



Cyngor Castell-nedd Port Talbot  
Neath Port Talbot Council

# Attention Line Managers!

We need you to help drive good work strategies and promote a positive #TeamNPT culture.

What can managers do to Support implementation of positive cultural strategies?

## What is Culture?

Organisational culture is a group of shared values, norms and behaviours that influences employee experiences in the workplace (CIPD, 2025). With foundations in policy, it is influenced by leadership, job responsibilities and employee interactions and is core to creating a positive environment that supports engagement, wellbeing and operational performance (Obeng et al, 2025).

## Why Does It matter?

A good workplace culture directly shapes how people feel and perform. Managers that prioritise good work initiatives help foster a positive organisational culture that increases productivity and supports NPT strategic objectives (Obeng et al, 2025). Unsupportive managerial behaviours can contribute to elements of toxic leadership culture, increasing turnover intention, adversely impacting organisational health and wellbeing (Jantjies and Bothra, 2024).

Charismatic leadership positively contributes to organisational culture, boosting employee satisfaction and corporate reputation (Yazici and Öztirak, 2023). We therefore need you to be an empowering leader and drive positive change, creating a supportive, inclusive and high performing #TeamNPT.

### 1. Encourage flexible working

Flexible working is not just an NPT policy – it is a key part of building a healthy sustainable workforce. Despite not being applicable to all teams (frontline roles in education and waste management are contractually excluded (NPT, 2026)), Managers should still ensure that flexible working arrangements are used fairly, and constantly where possible, to support wellbeing and operational performance (Barnes, et al 2025).

Granting employees flexible working opportunities helps balance personal and professional responsibilities. Especially beneficial in multigenerational workforces where employees have health needs or caring responsibilities, flexible working allows career cushioning, reducing workplace stress, sickness absence and delivering better service outcomes (Noermijati et al, 2025).

#### **Manager actions:**

- Champion flexible working by offering opportunities wherever possible. Consider all applications on individual merit and try to accommodate where possible without sacrificing operational output. If you cannot grant the request, explain the reasons behind the decision and look for alternative support options using the Employee assistance Programme system if needed.
- Try to focus on operational output and trust instead of physical office presence to ease commuting pressures whilst benefitting from increased employee motivation (Kgarimesta and Naidoo, 2024). Embrace digital communication tools, online meetings and collaborative programs to help employees work productively whilst staying connected (Pan and Nekhoda, 2024). Enforced office days should only be used for a clear necessity or project collaboration to increase trust, morale and reduce micromanagement assumptions.
- Actively participate in manager refresher training on flexible and hybrid working within NPT. Everyone can benefit from a refresher course, sharing knowledge and best practice alignment for consistency and positive engagement (Hartley, 2025).

### 2. Provision of development pathways

If your service struggles to recruit skilled staff or experiences high turnover as employees leave for higher-paid roles, you may wish to participate in NPT's trial Career Grade Scheme. Launching within the environment directorate, the scheme is designed to give NPT a competitive recruitment edge by strengthening development pathways and demonstrating commitment to helping employees build meaningful long-term careers in public sector (Speer, 2017). Research shows that visible development opportunities enhance engagement, retaining and protecting organisational knowledge, talent and specialist skills (Contiu, Gabor and Otlean, 2012). To help employees see a valued future with us, develop your team career pathway.

#### **Manager actions:**

- Review your current organisational structure, considering succession planning turnover and available budget. Strategic analysis of specialist roles lost through turnover can identify areas where career pathways can offer stability.
- Complete the template outlining role levels, responsibilities and professional qualifications. Mapping competencies provides structure and guidance of expectations.
- If suitable, obtain operational sign off and market opportunities internally to promote development pathways and demonstrate commitment to employee progression.
- Even if a career grade scheme is not suitable for your area, the training team can still help you strengthen personal development and skill growth within your team, building a more resilient and motivated workforce (Masuku, Esterhuyzen and Ramajoe, 2025).

Remember – Gallup (2025) estimates around 70% of team engagement is attributable to the manager. A positive culture doesn't happen by accident; it grows when leaders create employee trust by championing fairness, transparency and opportunity (Ndlovu, Quaye and Saini, 2021). Be part of the change!

### 3. Encourage employee voice

Employee voice is essential for building a fair, transparent and positive culture as employees that feel supported in speaking up, questioning actions and voicing concerns, contribute more effectively to organisational resilience and demonstrate higher engagement (Sinisi and Stroe, 2025). NPT is developing a Kaizen based employee voice framework whereby 'Ask Francis' is becoming multi-channel with manager level discussion forum feedback. Employees will be able to engage through paper forms, digital QR and mobile anonymous networks where all questions are considered with published answers. Manager delivery is crucial to allow discussion in team meetings and normalise employee voice within everyday operations. Providing opportunities for free speech in a safe environment will also build trusted relationships amongst teams.

#### **Manager actions:**

- Encourage open voice by creating psychologically safe spaces where staff feel comfortable raising concerns, ideas or challenges without fear of negative consequences (Yang et al., 2025). Adopt an open-door policy with approachable leadership style, making yourself visibly available for conversations and concerns. Promote openness by setting aside regular time for informal one-to-one conversations with your team.
- Actively promote all employee voice channels and encourage staff participation in engagement surveys. Support participation by providing time off section and enabling access to digital equipment. For teams without laptops, managers can request devices from digital services via [support@npt.gov.uk](mailto:support@npt.gov.uk). Supporting participation shows employees that all feedback is valued.
- Regularly disseminate top-down communications and outcomes from the 'Ask Francis' channel ensuring transparency of the organisational feedback loop. Build time into team meetings to discuss raised themes, responses and actions taken by the organisation. Embedding open communication into team practices

For further information or support  
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