

People and Resources Committee

Minutes of the People and Resources Committee meeting held in public on:

Date: Friday 19 September 2025

Time: 2pm

Venue: HCPC Offices, Kennington, London

Present: John McEvoy (Chair)
Neville Hounscome
Alice Gair*
Helen Grantham
Pameleta Ricketts
Valerie Webster

Apologies: None

In attendance:

Fatma Ali, Head of HR and OD (until item 11)
Claire Amor, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs
Francesca Bramley, Governance Manager
Alastair Bridges, Executive Director of Resources
Eve Johnson, Employee Forum Representative
Alan Keshtmand, Head of Finance
Noah Linley-Adams, Governance Officer
James McMahon, Head of Estates, Facilities and Sustainability (from item 12)
Patricia Morrissey, Head of Governance
Uta Pollmann, Partner Project Lead
Andrew Smith, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education,
Registration and Regulatory Standards

* Council Apprentice

Public meeting

1 Welcome and Introduction

- 1.1 The Committee Chair welcomed those present to the meeting of the People and Resources Committee (the Committee) and thanked all those present for joining the Committee meeting in person at the HCPC's London offices. The Committee Chair invited Committee members and attendees to introduce themselves.

2 Apologies for absence

- 2.1 There were no apologies.

3 Approval of agenda

- 3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

4 Declaration of members' interest in relation to agenda items

- 4.1 There were no interests declared.

5 Minutes of the People and Resources Committee meeting held in public on 12 June 2025

- 5.1 The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of its meeting held in public on 12 June 2025.

6 Matters arising

- 6.1 The Committee noted the updates on the matters arising from previous meetings held in public.

Performance Reports

7 Resources Directorate Performance Report

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive Director of Resources, providing an update on performance in the areas covered by the HCPC's corporate enabler functions for July 2025.
- 7.2 The report showed continued good performance reported against most key performance indicators (KPIs).
- 7.3 Overall, good progress was being made against the technology roadmap, with 84% of the technology roadmap budget currently projected to be spent by the end of the

financial year. The Executive Leadership Team (ELT) continued to monitor progress closely and deep dives had taken place where appropriate to ensure projects remained on track. However there were some risks to delivery with a significant amount of work be completed in quarters 3 and 4.

- 7.4 The data project, including work to build a refined FTP data model, had been delayed due to the temporary diversion of resource onto essential reporting updates outside the project. The ELT had agreed mitigating actions to secure additional specialist resource that would enable this work to progress.
- 7.5 The Committee would receive an update on benefits realisation and change management at its next meeting in November 2025. The Committee noted that only two of the 103 benefits were reported to be at risk, which could be an indication that the targets that had been agreed at the outset were not sufficiently ambitious or that the reporting was too optimistic.

Action: The benefits expected to be realised would be explored as part of the benefits realisation and change management update due to be presented to the Committee at its meeting in November 2025.

Action: The benefits dashboard in future Resources Directorate Reports would be simplified to reduce the number of graphics and improve readability.

- 7.6 In response to the cyber attack involving SMS toll fraud by external actors, the IT department had successfully launched a new multi factor authentication system on 10 September 2025 with no user adoption challenges reported to date. Discussions were ongoing with Microsoft to seek to recoup some of the excess charges generated by the fraudulent activity.
- 7.7 In response to a question, the Executive Director of Resources clarified that FTP frontloading was not expected to generate any immediate financial gains, although over the longer term as frontloading became more fully embedded into practice there was a potential for financial efficiencies to be realised through a reduction in external legal costs. It would take time to build internal capacity and capability and during the transition an increase in overall FTP costs may be unavoidable.
- 7.8 The Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards clarified that the outcome of the FTP frontloading lessons learned workshops would help to identify the types of cases that were best suited to in-house frontloading. FTP referrals remained on an increasing trajectory and the FTP budget may need to increase to ensure there was sufficient capacity to manage the demand.

8 HR Performance Report

- 8.1 The Committee received the HR performance report from the HR Business Partner covering the first quarter of the 2025-26 financial year, which outlined the performance of the organisation in line with the KPIs from the HR function.
- 8.2 The Committee noted the following points.

- The total average full-time equivalent of 364 remained within the budgeted establishment of 398. There had been a slight increase in fixed term contracts and agency usage for specific departmental and organisational project-related work.
- The average days to hire had been 22 days, which was well within the key performance indicator limit of 42 days and there had been a 12% increase in the talent network following a successful careers fair. There had been challenges recruiting to more specialist role, including a specialist IT test analysis role that had recently been recruited to after two recruitment campaigns. The HCPC had recently invested in LinkedIn Recruiter, which enabled headhunting. Recruitment screening processes would continue to be refined to attract high-quality candidates
- Staff retention had increased from 81% in quarter 4 2024-25 to 83% in quarter 1 2025-26 and voluntary turnover had remained consistent at 11%.
- There had been a slight decrease in the exit interview response rate, although all leavers who had been interviewed had reported that they would recommend the HCPC as a place to work.
- There had been significant learning and development activity during the reporting period, including the successful delivery of workshops for managers on topics such as high performance and sexual safety, the launch of the management development and senior leadership programmes and the rollout of six mandatory training modules for all employees.
- Although the pulse survey response rate was 62%, which was 7% lower than during the previous quarter, the satisfaction rate had remained steady at 86%. The reduced response rate may have been due to increase levels of annual leave over the summer months. The Employee Forum Representative commented that the low response rates within Fitness to Practise and Tribunal Services were likely to be attributable to survey fatigue and a time-sensitive workload. There were a number of bespoke systems in place to gain feedback from colleagues within these teams, including mood boards and daily huddles.
- Work was under way to reduce long term sickness absence through targeted support and intervention.

8.3 The Committee discussed the impact of artificial intelligence (AI) on employees and how any concerns were being addressed. A new organisational policy on the use of AI had recently been introduced and the Employee Forum had been engaged in its development. The Chief Executive and Deputy Chief Executive had also led a 'Let's Talk' session with employees to listen to their views and a Slido poll had generated useful discussions at the last all-employee briefing.

8.4 The ELT were soon due to consider approval of an AI-driven redaction package that had received positive feedback from employees involved in the pilot and a learning module was in development to further build employees' awareness and

understanding. Employees would continue to be fully engaged in identifying and implementing AI solutions.

- 8.5 In response to a question, the Employee Forum Representative reflected that feedback from employees regarding AI use across the HCPC had generally been positive and that it was considered to be a useful tool that should be used carefully and alongside human input, provided steps were taken to maintain data security and confidentiality as appropriate.

9 Finance Report

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Finance and Commercial presenting the financial position as at the end of July 2025, with a commentary on the major variances, risks and opportunities.

- 9.2 The Head of Finance and Commercial highlighted the following points:

- a break even year-to-date position (excluding ringfenced reserves for exceptional legal costs that would be discussed in more detail during the private session of the meeting), which was favourable to the £150k deficit that had been forecast and was related to a delay in the progression of some legal cases.
- a total available contingency of £275k;
- a continuing downward trend in the number of international applications since February 2025, which would be analysed in more detail during the quarter 2 forecast review;
- the full-year major projects and investments budget reducing from £2.3 million to £1.8 million, mainly due to the phase 1 of the international assessment model programme being delivered in house and phase 2 would continue into 2026-27; and
- the provisions arising from the Somerville legal case, which had been agreed with the NAO following the year-end audit of the 2024-25 accounts.

- 9.3 The Committee discussed the recommendation to review cost efficiencies through reducing operational requirements associated with international applications. The ELT planned to review the temporary resource that had been agreed to manage the previous spike in applications, noting the workforce requirements would be given careful consideration since performance had only recently returned to within the KPI in July.

- 9.4 The Committee enquired as to how the HCPC planned to respond to the NHS 10-Year Health Plan for England commitment to reduce international recruitment to less than 10% by 2035. The HCPC continued to engage in cross-organisational planning, however this was not expected to have a significant impact as the majority of professions regulated by the HCPC did not have greater than 10% of internationally trained registrants as a proportion of the Register.

10 Partner Report

- 10.1 The Partner Project Lead joined the meeting for this item. The Committee received the Partner report for the first quarter of the 2025-26 financial year, which provided an overview of a number of performance metrics.
- 10.2 Voluntary partner turnover had remained stable. 47 partners had left the HCPC due at the end of their eight-year term during the quarter, which was higher than in the previous quarter. This was due to a significant number of Fitness to Practise panel members and panel chairs reaching the end of their term and increased recruitment activity had been planned and taken forward to ensure continuity of service provision.
- 10.3 Recruitment levels had continued to be high, with approximately 500 applications received for partner vacancies during the quarter. Training had been provided to 71 partners. The new Partner Officer had positively impacted on the Partner team's capacity.
- 10.4 The Committee enquired as to whether there was an AI-informed plagiarism application that could be used during the recruitment process. The Head of HR and OD clarified that although a plagiarism application was available, there were unresolved issues relating to equality, diversity and inclusion.

People

11 Employee Forum update

- 11.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Employee Forum Representative, who introduced herself to the Committee as a Hearings Officer who had been an Employee Forum Representative since 2022 and had recently taken on the role of Deputy Employee Forum Chair pending an election process.
- 11.2 Key updates included:
 - the reappointment of Maryam Khorassani as Employee Forum Chair;
 - the concerns that had been raised by an employee regarding recent troubling global events, which the Employee Forum had responded to with compassion, empathy and reassurance supported by the EDI Strategic Lead to ensure all employees felt safe and supported;
 - an overview of the topics and issues that had been raised to the Forum by employees, which included office etiquette, increased office attendance and the witness support service that was under development;
 - suggestions that had been discussed with the HR department including mental health, wellbeing and volunteering days and greater transparency in relation to the HCPC's pay bands, which would be considered when the updated pay bands were confirmed;
 - the Employee Forum's feedback on the HCPC's freedom of expression practice note, noting that the term 'gender critical' used in the policy had been in accordance with the Equality Act and that the note sought to support the transgender community;

- the introduction of an anonymous feedback route for employees, which was due to launch in October 2025.

11.3 The Committee sought assurance that the Employee Forum was sufficiently resourced to fulfil its important role effectively. The Employee Forum Representative reflected that the current Employee Forum model was simple but worked well, as employees knew they could contact the Forum through a range of channels. The Employee Forum Representative's line manager had been supportive and had allowed protected time for her to undertake her Employee Forum duties, acknowledging her work had to be prioritised on occasion due to the nature of FTP hearings.

11.4 The Committee expressed its continued support of the Employee Forum's work and thanked the Employee Forum Representative for attending the meeting.

The meeting was briefly adjourned.

Finance and investment

12 Financial regulations

12.1 The Head of Finance presented the financial regulations, which had last been approved by the Council in December 2024, and highlighted the following proposed changes to the Committee:

- the Executive Leadership Team to approve proposals exceeding the aggregate budgeted spend, with Council approval sought for any singular, unplanned events resulting in a financial impact (capital or operational expenditure) that exceeded 1% of the total aggregate expenditure budget for the year to remove the ambiguity that had unintentionally been introduced in the version that had been approved in December 2024; and
- aligning the financial commitments and approval thresholds to the revised procurement policy, in line with the Procurement Act (2023) which had come into effect from February 2025.

12.2 The revised financial regulations had been considered by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) at its meeting on 18 September 2025. The ARAC had been broadly supportive of the proposals but had requested further information on the rationale and context to the proposed changes to be shared by email prior to formally recommending the financial regulations to the Council for approval.

12.3 The Committee recommended the revised financial regulations to the Council for approval.

13 Reserves policy

- 13.1 The Committee received a report setting out a review of the reserves policy, which had last been updated in February 2024 and was reviewed annually by the Committee.
- 13.2 No changes were proposed to the policy, which was to maintain at least positive realisable net assets with an aspiration to maintain reserves at three months of operating expenditure.
- 13.3 The most recently reported reserves position showed positive realisable net assets of just over £7 million, which equated to approximately 1.5 months of operating expenditure. Steady progress had been made towards achieving the three-month aspirational target over time.
- 13.4 The HCPC's reserves were calculated by deducting intangibles from net assets. The value of property was not currently deducted in the calculation and if this were done, the reserves would be significantly lower than currently reported. Most, if not all, other health care regulators were understood to deduct the value of property when calculating their reserves.
- 13.5 The reserves policy had been reviewed by the ARAC at its meeting on 18 September 2025. The ARAC had been broadly supportive of the policy but had provided some feedback for incorporation into the next review, including clarifying the definitions of reserves types listed in paragraph 4.3 of the policy and potentially seeking to make the reserves targets more ambitious.
- 13.6 The ARAC had also requested that the Executive aim to complete the next review of the policy earlier than the scheduled annual review. The timeline would be considered by the Executive and the Chair of the ARAC, taking into account the next fees review, wider financial pressures, opportunities and challenges.
- 13.7 The Committee endorsed the approach that had been outlined by the Executive Director of Resources.

14 Sustainability strategy update

- 14.1 The Head of Estates, Facilities Management and Sustainability presented a progress update on the delivery of the HCPC's sustainability strategy approved by the Council in 2023.
- 14.2 The following points were noted:
- the development of online resources for registrants to increase awareness and support environmentally sustainable practice;
 - the completion of the HCPC estates consolidation in 2023 with a 50% reduction in the estate compared to the baseline;
 - the planned actions to support achievement the target to achieve net zero Scope 1 greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions by 2027-28, including implementation of the staged phase-out of gas, and site-wide plan to

upgrade relevant portions of heating ventilation and air conditioning (HVAC) equipment to facilitate this;

- the achievement of the Scope 2 GHG emissions net zero target in 2023-24 and in the move to renewable energy supplies in 2024-25 (pending external verification of the 2024-25 data);
- the target to achieve net zero Scope 3 GHG emissions (relating to purchased goods and services by 2039-40; and
- plans to introduce more timely and consistent reporting through a proof of concept for a new Microsoft sustainability reporting module.

- 14.3 The Committee commended the Head of Estates, Facilities and Sustainability for the significant progress that had been made over a relatively short period. The Committee reflected that an overview of the risks to the HCPC delivering its sustainability strategy would be useful for the Council to consider.

Action: An overview of the key internal and external risks to delivering the sustainability strategy would be included in the next update to the Council.

- 14.4 The Committee discussed the impact of home working on the HCPC's energy use and GHG emissions, and in particular how on-site energy use had reduced while energy consumption at employees' homes had increased, with a corresponding reduction in employee travel-related emissions. Further work was planned,, potentially through surveying employees, to enable the HCPC to build a more complete picture of energy use. It was acknowledged that the HCPC did not have full control over Scope 3 emissions but could seek to influence this.
- 14.5 The Committee enquired as to how the HCPC ensured energy use was minimised when the premises were closed. The Head of Estates, Facilities Management and Sustainability advised that all rooms include signage prompting employees to switch off lights and other appliances in addition to the online system that enabled remote control of systems such as air conditioning and heating.

Governance

15 Committee forward plan

- 15.1 The Committee noted the forward plan for 2025. An initial draft of the 2026 forward plan was due to be submitted to the next Committee meeting in November.
- 15.2 The Employee Forum Representative was invited to share their reflections on the public session of the meeting. The in-person setting had facilitated good discussions and the layout of the room had worked well. Although it had been a formal meeting with a set agenda, attendees had felt able to contribute and engage with the discussions as appropriate.

16 Resolution

- 16.1 The Committee resolved that the remainder of the meeting would be held in private, because the matters being discussed related to matters which, in the opinion of the Chair, were confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Council's functions.

The meeting was briefly adjourned.

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