

Key Issues Report
Issues for referral to reporting Committee/Group

Originating Committee/Group and meeting date:	People and Organisational Development Committee – 14 July 2026
Chair:	Karen Sinnott, Non-Executive Director
Lead Executive Director (as appropriate):	Kate Read, Chief People Officer

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
Research and Innovation	The Committee received updates on research, innovation, artificial intelligence and genomics. Members noted the re-establishment of the Research Governance Group and ongoing work to strengthen research opportunities, commercial activity and strategic alignment between research and clinical priorities. The Committee welcomed the success of the Trust's robotic surgery programme, which has delivered more than 4,000 procedures and enhanced ESNEFT's reputation for innovation, training and workforce attraction. Updates were also received on the development of AI technologies and genomics services to improve patient care, productivity and access to specialist testing.	Assurance
Board Assurance Framework (BAF)	The Committee reviewed the BAF and noted improvements to the recording of actions and intended outcomes. Members were assured that workforce risks continue to be appropriately managed and noted that future reporting would provide greater visibility of higher-scoring risks and wider organisational risk alignment, following amendment to the risk appetite for workforce risks.	Information
Emergent and Topical Issues	The Committee received updates on the introduction of the national Staff Standards and Leadership Standards, together with ongoing work to align Trust leadership programmes with the new frameworks. Members also noted updates on the Lord Mann Review, Band 5 nursing profile work, consultant job planning and activity to reduce bank and agency expenditure.	Assurance

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
Band 5 Nursing Profile Update	The Committee received an update on the national review of Band 5 nursing profiles and noted the significant scale of the programme across the Trust. Work is underway to standardise and review nursing job descriptions, supported by close engagement with trade union colleagues, including the Royal College of Nursing. Members noted the potential workforce and financial implications of the review and agreed to receive a further update later in the year.	Assurance
Workforce Report	The Committee noted continued positive workforce performance, including low vacancy and turnover rates, improvements in recruitment processes and strong uptake of work experience, apprenticeship and leadership development initiatives. Members also welcomed improvements in appraisal quality, mandatory training compliance and sickness management processes. Progress was noted in reducing temporary staffing expenditure, although this remains an area of ongoing focus.	Assurance
Smarter Support Services Programme (SSSP)	The Committee received an update on the Smarter Support Services Programme and noted progress across a range of transformation projects aimed at improving efficiency, standardisation and service delivery. Members discussed workforce engagement arrangements and recognised the importance of supporting staff through organisational change. Risks associated with the centralisation of outpatient booking services were highlighted and continue to be actively managed through programme governance arrangements.	Assurance
People Strategy - Strategic Priority 2: Staff Experience	The Committee undertook a deep dive into the Staff Experience pillar of the People Strategy, focusing on freedom to speak up, staff safety, discrimination, bullying and harassment. Members acknowledged positive progress but recognised the need to strengthen prevention-focused approaches, increase confidence in raising concerns and continue developing leadership capability. Further work will be undertaken to identify gaps and support improvements in staff experience and wellbeing.	Assurance

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
EDI Data - Annual Report	The Committee reviewed the Workforce Disability Equality Standard (WDES) and Workforce Race Equality Standard (WRES) annual reports. Members noted improvements in some race equality indicators alongside ongoing challenges relating to disability equality metrics. The Committee welcomed action being taken to strengthen reasonable adjustment processes, equitable recruitment, manager support and inclusion initiatives. The WDES and WRES Annual Reports were recommended to the Board for approval	Escalation (for approval)
Guardians of Safe Working Hours - Annual Report	The Committee received assurance regarding safe working arrangements for resident doctors. Members noted continuing pressures in several specialties, particularly within medicine, oncology, emergency medicine and ENT, alongside the importance of effective rota management and workforce planning. Positive improvements were noted in several areas, and the Committee welcomed the introduction of a new anonymous exception reporting process to encourage concerns to be raised and addressed more effectively	Assurance
Committee Effectiveness Review	The Committee reviewed the annual effectiveness assessment and noted positive feedback regarding the operation of the Committee, including recognition of effective chairing and constructive challenge. Members reflected on opportunities to maximise discussion through advance review of papers. The Committee recommended the Terms of Reference to the Board without amendment.	Assurance Escalation (for approval)

*Key:		Approval	Positive action required regarding an item of business or support for a decision
Escalation	Support/decision required by reporting committee to resolve an issue within its remit	Alert	Proactive notification of subject matter/risk that reporting committee is currently dealing with or mitigating which may require future action/decision
Assurance	Evidence or information to demonstrate that appropriate action is being taken within a reporting committee's remit	Information	No action required. Reporting to update on discussion within a reporting committee's remit