

Report to:	Public Board of Directors	Agenda item:	14
Date of Meeting:	6 November 2024		
Title of Report:	Alert, Advise and Assure Report – People Committee		
Status:	For discussion		
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Key Discussion Points and Matters to be escalated from the meeting held on 18 September 2024

ALERT: Alert to matters that require the board's attention or action, e.g. non-compliance, safety or a threat to the Trust's strategy

- **Pay cost reduction:** the People Committee continues to scrutinise plans, programmes and risks related to the target to deliver £19.4m pay cost savings and a reduction of 388 WTE. Conversations at regular meetings between the People Committee NEDs and the Chief People Officer have focussed on the risk of adverse impact terms on performance, quality, safety and staff wellbeing/ morale. The Committee sees significant evidence of plans being implemented and reductions in costs/ WTE year to date. However, further assurance as to deliverability of the plans to the end of the year and the management of the risks and impact is required.

ADVISE: Advise of areas of ongoing monitoring or development or where there is negative assurance

- **People Directorate Fit for Purpose (ongoing monitoring):** The Committee continues to monitor progress of organisational change within the People directorate in response to the AQUA report. The Committee has seen evidence of a 'heard, listened, learnt and acted' approach to change but will continue to monitor for delivery and impact and looks forward to seeing the outcome of the significant levels of activity in due course.
- **People Plan:** given the scope and scale of changes approaching through the Group model, the impact of the Community Services tender etc a full review of the People Plan is required. The changes underscore the crucial need to focus on leadership development. In that regard the Committee has seen evidence of actions including engaging change management advisors Prosci and recruiting to a leadership development post.

ASSURE: Inform the board where positive assurance has been achieved

- **Guardian of Safe Working Annual Report 2023:** the report is a summary of exception reports raised by junior doctors. Exception reporting (introduced under the 2016 contract) allows junior (now resident) doctors to submit a report when their actual hours of work vary from their rota, they fail to get adequate rest breaks, or they are unable to attend agreed educational activities due to service commitments. Additional hours worked may lead to compensatory time off in lieu or payment for the additional hours and, if safe working limits are breached, a "fine" may be levied against the division involved. Fines accrue to a Guardian of Safe Working Fund (which must be used to benefit the education, training and working environment of resident doctors). The Committee noted that:
 - although many potential "exceptions" still go unreported, the Trust's resident doctors are increasingly engaging with the exception reporting process;

- the number of exception reports raised in 2023 was similar to 2023 but is lower than pre-pandemic, which reflects the increase in the number of resident doctors.
- There remain challenges with cover at weekends and night-time especially when there is short term gap due to sickness. Nevertheless, no major issues with resident doctor rotas have been reported to the Executive Team or Guardian of Safe Working.
- regular meetings are now held between the People Function and the Guardian of Safe working to ensure rotas and other HR issues are dealt with in real time.
- The Guardian of Safe Working Fund amounts to £53k, most of which is fines levied 3 years ago. Given that the Fund cannot be spent on something the Trust is required to provide by law/ regulation and must have education or wellbeing benefits it is proving difficult to find meaningful initiatives on which to spend the Fund.

Noting the above, the Committee was assured that the Trust is compliant with the terms of the 2016 contract.

- **People Partner role:** this role was introduced in 2023, replacing the HR Business Partner role. It is one of the principal changes to the People Function and (alongside the creation of the People Hub to handle business-as-usual HR work) is designed to deliver more strategic business partnering to the divisions. The Committee heard reflections from the People Partner, Medicine and the Director of Operations, Medicine on the improved service to the Medicine division; stronger connections between the People Function and the division; and better outcomes (including higher staff survey response rates; increased appraisal compliance; and increased diversity amongst senior nursing staff). Next steps include embedding People Partners across each division and developing the role (with an initial focus on business and workforce planning); continuing to develop the People Hub; and implementing HALO as a case management system,.
- **People Plan/ Basics Matter (ongoing monitoring):** The Committee received exception reports in relation to some of the eleven elements of the People Plan including (amongst others)
 - The launch of Halo, the case management system, is delayed to October. Amongst other things, Halo will enable self-service and reduce administration for the vacancy review process.
 - The Parental Leave Policy has recently lapsed and is being re-drafted following the national policy on baby loss.
 - Resource issues have slowed implementation of the Restorative Just and Learning Culture (RJC) programme and it is being relaunched. The Committee was reassured that although the formal programme had been delayed, there was RJC activity happening across the Trust and that there was a synergy between PSIRF and RJC.

RISK: Advise the board which risks where discussed and if any new risks were identified.

No new risks identified.

CELEBRATING OUTSTANDING: Share any practice, innovation or action that the committee considers to be outstanding

None.

APPROVALS: Decisions and Approvals made by the Committee

None.
