

Strategic People Committee

Terms of Reference

1. Purpose

The overall purpose of the Strategic People Committee is to assist the Board in the performance of their duties through developing and monitoring the implementation of workforce related strategy. This includes:

- Oversight of all aspects of workforce and organisational development arrangements of the Trust including workforce planning as it relates to both the Trust and in the context of the Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire (BOB) Integrated Care System (ICS).
- Providing a forum to set the strategic direction concerning all matters related to workforce, monitoring delivery against such strategy and providing assurance to the Board to this effect.
- Oversight of Trust workforce performance and delivery against the people programmes of the Trust corporate objectives. When required, the Committee will focus on specific issues where Trust performance is deteriorating or where there are areas of concern.

2. Constitution

The Board resolves to establish a standing Committee of the Board to be known as the Strategic People Committee (the Committee). The Committee is a non-executive committee of the Board and has no executive powers, other than those specifically delegated in these terms of reference.

These terms of reference shall apply for as long as the Trust is an NHS Trust and can only be amended by the Board of Directors.

3. Membership

The Committee shall be appointed by the Board from amongst the non-executive and executive directors of the Trust and shall include (as a minimum):

- Two independent non-executive directors with the personal and professional characteristics necessary to be effective (this may include associate non-executive directors); at least one of whom (normally the Chair of the Committee) should be a member of the Audit Committee.
- Chief People Officer.

Committee members may appoint a deputy to represent them at a Committee meeting; both Executive and Non-Executive Directors.

A Non-Executive Director (NED) shall chair the Committee. In the event the Committee Chair is unable to attend they should make alternative arrangements for a NED member to act as Committee Chair.

A term of membership shall be for two years and renewable for two further two-year terms subject to the approval of the Board of Directors.

The Chair of the Audit Committee shall not be a member of the Committee.

The following Executive Directors will be expected to attend each meeting or send a deputy:

- Chief Medical Officer
- Chief Nurse
- Chief Operating Officer
- Chief Estates & Facilities Officer

Open invitations will be maintained for, and papers sent to:

- Director of Education & OD
- Director of Workforce & Wellbeing
- Freedom to Speak Up Guardian
- Trust Chair
- Head of Corporate Governance
- Board Affiliate(s)

Others may be invited to attend depending on relevance of agenda items. These will include:

- Director for Medical Education
- Assistant Director of HR and HR Business Partners
- Guardian of Safe Working Hours

4. Quorum

The quorum necessary for the transaction of business shall be three members consisting of two non-executive directors and the Chief People Officer or deputy. A duly convened meeting of the Committee at which a quorum is present shall be competent to exercise all or any of the authorities, powers and discretions vested in or exercisable by the Committee. In the absence of the Committee Chair and/or an appointed Deputy, the remaining non-executive members present shall elect one of themselves to chair the meeting.

Where a Committee meeting is not quorate within one half hour from the time appointed for the meeting; or becomes inquorate during the course of the meeting, the Committee members present may determine to adjourn the meeting to such time, place and date as may be determined by the members present

5. Meetings

The Committee shall meet at least 6 times during the year (usually bi-monthly) and at such other times as the Chair of the Committee shall require. Meetings of the Committee shall be summoned by the Secretary of the Committee at the request of the Chair of the Committee

Unless otherwise agreed, notice of each meeting confirming the venue, time and date shall be forwarded to each member of the Committee no later than ten days before the date of the meeting. Supporting papers shall be sent to Committee members and to other attendees, as appropriate five working days ahead of the date of the meeting.

The Committee shall follow an annual work plan reviewed by the members in advance of each financial year.

The Committee must consider the frequency and timing of meetings needed to allow it to discharge all of its responsibilities.

In addition to the formal meetings, Committee members should consider one session of training and development each year.

6. Authority

The Board of Directors has delegated to the Committee the authority to deal with the matters set out in the paragraphs below.

The Strategic People Committee is an advisory body with no executive powers; it is not the duty of the Strategic People Committee to carry out any function that properly belongs to the Board of Directors or the Executive Management Committee. The Committee is, however, authorised by the Board to investigate any activity within its duties as set out below and to seek any information it requires from any employee, who are directed to co-operate with any request made by the Committee.

The Committee is authorised by the Board to obtain external legal or other independent professional advice and to secure the attendance of external stakeholders with relevant experience and expertise if it considers this necessary. This shall be authorised by the Chair of the Committee and shall be within any budgetary constraints imposed by the Board of Directors.

The Committee has the authority to seek any information it requires from any member of staff and request any member of staff to attend its meetings. All members of staff are directed to comply with such requests.

7. Duties

The Committee shall be responsible for the following duties:

I. Governance

The Committee shall provide assurance to the Board on the effectiveness of structures, policies, systems and processes specifically in those areas related to workforce.

The Committee will receive regular reports from the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and Guardian of Safe Working Hours. These will have been considered by the Executive Management Committee (EMC) and provided to the Committee with a summary of any discussion. The Executive Management Committee shall receive regular reports from relevant workforce groups with escalation of workforce matters to the Committee as appropriate.

II. Compliance

The Committee shall review reports regarding compliance with external assessment and/or reporting related to workforce matters.

III. Performance

The Committee shall gain assurance on the full range of people performance metrics and delivery of annual breakthrough objectives, requesting in-depth examination of key people issues where required. Alongside this, the Committee shall consider associated risks to the delivery of Trust Objectives. The following will be used to support this function:

- Integrated Performance Report (IPR).
- Breakthrough objectives; performance reporting.
- People Directorate Risk Register.
- Corporate Risk Register (CRR).
- Board Assurance Framework (BAF).
- Minutes and/or reports from relevant stakeholder groups.
- Any other information deemed necessary and requested by the Committee.

Specific activities for the Committee within key areas are as follows:

a) Operational performance

- Detailed scrutiny of monthly, quarterly and year-to-date workforce performance and organisational development information, determining the level of assurance the Board should receive from this.
- Monitoring of staffing levels to ensure there are the right number of staff with the right skills and talent working at the Trust through recruitment and retention.
- Monitoring delivery of annual breakthrough objectives.
- Maintain oversight of people related service delivery agreements and key contractual arrangements (where appropriate).

b) Staff engagement

- Across medical and non-medical groups, monitoring of staff engagement levels and supporting activities including talent management and succession planning and leadership and management development.

c) Wellbeing

- Monitoring and providing assurance on the delivery of Health and Wellbeing Services provided by the Trust.
- Monitoring effectiveness of wellbeing initiatives to ensure desired outcomes were being achieved.

d) Speaking up

- Reviewing the application of the Trust's Raising Concerns Policy and Procedure, including the work of the Freedom To Speak Up Guardian (FTSUG) and the Guardian of Safe Working Hours (GSWH).
- Scrutiny of reports and actions from the FTSUG and GSWH.

e) Education

- Critically appraising training and education across the organisation.
- Reviewing the effectiveness of training programmes delivered both internally and externally by partner and Higher Education Institutes, making recommendations for action.
- Monitoring the provision of medical education for doctors in training.

f) Health & Safety

The Committee may choose to utilise deep dives to support the above for key people projects or areas of specific interest/concern.

IV. People Strategy

The Committee shall oversee the delivery of the People Strategy as well as the development and approval of any strategy related to workforce, workforce planning and organisational development. The Committee shall seek assurance that measures for success are implemented within appropriate timescales.

The Committee shall monitor, advise on and recommend to Board matters relating to the Trust's people and organisational development strategy, policies and culture as appropriate.

Alongside the above, the Committee shall maintain an awareness of developments related to workforce within the local place and system including opportunities for collaborative working and related risks. This shall include, but not be limited to, local workforce requirements to deliver:

- Scaling people services across the system.
- Integrated neighbourhood working.

V. Annual Review

The Committee shall set annual objectives in line with the purpose and duties of the Committee. A report on progress against these and the terms of reference shall be submitted to the Board at year end.

The Committee shall also undertake any other responsibilities as delegated by the Board. Those processes used by the Committee to gain assurance will be reviewed by the Audit Committee to determine their effectiveness. Where appropriate, the Committee will escalate areas of concern to the Board.

8. Reporting

The minutes of all meetings shall be formally recorded, and a summary submitted, together with recommendations where appropriate, to the Board of Directors.

The Trust's annual report shall include a section describing the work of the Committee in discharging its responsibilities.

9. Review

The Committee shall carry out an annual self-assessment of the effectiveness of the Committee in meeting its purpose. It is expected that Committee members shall attend each meeting, attendance shall be recorded and form part of the annual review.

The effectiveness of the Committee will be monitored by the Audit Committee through receipt of the Committee's minutes and by the Board through receipts of such written or verbal reports that the Chair of the Committee is required to provide.

The committee shall carry out an annual review of these terms of reference, putting forward any suggested changes to the Trust Board. The Board will review and approve the terms of reference annually.

10. Support

The Committee shall be supported administratively. This support shall ensure:

- The agreement of the agenda with the Chair and attendees.
- The collation of papers; papers will be distributed electronically five working days before the meeting.
- Advice to the committee on pertinent areas is provided.
- That minutes are taken and a record of matters arising and issues to be carried forward is made.

Appendix 1

Annual Objectives

The Committee objectives for the financial year 2025/2026 are as follows, noting the assurance function of the Committee:

- a) Performance
 - i. Oversight of progress against Trust breakthrough objectives for 2024/25 through regular reporting:
 - ***Improve everyone's experience of working at BHT by taking a zero tolerance approach to bullying and becoming best in class in the staff survey within 2 years.***
 - ii. Oversight of and support for the delivery of enabling Trust strategies.
 - iii. Oversight of key people risks through regular review.
- b) Other functions
 - i. Oversight of activities and outputs by the Freedom to Speak Up Guardian and Guardian of Safe Working Hours.

The appropriateness of these objectives will be considered as part of the annual review of the Terms of Reference.

Document Control

Version	Date	Author	Comments
1.0	18/1/2017	E Hollman	Developed for new Committee, approved by Committee and for Board ratification
2.0	4/1/2018	B O'Kelly	Updated to take account of system changes
3.0	28/5/2019	B O'Kelly	Updated to take account of changes to committee arrangements
4.0	29/06/2022	J James	Periodic review including change of Committee name
5.0	31/05/2023	J James	Periodic review
6.0	13/05/2024	J James	Periodic review
7.0	14/10/2024	J James	Periodic review incorporating feedback from internal audit of revised Trust Governance & Performance Framework
8.0	22/11/2025	J James	Periodic review