

Blood and Transplant

Board Meeting in Public

Tuesday, 20 May 2025

Title of Paper	People Committee Board Assurance Report	Agenda No.	5.2.3
Nature of Paper	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Official <input type="checkbox"/> Official Sensitive		
Author(s)	Omolola Majolagbe, Corporate Governance Officer		
Lead Executive	Julie Pinder, Chief People Officer		
Non-Executive Director Sponsor	Caroline Serfass, Committee Chair during 2024/25		
Presenter(s) at Meeting	Caroline Serfass, Committee Chair during 2024/25 Penny McIntyre, Committee Chair from 2025/26		
Presented for	<input type="checkbox"/> Approval <input type="checkbox"/> Information* <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assurance <input type="checkbox"/> Update		
Executive Summary (max 300 word count)			
<p>The purpose of this report is to summarise the People Committee's activity across 2024-25 and demonstrate that it has effectively discharged its delegated responsibilities, as set out within its terms of reference. The report will also inform the Accountable Officer's Annual Governance Statement 2024/25.</p> <p>The report was presented in draft to the People Committee on 1 May 2025 and, for assurance to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee on 2 May 2025. The assurance report highlighted two potential gaps which were discussed and the following agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) The Chief People Officer and Company Secretary to determine the appropriate approach to reporting from the Pay Committee to the People Committee. b) The Chief People Officer and Company Secretary consider how to give the Committee assurance in relation to the process for honour applications. 			
Previously Considered by			
People Committee on 1 May 2025. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee received the final report for assurance on 2 May 2025..			
Recommendation	The Board is asked to receive the People Committee Board Assurance Report for assurance.		
Risk(s) identified (Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks)			
N/A			
Strategic Objective(s) this paper relates to: [Click on all that apply]			
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invest in people and culture <input type="checkbox"/> Drive innovation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Modernise our operations <input type="checkbox"/> Grow and diversify our donor base			
Appendices:	Appendix 1 - Gap analysis against People Committee delegations.		

NHS BLOOD AND TRANSPLANT PEOPLE COMMITTEE COMMITTEE BOARD ASSURANCE REPORT 2024-25

Status: Official

Introduction

The People Committee is established by the Board of NHSBT as a committee of the Board with powers and responsibilities delegated to it within the NHSBT Standing Orders, Scheme of Delegations, Standing Financial Instructions and Terms of Reference.

The purpose of this Board Assurance report is to summarise the People Committee's activity during 2024-25 and demonstrate that it has effectively discharged its delegated responsibilities, as set out in its terms of reference. The report will also inform the Accountable Officers Annual Governance Statement 2024-25

Purpose of the People Committee.

The purpose of the Committee is to support the Board in its responsibility to discharge its regulatory duties in respect of employee relations matters, to provide assurance on the board composition and organisational climate, and to approve recommendations for external recognition. The Committee fulfils the role of the Remuneration and Terms of Service Committee described in EL (94)40 of the Code of Conduct and Accountability 2004.

The Committee has the following specific delegated authority from the Board:

- Terms and Conditions (including Pay and Severance)
- Senior Level Capability
- To act as a nominations committee for appointments to Executive Director posts
- Fit and Proper Persons Regulations Assurance
- Equality and Diversity Inclusion Compliance
- Mandatory Training Sub-committee.

Reporting structure

The People Committee reports its activities to the Board, escalating significant matters after each meeting. There are two executive sub-committees reporting to People Committee as shown below by dotted lines.



Committee membership and attendance 2024-25

During 2024-25, the Committee met four times. Meetings have been well attended and quoracy achieved on all occasions. The annual attendance of members is shown below:

Members	03.07.2024	20.09.2024	02.12.2024	3.2.2025	Total
Caroline Serfass, Non-Executive Director Chair to 31.03.2025	√	√	√	√	4/4
Peter Wyman, Non-Executive Director	√	√	√	√	4/4
Penny McIntyre, Non-Executive Director Chair from 01.04.2025	√	√	√	√	4/4
Lorna Marson, Non-Executive Director ¹	-	√	√	√	3/3

¹ Lorna Marson became a member of the Committee on 30 July 2024

NHSBT has arrangements in place regarding the identification and management of any conflicts of interest. Members' interests are included on the agenda for visibility. During the year no conflicts of interest requiring management were raised.

Summary of Activity

In 2024-25, the following have been the key areas of focus

Terms and Conditions (including Pay and Severance)

- The details of the Executive Senior Manager (ESM) Pay and Bonus Proposal were received by the Committee. People Committee considered how the award would be applied to individuals who had, or have been, in substantive ESM posts during the periods to which the award applies, ensuring that decisions made were within the parameters and guidance set out by DHSC.
- The Committee considered the review of two senior exit questionnaire.

Senior Level Capability

- The report on Board/Executive Succession Planning and Talent Management was received by the Committee. It was recognised that NHSBT was at the beginning of its journey in relation to succession planning and talent management. A planned approach to succession planning and talent management was noted by the Committee.
- Plans to adopt the NHSE Leadership Competency Framework were noted.

To act as a nominations committee for appointments to Executive Director posts

- The People Committee approved the process for and endorsed the final proposed candidate in relation to three executive appointments being the roles of the Chief People Officer, Director of Communications and Engagement and Donor Experience Director.
- The Committee also confirmed its approval of the Director of Blood Supply recruitment process, the recruitment of which was still in progression at the year end.

Fit and Proper Persons Regulations Assurance

- a) Following the Department of Health and Social Care's (DHSC) revised FPP Policy, an amended FPP Regulation Policy was approved by the Committee in February 2025. The policy was updated to reflect that DHSC will carry out checks upon appointment for its appointees. Additionally, the policy now includes a dispute resolution section, addressing a recommendation from the GIAA internal audit regarding the FPPR process. NHSBT will continue to carry out checks on an annual basis.

Equality and Diversity Inclusion Compliance

- a) A Forward Together Programme and Anti-racism Framework have been put in place to allow NHSBT to become an intentionally inclusive and anti-racist organisation and was a vital part of delivering the NHSBT Strategy. Implementation of phase 1 of the Forward Together Programme was concluded in March 2025, implementation of phase 2 will be led by the People Directorate from April 2025. The Committee monitored progress and were assured that the organisation's inclusive objectives aligned with the NHSBT strategy.
- b) The Committee received the annual Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) and Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) reports for 2023-24. They noted the progress made over the year and challenges identified and recommended publication of the WRES and WDES reports on the NHSBT D&I website to the Board.
- c) The Committee considered the NHSBT's Gender Pay Gap and ethnicity Pay Gap reports in relation to the 2023-24 financial year. They noted the success in reducing the gap across mean pay and median pay.
- d) The Public Sector Equality Duty Report (PSED) was considered and approved for publication at the July 2024 meeting.

Health, Safety and Welfare

- a) The Health and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023-24 was received by People Committee.
- b) There was discussion around Underlying Themes and Trends in Health, Safety & Wellbeing and a wellbeing deep dive highlighted improvement around neurodiversity and disability through the Our Voice survey results.

Mandatory Training Sub-committee.

- a) The Committee received quarterly reports and an annual report from the Mandatory Training Sub-committee. The Committee also noted the Mandatory Training Committee Terms of Reference.

Organisational climate

- a) There are regular reviews and assurance to the Committee quarterly of trends relating to Freedom to Speak Up, Disciplinary & Grievance caseloads.
- b) The People Committee reviewed 2023 Our Voice survey results and followed up on action plans.

People Strategy

- a) The People Plan was launched in April 2024. The Committee received the quarterly progress reports on the People Plan with summary of activities and Key Performance Indicator for the three quarters. There were notable improvements shown in two areas since the launch of the plan, the scope and kick-off of the Estate Strategy and actions related to harassment, bullying, and abuse within directorate action plans.
- b) The Committee received the initial version of the Workforce Dashboard in February 2025. The Dashboard will become a regular report to the Committee, and it is designed to provide aggregate workforce data to identify trends and generate insights that will inform strategic planning.

Any Other Relevant Matters

- a) The People Committee completed principal risk deep dive reviews of P-07 (Capacity, capability and/or flexibility in our workforce) and P-08 (Leaders and managers lack skills and capabilities) during the financial year.
- b) The People Committee considered the Remuneration and Staff Report within the Annual Report and Accounts for 2023-24 during the year, ahead of its Board approval and publication.
- c) The Resolution Policy, that replaced the current Dignity at Work and Grievance Policies, was received by the People Committee. The Policy has been developed in conjunction with various stakeholders within NHSBT including consulting with trade union representation. The Committee agreed an implementation review.

Committee Effectiveness Review

An externally facilitated effectiveness review of the Board and its Committees was conducted by BDO LLP between November 2024 and February 2025. The report of their findings was presented to the Board at their meeting on 1 April 2025. Whilst the findings related to the Board, rather than its committees, there were two elements that each committee should give consideration to.

The first relates to succession planning and development. During 2024-25 the People Committee considered the skills of its members and agreed the capabilities highlighted as most relevant to the People Committee. The Committee did not identify any further specific training requirements.

The second finding relates to the size of the committee/Board. The Terms of Reference of the People Committee state that there will be no fewer than three Non-Executive Board members. At least one member of the Committee should have experience of HR strategy and services. The Committee currently has four members, which includes the Chair of NHSBT and a member of the committee who has a HR strategy background. The People Committee therefore meets this requirement, and the size is considered to be effective. One member left the Committee after the 1 May 2025 meeting, however the Committee still meets the requirement for three Non-Executive Board members.

Assurance and Statement to the Board

The opinion of the People Committee is that its risk management, control and governance processes are adequate and effective and may be relied upon by the Board.

The Gap Analysis against the Committee's delegations as set out in Appendix 1 has highlighted:

- a) Whilst pay proposals were brought to the Committee for consideration no regular reporting from the Pay Committee was received.
- b) No report has been received by the Committee in relation to the Honours process.

Appendix 1

Gap analysis against People Committee delegations

Committee Delegation	Terms of Reference	Reviewed by Committee (evidence and date)
<p>Terms and Conditions (including Pay and Severance)</p> <p>To determine the remuneration and conditions of service of those very senior managers currently paid under the terms of the Executive Senior Manager (ESM) Framework 2016 and any other management posts with a base salary in excess of £100,000 per annum.</p> <p>Through the Chair of NHSBT and the Chief Executive, to monitor and evaluate the performance of the Chief Executive and individual NHSBT Directors and to use the authority delegated by the Board to set performance bonuses, if appropriate and within guidelines and/or requirements set by DHSC.</p> <p>Through the Chair of NHSBT and the Chief Executive, to oversee and advise the Board on termination and severance arrangements in relation to the Chief Executive and NHSBT Directors.</p> <p>To consider and approve any individual redundancies with projected costs in excess of £100,000.</p> <p>To consider and approve any redundancies of 10 or more cases as part of one redundancy/restructure programme, regardless of projected cost where further external approval is required, as well as all voluntary redundancy schemes.</p> <p>To provide prior consideration and approval to any special/special severance payment, including confidentiality clauses, where further external approval is required.</p> <p>To consider and approve PILON cases of £50,000 or more, or any CILON case irrespective of cost, where further external approval is required.</p>	<p>5.2.1</p>	<p>The details of the Executive Senior Manager (ESM) Pay and Bonus Proposal were received by the Committee in July and September 2024. The Committee considered how awards applied to individuals who were, or had been, in substantive ESM posts during the periods to which the award applies, ensuring that decisions made were within the parameters and guidance set out by DHSC.</p> <p>The Committee considered the award of performance bonuses within the guidelines set by DHSC.</p> <p>Not applicable as circumstance did not arise in the year.</p> <p>Not applicable as circumstance did not arise in the year.</p> <p>Not applicable as circumstance did not arise in the year.</p> <p>Not applicable as circumstance did not arise in the year.</p> <p>Not applicable as circumstance did not arise in the year.</p>

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<p>To consider and approve redundancy proposals within organisational change exercises, where the total estimated redundancy cost exceeds £500k.</p>		<p>Not applicable as circumstance did not arise in the year.</p>
<p>Senior Level Capability</p> <p>Annually, the Committee shall receive assurance on:</p> <p>Strategic issues affecting NHSBT and any implications for requirements of skills and expertise of the Board and executive leadership of the organisation</p> <p>The structure, size, diversity and composition of the existing Board and, given the assessment of strategic issues, make recommendations to the Board for future succession planning or near-term changes where needed.</p> <p>NHSBT's talent management and succession planning strategies for the executive leadership of NHSBT (CEO and 2 layers below), assuring itself of the continued ability of the organisation to operate effectively in its strategic context.</p>	<p>5.2.2</p>	<p>The Committee considered proposals for the recruitment of a new Executive Director role (Director of Communications and Engagement) during the year.</p> <p>An assessment against a Board Skills and Capabilities Framework was undertaken in August 2024. The findings from the assessment relevant to People Committee was presented to the Committee in December 2024, with capabilities most closely align to People Committee highlighted. The capabilities highlighted as most relevant to the People Committee did not identify any further requirements.</p> <p>The report on Board/Executive Succession Planning and Talent Management was received by the Committee in December 2024 and February 2025. It was recognised that NHSBT was at the start of its journey in relation to succession planning and talent management. A planned approach to succession planning and talent management was noted by the Committee.</p> <p>The NHS Leadership Competency Framework was considered for adoption in February 2025.</p>
<p>To act as a nominations committee for appointments to Executive Director posts.</p> <p>Responsibility for ensuring that a proper process is in place for the appointment of Executive Director posts by approving the process to be adopted for recruitment and appointment, and reviewing a report of the process followed prior to endorsing the proposed candidate for appointment to an Executive Director post.</p>	<p>5.2.3</p>	<p>The People Committee approved the process for and endorsed the final proposed candidate in relation to three executive appointments in July 2024 being the roles of the Chief People Officer, Director of Communications and Engagement and Donor Experience Director.</p> <p>In February 2025 the People Committee confirmed its approval of the Director of Blood Supply recruitment process.</p> <p>The extent of involvement appropriate for the People Committee and Board in future CEO and Executive Director appointments, was agreed in July 2024. This has now been reflected in the Standing Orders and Terms of Reference.</p>

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<p>Organisational climate</p> <p>It will maintain an overview of the culture and climate of NHSBT to ensure NHSBT delivers on its ambition to be a high performing and inclusive organisation. This assurance will be sought through the regular review of trends relating to whistleblowing, Freedom to Speak Up, Disciplinary & Grievance caseloads and absence data to identify specific issues or deterioration in climate.</p> <p>The People Committee will also review 'Our Voice' survey results and follow-up on subsequent action plans. Employee representatives, network representatives may be invited to participate in Committee discussions on the above topics to bring them to life for the Committee.</p> <p>The People Committee will report back to the Board with any major concerns which require its attention.</p>	<p>5.2.4</p>	<p>The Committee reviewed the Freedom to Speak Up Policy and Annual Return in September and December 2024 to have an overview of the culture and climate of NHSBT and ensure NHSBT delivers on its ambition to be a high performing and inclusive organisation.</p> <p>The Forward Together and Anti-racism Programme have been put in place to allow NHSBT to become an intentionally inclusive and anti-racist organisation and was a vital part of delivering the NHSBT Strategy.</p> <p>The Disciplinary & Grievance cases update were received in December 2024 to identify specific issues or deterioration in climate.</p> <p>There was an annual review of 'Our Voice' Survey 2023 result in July 2024 and follow-up on subsequent action plans within the Clinical directorate both from IBI report and CARE groups perspective.</p> <p>The People Committee reports to the board after each meeting.</p>
<p>Approval of recommendations for external recognition for NHSBT employees.</p> <p>Receive assurance that an effective process is in place for the consideration and approval of recommendations for local Clinical Excellence Awards for NHSBT medical staff.</p> <p>Receive assurance that an effective process is in place for the consideration and approval of recommendations from the NHSBT Honours Committee.</p>	<p>5.2.5</p>	<p>Local Clinical Excellence Awards ceased from 1 April 2025, and since 2020 have been awarded equally as per advice from NHS Employers, therefore no report has been required.</p> <p>The Advisory Committee on Clinical Impact Awards runs the National Clinical Impact Awards scheme for DHSC in England. As NHSBT does not control the process no report has been required.</p> <p>No report has been received from the NHSBT Honours Committee.</p>
<p>People Strategy</p> <p>The Committee shall have oversight of the People Strategy, related programs and success measures for the programs.</p>	<p>5.2.6</p>	<p>The People Plan was launched in April 2024. The Committee received the quarterly progress reports on the People Plan with summary of activities and Key Performance Indicator for the three quarters.</p> <p>The Committee received the initial version of the Workforce Dashboard in February 2025. The Dashboard will become a regular report to the Committee, and it is designed to provide aggregate workforce data to identify trends and generate insights that will inform strategic planning.</p>

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<p>Fit and Proper Persons Regulations</p> <p>The Committee shall:</p> <p>Monitor compliance of the Fit and Proper Persons Regulations (FPPR) for Non-Executive Directors and Executive Directors.</p> <p>Receive an annual report from the Company Secretary on FPPR annual checks compliance.</p>	5.2.7	<p>The Committee monitored compliance of the FPPR for Non-Executive Directors and Executive Directors and received annual report from the Company Secretary on FPPR annual check compliance in July 2024.</p>
<p>Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Compliance</p> <p>The Committee shall review annually the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) objectives set to fulfil the organisation's public sector legal obligations.</p> <p>The Committee shall confirm to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee (ARGC), NHSBT's EDI compliance in respect of legal and regulatory obligations.</p>	5.2.8	<p>The EDI objectives were reviewed to ensure the fulfilment of the organisational PSED in July 2024. The Committee was assured the new policies go through Equality Impact Assessment routinely and has been built into the process.</p> <p>They confirmed to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee NHSBT's EDI compliance in respect of legal and regulatory obligations through the People Committee Annual Report delivered on 16 May 2024. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee received and took assurance from the Public Sector Equality Duty Assurance Report in January 2025.</p>
<p>Health, Safety and Welfare</p> <p>The Committee shall review and seek assurance in relation to NHSBT's compliance with health, safety and welfare legal and regulatory obligations. A report of such shall be considered by the Committee on at least an annual basis.</p>	5.2.9	<p>The Committee received and considered the Health and Wellbeing Annual Report 2023-24 in July 2024, for assurance in relation to NHSBT's compliance with health, safety and welfare legal and regulatory obligation.</p>
<p>Mandatory Training Sub-committee</p> <p>The Committee shall receive quarterly reports and an annual report from the Mandatory Training Sub-committee.</p> <p>The annual report of the Mandatory Training Group will be presented to the Audit, Risk and Governance Committee for information as an assurance for risk control.</p>	5.2.10	<p>The quarterly reports were received at every meeting during the year and an annual report from the Mandatory Training Sub-committee was received by the Committee in September 2024. The Audit, Risk and Governance Committee received reports on mandatory training throughout 2024-25 and were sufficiently assured to resolve that no further reports were required by them, on the basis that the People Committee continues to monitor this area and the sub-committee.</p>
<p>Pay Committee</p>	5.2.11	<p>No report was received during the year.</p>

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Any Other Relevant Matter	5.2.12	<p>The Resolution Policy, that replaced the current Dignity at Work and Grievance Policies, was received by the People Committee. The Policy has been developed in conjunction with various stakeholders within NHSBT including consulting with trade union representation.</p> <p>In July 2024, the Committee received deep dive reviews of principal risks:</p> <p>P-07 Capacity, capability and/or flexibility in our workforce</p> <p>P-08 Leaders and managers lack skills and capabilities.</p>
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