

Northern Health and Social Care Trust Feedback Report to Trust Board

Report from:	TeamNORTH People & Culture Committee
Author of Report:	Paul Turley, Non-Executive Director
Lead Director:	Jacqui Reid, Executive Director of HR, OD & Corporate Communications
Presented By:	Paul Turley, Non-Executive Director
Date of Meeting:	27 th August 2026

Purpose

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the business undertaken by the TeamNORTH People & Culture Committee and to offer the views of and the advice of the Committee to Trust Board.

Strategic Objectives (select)

<i>Build Northern Partnerships and Integrate Care</i>	<i>Continue to improve Outcomes & Experience</i>	<i>Deliver value by optimising Resources</i>	<i>Nurture our people, enable our talent and build our Teams</i>	<i>Improve population Health and address health and social care inequalities</i>
			X	

Summary of Committee Business

A copy of the draft minutes of the Committee meeting are enclosed



DRAFT NOTES
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A copy of the final minutes of the May 2026 meeting are enclosed



Final P&C
Committee Minutes

Terms of Reference remain under review following the recent Trust restructuring. A revised version will return to the Committee in November 2026 for approval.

Under review following recent Trust restructuring

Corporate Communications Strategy 2026-28



5.0 NEW DRAFT 5.0.3 Presentation
Corp Comms StrategyP&C committee - Co



The Committee received a progress update on implementation of the strategy. The Communications function continues its shift from reactive to proactive delivery. Key progress includes the launch of the new Trust website, introduction of a quarterly newsletter and development of a pilot to support more efficient handling of Assembly Questions Written. The Committee welcomed the stronger approach to internal communication and agreed that newsletters for political representatives should be shared with Non-Executive Directors.

HSC Culture Update



6.0 HSC Culture
Update NHSCT Peop

The Committee received an update from the Department of Health on work to align Being Open, Strengthening Our Core and Being Human. Mapping is under way to reduce duplication and provide a coherent approach for staff. The programme will also take account of learning from the Neurology and Muckamore Abbey Hospital Inquiries. A further workshop is scheduled for September 2026, with Trust-led implementation supported by the Department.

Corporate Workforce Position (Hygiene Factors):

- **TeamNORTH Welcome:** dashboard reporting currently shows 42%; manual tracking demonstrates 93% attendance for Quarter 1 following implementation of the single start date. Work is required to reconcile the reporting position.
- **Openness training:** compliance is 65% against a 70% target. Divisions have been asked to review performance and strengthen delivery.
- **Appraisals:** compliance is 67% against a 70% target. Divisional action plans remain in place and proposals for team appraisals are progressing through SMT.
- **Absence:** the June 2026 rate was 7.61%, a slight increase from May. Long-term absence remains the key pressure. Focused HR support continues in the two divisions with the highest absence, alongside work to understand potential Occupational Health delays to return to work.

Professional and Service Workforce Updates

The Committee reviewed workforce updates across Pharmacy, Social Work, Nursing and Midwifery, Psychological Services, Corporate Support Services, Infrastructure and Medical Workforce. Progress includes development of a Medical Recruitment and Retention Strategy, implementation of the Safer Nursing Care Tool, continued action on recruitment and agency reduction, and regional oversight of the 10-year social work recruitment and retention plan. These areas remain subject to continuing Committee oversight.

Reports Approved by the Committee

Health & Safety Annual Report



9.2 Health Safety
Annual Report 2024

Overall health and safety performance remained stable despite disruption from the Encompass rollout. Violence & aggression and moving & handling incidents reduced, but slips, trips and falls and RIDDOR-reportable incidents increased. Risk assessment compliance remained below target, with GRANT at 90% and RAANT at 79%. Trade Union Side highlighted ongoing concerns

regarding staff stress, workforce shortages and violence/aggression, particularly within Holywell Hospital.

Key concern: Continued staff safety, stress and violence/aggression risks, especially in mental health settings

Staff Health, Wellbeing & Inclusion Strategy

The Committee approved extension of the Staff Health, Wellbeing & Inclusion Strategy from March 2027 to March 2028, aligning it with the People & Culture Plan. This will maintain continuity of delivery and assurance while the longer-term strategic framework is progressed.

Items for Escalation to Trust Board

1. Workforce Attendance and Assurance

Sickness absence remains high and increased slightly to 7.61% in June 2026. Long-term absence continues to be the principal pressure. Targeted case management is continuing in the two divisions with the highest absence.

2. Workforce Governance Compliance

Appraisal compliance remains below target at 67% against 70%, and openness training is 65% against a 70% target.

3. Overdue Non-Clinical Policies

The Committee noted a backlog of overdue non-clinical policies. Some reviews require regional and Trade Union engagement. Revised processes are being introduced to progress as many reviews as possible while retaining appropriate governance. The Committee has requested a formal progress report in November 2026.

4. Capital Development Workforce

Uncertainty regarding capital budgets and future Department-funded projects is affecting the Capital Development Team. A number of staff are on secondment and management support is continuing while funding decisions remain outstanding.

5. Regional Estates Apprenticeship Programme

Progress on the regional Estates Apprenticeship Programme has stalled because of the absence of key personnel in other Trusts. NHSCT Estates will escalate the matter through the regional Heads of Estates meeting.