



Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte
Health Service Executive

HSE People and Culture Committee Meeting

Minutes

A meeting of the HSE People and Culture Committee was held on Friday 12 June 2020, 2:30 pm via videoconference facilities.

Members Present: Yvonne Traynor (Chairperson), Aogan Ó Fearghail, Sarah McLoughlin, Fiona Tierney, Bernie O'Reilly

In attendance:

- HSE Executive Members: Anne Marie Hoey (National Director Human Resources), Vera Kelly (General Manager Organisation Development), Niamh Drew, Hannah Barnes

1. Governance and Administration

The Chair commenced the meeting by thanking the National Director of HR and her team for the dedication they have shown to the HSE throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. Those in attendance agreed the running order of the agenda. No conflicts of interest were declared.

In response to questions regarding the more long-term effects of the COVID-19 response and also in regard to the actions carried out by Occupational Health throughout the HSE's response the ND HR suggested that Linda Sisson's attendance at future People and Culture Committee Meetings would be of a huge benefit to the Committee. A discussion surrounding the Committee's workplan for the rest of the year took place. The ND HR advised that some aspects of the workplan may need to be reworked as certain areas of the HR workstreams need to be focused on due to changes over recent months. The committee were given the example of recruitment which they were told has become more agile and could be looked at by the committee in a focused session.

The Committee acknowledged the great work that has been undertaken but emphasised the importance of opportunities for process redesigns and lesson learned from empowering decision-making throughout all areas of the organisation.

ND HR discussed the return of the Values and Action programme and further discussed the culture changes seen within the organisation during the COVID-19 response. The Committee requested that further consideration be given to a Culture Audit which would provide the organisation with a baseline

of both the positive and negative aspects. Emphasis was placed on the importance of building on the good engagement and general feeling of pride within the organisation.

Actions:

- Linda Sisson to be invited to attend future meetings of the People and Culture Committee – Secretariat (August meeting)
- ND HR to rework the Committee's workplan to capture changing areas of focus due to the impact of COVID-19

2. National Director's Update

The ND HR provided an overview of the HR activities to the Committee. She highlighted that as the focus moves to service continuity in a COVID environment, National HR will be required to be an enabler to service continuity and the reintroduction of services. To do this HR will be required to undertake a sizeable piece of new work. In particular, a focus will be placed on the following:

- A Workforce Projections Group which will be used to reassess the methods used to augment the workforce in recent months against the priorities for staffing new services established for COVID and reintroduction of clinical services.
- New ways of working as creativity and flexibility will continue to be a requirement for the HSE workforce and communication with staff and staff representative bodies will be an on-going requirement.
- Staff Health and Wellbeing will be an area of as staff will require on-going and enhanced supports as they emerge from working in COVID-19 environments and managing their own experiences.
- Supporting services in managing change as the way of doing business within national HR in respect of training, change management support and staff engagement will also being reviewed. Predominately face to face services will transition to delivering using virtual, multimedia and eLearning methods.
- The National HR division also plan to capture staff attitudes to services and feedback from staff on their experience over the past few months in addition to gathering key learnings and proposals for the future

In response to the outlining of these areas the ND HR was asked to expand on ways in which working has changed within the clinical areas of the HSE. The ND HR informed the committee that one of the main developments has been in the area of Tele-medicine which has allowed for the introduction of virtual consultations to many services, in particular the Performance oversight group noted the number of such consultations taking places in CAMHS. The ND HR said that this

area had lots of potential to expedite and grow which makes sense from a public health perspective and a capacity perspective. It was noted that COVID-19 saw an emphasis of Patient Focused resources and the Committee asked for a proposal on how this can be maintained going forward.

The Committee were also told of how a more agile way of working has developed during the response to the pandemic. In many areas decision making evolved which allowed for localised decision-making with clear direction from top levels of the Governance structure and escalations made appropriately when necessary. The ND HR said that it is hoped this agile way of working will continue and that it has been welcomed in most instances. Clarity surrounding the full utilisation of resources and budgetary impacts was sought.

The issue of providing childcare was also raised for discussion. The ND HR advised that this was a big challenge and continues to be. During the height of the pandemic the HSE attempted to be as flexible as possible in relation to rotas and it was highlighted that staff were excellent in making their own arrangements. Interdepartmental groups are continuing work on this issue and it will continue to be considered under the recovery planning piece of work which is ongoing.

The committee asked for a status update on the review of the centre. The ND HR said that this piece of work has been delayed due to COVID-19 but has now recommenced and it has been proposed that a draft of the report will go to the September board meeting. The committee also requested an update on the tracking of staff training. The ND HR responded saying that tracking of training is recorded to an extent on HSE land however not all training available to the wider HSE organisation is provided through this platform. The Committee emphasises the importance of upskilling and tracking it.

The ND HR provided an update on specific COVID-19 recruitment campaigns including 'Be on Call for Ireland'.

The ND HR confirmed for committee members that a detailed report regarding health care staff infections should be available within the coming weeks. The Committee also requested to be kept up to date on the rate of staff absences during the COVID-19 pandemic.

3. Staff Experience in the HSE

Vera Kelly (GM Organisational Development) entered the meeting at 15:25.

The ND HR outlined how the experience of COVID-19 has had an impact on HSE staff, their families, colleagues and the wider community. Maintaining and improving levels of staff engagement is increasingly important as the HSE transitions through the phases of the COVID-19 pandemic towards

recovery and service continuity in a COVID-19 environment. She told the Committee that through staff engagement and hearing about their experiences we can learn about their positive experiences, concerns, views and ideas for change while taking appropriate action as the organisation continues to navigate through the response to the COVID -19 pandemic and delivery of core services.

To learn about the staff experience during the crisis it is proposed that a mixed methods approach including both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, will be used to gather information from the system. The GM for Organisational Development outlined that the focus groups will be used to provide staff the opportunity to share their experience and stories during COVID-19 and for the Health Service Executive to learn what worked and what could have been done differently as a result. The Committee were told that the structure of the focus groups is envisioned as being 10 groups of 15 people. Additionally, an online staff survey will be conducted as in previous years. Although there may be an element of staff fatigue when it comes to these surveys it is felt that a survey is necessary to reach as many people in the organisation as possible to answer necessary questions. The ND HR said that it is hoped a culture audit will be captured through the method of focus group sessions.

Regarding problems seen in the past with online surveys the GM of Organisational Development said that the most common problem was caused by web browsers. The last survey saw a response rate of 15%. Every organisation that the HSE works with was involved however the level of buy in from s.38s needs to be improved upon. The GM of organisational Development also confirmed that HR is currently going through a procurement process to assist with the online staff survey as has been done on previous occasions.

The committee discussed the risks assigned to the People and Culture Committee and agreed to look at the risks assigned to the committee in detail at their following meeting.

Actions:

The Committee will have a detailed look at risks assigned to the People and Culture Committee on the CRR – Chair / Secretariat (August Meeting)

4. Any Other Business

The Committee agreed to look at an alternative date for their August Meeting.

Meeting concluded at 16:10.

Signed: Y. Traynor
Yvonne Traynor
Chairperson

24/08/2020

Date