

**Meeting Assurance Report to the
Council of Governors
held on 13 June 2024**

Name of Committee / Group	People Committee
Date of Meeting	12 February, 11 March and 8 April 2024
Chair	Shiella Wright, Non Executive Director
Lead Officer	Mark Gwilliam, Director of HR & Staff Development
Meeting Administrator	Joy Spotswood, PA to the Director of HR & Staff Development

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide in summary an update on the key discussions and outcomes of the above meeting.

Agenda items covered at the meeting

The agendas included the following items:

12 February 2024:

- Industrial Action Update
- People Strategy Deep dive – “We are Rewarded and Recognised”
- Approach to Appraisal Compliance Rates
- Medical and Dental Appraisal Quarterly Update
- Freedom To Speak Up (FTSU) / Employee Relations Casework Quarterly Report
- Incident Update – NMC Register
- HR KPI Report / Managing Attendance Update
- Items to Note:
 - Monthly Nurse Staffing Report – December
 - Monthly Agency Report - December

11 March 2024:

- Industrial action Update
- Update on Sickness in Facilities
- People Strategy Deep Dive – “We Work Flexibly”
- People Strategy Workstream Progress Report
- Future Nurse Recruitment
- HR KPI Report
- Objectives for 2024/25 and Review of Progress against 2023/24 Objectives
- Agency Employment Checks
- TO NOTE:
 - Monthly Nurse Staffing Report – January
 - Monthly Agency Report - January
- Review of Meeting Effectiveness – End of Year Review

8 April 2024:

- Industrial Action Update
- People Strategy Deep Dive – “We are Safe and Healthy”
- Breakdown of Reward and Recognition Data
- HR KPI Report
- Getting Back on Track Update
- 2023 Staff Survey Benchmarked Report
- Gender Pay
- People Committee Annual Report, Work Plan and Terms of Reference
- To Note:
 - Monthly Nurse Staffing Report – February
 - Bi-annual – Nursing Workforce Review – March

Matters to highlight

From the February meeting specific areas to highlight are as follows:

Incident Report – NMC Registration – Following an NMC investigation and removal from their register, we received information to say that the Trust did not nor could have identified the incident earlier. Therefore no change to Trust’s processes is required. However the NMC have changed their processes and now undertake direct checks with the overseas body rather than with the individual.

People Strategy Deep Dive - Reward & Recognised – We received a deep dive into “We are Rewarded and Recognised”. Currently, there are now 15,133 registered users on the VIVUP portal. 3,644 users have placed orders for electronic/white goods between Jan '23 – Jan '24 as part of the salary sacrifice scheme. Also, 191 affordable loans have been issued via Salary Finance between January '23 – December '23 and work continues to promote and develop the reward offers available.

Regarding recognition events which recognise staff included the annual Thank You Awards, National Celebration days and local recognition in directorates ie. Shout Out – MSK and Hug in a Mug - Brearley. Rising Star awards have also been introduced, which focuses on the international nurse recruits and recognises the achievements of individuals.

It was confirmed the retirement policy has been revised to include detail around pension flexibilities.

Appraisal Compliance Rates – Pilot – The Committee was informed that Trust Executive Team (TEG) had agreed to pilot a six-month appraisal window from 1 April to 30 September 2024 to improve appraisal compliance rates. The outcome of the pilot will be fed back to the Committee.

From the March meeting specific areas to highlight are as follows:

Facilities Sickness Update – Andrew Jones attended and provided an update and actions being taken to manage sickness within the facilities directorate. The Committee noted the challenges in managing long term absence within current policy, and it was confirmed the policy was due to be reviewed shortly.

Future Nurse Recruitment – Chris Morley presented the Nursing/Midwifery and Clinical Support Worker Workforce Planning Tool to highlight the predicted future workforce trends.

For all three staff groups the tool predicted that current actions are sufficient to address the known workforce requirements over the next 18 months. Essential to this will be an ongoing focus on retention and to be ready for any funding associated with the Long-Term Workforce Plan, which won’t be released until 2025.

There are some unknown variables within the current position including some attrition of internationally educated nurses, outturn from the universities and the impact of pension changes. Whilst the position for

winter 25/26 indicated we have sufficient arrangements in place to address the known workforce requirements.

Flexible Working – It was confirmed a review of the flexible working policy is underway. Working Groups have been established across all staff groups in consultation with leaders and staff side. Learning has been taken both from feedback received from the Pulse and Staff surveys and understanding of the national conversation.

From the April meeting specific areas to highlight are as follows:

We are Safe and Healthy Deep Dive – The Committee received a presentation on “We are Safe and Healthy” deep dive. A Wellbeing Strategy is being developed and will focus on prevention, protection and support. Good support is already in place ie. Vivup, staff physio etc, but STH and the ICB are now developing an offer of prevention and protection. Currently the trust has 270 Wellbeing and Menopause champions in place to promote the latest thinking and resources available.

The trained wellbeing midwifery advocate shared with the Committee a model of good practice they have established within Obstetrics, Gynaecology and Neonatology. Also shared was the work undertaken in Critical Care to support staff to reduce their sickness absence and improve retention.

Salary Sacrifice and impact on AFC Band 1 & 2 roles – Kirsten Major reported on an issue that had been raised at the Partnership Forum relating to the increase in the national minimum wage taking it to 1p less than AFC2. This means that those staff whose salary falls below the national living wage will no longer be able to participate in the salary sacrifice schemes. The unions had raised concern as this would affect those staff who were on AFC Band 1 & Band 2.

Mark confirmed he was raising this issue with the ICB CPO with a request to write to NHS Employers to put pressure on them to make some adjustments before the next pay award. He would also be raising this with the Shelford HRD's with the potential to lobby through the Shelford Group. Kirsten Major also agreed to raise this through the Shelford CEO's.

Staff Survey Results – A full copy of the 2023 Staff Survey Benchmarked report was circulated to the Committee. Also included with the report was a summary identifying our performance against our peer benchmark group and the next steps in response to the results which included developing an enhanced Trust action plan, carrying through the focus on the three areas from the work in 2023 (flexible working, team wellbeing support and enabling breaks).

Recruitment Time to Fill Performance – As at 29th February 2024 the year to date position for time to fill was 8.9 weeks which was a 0.1 week improvement on the January YTD position. Performance for February was 7.7 weeks against the trajectory of 8 weeks, which is a 1.7 week improvement on the January In-Month position. Mark Gwilliam also reported that March's position was also achieving a 7.7 week performance.

Gender Pay Gap - Mark Gwilliam presented a paper to the Committee outlining the gender pay gap data for 2023, following national submission on the 28 March 2024. Highlighting:

- The mean gender pay gap for the Trust has decreased to 19.44% from 20.58% in 2022.
- The mean average hourly rate has increased for both men and women with higher increase for women.
- Women: increased to £17.95 from £17.00 in 2022 (increase of £0.95) Men: increased to £22.28 from £21.40 in 2022 (increase of £0.88)
- The mean gender pay gap on bonus pay has also decreased from last year, both including and excluding long service awards.
- Without long service awards: decreased to 38.22% from 40.27% in 2022 With long service awards: decreased to 73.35% from 81.55% in 2022

The gender pay gap is included as part of the quality and diversity agenda, particularly the women's network group. The Committee noted the detail of the gender pay gap data for 2023 and the work underway to address the gaps.

Documents approved were:

- The Committee's Annual Report, Workplan and Terms of Reference

Significant issues / concerns escalated including proposals on the next steps to address this

The Committee requested to escalate to the Board of Directors the issue regarding Salary Sacrifice and impact on AFC Band 1 & 2 roles.

Implications

Aim of the STHFT Corporate Strategy		✓ Tick as appropriate
1	Deliver the Best Clinical Outcomes	✓
2	Provide Patient Centred Services	✓
3	Employ Caring and Cared for Staff	✓
4	Spend Public Money Wisely	✓
5	Create a Sustainable Organisation	✓
6	Deliver Excellent Research, Education and Innovation	✓

Recommendations

The Council of Governors is asked to **RECEIVE** and **NOTE** the update provided and respond to any specific points raised within the report.

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Meeting Administrator	Joy Spotswood, PA to the Director of HR & Staff Development

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide in summary an update on the key discussions and outcomes of the above meeting.

Agenda items covered at the meeting

The agenda included the following items:

- Guardian of Safe Working Hours Quarter 4 Update/Annual Report
- Industrial action Update
- People Strategy Deep Dive – “We are Compassionate and Inclusive”
- People Strategy Workstream Progress Report
- Staff Survey Action Plan
 - Sexual Safety Charter
- HR KPI Report
 - Sickness Improvement Plan
- TO NOTE:
 - Monthly Nurse Staffing Report – March 2024
 - Monthly Agency Report – March 2024

Matters to highlight

Specific areas to highlight are as follows:

People Strategy workstream progress update – The Committee noted no particular concerns. There was a focus on the special leave policy, working flexibly – in terms of retaining people, between spring and autumn protected time for learning events with a significant number of learning events when staff might be more able to attend, the launch of the PROUD improvement conference and a focus on Freedom To Speak Up with a significant amount of work being undertaken. The Committee considered the findings from the staff survey, and concerns and actions planned to address the low survey response rate.

Sexual Safety Charter – The Committee received a paper on sexual safety which broke down the incidents related to patients and colleagues.

Significant issues / concerns escalated including proposals on the next steps to address this

New areas which the Committee / Group wishes to escalate as potential areas of non-compliance, that need addressing urgently or escalating:

Guardian of Safe Working Hours quarter 1 update. The Committee heard there has been a 46% increase in exception reporting which could indicate an excellent reporting culture or signal concern. Of note was the specialty oncology where the trend remains upwards due to low staffing. The Committee was informed that there is no confidence in safety of the hours and education. It was acknowledged that the Board is aware and that the Medical Director (Development) and Chief Executive have been working hard to address the matter and have met with the Workforce Improvement Board.

Implications

Aim of the STHFT Corporate Strategy		✓ Tick as appropriate
1	Deliver the Best Clinical Outcomes	✓
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3	Employ Caring and Cared for Staff	✓
4	Spend Public Money Wisely	✓
5	Create a Sustainable Organisation	✓
6	Deliver Excellent Research, Education and Innovation	✓

Recommendations

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