e.g. financial awareness, connection across the Commission, and very marginal improvement in workloads. However, the number of respondents who worked whilst unwell has increased, and work related stress remains an area of concern.

The survey also asks questions against the overall aims of the Wellbeing Strategy, which is:

To protect, promote and support organisational capability by achieving a workplace culture and environment where health, safety and wellbeing is championed by all, where people are able to bring their whole self to work, and where staff are enabled and empowered to make choices that support them to live well and work well.

In relation to this:

- **79%** of respondents agree the organisation does a good job of embedding well-being into the workplace culture. This has increased by 2% since the last survey in September 2022. This aligns to the March 2023 People survey which finds that 79% of respondents agree that their employer cares about their wellbeing
- **83%** of respondents agree that they are able to 'bring your whole self to work' -be authentic at work without judgement. This has increased by 2% since the last survey in September 2022. This correlates with the March 2023 People Survey where 79% of colleagues agree that the Senedd Commission is committed to creating a diverse and inclusive workplace, and that the Senedd Commission respects individual differences.
- **Nearly two thirds (63%)** of respondents agree that the Commission's senior management role models and encourages wellbeing at work. 22% disagree or strongly disagree and 15% don't know. This is the first time this question has been asked in the survey.

This report should also be read alongside the results of the March 2023 People Survey, which found that the overall wellbeing score for the Commission is 'Good' when compared to the industry average:

	2022	Industry average 2022
% of employees at risk of having poor wellbeing	21%	40%
My employer cares for my wellbeing	79%	68%
I rarely feel anxious or depressed about work	63%	57%
I am happy with my working environment	75%	72%
I feel happy at work	72%	69%

## Core question results and prior survey comparison

	May 2020	July 2020	Nov 2020	March 2021	July 2021	Oct 2021	Mar 2022	Sept 2022	April 2023	Change
Response rates	60%	62.4 %	70.6%	71%	64%	67%	67%	68%	63%	↓
<b>% agreeing or strongly agreeing</b>										
Staff agree that the organisation does a good job of embedding wellbeing into workplace culture	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	77%	79%	↑
<b>Physical wellbeing</b>										
Physical wellbeing rating (1. V Poor / 5 Excellent)	3.65	3.49	3.49	3.55	3.44	3.36	3.37	3.52	3.45	↓
Staff who have worked whilst unwell over the last 12 months	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	43%	43%	51%	↑
<b>Mental wellbeing</b>										
Mental wellbeing rating (1. V Poor / 5 Excellent)	3.41	3.4	3.3	3.21	3.33	3.26	3.24	3.36	3.32	↓
Staff experiencing anxiety / stress over the last 6 months which was partly or wholly work related	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	47%	46%	43%	45%	41%	40%	↓
Staff who agree their line manager communicates well and they understand what's important and what to focus on	92%	93%	95%	94%	92%	92%	91%	91%	94%	↑
Staff who feel workload is too high for the hours they were able to work	Not asked	21%	20%	17%	18%	22%	23%	19%	18%	↓
Staff who feel they do not have enough work to fill their hours.	Not asked	5%	4%	3.5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%	=
<b>Social wellbeing / connectivity</b>										
Staff agree that their line manager cares about their wellbeing	Not asked	Not asked	96%	98%	95%	96%	97%	96%	96%	=
Staff feel supported and connected to their team	95%	97%	96%	94%	92%	92%	92%	92%	95%	↑
Staff agree they feel connected across services	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	59%	61%	67%	56%	62%	69%	↑
<b>Financial wellbeing</b>										
Staff agree that the Senedd provides enough support and information regarding financial support and options	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	74%	73%	76%	↑
<b>Healthy workspaces</b>										
Staff agree that they are able to work from home effectively.	85%	87%	83%	89%	93%	95%	95%	95%	98%	↑
Staff agree their working environment is healthy and safe	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	Not asked	94%	98%	↑

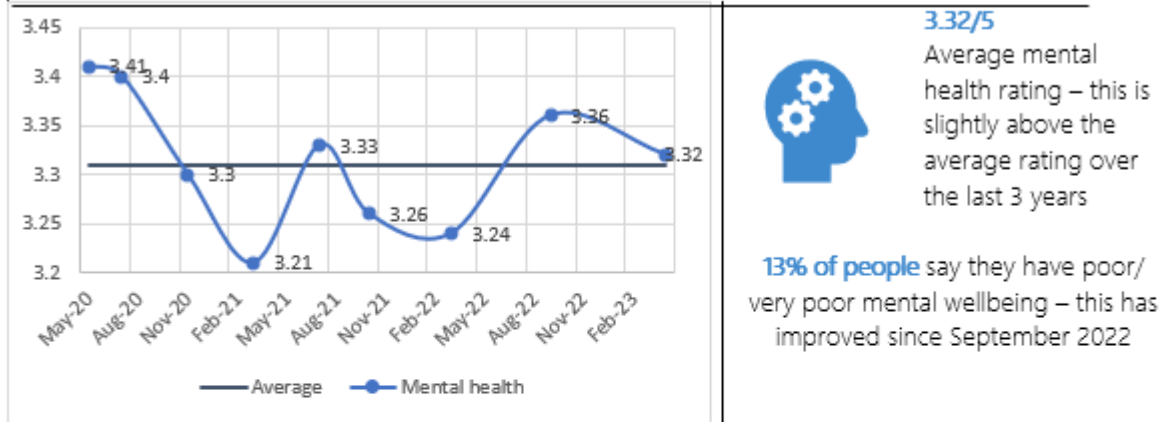
Positive result, does not need attention

May need attention

Area of immediate attention

As the Committee has particularly asked for information related to Mental Health, the following sections are the results from the Wellbeing Pulse Survey regarding Mental Health:

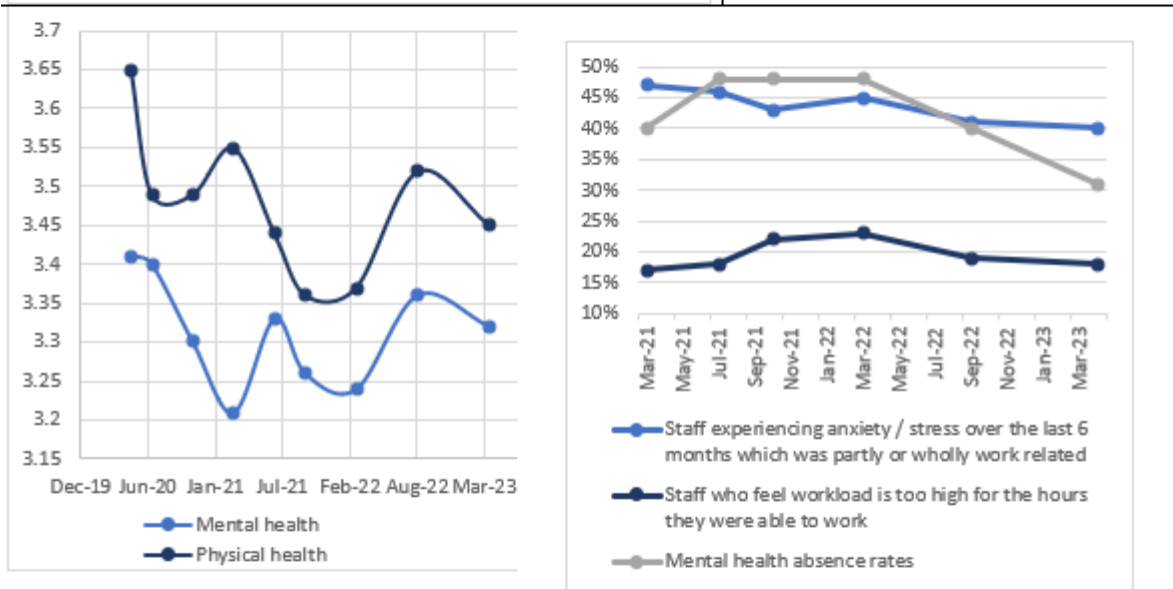
## Mental wellbeing



**3.32/5**

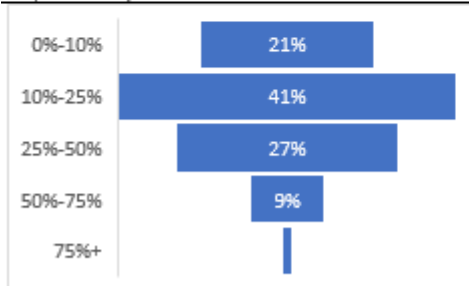
Average mental health rating – this is slightly above the average rating over the last 3 years

**13% of people** say they have poor/very poor mental wellbeing – this has improved since September 2022



Over the last 6 months **57%** of respondents have had anxiety or stress (home or work related) which has had a negative effect on their wellbeing (this is **the same** as in September)

**40%** of the whole workforce has experienced work related stress over the last 6 months (this is the lowest since we started asking this question in March 2021, and is 4% lower than the average response across that time). This is comparable with the March 2023 People survey figures where 63% of respondents say they 'rarely feel anxious about work'



Percentage of time respondents spend in meetings per week

Views on workload:



**18%** - Too high



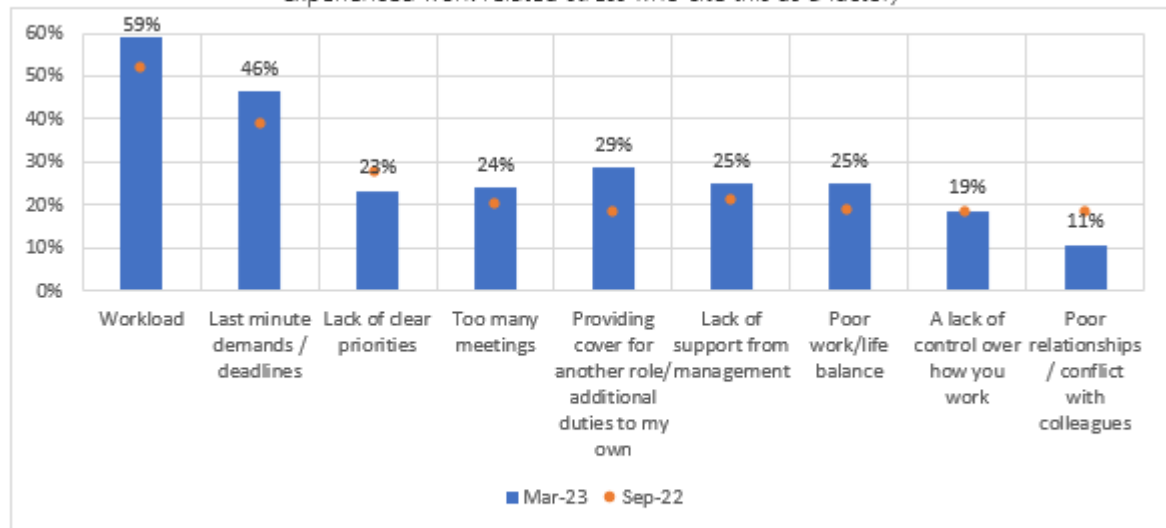
**78%** - About right



**4%** - Too low



Factors cited as causing work related stress (percentages relate to the amount of staff who have experienced work related stress who cite this as a factor)



In response to the question 'Is there any way in which you believe that the Commission could better support employees' mental health?', a significant number of responses was received and the full responses are in Annex 2. A summary of the most commonly mentioned responses is below:

- Better management of workload
- More staff / resources to lower workload pressures
- Training space / gym / equipment on site
- Engage a retained mental health professional to support staff
- Allow paid time during the work day for wellbeing activities
- Increase wages in line with the cost of living or provide another payment
- Consider and trial a 4-day working week
- Mandatory/refresher wellbeing training for line managers , including topics such as mental health, neuro diversity and menopause
- Healthier food options in the canteen
- Taking a more agile / speedy approach to the authorisation of and process of vacancy management/ recruitment
- Fair / consistent treatment
- Encouraging fewer meetings and protecting lunch hours / breaks
- Better management of conflicting / unrealistic / unreasonable deadlines which create high pressure points
- Taking a less hierarchical approach by allowing people to take managed risks and make decisions.
- Allow a number of Mental Health days for employees during the year

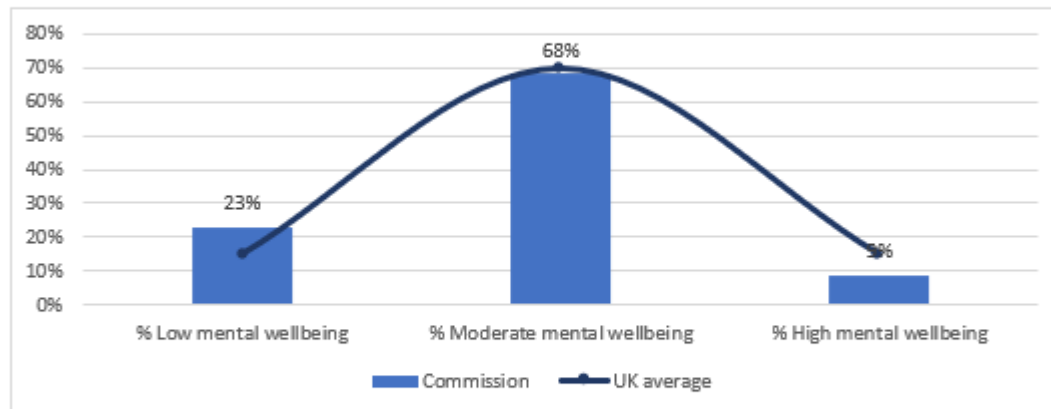
Positive responses were also received including:

**"This is by far one of the most inclusive places I've ever worked. It's such a lovely atmosphere, and the Senedd staff really care about each other's wellbeing."**

**"I couldn't feel any more supported than I do. Such a fantastic place to work. I don't think people here realise how good they have it compared to other work places."**

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For the first time in the wellbeing survey, we used the [Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scales](#), which is a scale used nationally and internationally to measure mental wellbeing. Moving forward, this will allow us to benchmark the mental wellbeing of our staff, as well as assess the effectiveness of interventions. 250 people completed this section:



Against the different indicators on the scale, as a group, respondents scored lowest on the indicator regarding feeling relaxed. It should be noted that 24 people have a score which is indicative of probable mental illness. Respondents were advised when completing the survey that if they had a score of <20, they may wish to see support from Occupational Health or the Wellbeing team.

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**94%** feel their line manager communicates well and they understand what's important and what to focus on



**91%** would talk to their manager if work made them stressed or anxious

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### Analysis

- There is an overall positive improvement on the number of respondents saying that workload is too high – and compared to this time last year it has reduced by 5%. However, this remains the highest factor contributing to work related stress, alongside last minute demands / deadlines
  - There has been a significant increase in respondents saying that working additional duties / providing cover for others is contributing to work related stress, and this is further shown through the free text responses where there are a number of comments about the need for additional resource and better management of vacancies
  - Compared to the UK average, the Commission has slightly more people with low mental wellbeing, and slightly less people with high mental wellbeing, but about the same representation of people with moderate mental wellbeing
  - Respondents remain largely positive regarding management communication and ability to talk to managers if stressed, although there were a number of comments received regarding the need for more management training
  - Unsurprisingly, there is generally a clear correlation between how staff rate their mental health and physical health, when comparing the results across previous surveys, as well as correlations between work related anxiety/stress, and workload. Mental health sickness absence rates were artificially inflated as a result of the pandemic, have reduced and are now at pre pandemic rates
-