Agenda Item: 17.3

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:	1 December 2020
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 18 November 2020.
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:	**Workforce report and Integrated Performance Report** Notwithstanding the operational pressures the Trust is facing, assurance gaps remain for sickness absence, mandatory training and appraisal. With a continued deteriorating trajectory since August, it was recognised that sickness is likely to deteriorate further in the months to come, especially as operational pressures take hold in the busiest months of the year, leading to very low assurance that the 4% target for 2020/21 will be achieved by the end of March 2021. There is limited assurance for appraisals, with increased concerns regarding lack of progress with seriously overdue appraisals and an urgent requirement to do more to hold senior managers to account. Whilst mandatory training was on an upward trajectory, insufficient progress as in-month performance deteriorated meant the Committee is not assured in this area. The Committee was not assured that the Trust is seeing the step change with the handling of employee relations cases that has been previously requested, and though the complexities of some of these cases was recognised as a factor, too many longstanding cases are still to be resolved which was considered to be unacceptable. There was a lack of assurance regarding organisational workforce data and its accuracy (see Risks to Refer to Risk Register below) and the challenges this poses in enabling the Committee to make accurate and reliable comparisons between workforce performance data from month to month.

Item for Assurance:	**Job Planning and Medical Recruitment** Despite the work that has gone into improving the position on job planning, the Committee remain unassured by progress to date, notably that 88/141 job plans are yet to be completed and signed off and therefore the November 2020 deadline will not be met. Moreover, it is of particular concern that this situation has now prevailed for over 12-months with little evidence of progress. Moving forward, the Committee will be more assured by a revised trajectory that sets out a clear trajectory for completion, including cases that may require mediation. As there is no People Committee in December 2020 this will be included in the December Non-Executive Director updates.
Item for Assurance:	**Culture and Engagement monthly update** The richness and breadth and depth of the culture and engagement work provided a lot of assurance to the Committee. The Committee were assured that whilst with less than two weeks to go until the National Staff Survey for 2020 closes, the Trust remains 7% below the 50% target, that no stone is being left unturned and all reasonable efforts are being made to maximise response rates. It is recognised that the response rates are higher than at this time last year at Trust level and in comparison with the national average for acute trusts as of last week. Assurance was taken from the progress being made in the Surgery Divisional Leadership Team to improve performance against the key People metrics, though it was recognised that the Committee would like to have seen more detail on the challenged areas and the detail of the action plans to support recovery.
Item for Assurance:	**Conflicts of Interest Policy** The Committee approved the updated Conflicts of Interest (including gifts, hospitality and sponsorship) Policy in the absence of the People Executive Group (PEG) being operational. The Committee is assured that as the PEG comes into operation later in November 2020, this is the forum that will receive and approve such policies going forward, reporting up to the People Committee via the Chair's Assurance Reports.
Risks to refer to risk register:	The Committee referred a risk to the Finance and Activity Committee for consideration under Key Strategic Objective Two in relation to a risk identified by the People Committee about the robustness and reliability of the Trust's workforce data.
Other items of business:	Other items the Committee reviewed: • Staff Story – Freedom to Speak Up (FTSU) Champions • FTSU Quarterly Report

Attendance	
Attendees:	S Roberts – Non-Executive Director and Committee Chair D Dickinson – Non-Executive Director A Brown – Non-Executive Director L Skaife-Knight – Deputy CEO

	C Castleton – Director of HR P Tydeman - Director of Transformation E Tabay – Deputy Chief Nurse C Shaw – CEO A Prime – Trust Secretary
Invitees:	H Warren – Divisional Director Surgery (agenda item 3) Liz Barker – Head of Nursing (agenda item 3) S Swanepoel Young - HR Business Partner (agenda item 3) C Hoare and Z Plaatjies - FTSU Champions (agenda item 4) D Trevanion – FTSU Guardian (agenda item 5) Dr G Raghuraman – Deputy Medical Director (agenda item 11) C Benham – Director of Finance (agenda item 13)
Observers:	M Bruce, J Dossetor - Governors