

Adults Scrutiny Panel

19 March 2024

Report title	Adults Social Work and Wider Workforce Health Check 2023	
Cabinet member with lead responsibility	Councillor Jasbir Jaspal, Adults and Wellbeing	
Wards affected	All	
Accountable director	Becky Wilkinson, Director of Adults Social Care	
Originating service	Adult Social Care	
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Report has been considered by	Adult Social Care Leadership Team Strategic Executive Board	1 February 2024 20 February 2024

Recommendations for decision:

The Scrutiny Panel is recommended to:

1. Note and comment on the findings of the adult social work and wider workforce health check for 2023
2. Provide comment, feedback, and challenge on the proposed actions to improve practice conditions for and the health of social work and wider workforce

1.0 Purpose

- 1.1 The City of Wolverhampton Council (CWC) carries out a survey each year to check the “health” of its social work and wider social care workforce and this forms part of Adult Social Care’s ongoing self-assessment. This report presents an overview of the findings of both surveys and concludes with actions to address the main areas for improvement.

2.0 Background

- 2.1 The National Social Work Task Force in November 2009 recommended the use of a framework to assist employers in assessing the “health” of their social work workforce. There was recognition that the whole system impacts on individual social workers and also on the overall quality of social work practice and regular health checks help organisations identify areas of strength and areas requiring greater focus. It also assists with workforce development planning and supports a culture of continuous improvement.
- 2.2 CWC extends this survey to the wider workforce who work directly with adults with care and support needs or manage teams that do, including managers, heads of service, and agency workers. The wider workforce is diverse and is made up of a variety of roles such as social care workers, day opportunities team leaders, reablement assistants, welfare rights officers, direct payments officers and occupational therapists.
- 2.3 A “healthy,” motivated workforce which has good retention rates and manageable workloads has the potential to make a huge difference. For instance, adults and carers will experience fewer changes in worker, and there will be more time for developing relationships and preventative, strengths-based working. Costs, such as that spent on recruitment and agency staffing, will also reduce.
- 2.4 The surveys are aligned with the eight Local Government’s Association (LGA) [Standards for employers of social workers in England](#).
- 2.5 This report provides a summary of the main findings and also any actions that are planned or in progress to address the key areas for improvement.

3.0 Key questions requested by Scrutiny Panel:

- 3.1 How do we compare to other (similar councils)?
- There is a national social work / workforce health check survey which some councils opt into while others prefer to carry out their own locally. The last national survey took place in 2022 and according to the public report, which gives an overall picture of performance against the LGA standards, the lowest rated standard nationally and for the West Midlands was continuous professional development, whereas this was a particularly strong area for CWC in 2022. National findings otherwise generally reflect what was identified locally. The next national survey is taking place in January 2024 so there is no comparable data for 2023.

- 3.2 What areas are of particular concern or challenge?
- No particular area of concern or challenge to note, however some actions will be longer term so it may take time to see progress on areas for improvement
- 3.3 What is the improvement plan for those areas and what resources are required?
- An action plan is developed and overseen by Adult Leadership team to address areas highlighted by these surveys. The action plan is updated regularly and reviewed quarterly by Adults Leadership Team. There are no additional resources required
- 3.4 Is the improvement plan proportionate to the challenge?
- Yes, the action plan is realistic and proportionate to what the workforce has told us needs to be developed further.
- 3.5 When can we expect to see results?
- Actions will be tracked throughout the year to ensure progress is being made and the impact of these will be evaluated by the 2024 surveys, although some actions may take longer to embed and start to evidence progress.
- 3.6 Are there any key financial, legal, equalities, other implications for Scrutiny to be aware of:
- Nothing further to note in addition to comments made in sections 6.0-9.0

4.0 Overview and key findings

- 4.1 The health check was circulated via an online survey between 6 September and 17 October 2023 (the wider workforce survey was extended to 19 October 2023). There was also an option this year to complete it by hand and return to a drop box at 22 different locations across the city.
- 4.2 The social work survey was open to all registered social workers at all levels including managers and heads of service, agency workers, students, and apprentices. The survey was sent to 146 registered social workers and received 78 responses, equating to a 53.4% response rate. This is similar to 2022 when the response rate was 54% (70 of 129). In 2024, the aim is to increase this response rate by at least 5%.
- 4.3 The wider workforce survey had a 38.3% response rate (137 of 358), which is a significant increase from 26% (89/340) in 2022. In 2024, the aim is to increase this by at least a further 5%.
- 4.4 There has been recognition over the past three years that response rates needed to improve to ensure the results are more representative of the wider workforce. To improve response rates in 2023, there was protected time in a September 2023 social work briefing and October 2023 workforce briefing for staff to complete the survey. Team managers also provided protected time in team meetings.
- 4.5 The Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner offered to visit team meetings prior to the survey launching to promote the survey with practitioners, share examples of how

their views have made a difference, and answer any questions about the survey, including reassurances of the anonymity of their responses.

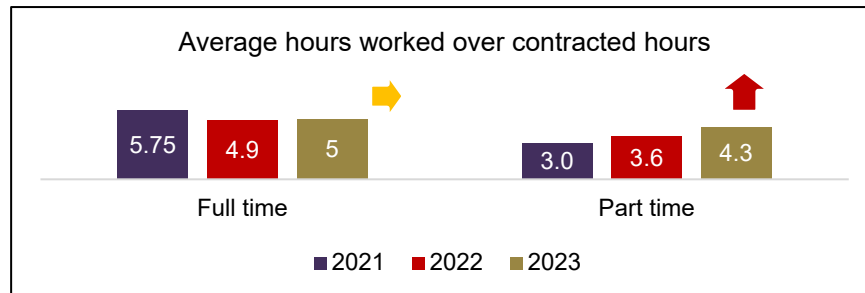
- 4.6 Additionally, a Teams channel was used to enhance communication, allow for discussion, and give easy access to the survey link.
- 4.7 There were also updates about progress on identified actions in the monthly newsletter using a “you said...we did” approach.
- 4.8 Not every respondent answered every survey question. The percentages referred to therefore reflect the percentage of respondents to each question rather than the whole survey. Actual numbers have also been included to provide transparency and comparisons with previous years findings to show trends or impact. This was also a request from Scrutiny Board in previous meetings.

Social Work

- 4.9 Nationally, social work recruitment and retention is a significant challenge and social work is on the national occupational shortage list. Whilst locally the turnover of adult social workers continues to be below the national average, the increasing complexity of situations and demand being seen post covid may start to have an impact.
- 4.10 Adult Social Care has a well-established strategy to attract and retain social workers which includes, amongst a number of other key actions, attendance at recruitment fairs, investment in social work apprenticeships and a strong training and development offer. However, additional actions are being taken this year including exploring the use of staying put interviews, developing trauma informed approaches to support wellbeing and reduce absence rates, and launching a programme for social workers 2 years post qualified, which is a time when social workers are more likely to leave.
- 4.11 The majority of respondents have worked for CWC as a qualified social worker for more than 11 years (24.7%, 19). This is followed by:
 - 1-3 years—19.5% (15)
 - 7-11 years—18.2% (14)
 - 4-6 years—11.7% (9)
 - 12 months or less—11.7% (9)
 - The rest responded “prefer not to say”
- 4.12 Positively more social workers this year are reporting that their workloads are manageable with just over 83% (65) reporting this compared to 73% (51) in 2022. A number of test and learn projects have taken place over the last 12 months as part of the adult’s redesign which has started to reduce demand into social work teams, particularly with the introduction of a Front Door team, which may explain why more social workers this year are reporting manageable workloads.
- 4.13 The percentage of social workers reporting that they never, rarely, or only occasionally experience stress due to their work has also improved this year, with 69% (54) reporting this compared to 56% (39) last year. Also, almost all said that they know where to get

help if they are concerned about their wellbeing and the majority feel able to discuss stressful situations or their workload with their manager and agree satisfactory ways forward.

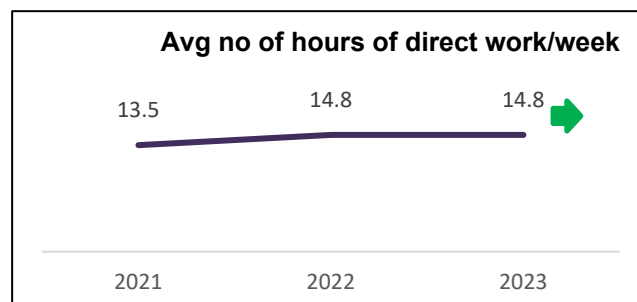
- 4.14 Full time social workers are working on average 5 hours per week over contract (around the same as last year), and those who are part time are working slightly more, averaging about 4.3 hours over each week (3.6 in 2022).



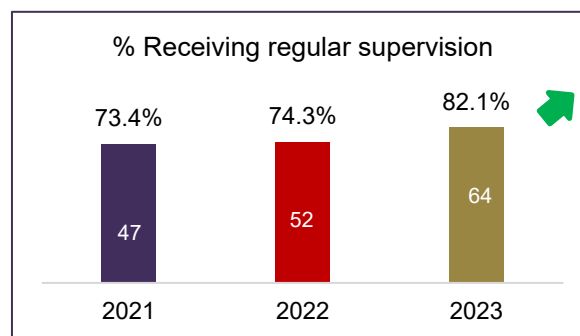
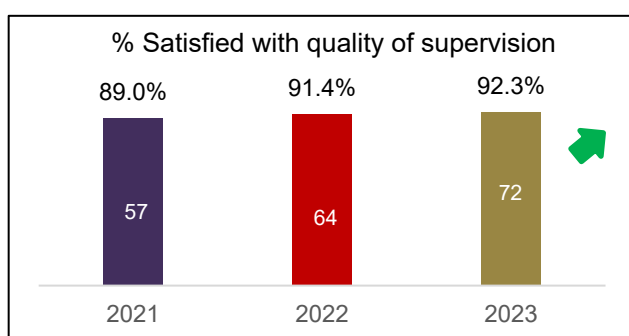
- 4.15 The adults’ redesign, currently in progress, is reviewing demand, workflow, systems as well as workloads and skill mix across the service. This, along with ongoing recruitment and retention activity, should help to further stabilise teams and create even more manageable workloads, which should in turn further address stress levels and reduce hours worked over contract. Additionally, stress is a standing agenda item at quarterly meetings of the Strategic Health, Safety and Wellbeing Board and there is a stress taskforce (including organisational development, human resources, health and safety team) to look at how to address concerns raised.

- 4.16 Additional actions this year to help reduce demand on social work teams includes developing our online offer, which gives people access to information and advice quickly, at a time that suits them, and without them having to wait to speak to someone in a social work team unless they want or need to.

- 4.17 The majority of social workers (79.5%, 62) agree that Wolverhampton has a clear model of social work practice that promotes relationship working and a strengths-based approach to achieve the best outcomes for individuals and families, which is similar to 2022 (80%, 56). Social workers are spending the same amount of time as last year working directly with people, but this is still higher than in previous years (10 in 2018; 14.2 in 2019; 11.8 in 2020).

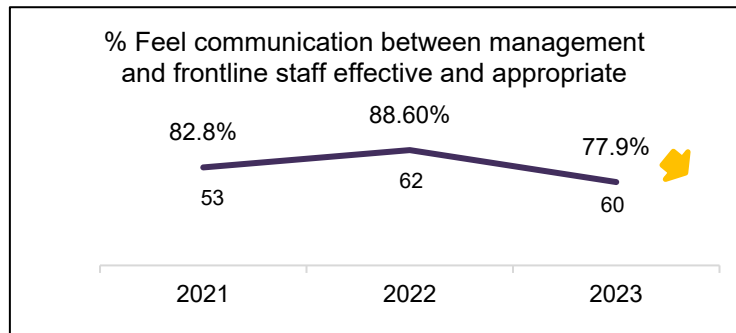


- 4.18 More social workers this year (82%, 64) said they have regular supervision compared to 74% (52) last year and just over 92% (72) are happy with the quality of their supervision, around the same as last year (91%, 64).

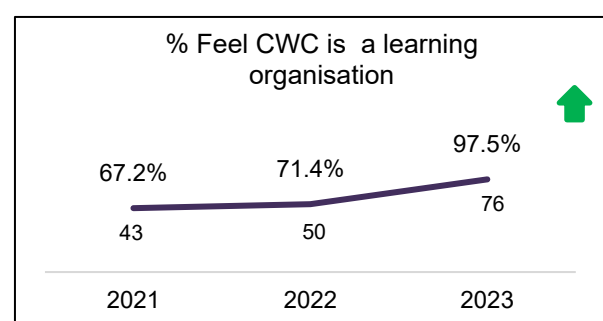
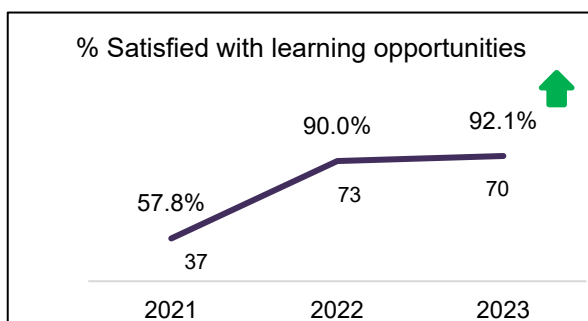


- 4.19 Although the majority (77%, 59) feel they have opportunity within supervision to reflect on how they are meeting professional regulatory standards, it is important for as many as possible to have this opportunity, so the aspiration is to increase this over the coming year. Also, although the majority of supervisions include discussions around equality and diversity, around 9% (7) commented this was not the case so actions have been identified to ensure that all social workers report that these discussions are happening next year. A series of reflective sessions will take place with managers to strengthen their supervision conversations, and this will incorporate the Social GRACES tool.
- 4.20 Actions implemented since the last health check have continued to contribute to the positive experiences of supervision for social workers, including the commissioning of supervision training and the promotion of a first-year management portfolio programme to support new managers across the workforce. The use of weekly huddles, where managers and heads of service meet with practitioners to discuss people they are working with, alongside a revised supervision policy has also supported this.
- 4.21 The majority feel that the way managers, including senior managers, communicate is effective and appropriate. Although this has decreased since last year, with 78% (60) responding “yes” compared to 89% (62) in 2022, no one responded “no” compared to 11% (8) in 2022 as the option to choose “somewhat” was added this year.
- 4.22 A key theme was that social workers wanted improved communication around key changes such as the redesign and there are actions to improve on this in 2024 including identifying some dedicated resource to support communication about key transformational activity.

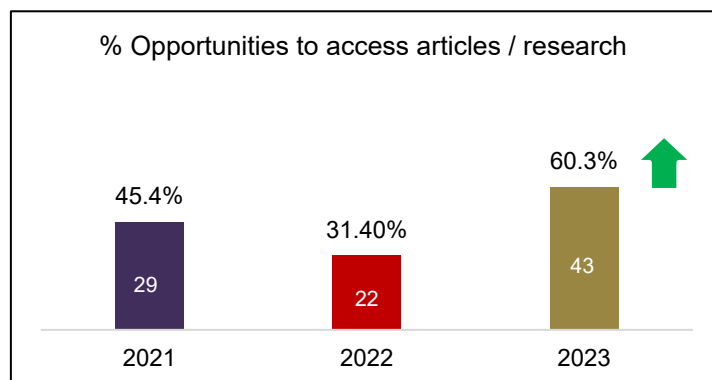
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- 4.23 There was a decrease in the number of social workers who feel that they are or would be consulted about changes that affect their role, with 65% (50), saying this compared to 70% (49) last year. There was, however, also a reduction in “no” responses, 13% (10), compared to 30% (21) last year. The option to respond “somewhat” was added in 2023, which has contributed to this change.
- 4.24 The senior leadership team’s communication and engagement strategy has ensured they have continued to be as visible as possible. A regular presence at team huddles, continued monthly updates via the Adult Social Care newsletter and attendance and participation at regular social work briefings has made a continued difference to this. Additionally, in a direct response to comments made by social workers in the 2023 survey, senior managers have made a commitment to ensuring that important updates and information that is relevant to their teams are regularly discussed within team meetings in addition to via e-mail. The possibility of regular video updates by the Director of Adult Social Care is also currently being explored.
- 4.25 There has been a further improvement in social workers’ satisfaction with learning and development opportunities this year and significantly more feel that CWC is a learning organisation with a positive learning culture. Actions to improve this over the last year has included:
- Organisational Development shares a monthly newsletter which outlines upcoming training and development opportunities and send targeted emails
 - More face-to-face training being offered, including the Joint Adult and Children’s Social Work Conference in November 2023
 - The social work training plan for 2023-2024 incorporated a number of courses prompted by suggestions from the 2022 survey, including trauma informed practice, Mental Capacity Act, Safeguarding Training, Learning Disabilities, Human Rights Act Assessment Training



- 4.26 More social workers this year are accessing research and articles to support their practice and development, with 60% (43) saying that they access these resources and 31% (24) responding “somewhat”. Those saying “no,” (9%, 7), said the biggest barrier to this was time.



- 4.27 Over the last year Advanced Practitioners have supported social workers by identifying and sharing relevant research and articles which has likely helped the improvement in this area. More actions are planned, including developing and trialling Research Circles with a local university to help support social workers' access to relevant research. Additionally, the Quality and Improvement Advanced Practitioner and Organisational Development team will share information on creating an account with Research in Practice for Adults, in an effort to reach out to those social workers who have not yet signed up to and accessed this resource.
- 4.28 This year, six respondents said that they completed the Assessed and Supported Year in Employment (ASYE) in the last two years, and, on a scale of 'one' to 'five' (with 'one' being not effective and 'five' being very effective), all rated the programme as 3 or above. This is an improvement when compared to 2022 when feedback included that the programme catered more toward social workers in Children's Services.
- 4.29 Over the past year, the ASYE programme has been reviewed and revised in consultation with newly qualified social workers within Adult Social Care. Changes have included a stronger focus on the Care Act and Mental Capacity Act and the introduction of two new Advanced Practitioner posts to support newly qualified social workers, mirroring the offer in Children's Services.
- 4.30 Just under 89% (65) of social workers said CWC makes them feel encouraged and empowered to make time for self-care and wellbeing activities to some extent, which is a slight decrease when compared to last year (93%, 65). However, this year, more social workers feel that CWC recognises the emotional demands of social work and provides the supervision, support and tools needed to deal with this, with 60.3% (47) reporting this compared to 50% (35) last year. Some responses to this question included:
- “There have been some recent discussions around trauma informed supervision, which I would be very interested in, also linked to proper 'debriefs' after particularly challenging situations”

- “I do believe they genuinely care and try; the issue as always is time and pressures from the role itself”
 - “I have been very lucky to have supportive line managers”
- 4.31 Actions taken over the past year to improve in this area has included commissioning trauma informed supervision training for managers, which started in October 2023. However, it is recognised that more can be done, and plans are underway to embed trauma informed practice across the Families Directorate, which will include consideration of how the organisation can be more trauma informed to better support the wellbeing of social workers and all frontline practitioners who are at risk of vicarious and secondary trauma.
- 4.32 Positively, the majority of social workers, 76% (59), plan to stay with the council over the next 12 months, which is more than last year (64%, 45). Just 3.8% (3) stated that they do not intend to stay (1.4%, 1, in 2022). When asked what would influence their decision, the top three responses were supportive managers (although this also has been identified as a strength), workloads, and supportive teams (again, this has also been identified as a strength in other areas of the survey). Based on this, it is possible that some respondents listed what is influencing them to stay, rather than what they feel needs to improve to support retention.
- 4.33 When asked to think back over the last 12 months and state one or two things that they would change about their job if they could, themes included:
- Manageable workloads and reduced demands
 - Review of how teams work and structures, including use of specialist teams
 - More understanding/information about the redesign
- 4.34 Some comments included:
- “Need specialist teams to work with people with learning disabilities, physical disabilities etc”
 - “I would not change [anything] but would value being part of working groups and projects”
 - “Would like to know more about the redesign”
 - “Very happy”
 - “Better buddy system for new workers”
 - “Manageable workloads”
- 4.35 There continues to be a strong sense of pride and positivity about working for the council and 84% of social workers (65), comparable to last year, would recommend CWC as an employer. Some comments that were provided when answering this question included:
- “I would highly recommend Wolverhampton as a place to work, with a supportive culture”
 - “I feel CWC are invested in me; I have been able to engage in various training opportunities which has helped with my career progression”
 - “Feel there is a genuine passion to do well for the people we serve and to be a supportive employer. Lots of training and good pay for social workers compared to

other local authorities. We have a good, supportive team who work hard and always try to go above and beyond regardless of what else is going on around us”

- “Maybe. Depending on the person’s circumstances and what they were looking for”
- “Duty can be stressful and demanding”

4.36 For the third year, almost all felt that CWC was committed to tackling inequality and discrimination in some way, with only 1.3% (1 person) disagreeing (4.3%, 3 in 2022). This positive result is likely due to the strong approach taken by the whole council in addressing equality and diversity issues and is also a key priority for Adult Social Care. Within social work teams there are well established cultural competence champions and training for social workers and managers. However, there is recognition that there is more that can be achieved, and Adult Social Care has a service equality plan to drive this forward over the next 12 months.

4.37 When thinking back over the last 12 months respondents said that a number of things made them feel positive about working in Wolverhampton including:

- “Management has a shared desire to improve the journey for the people we support. They role model value-based social work”
- “Open and supportive environment – a one council approach”
- “How we listen and adapt to provide a better service for residents”
- “Wolverhampton council is caring towards its staff and concerned with their wellbeing”
- “Working with an organisation that provides learning opportunities and promotes reflective practice”
- “Practice Education and condensed hours has enabled me to find enthusiasm for social work again and a better work life balance”
- “Our hard work is acknowledged by senior management”

Workforce

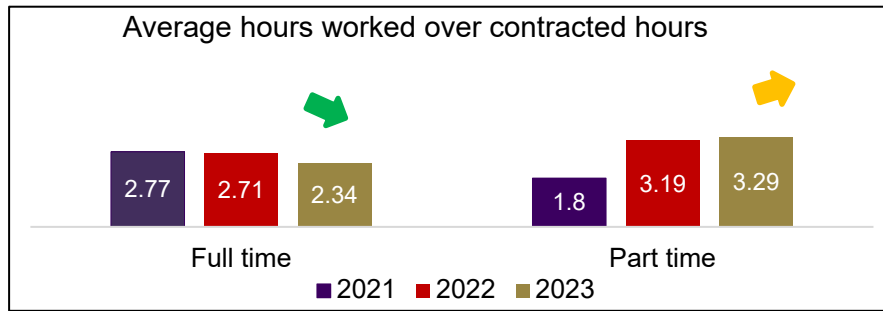
4.38 The vast majority of respondents have worked for CWC for more than 11 years (56.6%, 77). This is followed by:

- 12 months or less—14.7% (20)
- 4-6 years—10.3% (14)
- 1-3 years—10.3% (14)
- 7-11 years—6.6% (9)
- The rest responded “prefer not to say”

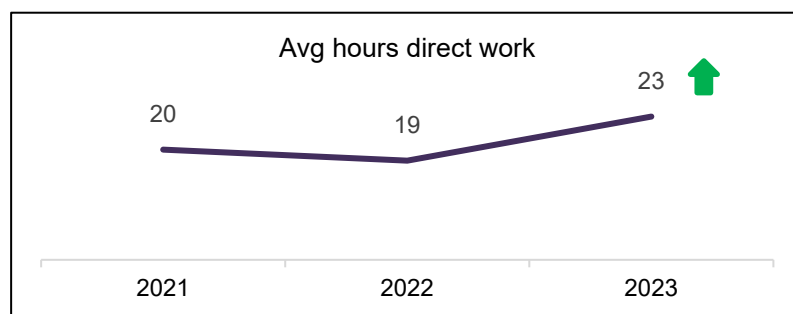
4.39 Positively, the majority feel that their workloads are manageable and that they rarely, never, or only occasionally experience unmanageable levels of stress due to their work. However, there has been a slight reduction in both this year, with about 88% (121) responding that their workloads are manageable compared to 91% (81) last year and 80% (110) saying that they never, rarely, or only occasionally experience unmanageable levels of stress due to work compared to 88% (78) last year.

4.40 The average number of hours full time practitioners are working over their contracted hours has reduced from last year, but those who are part time are working slightly more hours over.

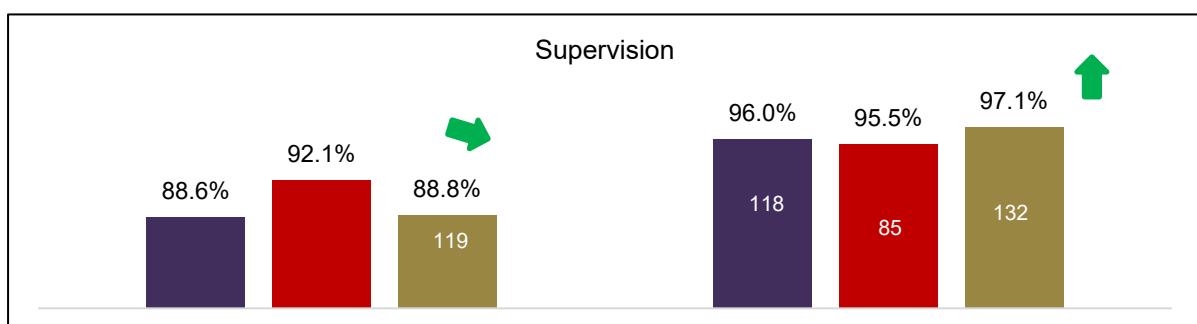
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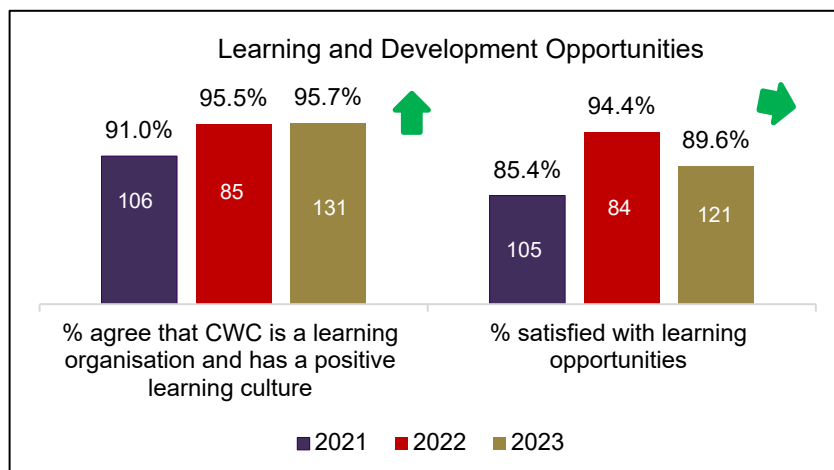
- 4.41 Over the past year, leaders took action to support recruitment and retention, especially within the Occupational Therapy (OT) and Sensory Service where staffing challenges were being experienced, to improve workload manageability, hours worked over and stress levels. However, it is recognised that more actions are needed this year to support a number of teams across the wider Adult Social Care service, including Inhouse Provider Services and OT.
- 4.42 Actions will include exploring reimbursement of professional fees for OTs to attract and retain staff, ensuring stress risk assessments are completed and Heads of Service / Service Managers taking time on a regular basis to speak with teams about how they are feeling and exploring ways forward to address workload issues.
- 4.43 The vast majority of the wider workforce 92.5% (124) agree that Wolverhampton has a clear model of practice that promotes relationship working and a strengths-based approach to achieve the best outcomes for individuals and families, which is more than last year (87.6%, 78).
- 4.44 The wider workforce is also spending more time working directly with people; however, it is important to note that given the diversity of roles there will be differing expectations about how much time is spent working directly with people, so it is difficult to make general conclusions about this.



- 4.45 The frequency and quality of supervision remains high this year. The majority (89%, 119) said that that receive regular supervision, although this is slightly lower than 92% (82) in 2022, and almost all (97%, 137) said that they are satisfied with the quality of their supervision, which is slightly higher than 95% (95) in 2022.

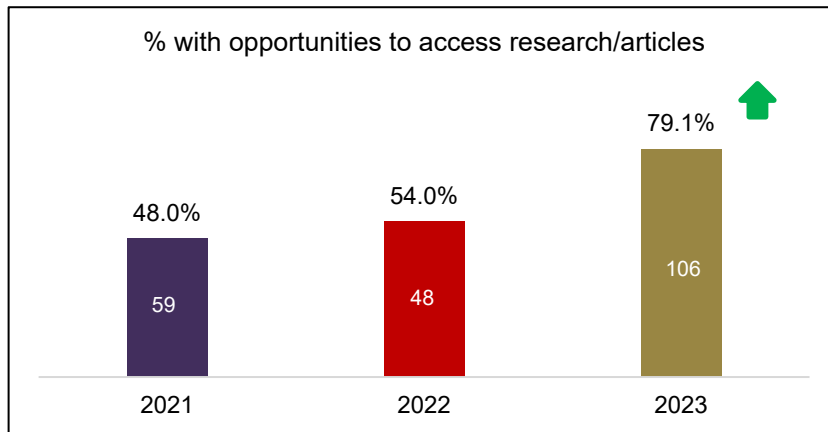


- 4.46 Although the majority of supervisions include discussions around equality and diversity, around 7% (10) commented this was not the case so actions have been identified so that all practitioners should be able to report that these discussions are happening next year. To achieve this cultural competence training will be better promoted across the wider workforce and there will be a session with Adult Leadership team on role modelling the Social GRACES tool in supervision.
- 4.47 Almost all feel that the City of Wolverhampton Council is actively committed to tackling inequality and discrimination in some way, with just one person disagreeing with this. Some of the responses recorded include:
- “Everyone is an individual and from different cultures and CWC employees are always mindful of this”
 - “Absolutely, but still have managers not confident having conversations and willing to be uncomfortable and willing to learn”
- 4.48 Positively, once again, almost all are satisfied with the learning and development opportunities available to them this year, and while there has been a slight decline in those who feel CWC is a learning organisation with a positive learning culture, this is still very high.

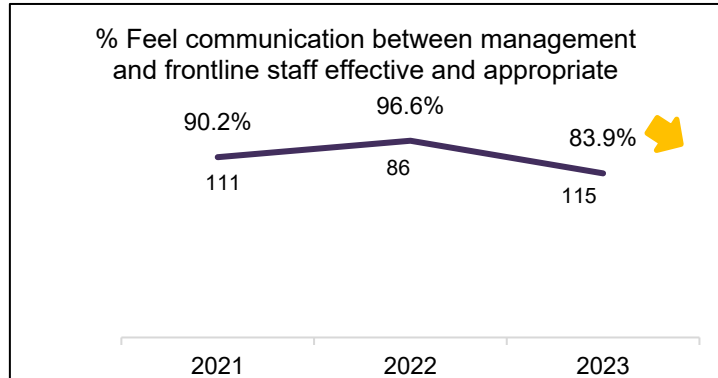


- 4.49 The majority, almost 80% (106) said that they have opportunities to access resources to inform their practice and professional development. Research in Practice for Adults attended the October 2023 workforce briefing which resulted in positive feedback and an additional 118 accounts being registered.

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- 4.50 Once again, communication between senior leaders and frontline staff is considered to be effective and appropriate. Although there has been a decrease in those who responded “yes” this year, the “no” responses remained around 3% (4) due to the addition of the “somewhat” option. Actions to support this has included regular updates via monthly newsletters and a workforce briefing in October 2023.



- 4.51 There was also a decrease in those who feel that they are or would be consulted in changes that affect their role, with 61% (83), saying this compared to 87% (77) last year. The option to respond “somewhat” was added in 2023, which may have contributed to this reduction. Some comments included:
- “There is a new change in October which will impact on our workload; we have been told about this in our team meeting and had a discussion about the impact this will have”
 - “Not always as timely as it could be”
 - “Only after changes have been made”
- 4.52 Actions to address this will include frequent updates on key changes as part of workforce briefings and newsletters and exploring regular video updates by the Director of Adult

Social Care. There has also been a commitment by Heads of Service to share more at team meetings rather than rely on emails.

- 4.53 Most respondents (90.5%, 124) agree that they are encouraged and empowered by the Council to make time for their own self-care and wellbeing activities to some extent, although slightly lower than last year (95.6%, 85).
- 4.54 Almost 70% (90) feel that the City of Wolverhampton Council recognises the emotional demands of the work they do and provides them with the supervision, support, and tools they need to deal with this, although this is slightly less than last year (76%, 68). Work around this has started in October 2023, with trauma informed supervision training and trauma informed organisational approaches as detailed in the social work section of this report.
- 4.55 Just over 90% (123) would recommend CWC as an employer and the vast majority (84%, 115) said that they plan to stay in Wolverhampton for the next 12 months, with only three people saying they plan to leave. The top three factors that would influence them to continue working in Wolverhampton were pay and other benefits, supportive team and training and development opportunities. Comments included:
- “As a new employee to CWC coming from a different Local Authority, the ethos and approachability of all staff, regardless of their role, has been refreshing”
 - “I have been with CWC for some time and always recommend to others as a good employer”
- 4.56 When asked to think back over the last 12 months and state one or two things that they would change about their job if they could, themes included:
- More face-to-face training
 - Workload pressures
 - Opportunities to progress
- 4.57 Some comments included:
- “I would not change anything”
 - “Supported well wouldn’t change anything”
 - “More things to keep my brain active”
 - “Last twelve months have been difficult, lots of changes, lots of new systems, extra work due to sickness, trying to keep on top of everything”
 - “Having more time”
- 4.58 Almost all reported a sense of pride about their job and when asked what made them feel positive about working in Wolverhampton over the last 12 months comments included:
- “I feel listened to”
 - “I feel like everyone does give 100%”
 - “Training and development opportunities have increased this year, which is nice”
 - “I am valued as a member of my team”
 - “A caring culture”
 - “I am overly proud to work for the council”
 - “Managers are very supportive and always take time to listen”

- “Working with a fantastic supportive team”

5.0 Next Steps

5.1 An action plan has been completed as a result of this year’s surveys to address the key areas of development and this is takes a “you said...we did” approach. The Adult Leadership team oversee this quarterly and progress on identified actions will be shared with the workforce during the year.

5.2 Key actions are highlighted within the report, and some are summarised below, along with other additional actions that have been identified:

- Promotion of the 2024 surveys in an effort to increase the response rate further in 2024
- The Adult’s redesign, including the development of a robust families front door, has started to reduce some of the demand on social work teams. More activity is planned to further manage demand and reduce workloads, stress and working over hours with further test and learn projects planned
- There will be regular communication about the adult’s redesign, including an update in an upcoming workforce briefing
- A dedicated Families Stakeholder Engagement Officer post is being developed with a focus on workforce engagement, ensuring that the workforce is informed and engaged with change
- Recruitment and retention strategy and action plan
- Managers will continue to offer flexibility where needed to help people balance their work and home lives to reduce stress levels and working over contracted hours
- Continued offer of stress risk assessments and wellbeing support / resources
- The nature of social work and frontline social care generally means that there is sometimes a requirement to work out of hours or longer hours than usual. When this occurs, managers will ensure that social workers and practitioners have the opportunity to take that time back by leaving work early or coming in late another day or, if more time has been accumulated, taking an extra day off to reduce the time worked over contract
- Continued implementation of trauma informed supervision training
- Creation of a working group from February 2024 to develop a trauma informed action plan to change how we work as an organisation—ensuring to support the wellbeing of social workers and all frontline practitioners, including consideration of vicarious and secondary trauma
- Supporting managers to facilitate discussions in supervision around equalities and diversity, including use of the Social Graces tool
- The 2024-2025 Workforce Development Plan will be coproduced with Heads of Service across all areas of Adult Social Care to ensure the training and development needs of all service areas are met
- Some respondents identified specific training that they would like in the following year to support their practice and their development, and some of these will be taking place in the coming year, including further S42 Safeguarding training, working with

people who have a learning disability, and training for working with people who are autistic

6.0 Financial implications

- 6.1 There are no direct financial implications as a result of this report.
- 6.2 Any costs arising from actions in the work plan and priorities will be funded from within existing approved Adult Social Care budgets. [JC/30012024/Z]

7.0 Legal implications

- 7.1 There are no legal implications as a result of this report. [TC/0702/2024]

8.0 Equalities implications

- 8.1 Social work and social care is a diverse profession, and the makeup of the frontline teams in Wolverhampton is largely representative of the local community. The Council's approach to fair recruitment is followed robustly for the recruitment of all posts. This includes anonymous application forms, progression of people with disabilities to interview and diverse recruitment panels. The health check survey asks practitioner's views on the council's approach to equality and diversity, and this has been mentioned in the report.
- 8.2 This survey was sent via e-mail and completed via an electronic device, with the option to print (or have someone else print for you) a copy, complete by hand and return to a drop box in one of many offices throughout the city. While attempts are always made to ensure that all members of staff have access to and are able to complete the survey, when feedback from the workforce is gathered, they will be asked if there are any barriers which prevents them from being able to do so in order to ensure support can be provided in 2024 and future surveys. Regular reminders and discussions around support required to complete the survey will also take place while the 2024 survey is open in order to support better access to all who require it.

9.0 Health and Wellbeing Implications

- 9.1 The health and wellbeing of our workforce is a priority for the City of Wolverhampton Council. The purpose of this health check is to get feedback from social workers about how they feel about working for Wolverhampton and how leaders can work to make improvements where necessary to support the wellbeing of the workforce and ensure they feel supported. Actions identified in the report are intended to support the health and wellbeing of the workforce.