

Council, 7 December 2022

Unconfirmed minutes of the People and Resources Committee meeting of  
10 November 2022

Committee Chair's summary to Council

The People and Resources Committee met on 10 November 2022.

We received good updates on HR performance, Employee Forum, Mentoring, Staff Survey and Investment Policy.

The Finance Report highlighted the improved 2022-23 forecast and the 2023-24 outlook. I have followed up on this with the Chair of Council and Chair of Audit and Risk Assurance Committee. The uncertainty around International Registration numbers remains a major factor. Next financial year will need careful budgeting.

In addition, there was a good new Report from the Resources & Business Performance Directorate. Although still a work in progress, the dashboard was very welcome & clear.

Also, we received a first time Business Change portfolio report. Also, a work in progress, but a good start and to be continued. Regular updates requested as well as finalisation of work on benefits realisation. We noted that BDO will audit the methodology.

The Partners report still did not address the question of performance appraisal fully and the Committee will receive an update on this in the new year.

*Stephen Cohen, Chair of the People and Resources Committee*

## People and Resources Committee

### Public minutes of the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the People and Resources Committee held on:-

**Date:** Thursday 10 November 2022

**Time:** 11:30am

**Venue:** MS Teams

**Present:** Stephen Cohen (Chair)  
Neville Hounsome  
Valerie Webster  
Meera Burgess (public session only)  
Rebekah Eglinton

### In attendance:

Ewan Shears	Secretary to the Committee
Claire Amor	Executive Director of Governance, Assurance and Planning
John Barwick	Chief Executive and Registrar (public session only)
Alastair Bridges	Executive Director of Resources and Business Performance
Andrew Smith	Executive Director of Regulation
Naomi Nicholson	Executive Director of Professional Practice and Insight
Fatma Ali	Head of HR (public session only)
Alan Keshtmand	Head of Finance
Paul Cooper	Head of Business Change (public session only)
Tehmina Ansari	Learning and Development Manager (item 12)
Rebecca Bryan	HR Business Partner (item 13)
Ben Newman	Chair of Employee Forum and QA Manager (item 14)
Kellie Green	Head of Professionalism and Upstream Regulation (item 15)
James McMahon	Head of Estates & Facilities Management (item 18)
Geoff Kirk	Head of IT and Digital Transformation (item 19 tabled paper)

## Public

### **Item 1. Chair's welcome and introduction**

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed those present to the 11<sup>th</sup> meeting of the People and Resources Committee. The Chair noted that this would be his final Committee meeting as his tenure as a Council member would conclude at the end of the calendar year. The Chair thanked the Secretary to the Committee and the Executive Director of Governance and Planning for their support over the last two years as Chair and wished the Committee success going forward.
- 1.2 The Executive Director of Governance and Planning thanked the Chair on behalf of the Executive for being the first Chair of the People and Resources Committee and for his help in establishing it. The Head of Finance also extended his thanks to the Chair for the guidance and support given both inside and outside of the Committee meetings.

### **Item 2. Apologies for absence**

- 2.1 There were no apologies received.

### **Item 3. Approval of agenda**

- 3.1 The Chair had previously agreed that a private paper could be tabled for consideration, and this would be heard at Item 16 in private session.
- 3.2 The Committee approved the agenda.

### **Item 4. Declarations of members' interests**

- 4.1 No interests were declared.

### **Item 5. Minutes of the People and Resources Committee meeting 6 September 2022 (report ref: PRC 35/22)**

- 5.1 The Committee approved the minutes of its meeting held on 6 September 2022.

### **Item 6. Matters arising (report ref: PRC 36/22)**

- 6.1 The Committee noted the report.

## **Item 7. Resources and Business Performance Directorate performance report (report ref: PRC 37/22)**

- 7.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive Director of Resources and Business Performance and noted that this was a first prototype of the Resources and Business Directorate's dashboard report that would be presented to the Committee as a future standing item. The Committee noted that it would be reviewing the HR performance report and the Business Change performance report separately at this Committee meeting, but these would be incorporated into future iterations of the report as both a dashboard highlight and also as more detailed appendices. The Committee were invited to provide feedback on the report.
- 7.2 The Committee welcomed the report and clear overview that it provided, noting it would be refined as a tool for both ELT and the Committee. The Committee noted the following points for the Executive to consider:-
- the report provided a snapshot of the present, but it would be useful for the executive summary to include what was happening next, particularly for off-target items;
  - to incorporate a glossary section or explanation of acronyms and specialist terminology;
  - to be clear when referencing days in the report, whether that was total days or working days; and
  - to define what constituted an incident in relation to technology trends.
- 7.3 The Committee noted the delays with the Business Central (Finance system) re-implementation. The Executive assured the Committee that they were satisfied with the steps being taken and expected this work to be completed by August 2023. The Executive noted that it was important to build in the time to ensure that knowledge transfer, training and embedding the system to the organisation was successful. The Committee agreed that it was important that this time was built in and also fully costed.
- 7.4 The Executive clarified that the reported 36,800 avoided requests to the contact centre were considered 'avoided' as they were successful portal transactions that otherwise would have required a phone call to the department to resolve.
- 7.5 The Executive agreed that the desk utilisation appeared low at 33%, but assured the Committee that HR Business Partners were working with Heads of Departments to encourage employees to be on site more often. The Executive noted that the current metrics were based on desk bookings and did not include total staff attendance from other activities such as on-site training and meetings. The Executive confirmed that

33SS was not included in the baseline for the desk utilisation and an Estates update would be provided in the private session of the meeting.

- 7.6 The Chair of Committee suggested that desk utilisation should be a topic for discussion with Council and that the ELT should provide an opinion and reasoning on what levels of onsite attendance they would want to see from the organisation whilst maintaining flexibility for employees. The Chief Executive agreed to include this topic in his report to Council for discussion. The Executive agreed to share the recent staff hybrid-working survey results with the Committee outside of the meeting prior to that discussion.
- 7.7 The Committee noted that hearings space utilisation was low as they were predominantly being held remotely. The Executive was looking to offer the space to other regulators for hearings and also at how best to free up some of the space for the rest of the organisation when it was not being used for hearings. The Executive noted that due to the long run-in time and prior scheduling of current hearings, it was too soon to know the utilisation levels in the longer term.

#### **Item 8. Business Change Portfolio Performance Report – Q2 2022-23 (report ref: PRC 38/22)**

- 8.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Business Change. The key areas highlighted included the following points:-
- new investment request papers had been issued to the Heads of function which required benefits identification, corporate strategy and regulatory reform objectives to be included;
  - weekly clinics had been established by Business Change to support the Heads of function in preparing investment submissions and those conversations would be an ongoing exercise; and
  - a provisional workshop date had been set for 6 December with BDO to review the progress of the change and benefits framework and to establish a plan for embedding across the organisation.
- 8.2 The Executive noted that the Benefits and Milestone dashboards were examples of what was possible to show in the report. From the data sets created there were many options to consider for future iterations and welcomed feedback from the Committee.
- 8.3 The Committee welcomed the abridged version of the report noting it was a positive step forward and was clear and easy to read and commended the discipline of multi departments considerations for business investments.
- 8.4 The Committee noted it would be useful for the report to highlight what was being done differently as a direct result of analysing the data. The

Executive agreed to incorporate highlight changes in future iterations of the report.

- 8.5 The Executive noted that EDI capture across the organisation had been overall good, however that there were some gaps identified where some of the data had not pulled through in the reports. This data had now been moved across and the correction to the error implemented. The Committee commented that it was reassuring that the error had been detected.
- 8.6 The Committee noted that the calculation of benefits realisation was still being developed and that the work being undertaken with BDO would help to provide assurance for both intangible and financial benefits. The Committee emphasised that it was of utmost importance to be confident of the calculations and that BDO should look at all projects for integrity. The Executive noted the changes to the investment papers would result in significant improvements in the coming year and that the new culture of benefits realisation would continue to mature from this positive starting point. The Committee noted that internal audit time reviewing benefits realisation was already scheduled in this year's internal audit plan and the Executive would update the Committee with progress.

#### **Item 9. Finance Report – September 2022 (report ref: PRC 39/22)**

- 9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Finance. The report presented the financial position as at the end of September 2022, with a commentary on the major variances, risks and opportunities.
- 9.2 The Committee noted that the operating surplus for the year to date was £2.4m compared to a forecasted surplus of £1.9m which was a favourable variance of £0.5m. This was made up of additional income (International Applications) and non-pay related costs such as building maintenance, that were lower than anticipated.
- 9.3 The Committee noted that the Q1 2022-23 forecast deficit was £873,021 and that the adjusted forecast deficit was now £204,748. The key movements of the Q1 forecast against the budget included the following:-
- a reduction in panel hearing costs, due to lower case completion rates (this was not a saving as it was anticipated that this would catch up into the next year);
  - a correction of PwC over-forecasted costs;
  - additional phasing of nine vacant roles for months of November and December 2022;
  - a reduction in dilapidations provision for 33 Stannary Street;

- an increase in case and presentation costs because of contract renegotiations; and
  - an increase in bank charges as a direct result of additional international applications.
- 9.4 The Chair of Committee challenged the Executive to explore the feasibility of charging applicants for increased banks fees. He questioned if charges were a separate issue to registration fees. The Executive would consult the Chair of Committee outside of the meeting.
- 9.5 The Executive assured the Committee that the decrease in maintenance costs was an underspend and that the building was being maintained appropriately.
- 9.6 The Committee advised the Executive to explore bringing forward costs in relation to the presentation of the underlying deficit and to seek the advice of the Chair of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee.
- 9.7 The Executive updated the Committee that future iterations of the finance report would be similar in style to the new Resources and Business Performance Directorate performance report featured earlier in the meeting, incorporating a more focussed dashboard style. The Committee thanked the Head of Finance and looked forward to seeing the new style report.

#### **Item 10. Investment Policy Review (report ref: PRC 40/22)**

- 10.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of Finance, who highlighted the following outcomes from the review:-
- the policy had remained unchanged operating with a low-risk approach reflected in the spread of the cash deposits across the established institutions; and
  - credit risk ratings had been updated for HCPC's main account Lloyds (A+), along with Barclays (A) and Nationwide (A+), as of 25 October 2022.
- 10.2 The Committee discussed whether longer-term investments would be appropriate such as money market funds of government bonds and agreed that there was volatility and variability with those that would make balance sheet adjustments difficult. The Executive advised that government bonds were considered by the government as not appropriate for public sector bodies to invest in.
- 10.3 The Executive noted that cash held across three established banks was related to income received at any one time from registrants was in line with the HCPC's risk appetite. The Committee discussed diversifying the

cash more evenly across the three banks but agreed that operationally this would be demanding.

- 10.4 The Committee noted that the review of the policy had been requested by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee who had recently reviewed the paper and recommended that the Investment Policy remain unchanged, noting that the Executive would be taking additional steps to ensure ongoing compliance. The Committee also recommended that the Investment Policy remain unchanged noting the additional steps for the Executive set out in the paper.

### **Item 11. HR Performance Report Q2 2022-23 (report ref: PRC 41/22)**

- 11.1 The Committee received a paper from the Head of HR. The paper provided a number of performance metrics, with commentary, for Q2 2022-23. The Committee noted the following points:-
- there had been no significant changes from Q1 2022-23;
  - turnover levels continued to decrease and remained significantly below the national average. Hybrid working was seen as an important factor in this decrease;
  - there was a continued decrease in sickness levels; and
  - there was a reduction in the number of recruitment campaigns, and internal recruitment continued.
- 11.2 The Executive noted that during Q2 2022-23 most of the recruitment was in the midlevel pay bands, and that it was currently difficult to attract talent to the higher senior roles. Agencies that focussed on more diverse candidates were being consulted to address this.
- 11.3 The Committee noted that the recruitment gender balance verses the application gender balance differed. The Executive assured the Committee that they had not identified any issues with gender bias and that all applications were gender anonymous until the point of interview where the panel make up was diverse and the interview format was consistent, based on skills and competencies.
- 11.4 The Executive noted that the numbers for staff in the finance report differed to those in the HR report and assured the Committee that this was a simple timing difference of when the data was extracted by the finance team, to allow for the timely production of monthly management reports. The figure published by HR was the actual corrected number and the Executive committed to align these numbers for future Committee meetings. The Committee welcomed that the agency staff numbers were reducing but noted that focus on this was still needed.

- 11.5 The Executive noted that there wasn't a vacancy rate target but there were plans to introduce a case manager rolling recruitment campaign to counter some issues caused by turnover in the FtP department.
- 11.6 In response to a question, the Executive noted that the wellbeing and reward gateway was being accessed by employees and that webinars on the cost of living and links to managing finances were popular at this time. The Committee encouraged the Executive to work with managers to increase the take up of ecard recognition and noted this was recently highlighted to all managers at the recent round of 'compassionate leadership' training.
- 11.7 The Committee thanked the Head of HR for the helpful and comprehensive report but requested that when dealing with low numbers, it would be helpful to move away from reporting statistics in percentages where possible.

#### **Item 12. Beyond Barriers Mentoring Programme (report ref: PRC 42/22)**

- 12.1 The Committee received a paper from the Learning and Development Manager, who noted that this was HCPC's first inclusive mentoring programme and that throughout the programme, experiences were shared through both internal and external communication channels. The paper covered in detail the performance, delivery and impact of Beyond Barriers delivered from January 2022-July 2022.
- 12.2 The Committee commended the Learning and Development Manager for the positive report and successful programme. The Committee restated their support for the programme and commented that it should be continued on a regular basis.
- 12.3 In response to a question, the Executive noted that guidance was issued on the commitment required by participants prior to them joining the programme. This ensured all managers could provide for the necessary time required by attendees. Feedback from managers had been overwhelmingly positive confirming that the mentees had made progress in many areas. The Committee advised to allow time for mentees to have ongoing contact with their mentors and to incorporate longer-term feedback from the programme.
- 12.4 The Committee commented that there could be some cross-over learning around training for mentors and mentees, and evaluation and monitoring methods that might be beneficial to the Council Apprentice scheme.

#### **Item 13. HR Pulse survey results (report ref: PRC 43/22)**

- 13.1 The Committee received a paper from the HR Business Partner. The HR team had conducted a pulse survey for the first quarter of 2022-23. The Committee noted the aim of the survey was to:-

- monitor trends in employees' perceptions of their experience of working at the HCPC;
- understand perceptions of key areas impacting on engagement such as internal communications and equality and diversity; and
- identify any areas that could be looked into further, either to build on existing strengths or to address any areas for development.

13.2 The HR Business Partner, highlighted the following outcomes from the review:-

- of those who responded, 96% indicated they had understood how their work supported the goals of their team and department;
- management support was recognised and valued within the organisation, and this could be considered a benefit realisation of the management development initiatives;
- there was a need to focus on people feeling valued; and
- there was no standout feedback around protected characteristics, but further feedback would be sought from the EDI representatives across the organisation.

13.3 The HR Business Partner commented that the survey did not provide an overall view of HCPC culture and noted that there were also some microcultures within the organisation. Feedback from the pulse survey and the scheduling of local focus groups would inform a fuller picture moving forwards.

13.4 The Committee welcomed the paper and noted the following points:-

- communication methods would be tailored to different teams for maximum reach;
- the net promoter score highlighted that further understanding of why people wouldn't recommend HCPC as an employer was required;
- visibility of senior managers appeared to correlate to the size of the department;
- although 70% of respondents felt the HCPC was a diverse employer, 52% of the those who felt that the HCPC was not a diverse and inclusive employer, reported themselves as having a protected characteristic. This was being explored further by the HR team;

13.5 The Committee advised the Executive to:-

- be mindful of using percentages when dealing with small numbers, such as percentages of respondents from smaller departments;
- consider bringing the split department tables into one table making comparisons between the departments and identifying themes easier;
- research other surveys such as from 'MIT Sloane', to aid development of the questions and structure for the HCPC survey,
- to include benchmarking of the scores from the questions with similar organisations for future iterations; and
- to include questions on specifically on performance and accountability.

- 13.6 The Committee noted that a focus on desk utilisation would not provide for cultural changes if it was the same people at the same time being present. The Executive should decide on what outcomes they wanted and set out how to achieve that.
- 13.7 The Executive noted that the pulse survey in future years might be used to track progress throughout the year and the impact of actions taken from a bigger annual full survey.
- 13.8 The Committee welcomed the actions listed around dissemination of results and noted that the importance of good dissemination could not be understated, particularly for driving up (future) participation, which was noted as below target. The Committee suggested incorporating 'you said, we did's' to e-comms or screens around the office, if not already used; and advised to think more about further ways of demonstrating to staff that their responses were being heard and engaging them in change activities.

#### **Item 14. Employee forum update (verbal)**

- 14.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Employee Forum Chair.
- 14.2 The Employee forum Chair informed the Committee that there were seven staff representatives who received feedback from colleagues. Feedback was discussed with ELT at the forum's quarterly meetings and disseminated back to colleagues through the representatives. The Chair of Employee Forum, the Head of HR and the Executive Director of Resources and Business Performance also regularly met outside of these meetings.
- 14.3 The Committee noted that the topics of discussion at the meetings included, wellbeing, major organisational initiatives and change, HR

updates and EDI. The Employee Forum Chair provided examples of some of the feedback the forum had received which included the following:-

- feedback on the cost-of-living crisis, noting separating feedback driven by external factors from organisational factors could be challenging;
- positive feedback in relation to receiving a consolidated pay increase this year and also in relation to the salary sacrifice pension scheme;
- positive feedback in relation to other wellbeing initiatives, the availability of the 'Myhealth Mycare Myrewards' platform and for the established network of staff who act as wellbeing advisors throughout the organisation;
- feedback from staff in relation to the challenges of high workloads and the impact this had on their wellbeing;
- feedback in relation to the challenges of maintaining a work-life-balance;
- both positive and negative feedback relating to hybrid working arrangements;
- positive feedback relating to the major learning and development opportunities such as the Beyond Barriers mentoring programme; and
- the Aspiring leaders programme had raised some time commitment concerns, however this was oversubscribed so it did not appear to have put people off.

14.2 The Employee Forum Chair, thanked the Chief Executive and ELT for their positive and genuine engagement with the Employee Forum and representatives over the past years and noted that he was coming to the end of his term, and a successor would be in place for the next Committee meeting.

14.3 The Executive Director of Professional Practice and Insight put on record her thanks to the Employee Forum Chair for the positive influence he has had as Chair.

14.4 The Committee thanked the Employee Forum Chair for their comprehensive briefing and asked him to feedback to colleagues that this Committee, Council and ELT did review items such as the pulse survey and were listening.

- 14.5 The Committee confirmed they wanted to hear from the Employee Chair's successor going forward and once in place the Committee should decide on the frequency.

**Item 15. Partners Q2 2022-23 report (report ref: PRC 44/22)**

- 15.1 The Committee received a paper from the Executive.
- 15.2 The Head of Professionalism and Upstream Regulation presented the report and highlighted the following two points:-
- Partners were managed across the organisation in their individual functions and therefore the quality assurance around their performance sat within those functions; and
  - the team was working with colleagues in the regulatory functions to develop meaningful KPIs that would allow a better measure of Partner performance. The outcomes from that should be ready for the Q3 2022-23 report, accompanied by performance data.
- 15.3 The Committee noted the report and thanked the Head of Professionalism and Upstream Regulation. The Committee looked forward to receiving the performance data its next full Committee meeting.

**Item 16. Resolution**

- 16.1 The Committee was invited to adopt one or more of the following:
- 'The Committee hereby resolves that the remainder of the meeting shall be held in private, because the matters being discussed relate to one or more of the following;
- (a) information relating to a registrant, former registrant or applicant for registration;
  - (b) information relating to an employee or officer holder, former employee or applicant for any post or office;
  - (c) the terms of, or expenditure under, a tender or contract for the purchase or supply of goods or services or the acquisition or disposal of property;
  - (d) negotiations or consultation concerning labour relations between the Council and its employees;
  - (e) any issue relating to legal proceedings which are being contemplated or instituted by or against the Committee or the Council;
  - (f) action being taken to prevent or detect crime or to prosecute offenders;
  - (g) the source of information given to the Committee in confidence; or

- (h) any other matter which, in the opinion of the Chair, is confidential or the public disclosure of which would prejudice the effective discharge of the Committee's or Council's functions.'

Item	Reason for Exclusion
17	C, H
18	C

Chair.....  
Date.....

Unconfirmed