Oxford University Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Cover Sheet

Trust Board Meeting in Public: Wednesday 25 November 2026

TB2026.94

Title:	**People Committee Report**

Status:	**For Approval**
History:	**Regular Reporting**

Board Lead:	Ms Lynne Graham, Committee Chair
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Confidential:	No
Key Purpose:	Assurance and Approval

1. Purpose

1.1. As a Committee of the Trust Board, the People Committee will provide a regular report to the Board on the main issues raised and discussed at its meetings.

1.2. This is an inaugural report of the Committee.

2. Alert: matters escalated to the Board

Strategic Workforce Capacity and Capability Risks

2.1. The Committee discussed whether the current Corporate Risk Register sufficiently reflects the strategic risks associated with workforce capacity and capability in the context of increasing demand, workforce constraints and financial pressures. Members highlighted the potential implications for sustainable service delivery and agreed that the Committee should continue to monitor emerging workforce risks and escalate concerns where assurance gaps are identified. The Board is asked to note the Committee's concern regarding the continued alignment of workforce capacity with organisational demand and service sustainability.

Digital Delivery Risks Affecting Staff Experience

2.2. Whilst progress against the People Plan remains positive overall, digital delivery remains an area of concern. Improvements to infrastructure, equipment provision and digital training are progressing but continue to be affected by wider financial constraints. The Committee requested enhanced future assurance regarding whether staff have access to the digital tools, systems, equipment and training required to perform their roles effectively.

Freedom to Speak Up Themes

2.3. The Committee noted a continued increase in speaking-up activity, including concerns relating to bullying, harassment, inappropriate behaviours, staff wellbeing and racism. While the Committee was assured that strengthened arrangements are in place for escalation and organisational learning, it considered these themes significant indicators of organisational culture and workforce experience. The Committee supported submission of the report to the Board and recommends continued Board oversight of emerging themes and organisational responses.

3. Advise: partial assurance received

Corporate Risk Register and Workforce Assurance

3.1. The Committee received its first workforce-focused review of relevant corporate risks and supported the proposed approach. Members noted that further development of risk management processes is required, particularly in relation to target risk ratings, mitigation timescales and escalation of cross-cutting risks between Board assurance committees. Partial assurance was therefore received.

Integrated Performance Report

3.2. The Committee noted continued operational pressures affecting workforce experience, including challenges relating to urgent and emergency care performance, patient flow, delayed discharges, cancer performance and sickness absence. Members recognised the close relationship between operational performance and workforce wellbeing and will continue to monitor these issues through future reporting.

Medical Education and Resident Doctor Experience

3.3. The Committee noted improvements in educational quality indicators and a reduction in GMC survey red flags. However, for Resident Doctors workload pressures, access to teaching, induction arrangements and facilities remain areas requiring ongoing improvement. Partial assurance was received that appropriate improvement programmes are in place.

Guardian of Safe Working Hours

3.4. The Committee received moderate assurance from the Guardian of Safe Working Hours. Increased exception reporting was attributed primarily to improved utilisation of the new reporting platform rather than deterioration in working conditions. The Committee requested future trend analysis to strengthen assurance over time.

Workforce Delivery Plan

3.5. The Committee received an update on workforce optimisation and the review of medical workforce establishments. While progress had been made, further work was required to develop a comprehensive medical workforce baseline, dashboard, implementation timetable, and analysis of emerging findings to support identification of workforce optimisation opportunities. A further report on the medical workforce establishment review would be presented in February 2027.

OUH Values Refresh

3.6. The Committee endorsed progression of the three proposed values options to staff consultation. Members recognised that significant work will be required to develop the supporting behavioural framework and embed revised values

throughout the organisation. Partial assurance was received regarding programme delivery to date.

4. Assure: sufficient assurance or routine oversight

People Committee Terms of Reference

4.1. The Committee recommended approval of its Terms of Reference, subject to a small number of agreed amendments, and established arrangements for an early review to ensure the Committee remains effective as it embeds within the revised governance structure. Sufficient assurance was received.

Safe Staffing and Nursing Establishment Reviews

4.2. The Committee received substantial assurance that safe staffing arrangements were maintained throughout the reporting period. Safe staffing was consistently achieved through established escalation arrangements, staffing fill rates remained strong, staffing-related escalation indicators reduced, nurse vacancy rates improved and no staffing-related bed closures occurred after February 2026. The Committee was assured that nursing establishment reviews remain evidence-based and appropriately governed.

People Plan Delivery

4.3. The Committee received assurance that delivery of the People Plan remains broadly on track. Positive progress has been achieved across workforce wellbeing, staff experience, recruitment, onboarding, career development and workforce planning initiatives. Most programme objectives remain on schedule.

Medical Education Governance

4.4. The Committee received assurance that appropriate governance arrangements are in place for medical education and resident doctor training. Educational concerns remain limited; improvement programmes are progressing and oversight arrangements through Deanery quality processes remain effective.

Freedom to Speak Up Governance

4.5. The Committee received assurance that strengthened arrangements are now in place for the assessment, escalation, monitoring and organisational learning arising from Freedom to Speak Up concerns. The Committee further supported ongoing work to triangulate Freedom to Speak Up data with Staff Survey and other workforce intelligence to strengthen organisational insight.

5. Recommendations

5.1. The Trust Board is asked to:

- note the People Committee's report from its meeting held on 11 November 2026, consider the matters escalated under **Alert**, note the areas of partial assurance set out under **Advise**, take assurance from the matters set out under **Assure**