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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.

Trust Board Meeting Date	27 March 2025
Committee Meeting Date	18 February 2025
Chair	Ceri Jackson

KEY ESCALATION AND DISCUSSION POINTS

ALERT

(Alert the Board to areas of attention)

1. No alerts arose from this meeting.

ADVISE

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

2. **Condolences were expressed** for the recent losses of Jason Jones, Health Information Advisor in NHS 111 Services, and Carl Merritt, Emergency Medical Technician.
3. Gerry Adams, Community First Responder, was congratulated on recently receiving his **MBE award**.
4. The priorities for people and culture in the **IMTP for 2025-2028** were discussed and supported by the committee. The board will see those elements when the IMTP is circulated ahead of the board meeting in May.
5. **Mark Churchill**, a colleague from Ambulance Care spoke to the committee of his role. Mark has worked for WAST for 10 years, and he shared his career journey, which included 33 years with South Wales Police, roles in a drug and alcohol charity, and at the Office for National Statistics. In his current role, Mark transports vulnerable and older patients within Ambulance Care. Mark emphasised the importance of building relationships, providing social support, and ensuring patient safety and comfort. He highlighted the dedication of his colleagues and their commitment to treating patients with dignity and respect. Mark highlighted areas for improvement, particularly around communication and planning. He also called for better integration of diversity training into mandatory sessions. Members thanks Mark for his openness and honesty, commenting that his commitment and dedication to his role was demonstrate through his story.



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6. The **report from the Director of Cultural Change** and the **Director of People** was received with the following of particular note:
- There are now 161 culture champions, with 68% from operational areas, indicating strong engagement across the organisation. Engagement with colleagues across stations to promote the culture champions network has been particularly well received. This has been a good opportunity to promote initiatives like staff networks and the speaking up safely initiatives.
 - Catherine Goodwin's work presenting at national conferences on suicide in the sector and tackling workplace sexual harassment in the public sector was acknowledged. A pilot sexual safety training program for operational colleagues will start next month.
 - Coaching awards are being introduced, linked to the emergency ambulance practitioner development pathway, aimed at professionalising the service and supporting continuous development.
 - New tutors have been appointed to support colleagues in literacy, numeracy, and digital skills, enhancing colleague experience and employability.
 - Emphasis was placed on continuous development and strengthening the employee offer, aligning with the workforce plan agreed last year.
 - Improvements in the job evaluation process are ensuring timely job descriptions and adverts.
7. The following **Policies were approved**:
- Occupational Health Policy
 - Recruitment and Selection Policy
 - Occupational Immunisation Policy
 - Equality Impact Assessment Policy
 - Bank Worker Policy
8. The **Q2 Operational Update** from the Executive Director of Operations highlighted several initiatives related to our people and our culture, including:
- Acknowledgement that the situation with shift overruns has been contained but not significantly improved. To address this, a series of task and finish groups will be conducted in March and April with Trade Union partners to explore additional steps to reduce overruns further.
 - The migration of GRS to a cloud-based solution next year is underway, which is key to advancing the ambition to move to e-timesheets.
 - Positive feedback has been received on new roles and the single allocator model in EMS coordination, despite initial challenges during winter.
 - The collaboration with the clinical teams to improve clinical supervision for advanced paramedic practitioners and progress prescribing for Band 7 APPs.
 - Recent work to enhance palliative care paramedics, including potential progression to advanced practice.
 - Final discussions that are underway with trade union partners to agree on the rules of engagement for the next roster review.
 - High compliance with UCS staff scope of practice and plans to introduce clinical supervision in ambulance care.



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9. **Reflections** on the meeting were that the discussion regarding Our WAST Way was of particular importance given its role in leadership and management development and in driving cultural change. The approach taken to the facilitation of the committee effectiveness review was commended. The focus on more strategic as opposed to transactional matters of business was acknowledged, and Members felt that the hybrid approach worked well.

ASSURE

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

10. The Committee welcomed the new **leadership and management framework - Our WAST Way** - which will launch in Q1/Q2 2025/26. The framework sets out clear leadership behaviours based on three core principles:

- *Care*: Supporting others, understanding their challenges and looking after personal wellbeing to perform at our best.
- *Valuing Everyone*: Building an inclusive, respectful culture where diverse perspectives are sought, heard and acted upon.
- *Connect*: Strengthening collaboration, communicating purpose, leading through change and inspiring others to deliver results.

The Committee were assured that the framework will support the Trust in achieving a compassionate leadership culture. Workshops will be conducted to introduce the framework and equip managers to have meaningful development conversations, and an advisory group will help refine and communicate the framework. The impact of the framework will be evaluated through the NHS Wales Staff survey, cultural reviews, and individual leadership journeys.

11. The Committee scrutinises performance across several metrics within its remit. Whilst the board receives the **Monthly Integrated Quality and Performance Report** (MIQPR), there are a range of additional metrics this committee receives, including wider **People and Culture Plan Metrics** (qualitative this quarter) **Workforce KPIs** and **Cultural Themes and Trends**. Given this, the following areas of assurance will be of interest to the board:

- Safeguarding data is now included in the metrics received by the committee, highlighting 45 open safeguarding cases, some involving sexual misconduct. The inclusion of this data aims to provide a comprehensive view of the organisational impact of behaviours and concerns.
- The report noted the thriving people network, with significant engagement and participation.
- A positive update on change management progress was provided, building on discussions from the previous People and Culture Committee meeting.
- The workforce KPIs were reviewed, with a focus on the progress made in relation to mandatory training (MIST). While good progress was noted, there is a need to maintain focus to ensure compliance by the end of the financial year.
- There has been an increase in disciplinary cases from July to December, and a decrease in respect of resolution cases. The average duration for case closure has improved significantly, with fast-track cases being resolved quickly, while complex cases, especially those involving sexual safety concerns,



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taking longer. The importance of local resolution leading to genuine cultural change was emphasised.

- The turnover rate has decreased by 1.5%, but specific areas including EMS, 111, and integrated care still face high turnover rates.
- The new process for moving on interviews, implemented in January, provides detailed data on reasons for leaving, satisfaction levels, and cultural perceptions. Key themes include workplace relationships, recognition, and career progression.
- Speaking Up Safely insights include:
 - 65 concerns raised in the last six months, with a significant increase in October during the Speaking Up Safely month
 - Initially, many concerns were raised anonymously, but that number has decreased which was seen as positive
 - 63% of concerns were related to incivility
 - Many concerns were resolved at the local level by managers and senior leaders, there is a focus on minimising detriment to individuals who raised concerns.
 - The first lessons learned review was conducted to understand what went well and what could be improved, with a future focus on reducing detriment and providing support to those who come forward

12. Assurance was provided on progress since 2022 on **compassionate practices**, with an increasing number of colleagues trained. Actions related to a recent audit on disciplinary case management had led to ongoing evaluation work on compassionate practices with an external evaluation currently underway.

13. The Welsh Ambulance Services Partnership Team (WASPT) is the board's local partnership advisory forum. The **WASPT highlight report** sets out the ongoing projects, upcoming challenges, and the steps being taken to address them in partnership. The following was noted from the WASPT meetings in November 2024 and January 2025:

- WAST have been invited to deliver a session at the Annual Ambulance Leadership Forum Conference (ALF), which is to be held in Leeds on 11 and 12 March this year on the main conference stage. This will focus on WAST's experience, learning and activities of building respectful and cohesive relationships.
- The first WAST Social Partnership Conference will be held on 31st March 2025. The conference will be opened with a keynote address by the Minister for Skills, Culture and Social Partnership, Jack Sargent. Members agreed this will be a key demonstration of WAST's good partnership working.
- The issue of overruns and TOIL was discussed at both meetings, with Trade Union Partner raising concerns regarding staff wellbeing due to overruns and consequent delays in approval of TOIL. As can be seen in the Operations Update above, task and finish groups have been established to work in partnership on these issues.

14. The **Exposure to Fumes Internal Audit** was received. This evaluated actions being taken by the Trust to ensure the health and wellbeing of staff exposed to fumes as a result of delays in handovers of care at hospital. The review received reasonable assurance overall and the management of



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actions will be monitored by this committee. This issue is reported at WASPT and comes through that groups AAA reports to this committee and acts as a helpful triangulation to these second line of defence audit reports, as do board member visits to emergency departments.

15. The **Resourcing Policy Internal Audit** was received. This audit looked at the policy's compliance with national terms and conditions, and to assess its application as an enabler for effective resource production. The review received limited assurance (with two objectives limited and two reasonable) overall. The management of the actions to address the two high and three medium level matters arising will be monitored by this committee.
16. The Committee's **annual effectiveness review** was held, with a revised approach taken across all committees. A discussion was facilitated to consider what changes and improvements could be made to the Committee's operations. The draft Annual Report was reviewed, however the final Report for submission to the Audit, Risk and Assurance Committee, and the revised Terms of Reference for 2025/26, will be circulated for approval by Chair's Action after the meeting.
17. The **Audit Tracker** was reviewed, and the Committee noted the update and that there was good 'confirm and challenge' throughout the process of reporting on audit action closures; notwithstanding a slower rate of closures this quarter (17%) with 41% of recommendations having a changed date. Longstanding Trade Union Release Time audit actions were closed. Whilst the recommendations for these were not implemented in full, the committee was satisfied that the risk was mitigated and the relationship with Trade Union Partners maintained in the way forward.
18. In private session the committee reviewed progress against ten **suspensions over four months** which is a decrease from eleven reported in the last quarter. Six cases are with the **Employment Tribunal** (an increase of two from the previous quarter). Members were assured on actions in place to manage these cases.
19. Members received the Cyle of Business **Monitoring Report, and the Committee priorities update** with no issues to escalate.

RISKS

Risks Discussed: The four risks within the remit of this Committee were reviewed and it was acknowledged that these had been discussed throughout the items within the agenda:

160 –High absence rates impacting on patient safety, staff wellbeing and the Trust's ability to provide a safe and effective service - whilst there has been a significant reduction in absence levels, the score of 20 (5x4) remains static however, this will remain under review given the significant work undertaken to strengthen the controls, assurances, and mitigating actions. A deep dive was held on this risk, and it was noted that despite positive progress there will need to be continued action taken to mitigate the risk and reduce the score.

201 – Damage to the Trust's reputation following a loss of stakeholder confidence which remains at a



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score of 20 (4x5). The risk is inextricably linked to several of the metrics measured and discussed at PCC.

163 – Maintaining effective and strong Trade Union partnerships has reduced in score from 16 (4x4) to 12 (3x4) reflecting the positive engagement and partnership working operating well and ongoing discussions on a range organisational change issues.

558 - Deterioration of staff health and wellbeing in the face of continued system pressures as a consequence of workplace experiences remains unchanged at a score of 15 (3x5).

The Committee acknowledged risks **223 and 224** overseen by the Quality, Safety & Patient Experience Committee; however, considered at each of the Board Committees given they impact every area of the Trust. **New Risks Identified:** No new risks identified at this meeting for the register.

COMMITTEE AGENDA FOR MEETING

Director Update	Operations Quarterly Report Q3	Staff Story and Staff Story Update
Our WAST Way	Cultural themes and trends report	Compassionate practices update and action plan
People and culture plan metrics	MIQPR	Resourcing Policy Internal Audit
WASPT Highlight report	Exposure to Fumes Internal Audit	Annual effectiveness review
Risk management and BAF	Deep dive on risk 160 (high absence rates)	Audit tracker Q3
Policies for approval	Cycle of business and monitoring report	WASPT Minutes November 2024

COMMITTEE ATTENDANCE

Name	9 MAY 2024	8 AUGUST 2023	16 NOVEMBER 2023	20 FEBRUARY 2024
Ceri Jackson				
Bethan Evans				
Joga Singh				
Hayley Hutchings				
Hannah Rowan				
Angela Lewis				
Carl Kneeshaw				
Chris Turley		Left at end of item 13		
Lee Brooks	Sonia Thompson			
Liam Williams	Jonathan Turnbull-Ross			
Estelle Hitchon				
Andy Swinburn				
Alex Crawford				
Trish Mills	Julie Boalch			
Damon Turner				
Marcus Viggers				
Christian Fox	Hugh Parry			
Tim Cahalane				

	Attended
	Deputy attended
	Apologies received
	No longer member