

COMMITTEE UPDATE REPORT/ ADRODDIAD DIWEDDARU'R PWYLLGOR – PEOPLE, ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

Date of last meeting/ Dyddiad y cyfarfod diwethaf: 18 August 2026

Quoracy/ Cworwm: Met

Report by/ Adroddiad gan: Neil Prior, Chair

KEY DISCUSSION POINTS AND MATTERS TO BE ESCALATED FROM THE DISCUSSION AT THE MEETING/ PWYNTIAU TRAFOD ALLWEDDOL A MATERION I'W HUWCHGYFEIRIO O'R DRAFODAETH YN Y CYFARFOD:

Alert¹ (may require discussion)/ **Rhybuddio** (efallai y bydd angen trafodaeth)

The People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee had no matters of which to **alert** the Board.

Advise² (to monitor)/ **Cynghori** (i fonitro)

The People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee wish to **advise** the Board that:

- A number of Health Education and Improvement Wales (HEIW) actions remained overdue, as outlined within the **Assurance and Risk Report**. A meeting would be scheduled between the Chair and the action leads to gain a clearer understanding of the outstanding actions and the rationale for the delays to completion, and to receive an update on the action and revised dates. It was also recommended to set out the reasons for no completion within the narrative of the report.
- Whilst assured of progress to date, assurance was not provided on the **Future NHS Workforce Solution** next steps, due to the resource implications and associated risks, with recognition that successful implementation of the new system will require significant organisational capacity, commitment and effort. The new system (NHS People Portal) would be implemented in summer 2027 (delayed from spring 2027). A dedicated session would be required to provide the Committee with a more comprehensive overview of the programme, including its objectives, key risks, implementation approach and assessment of organisational readiness.
- The **organisational change processes (OCP)** will be reviewed to identify how it can be applied more effectively at local level, while remaining aligned with the all-Wales framework, in order to improve engagement, proportionality and staff

¹ There is a lack of confidence that any action in place is sufficient to address the issue satisfactorily and/or within the scope of the operational team or executive to resolve. Engagement, action or intervention required.

² There are areas of concern where assurance has been taken on actions in place but requires close monitoring. An early warning of an emerging and potentially serious concern.

experience. Members acknowledged the need for a formal organisational change framework; however, recognised that the current process is overly complex and could increase staff anxiety. A review to promote earlier engagement, greater proportionality and a more positive, staff-centred approach to change, was supported.

Assure³ (to note)/ Sicrhau (i nodi)

The People, Organisational Development and Culture Committee (PODCC) wishes to **assure** members of the Board that:

- The people-centred approach reflected in the draft **Workforce and Organisational Development 5-year Strategic Plan** was welcomed. The plan also outlined the need for greater ambition in addressing workforce pressures, service transformation, community-based care, digital innovation and artificial intelligence (AI), and the importance of staff engagement, organisational trust, wellbeing, and called for clearer outcomes and a more distinctive strategy for west Wales. Feedback from the discussion will inform the next iteration of the plan.
- The **Organisational Development Cultural Progression Report** outlined the progress made during 2025-26 and priorities for future work; however, cultural improvement depends on leaders creating psychologically safe, trusting and supportive environments, rather than the volume of organisational development activity alone. Whilst progress in equality, diversity and inclusion was welcomed, greater insight into the drivers for positive staff experiences was needed, as well as the importance of continued action, scrutiny and learning from best practice across Wales and beyond.
- The first quarter report on **Delivery Against Planning Goals Aligned to the PODCC** was received; however, it was reiterated that future reporting would be revised to ensure that intended outcomes and impact would be more visible rather than actions alone.
- The **Health Board Partnership Forum** update summarised the May and July 2026 meetings, where discussions included the Health Board's response to extreme heat, and the future operation of local partnership forums in light of poor attendance.
- The Committee noted positive Welsh Government feedback on the Health Board's submission, highlighting strengths in leadership and governance, organisational commitment, workforce data, and the maturity of the **Strategic Equality Plan Annual Report 2025/26**. There was discussion on reducing gender pay gap and inequalities impacting on disabled and ethnic minority staff, highlighting under-representation, under-reporting of disabilities, and the need to improve understanding of lived experiences. Fairness, trust and psychological

³ There is confidence that actions are robust and will be sufficient to address the issue or generally operating effectively. Routine monitoring.

safety are key cultural challenges requiring continued action and proactive management support.

- Continued progress has been made on the **Speak Up Agenda** to strengthen mechanisms that enable staff to raise concerns, and share feedback; however, staff must not only feel able to raise concerns, but have confidence that the organisation will listen, respond and take appropriate action to build trust.
- The six workforce improvement programmes are addressing previously identified workforce **Grip and Control** gaps, with the remaining travel expenses issue being managed separately.
- Assurance was received from the **Performance Assurance and Workforce Metrics** report that staff engagement had increased from 72% to 74%; however, declining response rates and lower scores for involvement in decision-making had fallen to 44.2%, highlighting an ongoing challenge in ensuring staff feel able to influence organisational decisions. Concern was raised regarding appraisal compliance, emphasising the importance of ensuring all staff receive at least one meaningful developmental review each year. The issue of staff missing increment gateways where appraisals had either not been completed or recorded appropriately was also highlighted.
- Assurance was received on the **Strategic People Planning and Education Group (SPPEG)** update report and the **SPPEG Annual Report 2025/26** was approved. A meeting is to be arranged with key leads to review the role of SPPEG and how it aligns with the wider Committee structure.
- Eight appointments were approved as detailed within the **Outcome of Advisory Appointments Committee (AAC)** update, on behalf of the Board.
- With regard to **Corporate/Workforce Policies for Approval**, the Committee agreed to:
 - Receive assurance that the documents received were reviewed in line with the Written Control Documentation Policy.
 - Approve the following policies:
 - 001 – Adverse Conditions Policy
 - 109 – Time off in Lieu Policy
 - 131 – Flexi Time Policy
 - 344 – Guidance on Relationships at Work
 - 350 – Supporting Transgender Staff Policy
 - 511 – Unpaid Carers Policy
 - 1506 – Guidance on Single Sex Services and Facilities
 - Extend the review date of the following policies:
 - 603 – Developing New Clinical Roles Policy (until 28 February 2027)
 - 107 – Volunteers Policy (until 28 February 2027)
 - 42 – Guidance on Starting Salaries Policy (until 30 November 2026)
 - 447 – Staff Immunisation & Screening Policy (until 30 November 2026)
 - 299 - Registration and Re-registration of Health Professionals Policy (until 30 November 2026)

- 139 – Uniform & Dress Code Policy (until 30 November 2026)
- Adopt the following All-Wales document:
 - 1512 - Breastfeeding in the Workplace Toolkit

Review of Risks/ Adolygiad o Risgiau

The Committee reviewed the corporate and operational risks aligned to PODCC. As part of its review, the Committee considered the status of each risk and the current scores.

The report highlighted one principal risk being aligned to the refreshed strategic framework, two corporate risks within the Committee's remit, key operational risk themes, and updates on relevant audits, inspections and Welsh Health Circulars.

The Committee challenged whether mitigations for principal workforce sustainability risk 1186 were sufficiently ambitious, emphasising the need for stronger workforce planning, innovation, digital solutions, alternative workforce models, including a broader focus on the wider care

The Committee also considered audit-related matters, and sought assurance regarding the consistency of sickness absence recording across the organisation.

Sharing of learning/ Rhannu dysgu

Mr Andrew Poole presented a staff story on Bronglais Hospital's locally developed wellbeing programme, created in response to staff feedback. The initiative offers a range of wellbeing, social and healthy travel activities and has grown to more than 400 members.

Feedback showed strong benefits, with 97% of participants reporting a positive impact on their physical or mental wellbeing and improved overall wellbeing scores. The programme has incurred no direct cost to the Health Board, drawing instead on support from the League of Friends and local partners.

The initiative was praised as an excellent example of co-production and local leadership, with recognition of its positive impact on staff wellbeing and the potential lessons it could offer across the wider organisation.

Recommendation/ Argymhelliad

The Board is asked to:

- **Note** the items the Committee is advising them of.
- **Take assurance** from the items that the Committee is providing assurance on.

Date of next meeting/ Dyddiad y cyfarfod nesaf: 10 November 2026.

Agenda, papers and minutes are available on our website/ Mae agenda, papurau a chofnodion ar gael ar ein gwefan: <https://hduhb.nhs.wales/about-us/governance-arrangements/board-committees/people-organisational-development-and-culture-committee-podcc/>