

People & Culture Committee

Date of Meeting	29 October 2025
Paper No.	PCC1-B
Agenda Item	4.2
Subject of Paper	People & Culture Committee Annual Report 2024/25
FOISA Status	Disclosable
Primary Contact	Marcus Walker Associate Director of Governance & Risk
Date of production	01 September 2025
Action	For Decision

1. Recommendations

- 1.1. To review the People & Culture Committee annual report for the 2024/25 academic year and approve it for noting at the next scheduled Board of Management.

2. Consultation

- 2.1. Members are asked to discuss the Committee's annual report and, subject to any changes, approve the paper for tabling at the Board of Management's next meeting,

3. Key Insights

- 3.1. Since 2014/15, following an internal audit recommendation, the Board of Management has established the practice of preparing an annual report for each committee. Annual committee reports are tabled early in the academic year.
- 3.2. The annual reports provide a high-level review and record of the Committee's deliberations and decision-making which can be used by members to reflect on the year, as well as to inform other stakeholders. In addition to the regular publication of

Board and committee minutes and papers, annual committee reports demonstrate the College's commitment to openness and transparency.

- 3.3.** All of the annual reports prepared for the committees will be used as a basis for the drafting of the College's annual report, in line with the original internal audit recommendation.

4. Impact and Implications

- 4.1.** Annual committee reports are one aspect of the Board's established practices that aim to provide assurance to the College's students, staff and other stakeholders, including the Board, that our systems of governance, effectiveness and accountability remain robust and delivered to a high standard

Appendix 1: People & Culture Committee Annual Report 2024/25

People & Culture Committee Annual Report 2024-25

Introduction

1. The People & Culture Committee has oversight over human resources, organisational development, employee relations, health and safety and equality, diversity and inclusion.
2. R Gillespie convened the Committee and its membership consisted of M Ahmad, P Hillard, P Little, C McCarthy, S Mcdowall and A Sullivan.
3. During this academic year, three meetings of the Committee were held to consider the work and priorities of the College within its remit. Members received reports and presentations from the Vice Principal of People & Corporate Support, Associate Director of Governance and Risk and other members of staff. A summary of key issues and business of note is enclosed below.

Supporting Strategies

4. The People & Culture Strategy outlines the College's vision to deliver a comprehensive workforce plan, support our people, embrace a new world of work and enhance employment relations. The Vice Principal of People & Corporate Support presented an annual delivery report in February 2025. He highlighted that the Personal Development Review (PDR) programme was rolled out in 2024-25 but advised that, due to low completion, it would become mandatory in 2025-26. The Vice Principal also updated members on the progress of procuring a new integrated HR system. The Committee noted that the strategy would be reviewed in light of Covid-19, organisational change and significant staff turnover in HR.
5. The Digital Strategy articulates the College's ambitions for our digital services to support active collaborative learning and data-driven decisions, and be integrated, accessible anywhere, secure and people-centred. The Director of IT reported to the Committee on the delivery of the strategy in February 2025. He updated the Committee on the delivery of Microsoft Teams telephony and the associated cost savings and continued development of the College's cyber security infrastructure. He also highlighted the positive feedback from users of the 4me Service Desk, which is being considered for adoption in the other areas of the College.
6. The Committee welcomed the progress the College had made to date in delivering on the aims of both strategies.

HR Metrics

7. At each meeting throughout the academic year, the Committee received a report on HR metrics and activity from the Vice Principal of People & Corporate Support. In addition to core data and analysis on staff headcount, vacancies, turnover, overtime, absence, development and integration, the report provides an update on the work of the People & Culture team and employee relations.
8. In 2024-25, members were apprised of the use of the voluntary severance scheme and the conclusion of organisational change. Members also discussed work-related

stress, long-term absence and the measures the College has in place to support staff wellbeing. It was also highlighted that there is a low staff turnover rate for the College as a whole but that specific parts of the College face staff retention issues due to competition from other public sector organisations.

Staff Wellbeing and Engagement

9. In the second semester of 2023-24, the College partnered once again with wellbeing specialists, Robertson Cooper, to undertake a new staff wellbeing and engagement survey. The Board and the Committee received presentations on the findings and action plans, with standing updates provided in 2024-25 and planned for 2025-26.

Fair Work

10. The College is wholly committed to the principles of Fair Work. The Committee reviewed a report in February 2025, followed by the Board in March 2025, that outlined the measures and initiatives that were in place to provide an effective voice, opportunity, security, fulfilment and respect for our staff. The College will continue to work with our staff and trade unions to progress Fair Work practices.

Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

11. Members received an update on the College's equality, diversity and inclusion work and data at each of its meetings in the academic year. The Committee was informed of continued improvements to the Equality Impact Assessment process and documentation, measures being implemented to ensure the College complied with the Worker Protection Act 2024 and the work of the Gender Based Violence Working Group. The Committee also reviewed and approved the Public Sector Equality Duty (PSED) Reports for 2025.

Climate Change and Sustainability

12. The Committee received a report in February 2025 on the College's work with the Environmental Association of Colleges and Universities (EAUC) to advance sustainability. The EAUC report highlighted several strengths, including statutory reporting that aligns with sector best practice, significant emissions reductions since 2015-16 of 36.8% for Scope 1 and 54% for Scope 2 and exemplary procurement processes.
13. Areas identified for further development include updating and strengthening sustainability communications, developing a Climate Action Plan and Sustainable Travel Policy, establishing clear pathways to achieving net zero, and undertaking a statutory assessment of future climatic risk. The report also noted that the College has a significant shortfall in dedicated sustainability staffing compared to the wider sector, which may limit progress in delivering on our sustainability ambitions. A plan is in place to address the recommendations within the report for 2025-26.

Estates, Facilities and IT

14. Throughout the academic year, the Estates, Facilities and IT departments updated the Committee on their work to maintain and develop our City and Riverside campuses, as well as maintain the Charles Oakley Building which remains unoccupied.

Risk Management

15. The Committee regularly reviewed the Strategic Risk Register and Management Action Plans for those risks within its remit throughout the academic year, recommending any changes to the Board for final approval. Risks are rated low, medium, high or critical.

- **SR10 - Staff:** This risk, concerning recruiting and retaining suitable staff, has been rated high since June 2023. With an improved financial position and organisational change concluded, it was expected that this risk would reduce in 2024-25. However, difficulties in recruiting and retaining senior staff persist due to terms and conditions, particularly pay, which remain less competitive than the wider public sector.
- **SR17 – Industrial Action:** This risk of industrial action also had a high rating from June 2023; however, it was reduced to a medium rating at the beginning of the academic year following the conclusion of local and national industrial action and multi-year pay deals agreed nationally.

Members' Attendance

16. The attendance of members of the Committee for this academic session, and the previous four academic years, is as follows:

Year	No. of Meetings	Possible Attendances	Actual Attendances	Percentage Attendance
2020-21	3	24	24	100%
2021-22	3	21	21	100%
2022-23	3	24	20	83%
2023-24	3	18	14	78%
2024-25	3	21	17	81%

Review

17. Committees review their Terms of Reference annually, recommending any changes to the Board for approval. This is an opportunity for members of committees to reflect on their purpose, remit, business, membership and meetings at the end of the academic year with the next session in mind. No changes were recommended in 2024-25.