

Board Meeting in Public
Monday, 18 May 2026

Title of Report	People Committee Report	Agenda No.	5.2.5
Nature of Report	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Official	<input type="checkbox"/> Official Sensitive	
Author	Omolola Majolagbe, Corporate Governance Officer		
Lead Executive	Julie Pinder, Chief People Officer		
Non-Executive Director Sponsor	Penny McIntyre, Committee Chair		
Presenter(s) at the meeting	Penny McIntyre, Committee Chair		
Presented for	<input type="checkbox"/> Approval <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Assurance	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information <input type="checkbox"/> Update	
Is there a plan to communicate this to the organisation?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> Yet to be determined
Purpose of the report and key issues			
This report is submitted to the Board to draw attention to the main items discussed at the People Committee held on 7 May 2026.			
Previously Considered by			
N/A			
Recommendation			
The Board is asked to note the report.			
Risk(s) identified (Link to Board Assurance Framework Risks)			
-			
Strategic Objective(s) this paper relates to:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Collaborate with partners <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Invest in people and culture <input type="checkbox"/> Drive innovation <input type="checkbox"/> Modernise our operations <input type="checkbox"/> Grow and diversify our donor base			
Appendices:	None		

1. Background

This report is submitted to the Board to draw attention to the main items discussed at the People Committee (PC) held on 7 May 2026.

2. Reports for Strategy and Performance

Annual People Report

The Committee received an integrated update on delivery of the People Plan, workforce data and the Forward Together programme. Strong progress was reported, with 43 actions committed during the year: 23 completed, 15 on track and five paused with clear justification. Delivery progress was balanced across the People Plan pillars, with notable achievements in recruitment and inclusion (Join), health, safety and wellbeing (Stay), leadership and digital development (Thrive), and strengthened management information and systems (Foundations), including the successful implementation of the HR ServiceNow module.

The Forward Together programme has delivered tangible cultural and inclusion improvements, supported by external reviews, the development of a policy toolkit and national recognition through shortlisting for a Government Project Delivery Award. Discussion highlighted the importance of moving from a high volume of activity to fewer, more strategic priorities, with clearer KPIs and a stronger focus on outcomes. While improvements in workforce dashboards were welcomed, the committee emphasised the need to complement quantitative data with qualitative insight and evidence of impact on colleague experience.

The Committee noted completion of Board-level anti-Semitism training and confirmed that this learning is being embedded into wider inclusion and onboarding activity. Ongoing engagement with faith and community leaders continues, with potential need for clearer public positioning highlighted.

Workplace adjustment satisfaction remains at approximately 50%. An external review has been completed, and plans are in place to centralise processes within HR, improve tracking and reporting, add clinical input, and address under-reporting without increasing administrative burden.

The committee confirmed four strategic programmes for the year ahead: driving a high-performing culture, strategic workforce planning, supporting operating model change, and building transformation capability and capacity. Actions for the year are confirmed as committed and will be further aligned with the wider business plan. It was noted that a formal People Strategy will be developed to succeed the current People Plan, retaining the Join, Stay, Thrive framework while strengthening organisational capability to respond to future workforce and technological change.

Approach to Strategic Workforce Planning

The Committee considered the proposed approach to developing a Strategic Workforce Plan and welcomed the paper as a valuable first step in clarifying organisational maturity and capability gaps. Discussion recognised that current workforce planning is largely reactive and siloed, with limitations in data quality, system integration and analytical capability constraining more strategic planning. Members agreed there is a need to “get the foundations right” by improving baseline workforce data, integration across people, finance and strategy, and moving towards more consistent, organisation-wide workforce planning before attempting longer-term scenario modelling. Key workforce risks were highlighted, including an ageing workforce, particularly in nursing roles, low engagement among younger staff, and the pace of technological change. The Board emphasised the importance of taking a phased, proportionate approach—focusing first on no-regrets actions and

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near-term priorities—while maintaining sight of longer-term strategic implications, including the impact of AI, automation and service transformation. It was noted that external expertise may be required to accelerate progress and challenge traditional role design and workforce assumptions. The discussion provided helpful direction for further development of the Strategic Workforce Plan and its alignment with emerging organisational strategy and transformation priorities.

Board/Executive Succession Planning and Talent Management

The Committee reviewed progress on succession planning and noted a clear step change over the past 12–18 months towards a more structured, data-informed approach aligned to the NHS England Leadership Capability Model. Improvements were evident in the identification of succession depth, emergency cover and business-critical roles.

Succession depth at Executive level is improving but remains uneven, with greater risk in some corporate functions. At Senior Leadership Team level, clearer pipeline visibility has enabled more targeted development, with high-potential leaders supported through personalised development and cross-system learning.

The Committee noted that ethnic minority representation within the high-potential pool remains below organisational averages and welcomed plans for targeted positive action, emphasising the need for fair, objective and bias-aware assessment. The Committee advised prioritising business-critical roles as the approach is scaled further.

3. Reports for Assurance

Public Sector Equality Duty Report

The Committee considered the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) report for 2024/25. It was acknowledged that there is a timing lag in the reporting period due to the transition from the previous EDI operating model to the new approach. Members were reassured that reporting will be brought up to date.

Long Term Sickness Absence Review

The Committee reviewed and welcomed an evidence-based paper on long-term sickness absence, noting increases in stress- and anxiety-related absence, particularly among more senior staff, and recognising the complexity of the issue and its wider societal context. The Committee endorsed the proposed task-and-finish approach and confirmed inclusion of this work within the People Plan, highlighting the need for tailored, preventative interventions informed by both data and lived experience, and noting the potential wellbeing and financial benefits of reducing long-term sickness absence.

Annual Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report

The Committee reviewed and approved the Health, Safety and Wellbeing Annual Report for 2025/26, confirming it provides appropriate assurance of effective management in line with policies and standards. Strong safety performance, continued ISO 45001 certification, improved accident outcomes and increased near-miss reporting were noted. Wellbeing survey results showed improvement, with further focus required on visible leadership behaviours.

Employer Relations Strategy Update

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The Committee reviewed the Employee Relations update, noting progress against short-term actions and increased challenge within the industrial relations climate, particularly in relation to business-critical change. The Committee supported the current approach but identified the need for a clearer, longer-term Employee Relations strategy aligned to organisational strategy, workforce growth and forthcoming employment legislation, to provide greater clarity, consistency and assurance.

Post Implementation Review of Resolution Policy

The Committee considered a post-implementation review on the Resolution Policy, developed in partnership with recognised trade unions. While early data shows increased use of informal resolution, the Committee noted that the framework remains overly complex and lacks sufficient qualitative insight to demonstrate impact on employee experience. The Committee recommended prioritising simplification and clarification of the Policy, working jointly with trade unions, and advised caution on expanding scope until existing complexity is addressed. A further post-implementation review was requested, including re-baselined data and enhanced qualitative feedback.

4. For Approval

The following were approved by the People Committee

- Freedom to Speak Up Policy (annual review)
- Committee Board Assurance Report
- Committee Terms of Reference (annual review)

5. For Information

The following were received and noted by the Committee

- Mandatory Training Subcommittee Terms of Reference
- Personnel Security Standard (Departmental Health Check 2025) - The Committee noted that Executive approval has been given to introduce DBS checks for all new starters and to roll these out to the existing workforce over a phased 12–18-month programme, prioritising higher-risk roles. Progress will be monitored through phased update reporting, and clear communications will reinforce that DBS checks are a mandatory government requirement.
- An update on the recruitment of a new Chief Financial Officer in view of the upcoming retirement of the current role holder
- An update on DHSC's recruitment of Non-Executive Directors

6. Remuneration Committee

The Committee received an update from the Pay Committee on recent high-priority decisions taken since the last meeting. The Committee was assured by the report and discussed matters of strategic importance arising.

7. Items for Escalation to Board

- Annual People Report
- Annual Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report
- Freedom to Speak Up Policy annual review
- Committee Board Assurance Report
- Committee Terms of Reference Review (deferred until July 2026 to align with other Board Committee ToR reviews)