



 GIG CYMRU NHS WALES	Iechyd Cyhoeddus Cymru Public Health Wales	Name of Meeting People and Organisational Development Committee
		Date of Meeting 8 November 2023 Agenda item: 3.5

People Strategy Update	
Executive lead:	Neil Lewis, Director of People and Organisational Development
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Approval/Scrutiny route:	Leadership Team People and Organisational Development Committee
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Purpose
The purpose of this report is to provide an update on the progress, to realise the vision set out in our People Strategy. It covers the period from November 2020 through to September 2023.
The People and Organisational Development Committee is asked to take assurance from the report.

Recommendation:				
APPROVE <input type="checkbox"/>	CONSIDER <input type="checkbox"/>	RECOMMEND <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	ADOPT <input type="checkbox"/>	ASSURANCE <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
The People and Organisational Development Committee is asked to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Receive assurance on the progress of the work.				

Link to Public Health Wales [Strategic Plan](#)

Public Health Wales has an agreed strategic plan, which has identified seven strategic priorities and well-being objectives.

This report contributes to the following:

Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	All Strategic Priorities/Well-being Objectives
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.
Strategic Priority/Well-being Objective	Choose an item.

Summary impact analysis

Equality and Health Impact Assessment	An Equality and Health Impact Assessment is not required.
Risk and Assurance	<p>This links to Strategic Risk 4 on our risk register.</p> <p>There is a risk of weakness in our organisational health, including our culture, capacity, capabilities and governance.</p> <p>Caused by sub-optimal leadership, management and engagement. Resulting in low staff wellbeing and morale, failure to recruit and retain our staff and ineffective performance across one or more of our strategic priorities.</p>
Health and Social Care (Quality and Engagement) (Wales) Act	The People Strategy emphasises partnership working across the wider system, to enhance the coordination of services and improve patient engagement, as required by the Act.
Financial implications	Delivery of the People Strategy will be dependent on sufficient funding.
People implications	Delivering against the ambition laid out in the People Strategy will create a more engaged, motivated, and high-performing workforce, all of which are essential for delivering the Long-Term Strategy.

1. Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide the Leadership Team with an update on the progress being made to realise the vision set out in our People Strategy. It covers the period from November 2020 through to September 2023.

The Leadership Team is asked to consider the report and recommend submission to the People and Organisational Development Committee for assurance.

2. Background

In 2018, Public Health Wales launched its Long-Term Strategy, "Working to Achieve a Healthier Future for Wales," guiding our vision for the future workforce and organisational culture. This was refreshed, updated and republished in 2023.

We know that our ability to achieve the strategic objectives outlined in our Long-Term Strategy depends on a skilled, capable and committed workforce at its core.

3. Description/Assessment

Our People Strategy 2020-2030 sets out our ambition to develop a flexible, sustainable and thriving Public Health Wales workforce with the capacity, capability and desire to successfully deliver our Long-Term Strategy. It was approved by the Board in January 2020 and focuses on 9 key themes, each of which are reported on below:

3.1 Inspiring Culture and Compassionate Leadership

Culture and leadership are fundamental to all aspects of strategy and significant progress has been made on both these aspects as set out below:

3.1.1 Culture Assessment

Developing our culture is a critical component of our People Strategy and as such was translated into our IMTP objectives. To develop our organisational culture, we undertook an assessment of current and ideal future state, as identified by our workforce through a full cultural inventory in early 2023. Getting our culture right and the way we work to deliver our promises is essential for the successful delivery of [our Long-Term Strategy \(2023-35\)](#).

Organisational results have been shared widely with colleagues, via news articles and intranet content and through online 'Spotlight On' sessions, delivered by the Chief Executive and other senior organisational leaders.

Directorate results have been shared with each Directorate, and People and OD Partners are supporting organisational leaders and people managers to develop plans to help close the gap between the existing and desired culture.

3.1.2 Development of our People Promise (employee value proposition)

Following extensive consultation with key stakeholders, our 'People Promise' establishes our commitment to our workforce and encompasses various aspects of the employee experience, such as workplace culture, support, development, and opportunities. It will be used to underpin our cultural aspiration and over the next 24 months will be integrated into key elements of the employment life-cycle.

3.1.3 Launch of our Behavioural Framework, Being Our Best

To support the culture we aspire to, our "Being our Best" behavioural framework has been rolled out to all staff and is being integrated into other areas of work such as recruitment, My Contribution discussions, etc.

3.1.4 Leadership and Management Academy Pilot

In partnership with Skills for Health, a formal learning and development programme has been established for organisational leaders and people managers. The programme is currently being piloted with two cohorts of senior leaders from across the organisation. The results of the pilot will inform future programmes, including an aspiring managers' programme to prepare people for future roles. The content and learning will further strengthen leadership capability to lead and support cultural change.

3.2 Employee Experience – Understanding what matters most to each other.

3.2.1 Work How it Works Best

Driven by our strategic intent to 'shape work around life' and following extensive work to create a more flexible working environment, where people could deliver their best work and have a healthy work life balance, Work How It Works Best (WHIWB) was launched as a pilot programme early in 2021.

Work How It Works Best has proven to be a significant benefit for most of our workforce and will also be a key enabler when it comes to attraction and retention. Our Work How It Works Best approach to agile working was shortlisted for a CIPD Wales award earlier in 2023, for best Hybrid Working Initiative.

Following a successful trial of Work How it Works Best, the Business Executive Team asked that we transition from a pilot programme into more established ways of working early in 2023. At the time of writing, we are now at the point of translating our existing ways of working into a formal organisational policy. Further embedding will continue to take place as our approach matures and we learn more about what matters most to our workforce.

3.2.2 Diversity and Inclusion

Our Strategic Equality Plan for 2024-28 is under development and we have engaged with a range of stakeholders to obtain their views on this important work.

We have achieved a reduction in our Gender Pay Gap by 5% and published data on our Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gaps for the first time.

The work being undertaken by the Staff Diversity Networks has gone from strength to strength and through a planned programme of events, their work helps educate others and reinforces our commitment to create a workplace which celebrates diversity and embraces authenticity.

3.2.3 Employee engagement

Recognising that people will experience our culture differently, based on the nature of their role and where they undertake their work, we have identified a number of areas where targeted interventions are necessary. One example of this is the work we are doing with our Consultants. We have run several facilitated workshops to understand their experience in more depth, resulting in the development of an action plan, which included the setting up of a Consultant Engagement Group.

We recognise that there is more work we need to do with workplace based colleagues, in our Screening and Microbiology teams in particular, to ensure they achieve higher levels of engagement and a greater sense of belonging. We are committed to achieving this by working in partnership to better understand their needs.

This year's Staff Conference was used to reinforce the work we are doing around both culture and engagement, utilising the theme of "Conversations, Connections and Celebrations".

Regular targeted Communication and Engagement materials have been developed to further strengthen the work we are doing to shape culture and experience. This includes items in the weekly "Staff News" bulletins, regular stories on the "News" section on the staff intranet and monthly live virtual "Spotlight On" sessions, hosted by the Chief Executive Officer.

3.2.4 Health and wellbeing

The health and wellbeing of our staff remains a key priority and we continue to review and strengthen our support arrangements.

A new Employee Assistance Programme has been introduced, provided by Vivup, which offers support and guidance on a wide range of topics covering both mental, physical, and financial wellbeing.

A comprehensive range of toolkits for managers to help them support the wellbeing of their staff has been developed and there is also a programme in place to develop managers' awareness and skills in supporting the wellbeing of their team members.

3.3 Designed to Deliver

Significant work has been undertaken to increase our capability in change management during the first three years of the People Strategy being launched. Much of this work has been around educating, coaching, and supporting line managers along with the creation of tools and frameworks through which to deliver change effectively.

We have strengthened the visibility of large-scale change programmes so that we can plan our resource appropriately. The introduction of comprehensive change dashboards enables us to plan and track progress.

Additionally, we have developed the means to measure the impact of change via qualitative and quantitative questionnaires which will be administered before, during and after organisational change takes place, enabling us to tailor our approach accordingly.

Partnership working has been particularly effective in this area, with a full time TU resource supporting this work. Regular updates are also provided to the Local Partnership Forum which is supportive of this work.

Work has also commenced with the Business Executive Team, to establish the principles by which we design our evolving organisation structures and this work will continue into 2023/2024.

In response to the Duty of Quality and the Quality and Safety Framework, Quality as a Business Strategy was introduced as a pilot. Part of this work involved mapping our organisation as a system, thereby enabling us to understand how we can improve quality, efficiency and effectiveness.

3.4 Workforce Shape and Planning

One of key challenges is ensuring we have adequate staff capacity to fulfil our strategic priorities. In 2022-23, the organisation's workforce cost was £129 million, which is a 65% increase in the five years since 2017-18. It is therefore essential that we plan and mobilise our staff effectively and efficiently.

Whilst a workforce planning framework has been established, some of the challenges we are facing are long term ones which require system-level intervention. Managers and key stakeholders have received training to apply our workforce planning approach within their respective areas, supported by their People and OD Partners.

Our focus, post-pandemic response, has been on identifying critical roles, categorising them, and planning for short-, medium-, and long-term interventions to ensure proactive resourcing in line with our overall strategic direction.

The work required to effectively deliver a robust organisational 'workforce plan' is extensive and requires specialist support for analytics/ forecasting and modelling. We are recruiting a Strategic Workforce Planning Manager to drive this piece of work forward and ensure a truly integrated planning approach is embedded.

We have managed a number of changes to the shape of our workforce including several TUPE transfers both into and out of Public Health Wales. For example, the transfer out of our Local Public Health Teams into the health boards. Additionally, the formation of the NHS Executive has also changed the shape and size of our organisation and this work will continue over the coming months.

3.5 Attracting and Recruiting Talent

We continue to face difficulties in recruiting for various specialised roles, including Radiologists and Breast Clinicians, Microbiology and Infectious Disease Consultants, Consultants in Communicable Disease Control, Public Health Practitioners, Biomedical Scientists, and some Nursing positions.

Advertising and engaging with the right audience has become increasingly challenging, with some approaches being more successful in some sectors than others. In line with NHS governance, all permanent and fixed term roles are advertised through the Trac recruitment system and NHS Jobs website, which does not lend itself to reaching audiences from minority groups.

To advance our strategic objective of widening access, we have undertaken a multifaceted approach:

- Collaborated with Welsh universities to reach graduates and undergraduates, broadening our candidate pool.
- Strategically attended job fairs, with Microbiology colleagues actively participating.
- Engaged the local community, including a diversity-focused careers fair at Dar-Ul-Isra Mosque in Cardiff.
- Supported apprenticeships and university partnerships for increased workforce diversity.
- Conducted a study with Arden University to refine recruitment approaches.
- Participated in the Kickstart scheme, facilitating transitions to permanent roles and further education.
- Continued support for Disability Confident and Armed Forces Covenant guaranteed interview schemes.
- Secured funding for an internship programme aligning with Welsh Government Action Plans.

- Hosted a successful virtual Microbiology showcase event.
- Utilised LinkedIn Recruiter License for challenging-to-fill roles.
- Overhauled our on-boarding processes with a culture-centric approach, including updated content, resources, and networking events.
- Supported the NHS Wales Aspiring Executive Talent Pool initiative, with two successful candidates.
- Implemented dashboards and process improvements for insights into employee retention.
- Provided Assessment and Selection training for culture-centric recruitment.

These actions collectively demonstrate our commitment to recruitment, diversity, inclusivity, and workforce planning to fulfil our strategic objectives.

3.6 Harnessing Data

Over the past three years, there has been a significant investment in upskilling staff and developing our corporate analytics capability. Development of the Performance and Assurance Dashboard and Directorate and Divisional Dashboards has provided an accessible and reliable way to illustrate workforce trends, and draw insights from the data, allowing for early and targeted intervention where required. This is aiding improved decision-making and, over time, will help us measure the impact of our interventions and establish cause and effect, where possible.

We have recruited and established new roles and teams in Public Health Wales, including a new Data Science team. This has brought new skills and new ways of working into the organisation and a data science community has been established to share knowledge, success, and challenges (currently 144 members).

We have agreed the framework for the Data job family, which includes Data Scientists, Data Engineers, Data Analysts, Epidemiologists, Health Economists and Evaluators. Based on NHS England's National Competency Framework for Data Professionals in Health and Care, we will build Data competency frameworks, standardised job descriptions and signpost supporting learning and development to professionalise the Data roles within the organisation.

We have established the Digital, Data and Design Authority which provides advice and approval to all of the work within Public Health Wales that has a digital element. Its role is to act a place for collective understanding and transparency about the digital work that is underway within the organisation, and to prioritise our digital work. By sharing the view of work across all the directorates, we can reduce duplication and make sure we have the right people on each project. We can also share knowledge and build capability in digital and data.

In addition to upskilling our workforce in the field of data analytics and digital technology, our work around this aspect was also recognised with a HMPA Award for Data Analytics in 2023.

3.7 Optimising Relationships

Our response to the COVID-19 pandemic acted as a catalyst to strengthen partnership working at a system-level. This work continues to gain strength and momentum, enabling us to have an even greater impact on improving health inequalities.

Examples of how we have optimised partnerships include:

- A cross-organisational Climate Change group that harnesses the combined expertise and skills of our staff to address sustainability and climate change.
- A focus on embedding Quality of Service (QOS) improvements through collaborative efforts.
- The establishment of the Public Health Genomics Programme, showcasing collaborative efforts in genomics research and healthcare.
- Creation of the Safe Care Partnership with Institute for Healthcare Improvement, NHS Wales health boards and trusts and Improvement Cymru.
- Our Discovery Service, working collaboratively across the organisation to ensure our services are designed to meet the public's needs effectively.
- The ACE Hub Wales collaboration with substance misuse and further education sector, enhancing training and co-producing guidance for a trauma-informed framework. A community of practice called TRACE is enabling learning and developing new capabilities.
- The Violence Prevention Unit's partnership with children and young people, adopting a co-production approach to develop the Wales Without Violence Framework. Valuable insights and expertise are shared at international conferences and with the ACE Hub.
- The development of tools, guides, and a Behavioural Science Community of Practice aimed at optimising efforts to bring about behaviour change in various health-related areas.
- A multi-year program involving Transport for Wales to promote active and sustainable travel and develop internal capability in understanding human behaviour and its impact on policy and service design.

These partnerships all demonstrate the benefits of collaboration and co-production in achieving shared goals.

3.8 Exploiting Technology

Following consultation with key stakeholders, Public Health Wales has published its Digital and Data Strategy. The strategy is in alignment with our long-term objectives and complies with the Digital Service Standards for Wales. Its implementation will

enable us to harness the potential of digital and data technologies to enhance health data accessibility, quality and security, to ensure that we are a data-driven organisation.

We have undertaken several reviews and discoveries to gain deeper insights into our digital landscape and the specific requirements of our digital service users. This includes a comprehensive overview of our digital and data architecture which identified opportunities for strengthening certain aspects of our governance, including the management of documentation and enhancement of our development processes.

Additionally, key training packages are in place to raise awareness of Information Governance and Cyber Security. These are mandatory for all Public Health Wales colleagues, ensuring that there is a shared understanding of the importance of information, data and hardware security.

3.9 Skills for the Future

Our work to deliver future skills has been highlighted in many of the sections already covered in this report.

We have also been active in the areas outlined below:

- Exploring job family approaches and fostering Communities of Practice.
- Delivering face-to-face training, e-learning support, and various development programmes.
- Partnering with the Open University to launch new training platforms.
- Supporting post-graduate education and career development for employees across Public Health Wales.
- Developing Public Health Practitioners through accredited programmes, Practitioner Registration schemes, and various support networks.
- Over one third of Microbiology staff are undertaking formal education and development including Specialist Portfolios, STPs, HSST and Equivalence routes.
- Promoting and supporting Apprenticeship opportunities for existing staff and also creating opportunities to recruit for staff development, including widening access to new Apprentices.

4. Conclusion

The report highlights progress achieved across multiple areas, including cultural and leadership development, employee experience, diversity and inclusion, change management, data analytics, and skills development.

Our ongoing efforts to attract and retain talent, address long-term workforce challenges, and optimise technology are gaining momentum and will continue to be a critical aspect of the delivery of our People Strategy.

Our achievements to date demonstrate a commitment to realising the vision set out in the People Strategy, ensuring Public Health Wales is an attractive workplace for future generations and a key player in improving health inequalities through effective partnership working and innovative approaches.

5. Recommendations

To maintain alignment and ensure continued success, the following actions are recommended:

1. Review and update the People Strategy to align with the revised Long-Term Strategy.
2. Identify and mitigate risks that may impact the ambition set out in the People Strategy.
3. Integrate People Strategy activities into Directorate work-plans and IMTP objectives.
4. Use data and analytics for ongoing monitoring and modification.

The People and Organisation Development Committee is asked to receive **assurance** on the progress of the work.