The NSS Staff Governance Committee meets four times a year and has an overview of all workforce and people management issues. Its focus is organisational culture and continuous improvement in respect of leadership and people management and ensures that staff feel NSS is a great place to work. Both the NSS Board and Staff Governance Committee view Staff Governance as an effective framework for the continuous improvement of people management and staff experience and as such enables us to maximise our service offering and retain and recruit staff.

This response provides examples of evidence of the positive impact of Staff Governance in the organisation. There are five strands to the Staff Governance Standard. However, we have chosen to provide examples of evidence for three strands, which are of particular relevance in NSS.

Well Informed

The 2016 staff survey showed that 84% of staff strongly agreed that “I am clear what my duties and responsibilities are”. However, it was also noted that only 63% of staff indicated that they were kept well informed about what was happening in NSS. As a result of this score we have put in place a number of communication initiatives to ensure staff across NSS are kept well informed. These include the following:

- Information is provided to staff using a range of communication and engagement tools at both a corporate and local level, including Team Talk, PULSE – the NSS bi-monthly staff magazine, Staff Updates, intranet (geNSS), Town Hall Meetings, Briefing sessions and Team Meetings.

- Staff can provide feedback at any time via the “Questions and Suggestions” link on the intranet site. A recent initiative that has been introduced is “Ask Colin” where staff can raise questions or make suggestions directly to myself; or the Executive Management Team on any issue. All questions, suggestions, answers and actions that result from this process are published regularly on geNSS.

- Staff are also encouraged to raise matters through their line manager or, if applicable, their Trade Union/professional organisation representatives at local partnership forums. A survey of the effectiveness of internal communications methods is also carried out by NSS every two to three years by the NSS Communications Team and reported to the Staff Governance Committee.

Treated Fairly and Consistently

NSS aims to continuously improve our staff experience. In this respect the NHS Scotland Staff Experience and Engagement survey, iMatter has been implemented across NSS. Feedback from managers has been positive, reporting that the results of the iMatter survey have supported them in facilitating open team discussions and development of actions and development plans which staff feel that they own. A response rate of 81% was achieved through a tailored communication and engagement programme.

NSS, along with many other organisations, continues to change in order to provide excellent services to our customers, service users and patients. In order to ensure that change is managed in a fair and consistent way across NSS an Organisational Change toolkit and process was developed in partnership with the Trade Unions. All guidance and supporting documents relating to Organisational Change are contained within one place on the NHS intranet. This toolkit takes managers through the
process they are required to follow step by step and provides practical examples which enables an easier understanding of Organisational Change.

A communications plan is in place to raise awareness of the toolkit and a programme of management training is being implemented. This includes bespoke training for those areas of NSS who are about to embark on organisational change programmes.

This should ensure that all staff going through organisational change are treated in a consistent way.

**Involved in Decisions**

A number of annual staff surveys have indicated that staff in NSS do not always feel that they are fully involved in decisions which impact on them. As a result of this NSS have implemented a number of initiatives to improve this.

- A programme of awareness sessions on working in partnership with the Trade Unions and engaging with staff has been held in multiple locations across every business area. These sessions were aimed at all managers of people, with the aim of raising awareness about engaging with both staff and the Trade Unions and the benefits of this approach to the organisation and staff. This work is being continued through the local partnership forums. It is hoped that this activity will help both managers and staff understand how they can be more involved in influencing decisions, and enable the organisation to engage more effectively with staff at all levels and across all areas.

- Introduction of Focus Groups to gain the views of staff. A number of focus groups were held through the year, for all staff in order to obtain their views on a variety of subject areas, including the Organisational Change toolkit, Job Evaluation process and the review of workforce policy.

In addition to these examples, NSS has developed some key performance indicators which are focused on continuous improvement and are reported to the Staff Governance Committee. These include:

- Reducing sickness absence to 3.8% and the hours lost due to stress and mental health. Work streams are in place to support staff and managers in promoting attendance at work and NSS being a healthy and safe place to work.

- Increasing youth employment in NSS. We have a target of recruiting an additional 40 people in 2016/17 under the age of 25 and are on target to exceed this. Some of this will be achieved by Modern Apprenticeships but others will through general recruitment.

- Increasing the number of employees with a disability. We have a target to increase the number of employees with disability by five in 2016/17 and have met this target. Work is underway by our recruitment team to find more ways of attracting candidates with a disability to apply for a post.