

Board of Management Meeting of the People and Culture Committee

MINUTE OF 2nd MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12 FEBRUARY 2025 AT 1500 HRS ON
CITY CAMPUS, ROOM C.06.106 (PCC2)

Present	
Manira Ahmad	Ciara McCarthy
Roddy Gillespie (Convener)	Stuart McDowall
Paul Hillard	Audrey Sullivan
Paul Little	
In attendance	
Dave Anderson	Drew McGowan
Debbie Gordon	Allison Miller
John Gribben	May Miller
Megan Frickleton (Interpreter)	Valeria Ramos
Scott Harrison	Scott Renton
Nathan Imeson (Interpreter)	Ann Butcher (Minute)
Apologies for absence	
None	

Item PCC2-1	Apologies for Absence	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	There were no apologies.	

Item PCC2-2	Declarations of Interest	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	D Anderson declared a connection to all items in his role as Chair of the Board.	

Item PCC2-3	Identification of Items to be Discussed Privately	
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	None notified.	

Item PCC2-4.1	Minute of the People & Culture Committee meeting held on 30 October 2024	
Paper No: PCC2-A	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Approval
Decision/Noted	The minute was approved.	

Item 5.1 was taken at this time.

Item PCC2-5.1 Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Survey Progress Report		
Paper No: PCC2-C	Lead: J Gribben/S Harrison	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>J Gribben reminded the Committee of the College-wide Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Survey undertaken by Robertson Cooper (RC) in March 2024, noting the good response rate of 66%. On completing the survey, each staff member immediately received an individual snapshot report that included signposting to support and suggestions for improvements of any issues identified. At the time of the survey, the College was going through a challenging period with significant uncertainty, industrial action and organisational change. Managers are currently working together with their teams on actions moving forward that will improve staff wellbeing.</p> <p>J Gribben further confirmed that RC's methodology was independent and given their expertise in the field, was not influenced by the College. D Anderson suggested benchmarking the survey's results across various sectors and industries. J Gribben considered that some organisations may be unwilling to disclose certain aspects of their results but agreed to investigate this further.</p> <p>M Ahmad thanked the team for their efforts and asked about the wider staff's perception and engagement with the action plan, emphasising that it was a collective effort rather than an individual one. J Gribben informed members that most staff were on board, though some pockets remained disengaged. However, feedback indicated that some employees felt a positive shift since the survey was undertaken.</p> <p>P Little added that RC was a leader in this field that no other college in Scotland has undertaken this initiative, reminding members that it has now been conducted twice and will be repeated. The survey results represent a point in time and are part of an ongoing journey. P Little further stressed that while the results may have been anticipated, the College is not complacent and will continue to learn and improve on action planning and staff engagement.</p> <p>T Hands sought clarification on action plans and noted that since the survey was conducted in March 2024, she had not been informed of these, either at Faculty-level or College-wide. J Gribben confirmed that this plan would be shared after the meeting and are typically Faculty-driven, focusing on workplace improvements, benefits and well-being initiatives. He added that he would check with Deans to ensure they were being communicated.</p> <p>T Hands thanked the Committee for inviting her to attend and informed that two surveys have now been undertaken by EIS-FELA in recent years including Workplace Culture in June 2022 and Workload in September 2024. Findings from both were shared with the Executive Leadership Team (ELT). Quantitative and qualitative data was gathered from the recent survey to provide an overview of the health and wellbeing effects on promoted and unpromoted lecturers' workload due to reduced teaching time and learning support provision and their ability to effectively educate and support students. The Workload survey results were shared in the paper submitted. T Hands considered that to date, no meaningful discussion or response from ELT to</p>	

either survey had been undertaken.

While the College acknowledged the output, it was noted that EIS-FELA has not provided any additional commentary or an action plan. In addition, it was highlighted that EIS-FELA has declined to provide critical information including survey methodology, questions and response rates that would allow the College to consider its findings fully. J Gribben confirmed that unless this information was provided to ensure its findings were accurate, representative and robust, the College was unable to comment on the outcomes.

T Hands replied that EIS-FELA research surveys were conducted by branch representatives in their own time and at no cost to College. Both surveys were cross-sectional using self-report measures and used questionnaires containing a series of closed and open questions generating statistical and qualitative data. As EIS-FELA was not commissioned by the College to conduct this research, she considered they were under no obligation to provide the additional data requested.

T Hands further reported that results from the Workplace Culture Survey showed the high number of respondents reporting an authoritarian leadership style, with a high proportion experiencing or being aware of bullying or unfair treatment in the workplace. Results from the Workload Survey showed a high proportion of respondents experiencing increased workloads due to cuts in class contact time and learning support with reports showing increases in work-related stress. She further highlighted that no staff Equality Impact Assessment was conducted prior to implementing organisational changes.

Referring to repeated requests for a copy of the RC Survey results, T Hands informed that EIS-FELA had to obtain a copy under a Freedom of Information request in December 2024. EIS-FELA have now undertaken a correlation of findings from both survey reports. T Hands also updated on the fair work concerns raised by EIS-FELA including cuts in facility time which they considered were now insufficient to properly represent members and engage meaningfully with management.

R Gillespie thanked T Hands for sharing the report and acknowledged the serious issues raised, noting that concerns from individual staff members were being addressed through relevant College policies and procedures. P Little emphasised the importance of formal processes for raising such issues and further highlighted the need for additional evidence-based information to support the EIS-FELA survey outcomes. J Gribben reassured that the College remains proactive in addressing all workplace concerns. However, T Hands expressed further concern about the current grievance process, stating that it is problematic and slow to progress.

D Anderson welcomed the discussion and thanked T Hands for the sharing EIS-FELA's perspective. From experience, he recognised that significant changes and reduced budgets often created challenges that require support to build resilience and wellbeing. R Gillespie pointed out the suggested commonalities within the surveys and proposed reviewing any overlaps to develop a joint action plan. He also suggested it would be helpful to know the number of individuals who participated in the EIS-FELA survey.

Regarding grievances, Committee members noted that lengthy process times were due to thoroughness and appeals but the College would work to expedite

these processes where possible. P Little added that if the data from the EIS-FELA survey was robust then genuine concerns would be treated seriously. Noting the issue of cuts in facility time, he informed of the increased offer made to EIS-FELA in November 2024 which is currently under debate. J Gribben confirmed that he would write to EIS-FELA on this matter before the end of this week.

R Gillespie suggested that conducting a comparison exercise would be an appropriate way to identify areas already being addressed in the current College action plan. D Anderson again acknowledged the existing challenges and the genuine efforts being made to resolve them. However, he emphasised the importance of a collaborative approach with consistent involvement of trade unions to ensure staff feel valued and engaged.

S Mcdowall acknowledged the College's commitment to continuous improvement but noted that the comparison exercise was not measuring like for like. He emphasised the need to invest in management to create an environment that supports wellness and ongoing improvement, providing support for managers through organisational development.

Decision/Noted

Benchmark Robertson Cooper results.
Provide copy of action plan to EIS-FELA and check with Faculties that they are being communicated and driven.
Engage with EIS-FELA to identify areas of commonality being addressed in the current Robertson Cooper action plans.

T Hands left the meeting.

Item PCC2- 4.2 Public Sector Equality Duty Reports

Paper No:
PCC2-B

Lead: J Gribben/S Harrison

Action requested: Approve

Discussion

J Gribben provided an overview of the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) reports due for publication in April 2025.

The Gender Pay Gap outlines steps to address pay equality. The over-representation of women in lower-paid support roles, contributing to a 7.67% gender pay gap (currently 7% in the UK) was noted. The disproportionate number of Black and Minority Ethnic staff in these roles were also highlighted.

Progress in achieving the 2021-2025 College Equality Outcomes were provided with improvements in the representation of staff and students with protected characteristics particularly noted. Key initiatives promoting a culture of dignity and respect; enhancing accessible support and facilities; embedding equality and diversity in learning and teaching and staff development; and supporting successful course completion for students with protected characteristics were all highlighted. Future planned initiatives were also advised. A new set of Equality Outcomes, developed under five key outcomes will be published under the Equality Outcomes Framework.

The Mainstreaming Report demonstrates the College commitment to the PSED, providing equality data for staff, students and the Board of Management across all protected characteristics.

S Harrison pointed out some minor errors which have now been corrected.

	<p>The report will be further reviewed by the Brand and Communications team prior to publication in April.</p> <p>D Anderson praised the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion team for the excellent reports and achievements. M Ahmad also acknowledged their hard work but expressed concerns about the number of initiatives planned and questioned whether the College was taking on too much and if it was realistic to deliver everything. She also emphasised the need to create time for staff to engage in these initiatives and incorporate them into their daily work.</p> <p>S Harrison informed that the plan is a two-year framework, making it more achievable. He reassured that the renewed working group and expanded network of stakeholders would help ensure success and that staff Continuing Professional Development (CPD) would be prioritised, providing diverse in-person and online training opportunities.</p> <p>Clarification was provided on awareness raising and embedding best practices around unconscious bias within the College to make it part of the culture. The Committee noted that this training had been provided to Board members previously and would be considered for future development events.</p>
Decision/Noted	That the Public Sector Equality Duty reports were approved.

Item PCC2-5.2 Fair Work Update	
Paper No: PCC2-D	Lead: J Gribben Action requested: Approve
Discussion	<p>J Gribben reported that Fair Work continues to be a high priority, highlighting that adherence to these principles is a condition of receiving grant funding from the Scottish Funding Council (SFC). The College contacted the Fair Work Convention team at the Scottish Government to enquire about conducting an audit of fair work in the College however it was confirmed that this service could not be provided.</p> <p>In November 2023, the College's Compliance Auditor conducted an assessment which confirmed College practice of fair work. In December 2023, an agreement was reached with EIS-FELA to reset industrial relations, to demonstrate practices of Fair Work and establish statement. With support from the Scottish Trades Union Congress (STUC), efforts were made to agree a Fair Work protocol; however, EIS-FELA have not signed up to this and have disengaged from the process.</p> <p>Referring to earlier discussion, J Gribben updated the Committee on the ongoing disagreement from EIS-FELA between facility time and Fair Work. He advised that following due process, facility time had been reduced following the conclusion of organizational change. To resolve the impasse on Fair Work, the Principal proposed increasing EIS-FELA facility time for the remainder of the academic year however this offer was rejected by EIS-FELA citing 'conditionality'.</p> <p>The dimensions of Fair Work and examples of additional and enhanced activities within the College were provided. J Gribben assured that the College is confident it is a Fair Work employer and will continue to demonstrate its commitment to Fair Work. He particularly emphasised the commitment to</p>

	<p>establishing a staff council that will engage all staff to enhance this work going forward.</p> <p>D Anderson acknowledged the ongoing dispute and concerns raised about facility time but emphasised that it was time to confirm that in the Board's view, the College is a fair work employer. The College has a clear framework and set of principles that it adheres to, and are continuously monitoring, recording, and striving to improve and uphold these principles.</p> <p>P Little said that the Board could be assured that the College was a Fair Work employer as our practices are outlined in the updated Fair Work in Practice report. He said the College has long been committed to Fair Work, citing a 15-year-long commitment to no compulsory redundancies – only undertaken once when forced to due to external pressures – and the low staff turnover rate.</p>
Decision/Noted	<p>To discuss the fair work update.</p> <p>That an update report will be submitted at the March Board meeting.</p>

Item PCC2-5.3	Digital Strategy Progress Report	
Paper No: PCC2-E	Lead: S Renton	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>S Renton provided a progress review of the six key strategic aims:</p> <p>Active Collaborative Learning: The continued investment in IT infrastructure and progress on the cyclic replacement programme, including network, Wi-Fi, data centres, server infrastructure and device upgrades were highlighted. Additional digital investment, including phase 1 of the network refresh have also been made with further initiatives focused on enhancing learning spaces. Technologies are currently being trialed to help inform a tender for the complete refurbishment of 196 classrooms and 127 specialist spaces.</p> <p>Access Anywhere: The use of Microsoft Teams has been expanded as a unified communication tool with the migration to Teams Telephony services almost complete. The additional benefits and financial savings were also highlighted.</p> <p>Cyber Security: Cyber security remains a critical focus, with several key initiatives taken to bolster cyber defenses. These include a comprehensive network penetration test, the development of an action plan in response to a data breach and additional investment in Mimecast to improve email security. Staff cyber security training will also continue.</p> <p>People Centre: The 4me service desk system has shown high levels of customer satisfaction and migration of other support systems, including estates, is being investigated.</p> <p>Partnership: A new IT leads group has been established with local Glasgow Colleges, Ayrshire, West and Lanarkshire Colleges to promote sharing of good practices and knowledge exchange aimed at enhancing IT services.</p> <p>Data Driven Decisions: Significant progress has been made in the</p>	

development and implementation of Power BI, with new dashboards being introduced, including a Principal's dashboard.

Systems Integration: The 'digital first' approach to adopt digital solutions aimed at enhancing efficiency and operational performance remains a key area of improvement, including integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI). S Renton updated the Committee on recent discussions with an external company to gain further understanding of processes and identify opportunities for improvement and potential collaboration.

S Renton further informed that options for capital investment are being explored. The separate network issues with GLQ/FES have been resolved and a network refresh tender will now be published.

P Little praised S Renton's leadership and acknowledged his team's ability to keep pace with technology evolution. M Ahmad also commended partnership working between private and public sectors provided there was clear purpose and further encouraged continued knowledge exchange and appropriate resourcing, particularly in AI. V Ramos expressed her appreciation for the efforts made to enhance the learning spaces to improve the student learning experience.

P Hillard thanked S Renton for his comprehensive presentation and noted the Audit and Assurance Committee's discussion on cyber security, highlighting the challenge of managing 'people risk'. While staff training is being addressed, he sought further reassurance on fostering a culture of effectively managing this risk. S Renton assured the Committee that the College is on track, balancing staff training with additional security initiatives (eg Mimecast) and audit actions are being taken forward to improve cyber security.

The Committee expressed their appreciation for the excellent progress being made.

Decision/Noted

To discuss the review of the Digital Strategy 2021-30.

Item PCC2-5.4 Health and Safety Monthly Reports

**Paper No:
PCC2-F**

Lead: J Gribben/D Gordon

Action requested: Discuss

Discussion

J Gribben provided the Committee with a summary of the H&S monthly reports produced for October - December 2024, including a report on a fatal incident in the community near City Campus during October 2024. Key concerns and recommendations for additional investment in resources to enhance security measures through a dedicated security team, are being reviewed by ELT.

The College also participated in the annual benchmarking exercise through the Association of Colleges (AoC). The Committee noted that for 2023-24, out of 43 participating colleges, this College ranked 2nd for the lowest number of near misses.

Decision/Noted

To discuss the Health and Safety monthly reports.

D Gordon left the meeting.

Item PCC2-5.5 Sustainability Action Plan		
Paper No: PCC2-G	Lead: J Gribben/A Miller	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>J Gribben reported that due to the absence of a dedicated in-house specialist, an external specialist was engaged from the Environmental Association of Universities and Colleges (EAUC) to ensure compliance with public bodies' duties relating to climate change. Following a comprehensive climate risk assessment, a detailed action plan has been developed. This plan outlines the pathways, costs and changes required to achieve zero direct emissions and net zero targets. A Miller further informed that a Power BI sustainability dashboard will be created and will be made available on the website.</p> <p>Recognising that the College is internationally focused, S Mcdowall asked how sustainable travel would be balanced with achieving international goals. J Gribben responded that, where possible, the College will prioritise the most environmentally friendly travel options. This approach will not limit international ambitions, and the College will explore ways to offset the environmental impact.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To discuss the Sustainability Action Plan.	

Item PCC2-5.6 Review of People & Culture Strategy 2021-2030		
Paper No: PCC2-H	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Discuss
Discussion	<p>J Gribben provided an update on the 4 aims of the People and Culture Strategy 2021-30. An initial review indicates that the strategy remains relevant however a more in-depth review will be conducted this year to further assess effectiveness and required changes. This will take account of the challenges of recent years including the impact of Covid, two years of organisational change and significant staff turnover in the Human Resources (HR) department which has created a challenging environment.</p> <p>The Personal Development Review (PDR) process has been launched however uptake has been low and will become mandatory for staff in 2025.</p> <p>Despite significant staff absence cases, the College remains committed to reducing this through the Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Survey action plan.</p> <p>The current HR system will expire in 2026 and a new integrated system will be required to integrate all HR systems. P Little added that ELT have now endorsed this significant investment.</p>	
Decision/Noted	To discuss the review of the People and Culture Strategy 2021-30.	

Item PCC2-5.7 HR Metrics Report		
Paper No: PCC2-I	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Discuss

Discussion	<p>J Gribben introduced the HR metrics report for the period April to June 2024 and provided a brief overview highlighting the decrease in overtime spend and headcount and increase in additional hours. He added that while the staff turnover has increased, it remains exceptionally low.</p> <p>The reasons for low staff turnover were discussed. P Little highlighted the College's positive work environment and additional benefits which enhance the overall employment package. He suggested preparing a broader overview paper on staff benefits and the overall workplace experience.</p> <p>Referring to the recent Local Negotiation Committee (LNC), J Gribben informed that the College is committed to supporting all aspects of trade union negotiations both locally and nationally. However, he reiterated that the duration of facility time is still in dispute with EIS-FELA.</p> <p>The Committee noted that staff in roles that were identified as ceased or diminished through organisational change continue to be supported.</p>
Decision/Noted	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To discuss the HR metrics report. Provide a broad overview on staff benefits and workplace experience.

Item PCC2-6.1	IT Progress Update	
Paper No: PCC2-J	Lead: S Renton	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	To note the update report.	

Item PCC2-6.2	EDI Update	
Paper No: PCC2-K	Lead: S Harrison	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	To note the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion update report.	

Item PCC2-6.3	Estates & Facilities Management Report	
Paper No: PCC2-L	Lead: J Gribben	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	To note the report covering the operational period August to December 2024.	

Item PCC2-6.4	Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2023-24	
Paper No: PCC2-M	Lead: A Miller	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	To note the annual Public Bodies Climate Change Duties Report 2023-24.	

Item PCC2-7	Any Other Notified Business	
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Discuss
Decision/Noted	None.	

Item PCC2-8		Review of Meeting
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Discuss
Decision/Noted	<p>R Gillespie thanked members for their attendance and contributions as well as the staff for their participation and the high quality of papers submitted. D Anderson expressed his thanks to the Committee for allowing him to attend, noting that it had been both helpful and insightful.</p> <p>Committee members agreed that discussions under Staff Wellbeing and Engagement Survey, fair work and digital investment should be highlighted in the Governance Report to the Board.</p>	

Item PCC2-9		Disclosability of Papers
Paper No: Verbal	Lead: D McGowan	Action requested: Agree
Decision/Noted	No changes were proposed.	

Item PCC2-10		Date of Next Meeting
Paper No:	Lead: Convener	Action requested: Note
Decision/Noted	Wednesday 14 May 2025	

The meeting closed at 1725 hours.

ANNEX TO THE MINUTE

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
PCC2-5.1 12 02 25	Staff Wellbeing & Engagement Survey: Benchmark Robertson Cooper results.	JFG	ASAP
PCC2-5.1 12 02 25	Staff Wellbeing & Engagement Survey: Provide copy of action plan to EIS-FELA and check with Faculties that they are being communicated and driven.	JFG	ASAP
PCC2-5.1 12 02 25	Staff Wellbeing & Engagement Survey: Engage with EIS-FELA to identify areas of commonality being addressed in the current Robertson Cooper action plans.	JFG/SH	ASAP
PCC2-5.2 12 02 25	Fair Work Update: Provide update report at next Board meeting.	JFG	BoM 26 03 25
PCC2-5.7 12 02 25	HR metrics report: Provide a broad overview on staff benefits and workplace experience.	JFG	14 05 25

ACTION POINTS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETINGS

Item	Description	Owner	Target Date
PCC1-4.3 30 10 24	Committee Annual Report: S Renton will provide a Digital Strategy progress report at the next meeting.	SR	12 02 25 Complete
PCC1-5.4 30 10 24	HR Metrics Report: Consider including additional information on staff absences where possible.	JFG	12 02 25
PCC1-6.2 30 10 24	Estates & Facilities Mgt Report: Sustainability action plan will be submitted.	JFG	12 02 25 Complete
SSEC1-5.3 27 10 21	Staff HR Metrics Report: Arrange information meeting with PMO staff.	SL	Ongoing