



Report Title	People and Organisational Development Highlight Report		
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Accountable Director	Mandy Wilcock, Director of People and Organisational Development		
Previous committees/groups	N/A		
Recommended action(s)	Information		
Purpose of the paper	The report provides a brief overview of the highlights, lowlights, and risks within the services in the People Directorate.		
Executive Summary			
<p>The report provides a brief overview of the highlights, lowlights, and risks within the services in the People Directorate.</p> <p>The paper aims to update the Trust Board on key successes and outcomes and current/future projects.</p>			
Recommendation(s)	The Trust Board are asked to note the contents of the paper.		
Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks (board and level 2 committees only)	<p>6. Develop and sustain an open and positive workplace culture.</p> <p>7. Support staff health and well-being effectively.</p> <p>8. Deliver and sustain improvements in recruitment and retention.</p> <p>9. Develop and sustain improvements in leadership and staff training and development.</p>		

People and OD Directorate Highlight Report

Highlights	Lowlights
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Top 100 Apprenticeship Employer: improved ranking for 2025 at #12, up from #23 in 2024 and #36 in 2025. YAS is the second ranked Ambulance and NHS Trust in the list. This reflects our commitment to the use of apprenticeships to develop key workforce skills and capabilities. • National Education and Training Survey (NETS): increased response rate to n=74 (2023 was 17) showing positive placement experiences in YAS that benchmark well in the region and sector. The 2 areas below the sector average (raising concerns and wellbeing) are being addressed through the introduction of a Placement Induction. • Recruitment: A strong pipeline is in place for 2025/26, with the 90 required Ambulance Support Worker (ASW) course places filled, and 66 new starters having joined the Trust since April. Recruitment for 2026/27 is also underway, with 80 ASW applicants completing pre-employment checks for a Jan 26 cohort and 26/27 places. All Newly Qualified Paramedic recruitment for 25/26 is complete with the final 34 applicants being allocated an induction course. • Turnover is showing a decreasing trend overall from 9% in April 2025 to 8.4% in August 2025. Integrated and Urgent Care (111 Call Centre) reduced from 23.8% to 23.0%, Emergency Operations Centre reduced from 16.8% to 16.6%. A&E is stable at 5.7%, while Patient Transport Service is stable at 9.5%. • Agency usage has improved significantly with a 97% reduction in usage since December 2024. The number of agency staff now sits at 9 from 305 in December 2024. This is due to the incredible work in 111 Call Centres to move their agency staff to substantive or bank worker contracts. The remaining agency staff sit, in the majority, in Fleet, recognising a national shortage of Mechanics. This is expected to reduce in the immediate future. • Sexual Safety Charter: The current compliance for the mandatory NHS England 'Understanding Sexual misconduct in the workplace' eLearning is 77.86% (16 April 2025 release date). This is one of the most successful rates of compliance for a new learning module that the Trust has seen. Following attendance at a national conference, the communications strategy is being reviewed to incorporate more 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paramedic oversupply: The 'no growth' financial position, A&E Operations at establishment and reducing attrition rates has resulted in the direct entry Paramedic pipeline (220) exceeding the number of positions available (168). This is a national issue. 43 appointable candidates are currently held in a holding pool pending positions becoming available. Communications are ongoing with partner Higher Education Institutes and Student Paramedics. YAS is engaging with NHS England, the National Education Network for Ambulance Services (NENAS) and the College of Paramedics. Paramedic recruitment for YAS includes 168 direct entry graduates (72.7%) and 63 Degree apprenticeship graduates (27.3%). • Sickness Absence: the Trust sickness rate at August 2025 is 7.2% improving from 7.4% in July 2025. Short-term sickness is at 2.7% and long-term absence 4.4% This is significantly above target (5%) and higher than previous years (6.5% in August 2024). For long-term absence Stress / Anxiety / Depression/other psychiatric illness continues to be the highest reason for long term absence. There are specific mental health interventions within the 2025/26 Health and Wellbeing plan. The absence reduction plan is being widened to include other areas that may affect staff morale. • The OEG Absence Group, overseen by the Organisational Efficiency Group and People and Culture Group, is working through the approved Absence Reduction Plan, which focuses on 3 areas: Accountability/Monitoring, Person-centred support and absence prevention. The 7 interventions include local plans for Directorates to be held accountable for absence/action, Avoidance of Harm agenda, Workplace adjustments, HR case (new Employee Relations management system) and person-centred support from day one. • Occupational Health (OH) and Specialist Service Provision: Spend on physiotherapy services (majority non-work related) and DSE referrals is being closely monitored as demand continues to increase. Work is ongoing with the service provider to shift the YAS culture from a reliance on specialist services as the first point of action. • Employee Relations: The rate at which casework is increasing has stabilised, though total numbers remain high with a total of 55

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<p>varied ways we can engage with staff more regularly using a range of formats.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inclusive Recruitment Review: Phase 1 of the review has concluded, with a summary report and action plan to be presented to the YAS Together Programme Group with recommendations owners and a Senior Responsible Owner (SRO) to be agreed to oversee implementation. The report and action plan will also be shared across service lines to ensure alignment and awareness. Stakeholders for Phase 2 have been identified, and an initial scoping meeting is planned for September 2025 to agree the scope and next steps. Workforce Equality Report: The Workforce Equality Report has shown significant progress in improving workforce representation across most protected characteristics. The finalised report has been published following approval at the Trust Executive Group in September 2025, accompanied by an infographic highlighting the work undertaken to improve diversity within the Trust. Health & Wellbeing: delivery against the Trust Health and Wellbeing Plan has seen positive progress. Work continues on driving efficiencies against the Occupational Health contract with 'did not attend' and 'short notice cancellations' seeing 50% reduction against same period last year (approx. cost reduction of £17,990). Greater engagement with local management is also driving up the quality of referrals. Plans in place to roll-out the Personal Exercise Programme (PEP) as business as usual from September following success of the pilot project. Good uptake against the health needs assessment and the health promotions. Absence Reporting System – The Trust has previously used an automated absence reporting line that has not supported person-centred conversations on day one. In 12 weeks, a new absence module via Global Rostering System, has been launched. The team have produced guidance, frequently asked questions, training videos, rolled out a Trust-wide communication plan as well as training managers on how to use the new module. The successful launch took place on 5 August 2025. Avoidable employee harm through investigations: This work relates to reducing harm or negative impact on people as a result of employee relations investigations. The evidence-based model, 	<p>disciplinary cases open at month end, 13 of which are Sexual Safety cases. Over the summer months, additional disciplinary skills education sessions have taken place, with an emphasis on increasing the number of Corporate Services managers developed in this area so we can better support operational areas in the Winter months. We continue to work through issues raised by Trade Union colleagues regarding the approach taken to the management of disciplinary caseload through the undertaking of a deep dive into over 80 case files. The report with the findings of this have been to TEG, JSG with presentations at People and Culture Group, in September and People Committee in November 2025.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apprentice progress Learners Past Planned End Date (PPED): 35.28% of ASW and AAP apprentices (33.25% Jul) are past their planned end date where the Education Skills and Funding Agency threshold is 15%, however this includes 47% AAPs. This presents a compliance risk and of financial clawback. Data analysis shows that apprentices with special educational needs or a disability are disproportionately represented (14% in total apprentice population but 31% in PPED learners). A wide range of actions and interventions are in place, managed through a specific project group, with data tracking and engagement with A&E Operations and Trade Unions. Appraisal and Career Conversations: Trust compliance rate is at 71.6% (28 Aug 2025) from the lowest rate of 69.0% in June 2025 (target is 90%). Senior Leadership Community (SLC) compliance as at 83.2% (28 August) with a target of 100%. It was anticipated that compliance may fall during the transition to the online tool and the implementation of the Robotic Process Automation. Reminders are in place of responsibilities to complete appraisals and of the support available to navigate the new approach.

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<p>developed by NHS Wales is now being rolled out across most NHS Trusts. At YAS, a Task and Finish Group has been working at pace to develop YAS specific content and delivery model. Phase one of delivery expected to start in Q3.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • People and Culture Group this group that originally met bi-monthly to discuss people issues, now meets monthly to discuss this important agenda. • Appraisals and Career Conversations the development of the online appraisals and career conversation is complete with over 1,000 appraisals completed to date. The Robotic Process Automation (RPA) to update ESR records is in place and fully operational, saving managers significant time. • Essential Learning: marginally below the 90% target at 89.7% (showing a steady improvement trend since March 2025. 13 of the 24 essential learning competences are over 90% with 7 over 88%. Seven directorates are above 90% with 3 above 87%. One is below 60%. Monthly communications shared with all managers highlighting competences requiring attention linked to the Statutory and Mandatory training dashboard. Active engagement with NHSE StatMand Optimise, Rationalise and Redesign project. • Statutory and Mandatory Training: The new 3 days of face-to-face StatMand training have been developed, quality assured, trialled and is now in delivery to meet the Training Plan 25/26 agreed timescales. The 3 one-day events are Supporting Every Mind (mental health, learning disabilities and neurodiversity), Safer Working Practices (Moving & handling people and basic life support) and Safer Responding (Conflict resolution and Violence Prevention and Reduction). 	

Key Issues/Risks to Address	Actions Implemented	Further Actions to be Undertaken
Sickness Absence – this continues to increase and stands at 7.2% for August 2025. Given the normal trend is for absence to reduce during the spring/summer months, the Trust is unlikely to meet this year's target reduction.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absence reduction plan has been approved with 7 interventions being progressed. • Move to person-centred day one absence process was implemented on 5 August 2025 with the move from Empactis to GRS. • HR Case, a system to manage absence cases has been implemented with clear 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Data from the HR case system to be reviewed to understand trends and patterns. • Discussions also need to take place on other potential health and wellbeing interventions can be explored to support staff.

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	<p>reminders on actions to be taken in accordance with the Attendance Management Policy</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attendance Management Policy has been updated to cover changes to absence management systems Discussion has taken place at People and Culture Group, with agreement increase the risk on the Corporate Risk Register from 12 to 16. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work to identify if there is a correlation between absence and staff morale (absence and staff survey/Pulse data) with a view to a programme of work to cover basics of employment – Pay, rest, work/life balance, appreciation and support mechanisms.
Continued increase in demand against physiotherapy services (risk).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In partnership with Vita Health Group and H&S Team work continues to drive efficiencies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Increased communication focus on physical wellbeing and self-care. Review if strengthening DSE assessment process is viable, through working closely with H&S Team.
Number of apprentices past their planned end date above the 15% threshold monitored by the Education and Skills Funding Agency resulting in workforce not progressing through the pipeline and financial risk of levy clawback.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> YAS Academy Apprenticeships Team resource requirements built into Training Plan 25/26 BI dashboard of individual apprentice performance against expected completion Use of alternative duties staff to contact apprentices and enable portfolio and assessment completion Apprentice survey to better understand challenges to completion Standing agenda item at Heads of Operations meetings to review data and actions Revisions to terms and conditions in collaboration with trade unions Implemented revised progress measures with apprentices put at risk of withdrawal for lack of progress, staged supportive process Worked with regulatory body IFATE to enable removal of 16-week consolidation period to enable AAP to pass through the End Point Assessment quicker. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Learner satisfaction survey currently open to gather more specific data; workload is a known issue Tracking specific data including average time on programme, number of knowledge tasks outstanding, SEND trends Onboarding of new Awarding Organisation in readiness for autumn registrations and streamlined assessment Build in-house Dyslexia Assessor capability to support SEND learners and reduce reliance on external provision

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<p>Pipeline of direct entry Paramedic from partner HEIs exceeds Trust workforce requirement creating an oversupply in year and for the future years</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions with senior leaders of partner HEIs to advise of the workforce requirement and extent of oversupply position • TEG paper submitted in July 2025 to advise of revised ASW workforce development numbers, including predictions for 26/27 and beyond. • Attendance on College of Paramedics webinar responding to specific YAS recruitment questions • Letter to Newly Qualified Paramedics providing answers to frequently asked questions, shared with partner HEIs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continued engagement with partner Higher Education Institutes, Student Paramedics, NHS England, the National Education Network for Ambulance Services (NENAS) and the College of Paramedics • Consider local support options to those in the holding pool and offer to the applicants. • Critical review of direct entry Paramedic recruitment including inclusion of a clinical assessment and ensuring elements of the assessment centre provide clear differentiation of candidates. Also to ensure access to recruitment is fair and equitable across all partner HEIs • Joint paper to TEG with Chief Paramedic regarding over supply position and consideration of pipeline for 26/27 HEI enrolment.