



## HSE People and Culture Committee Meeting

### Minutes

A meeting of the HSE People and Culture Committee was held on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> September 2023 at 9:00 in Dr Steevens' Hospital, Dublin 8.

**Members Present:** Yvonne Traynor (Chair), Brendan Whelan, Bernie O'Reilly, Deirdre Cullivan, Michelle O'Sullivan, Matt Walsh, Sarah McLoughlin, Aogán Ó Fearghail.

**HSE Executive Attendance:** Anne Marie Hoey (ND HR), Philippa Withero (AND Strategic Workforce Planning and Intelligence), Eithne Fox (AND Recruitment Reform and Resourcing), Pat O'Boyle (AND Capability and Culture), Colette Cowan (CEO UL Hospitals Group), Niamh Drew (Deputy Corporate Secretary), Rebecca Kennedy (Office of the Board), Paula McShane (Office of the CEO).

**Joined the meeting:** Maurice Power (Health Regions - Item 2.6), Mark Brennock (ND Communications – Item 3), Emma Finn (Head of Internal Communications – Item 3), Bernard Gloster (CEO – Item 3), Tony Canavan (Saolta Hospital Group – Item 5), John R Higgins (South / South West Hospital Group – Item 5), Trevor O'Callaghan, (Dublin Midlands Hospital Group – Item 5), Declan Lyons (Ireland East Hospital Group – Item 5), Carole Broadbank (CHO 8 – Item 5), Maria Bridgeman (CHO 3 – Item 5), Mellany McLoone (CHO 9 – Item 5), Catherine Neary, (CHO 5 – Item 5), Patrick Lynch (CRO – Item 6), Vera Kelly (National Organisation, Design and Development Lead for Staff Engagement– Item 7).

Minutes reflect the order in which items were considered and are numbered in accordance with the original agenda. All performance/activity data used in this document refers to the latest information available at the time.

#### 1. Committee Members Private Discussion

The Committee held a private session where the Chair provided a brief summary on the agenda, the relevant papers and approach to conducting the meeting.

#### 2. Governance and Administration

##### 2.1 Declarations of Interest

No conflicts of interest were declared.

##### 2.2 Committee Meeting Dates 2024

The Committee agreed to the meeting dates for 2024 circulated in advance of the meeting.



### **2.3 Structure of Committee Work plan 2024**

The Committee agreed that a draft work plan would come to its November meeting for approval.

### **2.4 Minutes**

The Minutes of the People & Culture meeting held on the 13<sup>th</sup> July 2023 were approved.

### **2.5 Committee Action Log**

The Committee requested that going forward a shared Action Log be presented as part of the Committee pack.

### **2.6 Matters for Noting – HSE Health Regions Progress Report**

*M Power joined the meeting*

M Power presented the Health Regions Progress Report on behalf of Liam Woods, National Director Health Regions Programme. He gave an overview of the timeline for the regions rollout and highlighted the importance of ICT in the processes.

The Committee discussed the expected transition period and NDHR confirmed no services will be stood down until they can be transitioned safely. The Committee also queried how KPIs will be utilised and whether they will, for example, be monitored in oversight groups. M Power confirmed the KPIs which will be used are currently under review and they will be reviewed through NPOG when finalised.

The Committee discussed patient engagement in the development of the Health Regions and highlighted that it was not strong in design phase and should be more involved in other level. M Power agreed to bring this feedback back to the implementation team.

*M Power left the meeting*

## **3. Communications**

### **3.1 Internal Communications Report**

*Mark Brennock, ND Communications and Emma Finn, Head of Internal Communications joined the meeting*

E Finn presented the Internal Communications Report to the Committee which provided an update on current communications activities including the launch of Health Regions internal staff communication; consultant recruitment international campaigns; and NAS Recruitment campaign.

*CEO joined the meeting at approx. 10:20*



She advised that a current goal of communications is improving engagement with non-desk based employees. One result from this would be improved engagement with the Staff Survey. The CEO confirmed increasing response in front line staff is crucial for 2025 and local management will be key in achieving this.

In relation to the upcoming Health Regions rollout, M Brennock advised that Communications are seeking to improve internal systems to allow a more coherent handover as part of the Health Region transition.

*Mark Brennock, ND Communications and Emma Finn, Head of Internal Communications left the meeting*

#### **4.4 National Service Plan 2024**

The CEO provided the Committee with a brief update on the development of the NSP 2024. He advised that work is ongoing towards a pay and numbers strategy and future support from the Committee will be critical in this regard.

*CEO left the meeting*

## **4 HR BI Monthly Report**

*Pat O'Boyle, AND Culture and Capability joined the meeting*

P O'Boyle presented to the Committee on Employment of people with a disability in the HSE, highlighting that the data here relies on self-declaration of disabilities. She provided an overview of the estimated number of staff with a disability employed within the HSE, the measures supporting employment of staff with a disability, and ongoing work to demonstrate compliance with relevant legislation.

According to the most recent staff survey, conducted in May-June 2023, 2,419 HSE staff out of 19,591 respondents to the survey have a disability. When extrapolated, this amounts to a proportion of 12.3% of those staff. The Committee discussed the numbers presented in and were advised by ND HR they are statistically reliable and HSE seeks to give the most reliable data possible.

#### **4.1 Bi Monthly Report**

The ND HR presented her Bi Monthly report. She provided an update on Recruitment Reform, highlighting in particular the HSE Resourcing Strategy, increased training places, and International Recruitment. The NDHR advised that the HSE Resourcing Strategy moving into implementation phase and confirmed that to address the gap between supply and demand, there are 400 additional



training places implemented in Nursing/ Midwifery, 200 in Medicine, 2000 roles recruited for internationally, and exploratory work commenced on the Physician Associate grade to support services.

The ND HR also advised that as the HSE moves towards the Health Regions, National HR is working closely with the Recruitment Managers around the organization to facilitate the development of a revised operating model, National standards, frameworks and initiatives. The Committee discussed the number of additional training places becoming available and noted that although there has been improvement in recent years, there are still more places required.

In relation to the Public only consultant contract (POCC), the NDHR advised that the numbers who have signed POCC have increased to 558 as of 13th Sept 2023 and this is rising at an average of 30-40 per week.

The NDHR outlined to the Committee the new Programmes from Training and Development, highlighting in particular the HSE HR Scholarship scheme which supports HR staff to enhance their professional knowledge and skills in HR while achieving a third level qualification. She advised that there have been two successful applicants for a bursary which will be provided by the IPA.

The ND HR updated the Committee on Corporate Employee relations. In relation to the Forsa Clerical/Admin dispute, she advised that a series of engagements under the auspices of the WRC have taken place and there will be ongoing engagement with Forsa over the next month. She also advised that the HSCP dispute has been subject to a series of engagements at the WRC, the outcome of which led to the suspension of the action which had been scheduled to commence on 11th Sept 2023.

#### **4.2 HR Dashboard**

The Committee reviewed the HR Dashboard which had been circulated prior to the meeting. The July outcome leaves employment levels strongly ahead of the YTD target and YTD employment levels continue to show strong growth with 66% achievement of the overall year-end target.

#### **4.3 Mandatory Training**

The ND HR advised the Committee that a new Statutory and Mandatory Training Policy was launched in August 2023. The Policy has been agreed with all stakeholders, including the trade unions, and was implemented on 15 August 2023. This new policy provides guidance to managers of the HSE



approach to statutory and mandatory training for employees under their supervision, and outlines the roles and responsibilities of all staff in ensuring the provision of, and participation in training.

## 5 Recruitment

*Tony Canavan, John R Higgins, Trevor O'Callaghan, Declan Lyons, Carole Broadbank, Maria Bridgeman, Mellany McLoone, and Catherine Neary joined the meeting*

### **5.1 Discussion regarding Services which have exceeded WTE targets in the 2023 Pay and Numbers Strategy in the category of Management and Administration.**

C Cowen led a discussion along with nine of the Hospital Group (HG) and Community Healthcare Organisation (CHO) Chief Officers on the process for approval of recruitment in cases where the targets would be exceeded. This was prompted by significant recruitment of Management and Administration positions beyond the target of 1460 additional WTE for 2023.

The Committee noted the view that management and administrative staff are essential for the smooth running of the service and critical to the safe provision of services. The Chief Officers reassured the Committee that the targets were taken seriously and that there are controls in place to approve exceptional recruitment. Some suggestions were made to improve the process.

C Cowen provided assurance to the Committee that all HGs / CHOs endeavour to comply with controls and mechanisms in place and confirmed that no posts are approved in the system without HG / CHO CEO's approval and sign off.

*Tony Canavan, John R Higgins, Trevor O'Callaghan, Declan Lyons, Carole Broadbank, Maria Bridgeman, Mellany McLoone, Catherine Neary left the meeting*

## 6 Risk Management

*B Whelan left the meeting approx. 13:10*

*CRO joined the meeting*

### **6.1 Corporate Risk Review Update**

The CRO updated the Committee on the Corporate Risk Review 2023 which was circulated in advance of the meeting. This review, which was undertaken on recommendation of the 2021 Moody Risk Review, has been completed and the draft Report considered by the EMT at a dedicated



workshop on the 12 September 2023. The ARC subsequently considered the Review Report at their meeting on the 15 September 2023.

The Committee noted the 10 proposals in the draft Review Report and the CRO advised a further update would be available at the November Committee meeting.

## **6.2 Q2 2023 Corporate Risk Register (CRR) Report**

The CRO presented to the Committee the HSE Q2 2023 Corporate Risk Register (CRR) Report. The Committee noted that there are currently 21 risks on the Register, of which 15 are rated High and 6 rated Medium.

The Committee noted that as the Corporate Risk Review is being concluded in parallel with the Q2 2023 Corporate Risk Register (CRR) Report, the Q2 report is “by exception”. The Committee discussed the risk ratings and outlined mitigation factors presented. The CRO advised that there will be further discussions on these as part of the ongoing risk review.

*CRO left the meeting*

## **7 Deep Dive**

*V Kelly, AND HR joined the meeting*

### **7.1 HSE Staff Survey 2023**

V Kelly presented the HSE Staff Survey ‘Your Opinion Counts’ 2023 survey results which had been circulated in advance of the meeting. They reflected the highest ever response rate and there was an overall engagement and score level increase.

The Committee discussed the results, focusing in particular on the discrimination in the workplace result where race, gender and age were the three highest reported grounds for discrimination. P O’Boyle advised that services will be supported around this, and a leadership framework is in development which will provide guidance in this area. The result on perceptions of service provision which reflected that some staff believe overall service provision in their organisation was deteriorating was also discussed.

## **8 AOB**



The meeting concluded at 14.10 pm

Signed: 

**Yvonne Traynor,  
Chairperson**

**20<sup>th</sup> November 2023**