

Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board (BCUHB)
Confirmed Minutes of the People & Culture Committee
held in Public on 19 December 2024
in the Boardroom, Carlton Court, St Asaph and via Teams

Committee Members Present	
Name	Title
Dyfed Jones	Independent Member (Chair of People & Culture Committee)
Billy Nichols	Independent Member (Vice Chair of People & Culture Committee)
Clare Budden	Independent Member
Karen Balmer	Independent Member (<i>via Teams</i>)
In Attendance	
Georgina Roberts	Senior Associate Director People Services
Pam Wenger	Director of Corporate Governance
Teresa Owen	Executive Director of Allied Health Professionals & Health Science
Carol Shillabeer	Chief Executive
Dyfed Edwards	Chair of the Health Board (<i>Observer</i>)
Nick Graham	Associate Director of Workforce Optimisation (<i>via Teams</i>)
Dave Harries	Head of Internal Audit
Katie Sargent	Organisational Development – Engagement Lead
Mike Parry	Associate Director of the Board
Ceri Harris	Head of Equality & Human Rights
Eleri Hughes-Jones	Head of Welsh Language Services (<i>part meeting</i>)
Nia Harris	Head of Organisational Development
Nia Thomas	Organisational Development Manager (<i>part meeting</i>)
Dewi Owen	Organisational Development Practitioner (<i>Observer - part meeting</i>)
Tracey Eccles	Speaking up Safely Guardian (<i>via Teams – part meeting</i>)
Nesta Collingridge	Head of Risk Management (<i>via Teams – part meeting</i>)
Committee Support	
Philippa Peake-Jones	Head of Corporate Affairs
Laura Jones	Project Support Manager (Corporate Governance)

Agenda Item
OPENING BUSINESS
PC24/88 Welcome and Apologies
Apologies were noted for Jason Brannan.
PC24/89 Declarations of Interest
No declarations of interest were raised.
PC23/90 Unconfirmed Minutes of Meeting held on 10.10.24
It was agreed that the minutes of the meetings held on 10.10.24 were a true and accurate record.

PC24/91 Matters Arising & Action Log

Operating Model

- There was discussion around action **PC24/72.2** relating to the recruitment of a Programme Director. It was confirmed that Ffion Johnstone has been appointed to this role and agreed that this action could be closed. It was also agreed that the Operating Model should be referred to as the Foundations for the Future Programme going forward.

The Committee reviewed the remaining actions and agreed to close the actions that were proposed for closure.

STAFF STORY

PC24/92 Staff Story

The Chair confirmed that this is the first staff story received by the Committee and will be a key part of the remit of the Committee going forward. It was confirmed that it is important to address the outcome of the story and what action should come back to the Committee in terms of progress.

In presenting to the Committee, the Organisational Development, Engagement Lead highlighted:

- The staff story has been shared via the Speaking up Safely Guardian and is based around fixed term contracts.
- The story focuses on a member of staff who moved to North Wales to take up a clinical role. The staff member was not paid during December 2023 due to the establishment control process which had an impact on their work and home life and the individual also felt let down by the Health Board.
- The issue has now been addressed and the member of staff now has a permanent position within the organisation however this issue has left an impact on the staff member.
- The key messages from the staff story are based around job insecurity, being unable to pay bills and feeling undervalued.
- Fixed term contracts have been identified by Workforce as an issue and work is underway to review how these are being used.
- It was confirmed that the only areas that should be using fixed term contracts are maternity cover, long term sickness and limited term projects.
- Further work is required to address the process for emergency payments and also ensure managers have a basic level of training in this area.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Noted that the key issues are now being addressed such as providing communication and training for managers, simplifying the process and monitoring fixed term contracts.
- Confirmed that the Health Board do not include a probation period within our terms of reference.
- Highlighted the need to be more people orientated rather than process focussed and work is taking place with Shared Services to develop a simplified process.

- Acknowledged that some staff experience severe hardship and there is a need to ensure signposting is provided where required.
- Suggested aligning staff stories to strategic items included on the agenda as we move forward, inviting staff members who share their stories to join the meeting and also provide assurance to the Committee that these issues are being addressed to ensure they are not repeated.
- Agreed the need for learning to be shared with staff via the People & Culture Sub Groups within the IHCs.

Actions:

- **PC24/92.1** Start to align staff stories to strategic items included on the agenda going forward.
- **PC24/92.2** Share the learning relating to fixed term contracts via the People & Culture Sub Groups within the IHCs.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the paper.
- **RECEIVED** the staff story.

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

PC24/93 Equality Report

Members noted that this was an introductory report to start to shape how the Committee can influence and help develop the Equality agenda. In presenting the report, the Head of Equality & Human Rights highlighted:

- The Team have developed a four-year action plan identifying the strategic objectives for equality and human rights and the report focusses on two key areas which are the Welsh Workforce Race Equality Scheme (WRES) and the Worker Protection (Amendment of Equality Act 2010) Act 2023
- The WRES measures the impact of data across the organisation from recruitment to exit interview.
- Information from ESR and the staff survey has been reviewed and shows a low level of staff declaring their ethnicity which suggests people may be experiencing discrimination however there is a long-term plan to address this issue.
- The Team have linked in with the Speaking up Safely Team and recognised there is little representation to take forward concerns raised and this is being reviewed.
- The Worker Protection Act was introduced in October 2023 and the organisation have a duty of care to provide safe spaces for staff to raise concerns in relation to sexual safety.
- The Team are developing the policy to align to the Act and there will be moral and financial implications for the Health Board.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Queried whether the WRES Report is operational and asked for this to be shared outside of the meeting to provide additional information.
- Suggested that ESR may provide some barriers in this area and there is a need to get the system working well for new starters to ensure data is being captured.

- Advised that the risk assessment relating to sexual harassment is reviewed and processes are put in place to ensure staff understand the policy and action is being taken which will provide a level of assurance.
- Agreed that the WRES Report requires Board level visibility.
- Suggested further work is needed to ensure the data is being reviewed to highlight where targeted actions and focus is required.
- Highlighted that as a major employer of 20,000 staff, this provides the Health Board with the opportunity for staff to become champions of equality within the local communities.
- Stated that the Strategic Equalities Plan has been signed off by the Board and an update should come to the Committee for assurance.
- Confirmed that there is a need to shape the strategic direction and areas of focus for the WRES Report to go to Board and form part of the Board Development Plan and also back to the Committee for assurance.

Actions:

- **PC24/93.1** Share the WRES Report with the Committee outside of the meeting.
- **PC24/93.2** Provide an update to the Committee on the Strategic Equalities Plan for assurance.
- **PC24/93.3** Share the WRES Report with the Board and take back to the Committee to monitor progress and provide assurance.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the updates.

PC24/94 Welsh Language Services Introductory Paper

Members noted that this was an introductory report into Welsh Language Services and this has been the focus of a recent Board Development Session. In presenting the report, the Head of Welsh Language Services highlighted:

- There is a current focus on the Welsh Language Commissioner five-year strategy and the main themes include Health & Social Care, Workplace and Young People.
- An outline structure has been developed which links in with areas of work such as organisational development, promotion and engagement, this is currently working well.
- There are issues relating to legislation and there is a need for further work to develop plans to increase the ability to deliver clinical consultations in Welsh.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Agreed on the importance of being able to deliver high quality, language appropriate care.
- Queried what we want to achieve as an organisation in terms of Welsh Language speakers and whether there should be a minimum expectation as this is a great opportunity as a major employer to make a difference in this area.
- Considered other languages and the ambition to provide any resident with services in their first language whatever that may be and how this links with the Strategic Equalities Plan. It was confirmed that a service for different languages is being provided but this needs to be developed further and shared more widely.

- Confirmed that discussions have taken place at Board level and there is a need to move forward to ensure patients receive care in Welsh as required as this supports better outcomes for patients.
- Agreed the need to focus on Children & Young people, Older people and Mental Health as priority areas and the Team are linking in to the IMTP and the Annual Plan.
- Acknowledged that BCU are making progress and this has been recognised at the NHS Wales Leadership Board.
- Recognised the high standard of Welsh Language learning support available to staff and suggested this is promoted when recruiting to roles.
- Confirmed that tutors are available across the organisation working with a range of staff including Executive Directors, front line staff and overseas employees and this support will continue to develop.
- Agreed the need to promote Welsh Culture as well as Welsh Language.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **CONSIDERED** the report as an initial discussion platform for future papers and assurance.

Nia Harris & Dewi Jones joined the meeting

PC24/95 People Operations Report

Members received the report and noted the progress. In presenting the report, the Associate Director of Workforce Optimisation highlighted:

- The change in the structure of the report into three sections – People, Leadership & Development and Culture & Engagement.
- There has been a reduction in vacancy rate and turnover however further work is required in relation to retention.
- The Health Board have the lowest sickness absence rate in Wales however there is a need to understand the trends, in particular relating to stress and anxiety.
- The PADR rate has increased to 77.8% and there has been an increase across the majority of areas.
- There has been significant improvement relating to time to hire and the challenge is now to maintain the improvement.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Considered progress in terms of workforce planning confirming that the workforce planning function is being developed and during Q4 the Team aim to address the medical staffing function.
- Noted the current challenges and suggested there is a need to provide assurance that the issues are being addressed.
- Acknowledged the triangulation of vacancy, sickness and PADRs to identify any pattern of issues and proposed the Team review a further breakdown of the areas of stress being recorded.
- Agreed to complete some wider mapping in relation to workforce planning to gain some clearer information and also address the action being taken to address the issues raised in the report.

Action:

- **PC24/95.1** With regards to the new format of the paper, include what is being done about the issues raised in the report and also include wider mapping in relation to workforce planning.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the current position and provided feedback regarding **ASSURANCE** required as a result of the reported positions contained in the report.

PC24/96 Culture, Leadership & Engagement Update

Members received the report and noted the progress. In presenting the report, the Head of Organisational Development and the Organisational Development Manager highlighted:

- The organisation currently has 62 culture change leaders and the Team are working to gain additional leaders across all areas of the Health Board.
- Some staff groups experience retention issues and high turnover of staff, these areas may require a stronger focus on culture change and a heat map will be developed as we move forward to identify any problem areas.
- Work is taking place with Trade Unions and Managers to help introduce the organisation's cultural values as soon as new staff are inducted.
- The Team are working closely with the new Retention Lead, James Johnson to ensure there is clarity around retention issues and required action and intervention as well as engagement with the Trade Unions.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Queried the effectiveness of the staff survey and the need for a higher response rate and views from a broader group of staff to gain more valuable data.
- Suggested the Committee review the staff survey including the results at a future meeting and link this in to a broader discussion on staff engagement.
- Discussed how other organisations engage with their staff and referred to Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust who complete a staff survey four times per year and gain a 70% response rate, it was agreed that this information would be shared.
- Considered the use of pulse surveys to target certain areas and start to work on local engagement to provide tailored solutions as different approaches are required in different areas.
- Suggested the information received from the Foundations for the Future Programme will be a good source of information.
- Agreed the need for the organisation to be clear on our values and cultures and develop good relationships for staff and line managers.

Actions:

- **PC24/96.1** Clarify that James Johnson has engaged with Trade Unions.
- **PC24/96.2** Bring the Staff Survey including the results to a future Committee linking into Staff Engagement.
- **PC24/96.3** Share an example of the Staff Survey from Northumbria Healthcare NHS Trust.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **DISCUSSED** and **NOTED** the information provided in the report.

PC24/97 Values & Behaviours Engagement Plan

Members received the report and noted the progress. In presenting the report, the Head of Organisational Development highlighted:

- The support received from the Committee and the Board to enable this work to take place.
- The Values and Behaviours Framework was approved by the Board in November 24. This will now start to be embedded along with the leadership pledge and the video footage.
- Co-design is taking place to inform the plan and the Team have been gaining feedback from forums, the Padlet and external colleagues of the Stakeholder Reference Group.
- A workshop is due to take place in January 25 with the colleagues aligned to the work to address areas including transformation, research, value and sustainability.
- A toolkit is in development and will be going out for consultation shortly ensuring a wide range of staff are included in the consultation including front line staff.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Queried the timelines and pace of the programme.
- Agreed that the Team now need to move forward with the delivery plan, monitor the implementation of the plan and provide assurance back to the Committee.
- Acknowledged the need for a strong approach to leadership at Board level to drive culture change.

Action:

- **PC24/97.1** Provide assurance to a future Committee on the progress of implementation of the Values & Behaviours delivery plan.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the information provided within the report.

PC24/98 Foundations for the Future Programme

The Chief Executive provided a verbal update highlighting:

- The Board were briefed on the Programme during an informal Board discussion and the Discovery Phase Report has now been published within the organisation.
- The design phase has commenced and workshop sessions are being held.
- Ffion Johnstone has been appointed as the Programme Director which will strengthen the programme management approach.
- An outline design is due to be developed by the end March and will go through the governance route for further discussion.

Action:

- **PC24/98.1** Item to return to the next Committee with a formal paper and the Programme Director may also be in attendance.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the update.

Tracey Eccles joined the meeting.

GOVERNANCE & ASSURANCE

PC24/99 Speaking Up Safely Update Report

Members received the report and the Speaking up Safely Guardian highlighted:

- In July 2021 a Speaking up Safety Framework was implemented to provide staff with an anonymous approach to raise concerns.
- The paper outlines the current framework and a current refresh of the freedom to speak up.
- Tracey Eccles was appointed as the Speaking up Safely Guardian in October 24 and further work is required to build a wider range of guardians within the organisation.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Suggested that it may be more difficult to raise issues in clinical areas.
- Agreed that all staff should feel safe to speak up and there is a need to break the hierarchical culture.
- Acknowledged the importance of implementing a mechanism to provide this service and also the need to ensure additional systems are in place that may help to reduce the requirement of this service.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- **NOTED** the update provided

PC24/100 On-Call Arrangements – Final Internal Audit Report

Members received the report and the Senior Associate Director People Services highlighted:

- The paper informs the current position in relation to the actions from the Internal Audit Report.
- The report coincides with the respect and resolution process which is also being addressed.
- Communication has gone out to staff to remind them of the need to factor in compensatory rest following an on-call session.
- The Head of Internal Audit noted the lack of progress in relation to the audit recommendations highlighting that this has been extended.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Suggested that there is not enough detail in the paper to provide assurance stating the need to include the recommendations with the paper going forward.
- Queried why the actions are not being addressed and suggested people need to be held accountable.

- Confirmed that the Audit Committee have a strong oversight of Internal Audit reports and a new process is being put in place to address out-standing audits.

Action:

- PC24/100.1** Final Internal Audit Report on On-Call Arrangements including the recommendations to come back to the Committee with a more comprehensive update and response plan.

It was resolved that the Committee:

PC24/101 Corporate Risk Register Report & Board Assurance Framework

Members received the report and the Head of Risk Management highlighted:

- All risks currently sit within the tolerance set and the actions are progressing.
- Following an Internal Audit recommendation, a change in process has been developed to scrutinise risks in more detail.
- The Health & Safety risk has been reviewed in depth and now includes further controls.
- In relation to the People, Culture & Wellbeing risk, retirement has been identified as an issue and this needs to be scrutinised in more detail to ensure there are actions in place to address this.
- The Risk Scrutiny Group in January will have a deep dive into these risks.

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Queried why the Health & Safety target risk date has been extended to 31.12.25 as this is a significant risk.
- Confirmed that the Health & Safety team are developing a framework for the whole organisation to prioritise the key areas and this will require a twelve-month period.
- Acknowledged that the Team are completing a review of the operational risks in relation to Health & Safety to ensure actions are aligned.

It was resolved that the Committee:

- RECEIVE ASSURANCE** on the corporate risks within the report.

FOR INFORMATION

PC24/102 Summary of Business to be Reported from Private

It was resolved that the Committee **NOTED** the report.

PC24/103 Committee Forward Workplan

It was resolved that the Committee **NOTED** the forward workplan for information.

FOR NOTING – Workforce Policies

It was resolved that the Committee **NOTED** the following Workforce Policies:

- NHS Wales Protocol for Recognising Continuous Service WP77
- WP4 a Procedure for NHS Staff to Raise Concerns

- All Wales Recovery of Overpayments Procedure

CLOSING BUSINESS

PC24/104 Agree Items for Referral to Board / Other Committees

It was agreed that there were no items to be referred to the Board.

PC24/105 Review of Meeting Effectiveness

As part of the discussion, the Committee:

- Agreed there had been some good discussion.
- Suggested the term update is not used in future and papers clarify the ask of the Committee.
- Acknowledged the need to promote the role of the Committee within teams to confirm that is to provide assurance to the Board in key areas.
- Stated that once the Executive Director of Workforce & OD has been appointed this will provide some further strategic direction.

PC24/106 Date of next meeting

Thursday 13th February 2025, 9.30-12.30pm

Resolution to Exclude the Press and Public

'Those representatives of the press and other members of the public be excluded from the remainder of this meeting having regard to the confidential nature of the business to be transacted, publicity on which would be prejudicial to the public interest in accordance with Section 1(2) Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.'