

Embedding Good Work: Managers Make the Difference

What is Organisational Culture

Organisational culture can be understood as a collection of shared values, beliefs and norms that influence how employees think, behave and interact within the organisation and in its broader external environment (Buchanan, 2023). There is a growing recognition among business leader that an organisations effectiveness is deeply connected to its underlying culture (CIPD, 2025b). Hywel Dda (n.d.) recognise their **values** must be more than a list of expected behaviours, understanding the importance they have on shaping structures, processes and policies to ensure the organisation reflects and reinforces these values. Applying these values in daily practice will enhance patient care and support continues growth as a healthcare provide.

Dalia et al., (2021) outlines how **managers** are essential to creating an environment where people can flourish, as their actions strongly shape both culture and organisational outcomes. Additionally, a positive culture strengthens organisational effectiveness, which is closely linked to the wellbeing and satisfaction of employees. The CIPD **‘Good Work Index’** report (2025a), which outlines how employees perceive different aspects of their working lives and highlights the factors that most influence their work experiences, also details the importance of managers in creating the conditions to enable good work.

Why is Culture Important to Hywel Dda

Strong organisational culture can influence public perception, drive organisational effectiveness, provides direction, and supports the organisation to attract, retain and motivate employees (Buchanan and Huczynski, 2023). Wei et al., (2020). Argues strong cultures can also **influence** how effectively teams collaborate, how decisions are made and how quickly organisations can adapt to change. As Hywel Dda face significant staffing challenges and increased workload, managers are critical in shaping working environments (West et al., 2022; Aggarwal et al., 2024). Creating a shared sense of **purpose** and **belonging** strengthens engagement, motivation and retention, which is important in supporting a well-aligned organisational culture (Tyagi, 2021).

While Hywel Dda (2025a) recognise there is a long journey ahead to confront and overcome the daily pressures the organisation face, they believe in putting people first by owning their role in providing high-quality care and supporting their employees to ensure people remain central to all they do.



Why Managers Matter: Leading a Culture that Supports Good Work

Taylor and Perkins (2021) outline the complexities of cultural change as it requires shifting people’s attitudes and behaviours and not just systems, highlighting the important role of managers to provide emotional intelligence and everyday leadership, encouraging staff involvement and influencing a sustainable change. CIPD (2023) suggest mangers provide a direct link between an organisation and its employees, enabling them to influence culture, performance and organisational outcomes. Furthermore, investing in training to strengthen vital skills, such as communication, conflict resolution, trust building and creating psychological safety supports team collaboration, employee experience and organisational effectiveness.

Hywel Dda recognise the significant influence managers have in shaping organisational culture and promoting ‘Good Work’ practices. As a result, the organisation will utilise monthly Clinical Care Group forums to implement three recommendations, which aim to equip managers with the vital skills required to influence an organisational culture that embeds core values (Hywel Dda, n.d.).

Recommendations

Flexible Working Training

CIPD Good Work Index (2025a) highlights work-life balance as a key factor, enabling employees to manage their work and personal commitments in a healthy way. As flexible working seems to be more widely adopted, research shows employees with access to these arrangements often display greater commitment, motivation and productivity (Mullins and Rees, 2023). While flexible working practices demonstrate positive outcomes for both the employee and organisation, an increase in remote working requests can also contribute to strained work relationships, barriers for managers and poor work-life balance due to unclear boundaries, creating additional demand on employee’s (Soga et al., 2022). Additionally, clinical services face significant challenges, such as scheduling constraints, operational pressures, resource limitation and increased supervision demands, which can impact the feasibility of flexible working requests (Choudhary and Brookes, 2025).

Hywel Dda aim to provide managers with vital training in monthly clinical care group forums to strengthening leadership, and support understanding of the organisations flexible and agile working policies to support staff requests and promote consistent and compassionate decision-making that positively shape staff experience.

Wellbeing Training

CIPD Good Work Index (2025a) outlines the importance of a physically and mentally healthy workplace, as improved wellbeing is linked to greater job satisfaction, motivation and performance. Jan-Emmanuel De Neve and Ward (2025) suggest poor job satisfaction is more likely to result in individuals leaving early, arriving late or taking more frequent absence, which has a significant impact on both individual and organisational performance. Given Hywel Dda (2026b) continues to experience high sickness absence rates, particularly linked to anxiety, stress and depression, staff may not experience sufficient health and wellbeing support within the workplace. The CIPD ‘Health and Wellbeing at Work’ report (2025b) identified inadequate managerial training is provided to support mental health, despite clear known benefits. Huo, Boxall and Cheung (2020) emphasise the importance of managers in shaping employee wellbeing, while Russell (2025) highlights the benefits of manager training to support them to identify early indicators of health and wellbeing in staff.

Hywel Dda will be providing managers with training in monthly clinical care group forums to strengthen knowledge of preventative approaches and how to promote to wellbeing, self-care and reinforce a compassionate culture within the workplace.

Appraisal Communication Strategy

CIPD Good Work Index (2025a) shows that having clearer career pathways and meaningful development opportunities lead to improved outcomes for individuals. As Hywel Dda (2025a) are experiencing fragility within their current workforce due to persistent operational pressures, exasperated by recruitment and retention challenges, robust appraisals could provide opportunity to identify development opportunities to address significant skills shortages. According to McClarey (2007) appraisals offer a chance to identify training requirements and outline career pathways, supporting professional and organisational requirements. However, managers should allocate sufficient time to enable meaningful outcomes. Conducting robust appraisals to identify skills gaps and outline succession planning requirements will enable mapping of a sustainable future workforce, while also improving staff engagement (Desarno et al., 2020).

Hywel Dda will be communication a strategy with managers within monthly clinical care group forums to highlight the positive impact of adopting an organisational approach to conducting appraisals, sharing the importance of identifying training requirements and exploring career pathways, allowing staff to develop their skills, encouraging greater job satisfaction (Butt et al. 2023).