

Agenda item 4.i

Report to:	Board of Directors	Date: 1 December 2022
Report from:	Director of Workforce and Organisational Development	
Principal Objective/Strategy:	The purpose of this paper is to provide the Board with an update on key workforce matters not addressed in PIPR.	
Title:	Report of the Director of Workforce and Organisational Development	
Board Assurance Framework Entries:	Recruitment Retention Staff Engagement	
Regulatory Requirement:	Well-Led	
Equality Considerations:	Public Sector Equality Duty Workforce Race Equality Scheme	
Key Risks:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Turnover increases as a result of poor staff engagement • We are unable to recruitment sufficient staff to meet safe staffing levels • Staff engagement is negatively impacted by poor people practices 	
For:	Information	

Items that are addressed in this report:

- Recruitment Services update
- Revised Appraisal Procedure and Processes

1. Recruitment Services Update

1.1 The overall Trust vacancy rate has been steadily increasing to 14.3% in October 2022 from March 2021 when our vacancy rate was at an all-time low of 3.3%.

1.2 This steady increase in vacancy rates is being experienced across the NHS. Drivers for this increase in vacancy rates are:

- National labour market and wage trends mean that attracting staff has become increasingly difficult particularly in those roles that are not NHS specific:
 - o In the last quarter the national unemployment rate was 3.3%, the lowest rate since July 1974. The number of people unemployed for up to six months decreased to a record low, and those unemployed between 6 and 12 months increased.
 - o The economically inactive rate increased 21.6% in the last quarter. This increase in the latest three month period was largely driven by those aged 16 to 24 years and those aged 50 to 64 years. Looking at economic inactivity by reason, the increase during the latest three-month period was driven by those inactive because they are students or long-term sick.
 - o The number of vacancies has been falling over the last 4 quarters and remains at historically high levels.
 - o The average pay growth for the private sector in the last quarter was 6.6% and 2.2% for the public sector. This is the largest growth seen for the private sector and the largest difference between the private and public sector.
- The cost of living pressures as a result of the high cost of fuel and energy and the high rate of inflation means that pay is increasingly a factor in turnover and whether we can attract staff.

- National skills shortages across a range of roles and long training times for many professions.
- Cambridge is a high cost of living area with the cost of accommodation being extremely high.

1.3 We have seen a significant increase in time to hire as a result of a period of very high turnover in the Recruitment Team and the disruption resulting from the implementation of the new NHS Jobs system. We have not been able to report on time to hire because of the disruption but the indicative figure for August was 61.9 against a KPI of 48 days. This is likely to have increased further because of very significant delays in the processing of Pre-Employment Health Clearances by Occupational Health.

1.4 We use NHS Jobs which is a nationally designed and managed electronic recruitment system which is free to NHS users. Over the summer they implemented a new version of this system which users were required to migrate to. We did this over the summer period and it required substantial changes to our processes. Unfortunately, we have found that this new version to not be user friendly and it has significantly impacted the speed of processes and also our ability to track the progress of candidates.

1.5 This change and disruption to our recruitment processes over the last six months coincided with significant turnover in what had been a very stable team and, in the last couple of months, severe delays with the Occupational Health pre-employment screening process.

1.6 All of the factors detailed above affecting the performance of the recruitment processes has led to a backlog in candidates waiting to go through the required pre-employment screening therefore increasing the time to hire which is having an impact on all departments across the Trust.

1.7 Actions being taken to improve time to hire are as follows:

- Procurement of a new electronic recruitment system. We will reach a decision on which one we want to procure before the end of December with the goal of implementing the new system by the end of March 2023. Both systems offer significantly better functionality for managing the process, monitoring and tracking applicants, reporting and an improved user experience for both recruiters and applicants.
- Our Occupational Health service is provided by Cambridge University Hospitals. They have acknowledged that they have been unable to provide a timely pre-employment health screening process and that this is also affecting CUH recruitment processes. They have taken action to address their staff shortages and we have implemented mitigating actions:
 - o Weekly performance meetings with CUH OH lead and DDW&OD
 - o We are routinely prioritising lists for pre-employment clearance to ensure the most urgent are being dealt with
 - o Triaging OH sickness management referrals through the Employee Relations team to help OH release capacity for pre-employment clearance
 - o We have developed an internal risk assessment process to support staff safely starting before the OH pre-employment clearance is processed.

We are starting to see an improvement in the turnaround time as a result of the actions described above.

1.8 We have reviewed our recruitment processes and specifically the pre-employment checking processes which are the main reason for elongated time to hire. These pre-employment checks are onerous but are required by our regulators and legislation and are important safety checks. There are six NHS Employment Check Standards that

outline the type and level of checks employers must carry out before recruiting staff into NHS positions. They require a lot of information from candidates in very specific formats and this can be difficult for candidates. We have modified our recruitment approaches to help safely expedite some applicants being able to join the organisation sooner and we have streamlined our internal recruitment process.

- 1.9 The vacancies in the recruitment team have been, apart from one post, been filled. The workload of the team has significantly increased, and we will be increasing the establishment of the team which will give additional capacity and expertise. The new role will have a focus on streamlining recruitment and temporary staffing processes. In the short-term we have staff from other workforce teams supporting recruitment services by processing pre-employment checks for candidates through a combination of staff working additional hours and the reassignment of rostered hours.
- 1.10 We are planning a further recruitment event in the hospital on the 3rd December focusing on recruiting for Nurses, ODPs, Healthcare support workers, housekeepers and admin. There is also planning underway for a specific event for Surgery, Transplant and Anaesthetics. We are working with Cambridge Community Services on the redeployment of staff, particularly administrative staff, who are no longer required for the mass vaccination programme.
- 1.11 We have significantly increased in 2022/23 our overseas nurses recruitment programme in order to address the vacancy position for Band 5 nurses. We are working to recruit 52 overseas nurses using additional funding available from NHSI.
- 1.12 In response to the increased vacancies in administration roles and housekeeping positions, we have moved these adverts to 'rolling adverts' ensuring there is a constant presence on our job pages for these posts. This includes a rolling advert for bank administration posts.

2. Appraisal Procedure

- 2.1 The Trust's Appraisal Procedure (previously called the Individual Performance Review Procedure) has been revised to ensure a supportive, equitable and consistent approach to appraisal review and career conversations. An effective appraisal process is fundamental to supporting staff development and career progression which we know from our staff survey feedback and leavers data is something that we need to improve. This review is an important part of the Compassionate and Collective Leadership workplan.
- 2.2 The drivers for the review and redevelopment of the procedure were:
- The procedure was significantly out of date and was considered by staff and line managers as cumbersome – we wanted to make it more user friendly and succinct.
 - We needed to streamline the process for pay step progression to ensure that it aligned with national terms and conditions and that it happened in a timely way.
 - We wanted our assessment of performance to be a balance of behaviour and demonstration of our values and outcomes against objectives.
 - We wanted to ensure that there was consideration and planning for development needs and career progression.
 - We wanted to ensure that there are structured discussions about the member of staff's health and wellbeing.
 - We wanted to ensure that working arrangements are reviewed and discussed
 - We wanted to improve objective setting so that there is better cascade of the corporate and divisional objectives through to individual objectives.

- We wanted the annual appraisal meeting to not just be a one off annual event but part of an ongoing dialogue with the member of staff about their performance and development needs
- We wanted to support an improvement in compliance rates for annual appraisal.

2.3 The appraisal process detailed in the procedure fully embeds the Trust's values and behaviour with the introduction of performance criteria ratings against the values in addition to progress against objectives.

2.4 The new appraisal form has been designed to guide a structured conversation that incorporates well-being, flexible working, development of objectives and personal development plans as well as facilitating career conversations. In addition, the form supports pay step progression review and approval providing a fully joined up approach between appraisal, performance review, personal development and outcomes.

2.5 The Procedure incorporates the requirement for three monthly reviews of progress against objectives and development plans. This is important in supporting staff well-being and check-in with staff regarding their development plans.

2.6 The new procedure and associated documents will be launched at the All-Staff Briefing in December 2022, to be fully rolled out across the Trust from April 2023. This 'soft' roll out provides managers and staff with the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the new process and documentation and attend training.

2.6 Training and guidance will be immediately available in the form of a 'how to guide' and self-bookable appraisal process training for line managers and staff. In addition, the new appraisal form and associated documents have been designed to include full guidance for users. In Q4 22/23 a comprehensive line manager appraisal skills programme will be rolled out to upskill and increase both confidence and competence of line managers with appraisal responsibilities.

Recommendation:

The Board of Directors is requested:

- **To note and discuss the content of this report**