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| Report Title | People Committee Chair’s Report | | |
| Author (name and title) | Tabitha Arulampalam, Non-Executive Director and Chair of People Committee Suzanne Hartshorne, Deputy Director of People and Organisational Development | | |
| Accountable Director | Mandy Wilcock, Director of People and Organisational Development | | |
| Previous committees/groups | N/A | | |
| Recommended action(s) | Assurance/Information | | |
| Purpose of the paper | The report provides highlights of the People Committee to provide assurance to the Trust Board. | | |
| Executive Summary | | | |
| The report provides highlights of the People Committee to provide assurance to the Trust Board. The paper aims to update the board on discussions taking place to reduce the risks set out in the Board Assurance Framework. | | | |
| Recommendation(s) | The Board are asked to note the contents of the report. | | |
| Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (Board and level 2 committees only) | 6. Develop and sustain an open and positive workplace culture. 7. Support staff health and well-being effectively. 8. Deliver and sustain improvements in recruitment and retention. 9. Develop and sustain improvements in leadership and staff training and development. | | |



Highlight Report

Report from: People Committee
Date of the meeting: 9 September 2025

Key discussion points at the meetings and matters to be escalated to board:

Alert:

None

Advise:

None

Assure:

9 September 2025

The meeting was chaired by Tabitha Arulampalam, Non-Executive Director and was quorate. The Committee:

- Received and noted the quarterly update to the risks aligned to the People Committee as set out on the Corporate Risk Register and Board Assurance Framework. Risks specifically discussed in the meeting related to sickness absence and the future management of the paramedic pipeline. A follow up assurance report with the outcome of targeted interventions about sickness absence will be coming to the Committee meeting in November. A longer -term view on workforce supply and demand will be discussed further at a future committee meeting. There were no new Corporate risks.
- Received and noted the report from the People Directorate that sets out highlights and lowlights. Updates were received regarding workforce turnover, significant reductions in agency usage, the implementation of a new absence reporting system, and ongoing high sickness absence rates. There were discussions regarding the national and local issue of paramedic oversupply, the creation of a holding pool for graduates, engagement with partner universities, and the need for long-term workforce planning. In addition, it was noted that the winter planning report (discussed at the Quality Committee) covered staffing issues.
- Received and noted the Chair's report from the People and Culture Group.
- Received and noted the progress regarding Culture Development and the YAS Together Programme detailing engagement activities, the use of self-assessment tools, and targeted projects to improve team culture, flexible working, and inclusion, with committee members raising questions about staff engagement and violence prevention.
- Received and noted the Annual Workforce Equality Profile and Equality, Diversity and Inclusion action plan, highlighting improvements in representation across several protected characteristics, ongoing challenges, and the implementation of targeted initiatives. Progress on the Action Plan will be reported to the committee in six months' time.

- Received and noted an update on Workforce Planning, Recruitment, and Retention with highlights regarding challenges in emergency call handler vacancies, improvements in remote care, and the ongoing implementation of pathways. Discussion took place regarding the efforts being made to improve the collection and analysis of retention data, including the use of stay conversations to understand what keeps staff engaged.
- Received and noted an update on Employee Relations and Sexual Safety Case Management with an update on the increase in complex employee relations cases, particularly sexual safety cases. The update included the increased training for managers and HR staff, the importance of supporting staff welfare throughout cases and the implementation of a new casework management system to improve data. The Committee heard that efforts are being made to minimise harm to staff involved in employee relations processes, with a focus on compassionate handling and support during suspensions and investigations.
- Received and noted the annual health and safety report outlining rising staff injuries from moving/handling and violence, identified gaps in training and risk assessments, ongoing regulatory focus on stress and compliance, and emphasising the need for enhanced resources and targeted improvements to address key risks.
- Received and noted the Strategic Health and Safety Report highlighting increased incidents in moving/handling and violence, ongoing challenges with training and risk assessments, regulatory scrutiny on stress management, and the need for improved resources and targeted interventions to ensure legislative compliance and staff safety.
- Received and noted the compliance regarding the Fit and Proper Person Test providing assurance that the organisation is compliant with fit and proper person requirements, following a recent audit with minor actions completed, and noted the need to update policy to include DBS checks for non-executive directors.

Risks discussed:

Risks relating to the following were discussed:

- Sickness absence – the Committee noted that absence remained unusually high for the summer months and acknowledged the increase on the Corporate Risk Register from 12 to 16. It was discussed that work is commencing regarding understanding potential reasons for absence which could correlate with staff morale. Outline plans will be discussed at the next Committee.
- Paramedic pipeline and the oversupply of paramedic students - the Committee noted a holding pool has been established for graduates awaiting job opportunities, with ongoing communication to manage expectations and provide updates on employment. The Committee acknowledged the work to engage with Higher Education Institutions and partner universities as well as participation in national forums, to address the oversupply issue and align future recruitment with predicted workforce needs.

New risks identified:

No new risks identified that are not captured as part of the corporate risk register or BAF

Suzanne Hartshorne
Deputy Director of People and OD
September 2025