



**MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE, CULTURE AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT 9.30AM ON
THURSDAY 25 September 2025 IN THE BOARDROOM, NIAS HQ**

PRESENT:	Mr J Dennison Mr P Corrigan Mr P Quinn	Committee Chair Non-Executive Director Non-Executive Director
IN ATTENDANCE:	Ms M Lemon Ms S Beggs	Director of HROD Manager of Chair and Chief Executive Office
	Mr N Sinclair Mr M Riddell Dr N Ruddell Ms L Turley Mr R Sowney	Director of Operations (Interim) Deputy Director of HROD Medical Director Deputy Director HROD Senior Clinical Advisor

APOLOGIES:

1 Apologies & Opening Remarks

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

2 Procedure

2.1 Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest

The Chair asked those present to declare any potential conflicts of interest now or as the meeting progressed.

No declarations of conflict of interest were made.

2.2 Quorum

The Chair confirmed the Committee as quorate.

2.3 Confidentiality of Information

The Chair emphasised the confidentiality of information.

3 Previous Minutes – 12/06/2025

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 12 June 2025 were **APPROVED** on a proposal from Mr Dennison and seconded by Mr Quinn.

4 Matters arising

The Committee **NOTED** the update to the matters arising from the last meeting.

<u>Matters Arising</u> Update organisational chart to be provided at the next meeting (Ms Lemon/Ms Turley)	Still pending due to ongoing changes within Fleet & Estates, and other interim posts. A final version will be presented at the next Meeting. ACTION: Ms Lemon/Ms Turley
<u>HROD Balance Scorecard</u> Mr Riddell will provide an updated reporting structure for the meeting in September	Covered on agenda.
<u>Comms Activities – HROD Balance</u> An update was provided at the meeting on 12 June with a more detailed plan at the next meeting. (Ms Lemon/Ms Turley)	This action is ongoing, awaiting other plans to align with the Single Comms plan. ACTION: Ms Lemon/Ms Turley
<u>Management of Violence and Aggression Update</u> It was suggested that there should be an annual update on this subject at the Committee (Ms Beggs)	Added to forward workplan and note on file for next year.
<u>HROD Restructure and 2025-26 Planning</u> Mr Dennison asked to see timelines to see the chronology of this	See appendix 1 that was distributed with the papers.

development and Ms Lemon said they are developing a plan to address these and will share with the Committee.	
<p><u>HROD Restructure and 2025-26 Planning</u></p> <p>Mr Corrigan asked the team to get a sense of the recruitment performance with BSO and the level of satisfaction of that and any potential sticking points, in particular the timeliness regarding job evaluation as it affects planning.</p>	See appendix 1

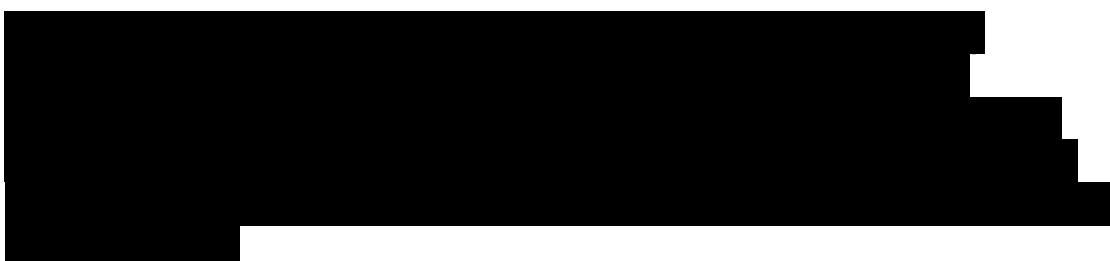
Mr Quinn pointed out that there are two substantive directorates going through restructure (Ops and HR) and queried if anything can be agreed with the DoH to progress this. Ms Lemon confirmed there may be an opportunity to discuss this at the Regional Partnership Forum. Ms Lemon added that more staff need to be trained in job evaluation to increase the capacity within this field.

5 Operational Resilience and Enhanced Leadership (OREL) Progress Report

The Chair welcomed Mr Riddell, Mr McKenna and Mr McCleery-Madams to provide a programme update in relation to an overview and outputs to date for Year One.

Mr McKenna highlighted that recruitment will commence next week in relation to the scheduled side. There are 14 team leader posts approved and commence on Monday.

The Programme Board has been established which is chaired by Mr Sinclair and decisions implemented.



Ms Paterson took part in a video for staff last week to set the context and keep communication open with staff and the feedback has been positive.

Mr McKenna advised that they are aware of some CSD's that are keen to move which may cause challenges in other areas with staff moving.

Mr Quinn referred to the new roles in terms of cultural change and leadership competencies and suggested further conversations are required with Mr Mullan and Mr Thompson regarding the ongoing strategy work, specifically about organisation values and leadership needs.

Ms Lemon confirmed that the manner of change being conducted is transformational and Mr McKenna added that some of the changes include 1-1 meetings, team meetings, some staff are completing masters, and the recruitment process is enhanced and transparent and focused on leadership and management. This has also been incorporated into the job descriptions for team leaders and KPIs.

The Committee **NOTED** the Progress Report.

6 Monthly Workforce Information and Strategic HR Report

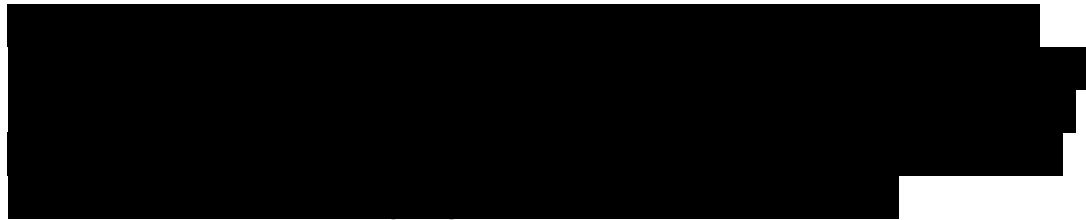
Mr Riddell presented the Report which provides updated information since the last Committee regarding workforce metrics, strategic updates across key areas of HR and additional papers on a number of key areas of work including Health and Wellbeing and Learning and Development Updates.

The Cover Page states it is 'For Approval' however the Committee confirmed it is 'For Noting'.

Mr Riddell referred to the workforce summary position and there is nothing worthy of note. Within the Turnover section of the report Mr Riddell intends to include detail of the exact number of leavers, their grades and reason for leaving.

ACTION: Mr Riddell

Ms Lemon advised that HR are carrying out a more detailed drilldown of what absence looks like in each directorate focusing on best practice. Ms Turley is leading on the intervention and putting an action plan in place. [REDACTED]



Mr Quinn welcomes the consistent focus on absence and assurance that issues are being addressed

Mr Sowney pointed out that staff in EOC appreciate the intervention in terms of health and wellbeing and he emphasised the importance of how Managers respond to staff at the time, in terms of leadership. NIAS and Ops is a very robust environment and there are still times when staff seek assistance or support during difficult situations that are disregarded. Ms Lemon agreed, and said they are aware that this is a live issue which is also being addressed via the organisational culture piece. Managers are being held to account for service delivery and feel vulnerable in relation to being responsible for a drop in cover.

The Committee **NOTED** the Progress Report.

7 Absence Management Update

Ms Turley provided an update on the current status and progress of NIAS priority to manage workforce absence.

The Committee **NOTED** the Report and welcomed the improvements.

Ms Lemon referred to a review of absence management carried out by Internal Audit which the outcome was satisfactory, however there were a number of matters identified that were considered not satisfactory and priority one findings. The team have made Internal Audit aware of the ongoing work in relation to organisational culture and employment policies and processes.

One of the significant findings identified a practice within Operations of staff being granted advanced leave out of the following years allowance. This is now being addressed via changes within the GRS system to prevent this automatically happening as well as guidance to managers.

Ms Lemon has asked for additional audit days later in the year to get a further assessment which will take account of the current ongoing work to mitigate the findings.

Mr Quinn acknowledged that the report will be shared with GARAC but requested that PCOD Committee members also see it.

Mr Quinn is keen to see developments regarding long term suspensions and asked if there is scope for the Organisation to progress on same. Ms Lemon said that she would share information explaining this.

ACTION: Ms Lemon

Ms Lemon advised that HR are conducting a significant review of Employee Relations which includes the completion to clear the backlog of complex cases. Phase two of this review is about the capability and capacity for managers escalating matters to a formal space which includes a new regional Disciplinary Policy and Grievance Policy.

[REDACTED]

The team are working on the governance relating to suspensions and there is a monthly review of each case to identify the progress.

8 Organisational Culture Programme Update

The Committee **NOTED** the update of key work and discussions at the Trusts Organisational Culture Programme Board.

Kings Fund is organising workshops in November and will create space for reflection for teams but critically there will be outcomes into plans to build into the overall three year plan.

Mr Quinn advised that at the last Programme Board Meeting they discussed an issue regarding the ultimate vision of culture within NIAS and whilst trying to build this up from the bottom, there needs to be strategic aims to work towards, that clearly sets out objectives with KPIs and the progress achieved. They also discussed that at times there is still a lack of momentum however, they acknowledge

the initiatives and in particular the work that Ms Biddle has carried out.

Ms Lemon referred to the Board's responsibility for culture vision and it was suggested that this should be discussed at the upcoming NED Workshop and Strategy Day.

The Committee alluded to work that the RQIA is carrying out regarding patient safety culture which had been raised at the previous Programme Board, and it is linked to the work Mr Sinclair is undertaking about professionalism and accountability.

Ms Lemon said they need to make sure they mainstream work and link strategic objectives to the Programme Board to give others measures to achieve. Most of them are workforce related and Ms Lemon has discussed with Ms Charlton how they build them into a cross-directorate process and roll out throughout NIAS.

Mr Dennison sought clarity on how the work will be implemented in terms of a baseline and measurements going forward. Ms Lemon responded that they need to ensure they don't rely on a mixed economy and they consider what engagement sessions will look, what the number of grievances are etc. Ms Lemon will set out what the indicators will be and how/when they check them.

Ms Lemon emphasised that changing the demographics is also significant and it is important that methodology is culturally transforming in itself to include what misogyny and sexual safety looks like. Mr Sowney suggested placing NQPs and students close to this to ensure they are involved at an early point. Ms Lemon advised they are establishing a Voices Network and there will also be a Student Voices Network, as she agrees it is very informative to hear their experiences.

9 Sexual Safety (Management Response)

The Committee **NOTED** the outline of the Trust high level response and plans in respect of the recently undertaken Sexual Safety Review within the Trust.

Ms Lemon referred to previous discussions at the last Committee meeting about the recommendations and to what extent NIAS are accepting or not accepting. Ms Lemon provided an example of

what NIAS are implementing in relation to EOI's. There was feedback that there is a perception that these are informal recruitment processes, which NIAS are taking on board and plan to adapt to provide assurance to staff.

Ms Lemon has liaised directly with Ms Biddle about creating a multi team Safety Huddle to include staff from Safeguarding, Ops, HR and perhaps professional standards to agree and refresh what they are reviewing and carrying out around managing sexual safety.

NIAS have agreed to conduct trauma informed investigations and provide dedicated resource as having the right skills is a challenge. They are looking at a pragmatic approach and seeking a regional job description for bank investigators.



It was proposed that the Board should receive a session to provide more understanding.

Ms Lemon and Ms Biddle have met to discuss and move forward with a 'speaking up safely leader' and suggest the NIAS Voices Network is a good forum to agree how this is implemented.

Ms Lemon confirmed for Mr Quinn that Ms Biddle will continue to work with NIAS two days a week up until the end of March and she is also providing input into managing some individual cases.

Ms Lemon sought clarity on information required to the Board and the Committee suggested that they are provided with a report and a dedicated board session to think about what the vision of culture is and the delivery of service to patients in terms of sexual safety.

ACTION: Ms Lemon

10 Vaccinations Briefing

The Committee **NOTED** the update provided by Dr Ruddell advising the approach to the roll out of a vaccination programme in 2025 including some of the associated challenges.

The PHA are not making any money available to deliver vaccines internally and suggested NIAS attend vaccinations at other Trusts, however, NIAS pushed back that this is a real challenge. NIAS have received confirmation that they will receive limited funding and will roll out the vaccine in October.

A video message has been recorded with a NIAS member of staff from the control room who ended up in intensive care as a result of flu and the message to staff is to receive the vaccine early. Dr Ruddell added that NIAS have a moral duty to protect patients, staff and their families.

Mr Dennison thanked the team for providing this update and highlighted that vaccinations cannot be enforced or mandated but can assist by showing leadership. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] The current stream of COVID is significant with outbreaks within hospitals. Dr Ruddell confirmed that the COVID vaccine has not been removed completely, it has been made available to those at risk.

11 Partnership Framework

The Committee **NOTED** the update which provides an overview of the work that has been undertaken this year to date of the review of Trade Union Partnership working across NIAS. The report provides a background to the work, key activities and progress against each and the next steps. Implementation of the new arrangements is planned for March 2025.

Ms Lemon confirmed that the HSC are still in ASOS context and have met with the Minister and TUs to agree a proposal to stand down ASOS. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] NIAS are concerned coming into winter that there is potential to present a serious risk.

[REDACTED] He advised the Committee that the last conservative

government changed legislation and put in a limiter on strike within scheduled services. Mr Riddell confirmed that this legislation will not be implemented in NI, however there is positive employment legislation due to be submitted through Stormont.

Mr Dennison sought clarity on the potential timing of the ballot and sense of action. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and are not sure if it will be before or after Christmas but she expects this will be discussed at their meetings and TUs will provide NIAS with seven days' notice for action.

Ms Gardner is putting plans in place for a governance structure when she returns from leave, about liaising with local management about derogations etc.

Mr Riddell pointed out that involving TUs with policy development has made a difference, which has been evident in the ongoing work Mr Sinclair has been carrying out to include TUs.

12 Northern Ambulance Service (NIAS) Response for the 26/27 Pay Review Body Call for Evidence

The Committee **NOTED** the submission from NIAS to the NHS pay review body. The information will be forwarded by DoH for ministerial approval before submission to the pay review body.

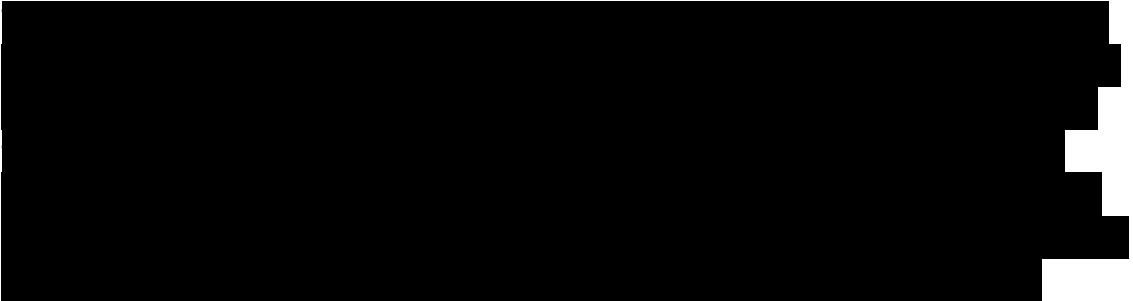
The template for the return seeks information on a range of workforce related metrics and this information has been collated and presented to the Department before being submitted to the pay review body.

The Review Body attended NIAS in person on the 23 September and feedback was that it was a positive session and the PRB will feedback their recommendations to government.

Mr Riddell confirmed for Mr Dennison that the Trust will have sight of the recommendations when they are published. He confirmed for Mr Quinn that on reflection they can submit subsequent feedback via email if required.

There is an issue around leavers and attrition rates within the paper as attrition rates are lower in other HSC bodies but are concerning in this paper.

Ms Lemon confirmed there are pockets of concerning areas i.e. staff moving on to other roles. Mr Riddell added that it's not necessarily about attrition per say, and that 'churn' is the problem.



Mr Sinclair continues to work with the University about that interface and interview requirements. In relation to driving requirements NIAS are clear that a driving license is critical, however, some don't have a driving license at all, so NIAS need to be more robust in relation to these requirements.

13 PCOD Forward Work Plan

The Committee **NOTED** the items on the forward workplan.

The Committee agreed it would be useful to share the work around Organisational Strategy and the HR strategic objectives to merge into the workplan, which some already links to the restructuring and remodeling.

14 Update on HROD Restructure

Ms Turley advised they have appointed two new colleagues within HR, Steven Warnock and Lee Henry.

The HROD structure has eight key functions and Ms Lemon's team are reviewing the directorate structure against those to ensure it is fit for purpose in terms of providing a service.

Ms Turley advised that there will be a change in system for HR next year which will affect the capacity of HR and timescales of objectives within the timeline. The team hope they will have the next tier in post by the end of the financial year.

15 Any Other Business

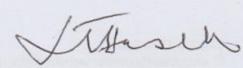
The Committee commended Ms Lemon and her team for achieving progress within the statutory mandatory training.

Next meeting:

4 December 2025, 9.30am

**THIS BEING ALL THE BUSINESS, THE CHAIR DECLARED THE
MEETING CLOSED AT 12.30AM**

SIGNED:



DATE:

10/12/25