Agenda Item 19c

The Queen Elizabeth Hospital King's Lynn
NHS Foundation Trust

Committee Chair's Assurance Report

Report to:	Board of Directors (in Public)
Date of meeting:	**7 December 2021**
Title of Report:	Assurance Report from the People Committee
Recommendation:	For assurance
Chair:	Simon Roberts, Non-Executive Director
Purpose:	The report summarises the assurances received, approvals, recommendations and decisions made by the Trust's People Committee at its meeting on **24 November 2021.**
Background:	The Committee meets monthly and provides assurance on the overarching strategy for People, workforce activity, staff experience and engagement, recruitment and retention strategy, culture and organisational development strategy, leadership, training and development within the hospital.
Item for Assurance	**Staff Story – Samuel Jude, BAME Staff Network** The Committee were assured that the BAME network were making positive steps to improve fairness and inclusion across the Trust. Examples given included the new See Me First Campaign, increased BAME staff promotions, fairness at shortlisting and interview panels. Additional plans for the network to engage with the FTSU guardian and champions to further support the safe space to speak up currently offered at the end of each monthly network meeting. The Committee recognised the progress made and reflected that this work was a marathon not a sprint to achieving our aims of zero discrimination within QEH.
Item for Assurance **Item for Escalation**	**Divisional Presentation – Clinical Support Services** The Committee was assured of positive progress through the Radiology Improvement Plan with staff feeling heard and invested in with the new MRI and DAC investment programmes helping in the latter regard. There were also positive reflections concerning the impact of the culture intervention. It was noted that despite some implementation challenges with RIS/PACS, these had offered great opportunities for the team to pull together and work through remedial plans and solutions. The Committee were not assured that the current high levels of vacancies and sickness absence particularly within the Pharmacy teams were fully mitigated by an improvement action plan. Whilst it was recognised that there is an NHS and regional

	shortage of Pharmacists, the ongoing high workload in the department could impact patient flow within the Trust.
Item for Assurance	**Freedom to Speak UP (FTSU) Bi-annual Report** The Committee was concerned about the results of the quarter 2 staff pulse survey that indicated a continuing significant concern of detriment if staff speak up however at the same time the Committee was reminded the sample size was small. It was therefore recommended that this be viewed in the round with the full staff survey responses in the new year. The proactive engagement of Guardians and Champions with Trust teams was noted and increasing synergy was being pursued with the Staff Networks. The Committee requested the FTSU team were mindful that whilst the total hours invested for FTSU has increased, the level of independent FTSU resource had decreased and this should continue to be monitored in the coming weeks to ensure the balance between trust-based and independent resource is at the correct level. It was acknowledged there are mitigating actions in place to ensure staff do not have to speak to a FTSU champion or guardian in their Division.
Item for Escalation	**Workforce Metrics Report and Integrated Performance Report** The Committee noted a continued and concerning deterioration in workforce metrics this month, specifically in relation to sickness absence at 7.22%. Whilst appraisal compliance had increases slightly, the Committee also reflected a drop in mandatory training compliance and a significant increase in the vacancy rate from 7.33% to 10.55%. See following item for root cause analysis paper discussion.
Item for Escalation	**Root Cause Analysis** The Committee engaged in a detailed review of workforce performance metrics to understand the root causes and action plan proposed to bring back in line. The analysis had identified a number of key issues along with a high level action plan and the Committee looks forward to attaining high level oversight of the implementation of a detailed action plan in the coming months. However, the Committee was also informed that there would be some significant investment and time required to achieve the target performance, specifically in relation to staff sickness. It was requested that this be given some significant time for discussion at a forthcoming board review meeting.
Item for Assurance	**Medical Staffing and Job Planning** The Committee noted the report as provided. Whilst there was assurance concerning the outcome of the 2020/'21 job planning round, the Committee queried the delay and position in job planning for 2021/22 and requested that future reports are updated to report against 2021/'22 progress and trajectory for completion.

Item for Assurance	**People Executive Group Assurance Report** The Committee noted the report and the revision to the Terms of Reference of the Professional Education Forum to better reflect new key deliverables. It also noted the current staff survey completion rate of 41.2% being in line with the response rate at the same point last year.
Item for Escalation	**Significant Risk and BAF Report** The Committee noted the reports as presented. It also reflected on whether the increased concern regarding sickness absence should be highlighted within this reporting and requested the Director of People to review in line with the Assurance and Risk Executive Group.
Risks to refer to risk register	**None**
Other items of business	**None**

Attendance record:

Attendees:
S Roberts – Non-Executive Director and Committee Chair
D Dickinson – Non-Executive Director
A Brown – Non-Executive Director
L Skaife-Knight – Deputy CEO
J Humphries – Director of People
A Webster – Chief Nurse

Invitees:
S Jude – Ward Sister / Charge Nurse (agenda item 3)
C Kirk – Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Lead (agenda item 3)
N Burns – Division Director Clinical Support Services (agenda item 4)
H Lodge – Clinical Support Services Head of Nursing (agenda item 4)
C Kent – Head of Organisational Culture (agenda item 8)
C Shaw – CEO

Apologies:
C Castleton – Deputy Director of HR

Observers:
J Dossetor, P Hipkin – Governors

Minute taker:
L Preston – Board/Committee Administrator