East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust

Key Issues Report
Issues for referral to reporting Committee/Group

Originating Committee/Group and meeting date:	People and Organisational Development Committee – 19 September 2026
Chair:	Karen Sinnott, Non-Executive Director
Lead Executive Director (as appropriate):	Kate Read, Chief People Officer

Subject	Details of Issue	Action*
Board Assurance Framework (BAF)	The Committee reviewed the BAF; no changes to report to committee regarding the strategic risk which is currently at target rating. No actions due.	Assurance
Emergent and Topical Issues	The Committee received an update on national and local workforce developments, including workforce planning, implementation of national employment agreements, apprenticeship reforms and ongoing recruitment challenges within key staff groups. Members also discussed preparations for winter, the induction of newly appointed staff and work to improve participation in national education and training surveys. The Committee highlighted the importance of organisational culture, psychological safety and speaking up, noting that learning arising from the Letby Inquiry should be considered through the Trust's governance arrangements.	Assurance
Workforce Report	The Committee reviewed workforce performance and received assurance regarding the overall workforce position, noting improvements in vacancy levels, appraisal compliance and workforce development initiatives. Members discussed ongoing work to reduce sickness absence, strengthen leadership and culture, and support staff engagement ahead of the annual staff survey. The Committee also reviewed progress with the Smarter	Assurance

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	Support Services Programme, recognising the significant organisational change underway and its role in supporting future workforce sustainability, management capacity and service transformation. The Committee noted continued progress in workforce planning, recruitment and talent development, while recognising that sickness absence and staff engagement remain key areas of focus.	
Nursing and Midwifery Skill Mix and Acuity Review	The Committee received a six-month progress update on implementation of the Nursing and Midwifery Skill Mix and Acuity Review and noted positive progress against the agreed recommendations. Members reviewed improvements in workforce indicators, recruitment and staffing levels, while recognising ongoing challenges in midwifery, older people's services and the impact of unfunded bed capacity on workforce requirements. The Committee also discussed the importance of maintaining safe staffing levels, supporting new recruits and using workforce, quality and patient safety data collectively to inform future workforce planning. The Committee received assurance that implementation remains on track and that improvements in workforce and patient care indicators are beginning to emerge	Assurance
Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report and Action Plan	The Committee reviewed the Public Sector Equality Duty Annual Report, noting continued progress in improving workforce diversity, inclusion initiatives, staff network development and health inequalities programmes. Members recognised ongoing challenges relating to the experience of disabled staff, workforce inequalities, bullying and harassment, data quality and retention of younger staff groups. The Committee received assurance regarding the actions in place to address these issues and recommended the report to the Board for approval.	Escalation (for approval)
Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy Action Plan	The Committee received a progress update on delivery of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategy and noted that all strategic actions remain on track. Members recognised improvements in workforce	Assurance

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	representation, leadership accountability, staff network development and the Trust's increasingly outcomes-focused approach to EDI. The Committee also discussed continuing challenges, including inequalities in the experiences of ethnic minority and disabled staff, particularly in relation to discrimination, bullying and harassment, career progression and disciplinary processes. Members supported the continued focus on reducing these disparities, strengthening leadership engagement and ensuring that staff voices remain central to the development of workforce policies and initiatives. The Committee received assurance regarding progress and endorsed the next phase of the EDI Strategy Action Plan.	
Medical Appraisal and Revalidation Annual Report	The Committee received the Medical Appraisal and Revalidation Annual Report and noted that robust arrangements remain in place to support compliance with General Medical Council appraisal and revalidation requirements. Members noted strong appraisal compliance, effective governance and oversight processes, and the continued work of the appraisal and revalidation teams in supporting good medical practice across the Trust. The Committee received assurance regarding the effectiveness of the Trust's appraisal and revalidation arrangements and noted the report.	Assurance
Volunteer Services Annual Report	The Committee received the Volunteer Services Annual Report and noted the continued growth and development of the Trust's volunteer programme, with record numbers of volunteers supporting patients across a wider range of services.	Assurance

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	Members welcomed the positive impact of initiatives such as post-discharge follow-up calls and recognised the significant contribution volunteers make to patient experience, staff support and community engagement. The Committee received assurance regarding the effectiveness of the programme and commended the Volunteer Services team and volunteers for their contribution to the Trust.	
Strategic Priority 3 – Education and Training	The Committee received an update on delivery of Strategic Priority 3: Education and Training, noting the significant investment being made in workforce development, apprenticeships, leadership development and research. Members recognised the Faculty of Education as a key strategic asset, supporting workforce sustainability, recruitment, retention and organisational development. The Committee welcomed progress in expanding apprenticeship opportunities, strengthening leadership development, increasing research participation and developing future workforce pipelines through schools, colleges and community engagement programmes. The Committee also noted the Trust's ambition to further strengthen its reputation as a leading organisation for education, workforce development and research, while continuing to improve learner experience and educational outcomes. Members received assurance regarding progress against the strategic priority and commended the Faculty of Education for its achievements.	Assurance
Provider Capability Assessment	The Committee reviewed the People and Culture domain of the annual Provider Capability Assessment and considered evidence relating to workforce, organisational development, culture and staff experience. Members noted that the assessment reflected a broad range of assurance previously considered through Board and Committee reporting and agreed that an Amber-Green rating fairly reflected current performance, recognising both areas of strength and areas where further progress and sustained improvement are required.	Escalation (23 September Board)

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	The Committee recommended the Amber-Green assessment to the Board for approval prior to submission to NHS England.	
Executive Group Reports	The Committee received updates from the **Staff Partnership Forum (SPF)**, **Local Negotiating Committee (LNC)**, **EDI Group** and **Faculty of Education**, providing assurance on key workforce, staff engagement and organisational development matters. Members noted ongoing discussions with Staffside colleagues regarding staff safety, violence and aggression, lone worker arrangements, travel planning and staff parking. The Committee also received updates on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion activity and agreed that the revised reporting arrangements provide improved visibility of people and culture issues across the organisation. The Committee received assurance that appropriate governance arrangements are in place to monitor and escalate workforce matters where required.	Assurance

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