EPSOM & EWELL TIMES
For the community, by the community. A not-for-profit service

19th November 2026

ISSN 2753-2771

EPSOM & EWELL TIMES

Up to £1 where sold

Low morale hits Surrey Police

18 April 2024



Up to 20 per cent of Surrey Police officers want to leave due to low morale and poor pay, according to a new report.

Police Federation of England and Wales (PFEW) found that 84 per cent of officers had experienced stress, low mood or anxiety over the studied 12 months. Of 2,276 Surrey police officers, 460 responded to the Pay and Morale Survey from November 2023.

PFEW issued its survey to support its national campaign for fair pay for police officers and an independent pay mechanism. It found nearly 80 per cent of officers said they were unsatisfied with their pay, with 69 per cent saying their workload was ‘too high’.

Tom Arthur, Branch Secretary of Surrey Police Federation, said: “This year shows yet again that officer morale stays at an all-time low, some 90% of those surveyed confirming this – with pay and feeling undervalued by the Government being the main reasons.

“One in five of my colleagues in Surrey are actively seeking alternative employment. Forces and the Government cannot keep ignoring this and making platitudes to the public about how they are serious in dealing with Law and Order.”

Polling 460 officers, 20 per cent of respondents said they intend to resign from Surrey Police either ‘within the next two years’ or ‘as soon as [they] can’. This was slightly lower than the national average (22 per cent) in the PFEW survey.

Due to the high number of staff leavers Surrey has a group monitoring resignations with leavers’ questionnaires and stay interviews. A recent PEEL inspection into Surrey Police found it still “lacks understanding” why staff or recruits might leave the force.

Adrian Rutherford, Director of People Services for Surrey Police and Sussex Police said: “We have seen our largest police officer recruitment drive in a decade; welcoming hundreds of new officers into our organisation and onto the streets of our communities.”

However, 12 per cent of police staff posts were vacant at the end of November 2023, according to a Surrey Police and Crime panel report. Approximately 73 per cent of respondents from Surrey Police said that they would not recommend joining the police to others.

The report found 85 per cent feel ‘worse off’ financially now than they were five years ago and 16 per cent ‘never’ or ‘almost never’ have enough money to cover all their essentials. Whilst police officers received a 7 per cent pay rise in 2023, they have still seen a 16 per cent real-terms pay cut since 2011.

Supporting and protecting Surrey’s workforce was found to ‘require improvement’ in the latest PEEL report (December 2023). The force had not completed a well-being survey in three years, or the Bluelight self-assessment to understand what affects good or poor well-being.

Officers responding to the PFEW survey said they do not feel respected by the Government (95 per cent) and they do not feel valued within the service (65 per cent) and over half (54 per cent) said they were experiencing low morale.

Surrey Police said it had a wellbeing strategy “which places officer and staff wellbeing at the heart of the organisation”. Indeed, the force’s mental health app, Backup Buddy, won best innovation at the InsideOut Awards 2021. However, according to the survey, morale and pride in the force have dipped since then.

Adrian added: “Our police officers undertake a demanding and often dangerous role, ensuring that we keep Surrey safe and protect the most vulnerable from harm. As a force, we are doing all that we can to ensure that we’re alleviating some of the pressures faced by those on the front-line.

“We will be looking closely at the findings of the survey, alongside our recent internal employee opinion survey to look at what we can do to improve matters. We wish to be an employer of choice and will continue to work with our colleagues in the Federation, as well as our own people, to ensure we’re doing all that we can to demonstrate the high value we place on our officers and staff and to be the best employer that we can be.”

Image Dave Connor CC 2 by deed (altered placing officers in front of Surrey Police HQ entrance)

© 2021-2026. No content may be copied without the permission of Epsom and Ewell Times Ltd. Registered office: Upper Chambers, 7 Waterloo Road, Epsom KT19 8AY