



## PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE HIGHLIGHT REPORT TO BOARD

This report provides the Board with key escalation and discussion points at the last Committee meeting. A full list of items discussed appears at the end of the report to enable members to raise any questions to the Chair which have not been drawn out in the report.

The papers for this meeting can be found by following this [link](#) to the Committee page on the Trust website.

<b>Trust Board Meeting Date</b>	20 February 2024
<b>Committee Meeting Date</b>	28 March 2024
<b>Chair</b>	Paul Hollard

### KEY ESCALATION AND DISCUSSION POINTS

#### ALERT

(Alert the Board to areas of attention)

1. No alerts from this meeting, however the meeting had a deliberate focus on **equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI)**, with the first part of the meeting exclusively given over to this important topic. The Chair welcomed other Board members to the meeting for this spotlight.

#### ADVISE

(Detail any areas of on-going monitoring, approvals, or new developments to be communicated)

2. There was a package of information at the meeting that **focused on EDI** and its importance in the People and Culture Plan.
  - (a) The Committee heard of progress which included active bystander and allyship training, policy development, governance changes, leading on sexual safety, and carers passport were highlighted. The final **Strategic Equality Plan 2024-2028** was presented to the Committee and is before the Board at its March meeting for approval. **The Committee endorsed the plan** and reiterated the need to ensure implementation includes SMART actions and is outcome-focused to demonstrate the impact of the initiatives to the lives of our people. It was noted that the performance reporting on cultural themes and workforce KPIs will draw out that impact and the themes, but that work is required to ensure they are connected in a way that the Committee and the Board can see progress of these important initiatives. The role of Non-Executive Directors (NEDs) as champions was also discussed and Hannah Rowen, EDI NED champion sought to have more guidance on how she and other NEDs might most appropriately support initiatives throughout the year, over and above monitoring the plan.



- (b) The **Annual Workforce Equality Monitoring Report for 2022/23** and the annual **Gender Pay Gap Report 2022/23** were presented and are before the Board at its March meeting.
- (c) **The Anti-Racist Wales Action Plan** update was received. The report gave assurance to the Committee on the progress made to date and further actions required and their management within the People & Culture Directorate. Going forward, Welsh Government expect the Trust to provide bi-annual updates on progress against the ARWAP with the Strategic Equality Plan, as part of the NHS Wales Performance Framework Policy Assurance reporting.
- (a) The Welsh Government's annual report on the **More Than Just Words Action Plan for 2022/23** was presented to the Committee. Updates were also received on the Welsh Language plan for the IMTP 2024-27 and progress on initiatives in 2023/24. Members commended the work and the focus on Welsh language.
3. Key progress was celebrated with the **Director of People and Culture** and the **Quarterly Operations Directorate updates**. The Committee noted:
- A joint WAST and NWSSP Legal and Risk session was held recently on sexual safety to over 140 colleagues across NHS Wales and other organizations. Angela Lewis highlighted the importance of culture and psychological safety in light of the recent publication of the ambulance services in England culture review. WAST has been shortlisted for the CIPD Wales Awards for Equality and Diversity in relation to this work.
  - Angela Lewis attended a CPD day for student paramedics at Glendale University and was impressed by their positive feedback and support from WAST colleagues.
  - A recent Trade Union and management colleagues' workshop was positive.
  - HEIW have funded a Retention Lead role for two years which has been filled and they will look to understand the trends of why people are leaving the service, and link this back to initiatives to mitigate that.
  - The recruitment of a resourcing, rostering systems manager who will help to improve the workplace experience for staff and managers by working on the electronic solutions for timesheets and interfaces was welcomed.
  - The introduction of the five week roster and the possibility of moving to six weeks in the future.
  - The reconfiguration of EMS coordination and the creation of a career structure from band 3 to band 8B, with the support of additional budget.
  - The recognition of EMSC staff through the EMD of the year process, with many shortlisted and some winners.
4. **Darren Anthony** joined the meeting to share his story. Darren is a newly qualified EMT 2 who joined WAST in September 2020 after working in various private and public sector jobs, including the leisure industry. Darren had applied to WAST 13 years ago but had to decline the offer due to family reasons. He was always interested in working for the service and was delighted to get another opportunity. Darren completed the Level 4 diploma for Associate Ambulance Practitioners, which is an accredited education program for EMT 2 roles. He was determined to excel on the course and achieved the highest marks. He also won the Skills for Health Apprentice of the Year Award for his achievement.



Darren enjoyed the course and praised the tutors, the resources, and the venue. He suggested that more practical work on site would have been beneficial, especially for such a high-profile job. Darren told members that he is happy to work for WAST and appreciates the policies, procedures, development, and support that the organization offers. He is also applying for the paramedic qualification, which he did not expect to have a chance to do.

The committee members congratulated Darren on his achievements and asked him some questions about his experience and challenges. They also thanked him for his time, determination, commitment, and enthusiasm.

5. The people and culture elements of the **IMTP 2024-27** were reviewed with members requesting a focus on evaluating impact of initiatives and the markers of success.
6. The **draft Health and Well-being Plan 2025-2029** was received for comment. The draft plan set out the principles for the approach to improving the health and well-being of our people and to provide strategic leadership to the Trust's health and well-being activities. The Committee noted that a consultation process with various stakeholders is planned to inform its development, and that a holistic approach to the plan will be taken as opposed to focusing just on individual well-being support initiatives. The Committee asked that the Well-being Team consider the accessibility of the document to ensure it's easy to understand and apply.
7. The Committee held its **annual effectiveness review for 2023/24** and agreed changes to its terms of reference and focus for 2023/24. The annual report and proposed changes will be reviewed by the Audit Committee in April and the Board in May.
8. The Committee were pleased to **approve two policies**, those being the All Wales Flexible Working Policy and the Homeworking Policy.
9. **Reflections** on this hybrid meeting included the fact that this was the Chair's (Paul Hollard) last People and Culture Committee meeting. Angela Lewis and others thanked Paul for his support of them personally, but also the attention and focus he has given people and culture issues, noting that he had been instrumental in the establishment of the Committee. Paul himself commented on the changes he has seen and the inclusion now of the impact of our culture and behaviours. Osian Lloyd, Head of Internal Audit, also joined the meeting in person which was welcomed.

## ASSURE

(Detail here any areas of assurance the Committee has received)

10. The **metrics** proposed to measure the impact of the **People and Culture Plan** were presented under the Plan's headings of Culture, Capacity and Capability giving a holistic evaluation of the Plan's effectiveness in enhancing organisational culture, fostering a sense of belonging and optimizing the capabilities of our people. The themes reflected the Plan's goals of improving organisational culture, creating a sense of belonging and developing the skills of our people. Members commended the approach and noted that whilst what our people are telling us is sometimes difficult to hear, it is important that we show we are listening and responding. Members highlighted the progress made in the last 18 months, such as:



- Having richer and more frequent feedback from staff and students through surveys and roadshows.
- Increasing the awareness and reporting of employee relations issues, such as culture reviews and grievances, and supporting people to come forward and raise concerns.
- Engaging the executive leaders in regular discussions and actions on people and culture metrics and challenges.
- Applying compassionate practices for individuals affected by organisational changes or employee relations processes.
- Reducing sickness absence rates in some regions and learning from their best practices.
- Promoting proactive health surveillance and addressing the main causes of absence, such as mental health and musculoskeletal problems.

The report also acknowledged the areas where more work was needed, such as:

- Building trust and confidence among staff and students to speak up and share their views.
- Ensuring that all colleagues feel safe and respected in the workplace.
- Achieving the target of 6% sickness absence by April and maintaining it.
- Continuing to monitor and improve the impact of the People and Culture Plan on organisational performance and wellbeing.

11. The **Monthly Integrated Quality and Performance Report** ("MIQPR") and the **Q3 Quarterly Workforce KPIs** show that continued system pressures including handover delays remain a significant pressure on our people. The Committee noted a welcomed increase in PADR (Personal Annual Development Review) and the focus of the senior leaders on improving statutory and mandatory training compliance. It was noted that sickness absence in 111 is high and that there is a cultural review underway to look at this. Low vaccination rates among patient-facing staff was a concern. Members noted good performance on unit hours produced and abstraction rates. An action was raised for the Quality, Patient Experience and Safety Committee to look at the way in which CHARU is mobilized given the utilization rates.
12. **WASPT highlight report** was received following their meeting on 15 December 2023, with members noting discussions related to:
  - The EMS establishment with an agreement that emergency ambulance lines would not be taken down but that a one off relief gap created.
  - Detailed discussion following a report with the results of air monitoring for diesel exhaust emissions at seven emergency departments in Wales and the actions taken to reduce exposure and the risk to staff.
  - Agreement on an approach to the IPC Policy with regard to carrying snacks, as well as other IPC related issues.
  - The actions agreed in partnership with ACAS in 2022 are on track.
  - The sub-structures establishes to report into WASPT are doing so with escalations making their way through where appropriate.
13. In private session the Committee reviewed progress on four **suspensions over four months** (an increase from the previous quarter) and two cases lodged with the **Employment Tribunal** (a decrease



from the previous quarter). Members were assured on actions in place to manage these cases and an action was raised to ensure a consistent approach on payment during suspension.

- 14. The **Audit Tracker** was reviewed, and the Committee noted good progress in closing off items.
- 15. The reasonable assurance **Retention of Staff Internal Audit** report was received, with key matters arising including finalisation and ratification of the 'Moving on Interview' process, with a clear timetable for its roll out; and evaluation of the effectiveness of the initiatives that have recently been introduced to improve staff retention. The roll out of moving on interviews was welcomed.
- 16. The Committee's **cycle of business** is on track with no escalations required.

## RISKS

**Risks Discussed:** The four risks within the remit of this Committee were reviewed as below:

**160** – High absence rates impacting on patient safety, staff wellbeing and the Trust's ability to provide a safe and effective service remains at a rating of 20 (5x4). Whilst good progress is being made to reduce sickness absence, a decision has been made to keep the risk rating under review. The controls and assurances have been strengthened and a suite of new mitigating actions have been identified during the last review.

**201** – Damage to the Trust's reputation following a loss of stakeholder confidence remains at 20 (4x5). Whilst the score remains unchanged and remains high, the risk has been strengthened to describe the difficulties in progressing the Trust's long term strategic ambition because of lack of stakeholder confidence and support. Additional controls and mitigations have been articulated to support this change.

**163** – Maintaining effective and strong Trade Union partnerships increased remains at a score of 16 (4x4). Additional mitigating actions reflecting the WASPT effectiveness review, the new ToR and operating arrangements for the group were discussed and it was noted that the actions detailed in the ACAS action plan will be aligned to this risk in the next review.

Risk **558** (deterioration of staff health and wellbeing in the face of continued system pressures as a consequence of workplace experiences) remains unchanged and scores 15 (3x5).

The Committee discussed risks **223 and 224** and noted the dynamic and consistent review of these risks across the Trust ensuring synergy between both.

**New Risks Identified:** No new risks identified at this meeting.

## COMMITTEE AGENDA FOR MEETING

Director of People and Culture Development Update and Operations Quarterly Report	Staff Story	Strategic Equality Plan
Annual Workforce Reports (Equality Monitoring Report 22/23 and Gener Pay Gap 22/23)	Anti-racist Wales Action Plan	WG More than just words annual report



Workforce priorities related to IMTP	People and Culture Plan metrics (to include cultural themes – priorities for 24/25)	Workforce scorecard and MIQPR
Risk management and BAF	Health and wellbeing plan	Annual effectiveness review
Audit tracker and Retention of staff internal audit	All Wales Flexible Working Policy	Homeworking Policy
WASPT Highlight report	Cycle of business monitoring report	

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE				
Name	9 MAY 2023	8 AUGUST 2023	16 NOVEMBER 2023	20 FEBRUARY 2024
Paul Hollard				
Bethan Evans				
Joga Singh				
Hannah Rowan				
Angela Lewis	Liz Roberts			
Chris Turley				
Lee Brooks	Judith Bryce			
Estelle Hitchon				
Andy Swinburn				
Jonathan Turnbull-Ross	Liam Williams	Liam Williams		
Alex Crawford	Hugh Bennett			
Trish Mills				
Damon Turner				
Paul Seppman	Hugh Parry			Hugh Parry
Ian James				
Tim Chalane				
	Attended			
	Deputy attended			
	Apologies received			
	No longer member			