People and Resources Committee

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

Date: Thursday 11 June 2026

Time: 2pm

Venue: Videoconference via Teams

Present: John McEvoy (Chair)
Neville Hounsome
Pameleta Ricketts
David Stirling

Apologies: Dabbi Taylor*

In attendance:

James Afolabi, Financial Planning and Analysis Manager
Fatma Ali, Head of HR and OD
Aihab Al-Koubaisi, Financial Controller (from item 11)
Claire Amor, Executive Director of Corporate Affairs
Francesca Bramley, Governance Manager
Laura Coffey, Executive Director of Fitness to Practise and Tribunal Services
Paul Cooper, Head of Business Change
Georgia Cross, Governance Officer
Eve Johnson, Employee Forum Chair
Alan Keshtmand, Head of Finance and Commercial
Geoff Kirk, Head of IT and Digital
Iain McGregor, Independent Adviser for Technology-Led Innovation
Patricia Morrissey, Head of Governance
Bernie O'Relly, Chief Executive
Aditya Palai, HR Business Partner
Uta Pollmann, Partner Project Lead (for items 10 and 11)
Andrew Smith, Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards and Deputy Chief Executive

* 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.

2 Apologies for absence

2.1 Apologies had been received from Dabbi Taylor, Council Apprentice. The Executive Director of Resources was not in attendance due to annual leave.

3 Approval of agenda

3.1 The Committee approved the agenda.

3.2 The Chair confirmed that item 13 (freedom to speak up annual report) would not be presented as part of the main agenda, and would instead be considered under any other business during the private session of the meeting.

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 March 2026

5.1 The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of its meeting held in public on 12 March 2026.

6 Matters arising

6.1 The Committee noted the updates on matters arising from previous public meetings. All actions proposed for closure would be closed, including action 31 relating to the EDI report, which would be considered later in the meeting.

Performance Reports

7 Resources Directorate Performance Report

7.1 In the absence of the Executive Director of Resources, the Head of IT and Digital presented a paper providing an update on performance in the corporate enabler functions for March 2026.

7.2 The following key points were highlighted:

- Overall performance remained strong across most key performance indicators (KPIs).
- Employee satisfaction had increased to 82%, indicating continued positive workforce engagement.
- Procurement cost efficiencies were reported at £0k for the month of March, reflecting the early stage of activity although a new procurement team was expected to drive progress.
- Technology performance remained strong, although performance and availability of the online Register has been affected by increased demand on the customer relationship management (CRM) and finance systems during the physiotherapist renewal period. Mitigations have been implemented to minimise further impact.
- The Defender Secure Score had decreased to 70%, reflecting revised Microsoft security requirements, with work underway to assess and address these changes.
- Office attendance remained within benchmark at 26%. Demand for on-site tribunal space continued to be low, and options to optimise the use of this space were under consideration.

7.3 Lower office attendance on Mondays and Fridays was noted, and it was acknowledged that the relationship between attendance patterns and productivity was not straightforward and varied depending on the nature of the role, but that a balance between home and office working was beneficial.

7.4 The Committee noted the reported increase in the turnover benchmark from 23% to 35% and sought assurance on the accuracy of this figure. The benchmark was sourced from the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development, and the Committee was assured that the data was reliable and appropriately applied.

7.5 The Committee noted the reporting of zero red risks within the investment portfolio. The Head of Business Change clarified that the current report was more reflective of specific project-level risks, but in future updates these would be elevated to the portfolio level risks to be more indicative of progress against strategy.

7.6 The Committee was advised that a partner had been identified for the technical design and future roadmap of the CRM system as part of the ongoing architectural review. This work was being undertaken in parallel with preparation for the wider procurement phase, which would cover system development and implementation, and would enable progress to accelerate once the architectural review was complete.

7.7 Clarification was sought on the status of the document security project, which was reported as on hold. Assurance was given that there was no immediate gap in provision, but a longer-term approach to document security required further development. Work in this area had been deprioritised to support more urgent requirements, particularly in relation to document sharing for fitness to practise (FTP) and legal services, but an interim solution had been implemented.

7.8 Regarding the investment portfolio financials and resourcing, it was noted that the reported comparison between forecast and delivered days represented indicative, trend-based estimates rather than precise measures, and monthly forecasts would inform sequencing and prioritisation across future quarters. The figures were intended to provide a high-level view of delivery trends, with further data collected expected to improve accuracy.

8 HR Performance Report

8.1 The HR Business Partner provided an update on HR performance for quarter four of the 2025-26 financial year.

8.2 The Committee noted that overall performance remained positive, and the following key points were highlighted:

- Recruitment performance remained strong, with high application volumes, time to hire continuing to outperform targets and a diverse recruitment pipeline.

- Internal development and progression was positive, with a proportion of roles filled by internal candidates.

- Despite an expected seasonal increase earlier in the quarter, sickness absence had reduced across both short and long-term measures with overall rates at 3%, below the national benchmark.

- Turnover remained below the UK average benchmark of 34%, with retention remaining strong. Voluntary turnover had increased slightly, particularly within more junior roles, but it was noted that the recent pay band increase was expected to support retention in this area.

- Exit interview completion rates had improved at 77%, with further work planned to increase participation, and the average length of service for leavers was reported at approximately 2.4 years.

- Improvements to recruitment processes, including the use of assessment centres, had been implemented and were generating positive outcomes.

- Compliance training completion remained high at 91% and strong progress had been made in learning and development activity.

- Engagement with employee benefits saw stronger uptake of financial benefits than wellbeing initiatives.

- Employee relations activity reflected a greater emphasis on disciplinary matters than capability issues.

8.3 The Committee noted their preference to using the term ‘improved’ rather than ‘strong’ in relation to internal career development and progression, to provide continued challenge as to how the organisation could further enhance opportunities in this area. Council-approved development programmes were expected to support further positive progress and, while retaining staff was important, a degree of turnover could also support organisational renewal and the introduction of new perspectives.

8.4 The relevance of using a CIPD benchmark for turnover was discussed, noting that this included sectors with higher levels of turnover which would not be sustainable for the organisation. It was agreed that further consideration would be given to developing a benchmark more aligned to the organisation’s roles.

Action: The HR Business Partner would review the use of the CIPD benchmark to measure turnover and consider a metric better aligned to the organisation.

8.5 The Committee was advised that employees are offered a choice of exit interview format, including a meeting with HR or a member of the Executive Leadership Team (ELT) either virtually or in person, or completion of a written form. It was noted that many individuals preferred to provide feedback through discussion, with interviews typically arranged one to two weeks prior to departure and the option to submit feedback after leaving the organisation.

8.6 The Committee sought clarification on the reported gap between pulse survey results, in which a proportion of staff did not feel recognised, and the number of ‘Making a Difference’ awards issued in Q4. Work was under way to review recognition approaches, including engagement with heads of department and line managers, and within the new people strategy.

8.7 The Committee emphasised the importance of ensuring that recognition schemes appropriately distinguish exceptional performance and suggested consideration of alternative or additional approaches, including awards that recognise outstanding or aspirational contributions, and the use of monetary awards, such as vouchers.

Action: The HR Business Partner would review the ‘making a difference’ award and consider enhancements to better recognise exceptional performance as an ongoing piece of work as part of the new people strategy.

9 Finance Report

9.1 The Committee received a paper from the Financial Planning and Analysis Manager, presenting the financial position as at the end of April 2026. It was noted that the report was more condensed than usual, as the Finance team were finalising the year-end financial position, but that standard reporting formats would resume in subsequent reports.

9.2 The following key points were highlighted:

- The report was based on a combination of actuals and estimates, and a comprehensive review of actuals would be undertaken at the end of month close.

- The financial position showed a positive start to the year with a surplus of £145k, which was £146k ahead of the breakeven budget and primarily driven by lower expenditure.

- An underspend in payroll continued to be observed, contributing to lower recruitment-related costs.

- Partner costs were lower than budget due to a reduced volume of hearings in April. It was noted that this was primarily due to timing rather than sustained savings and costs were expected to increase in subsequent months.

- Income was slightly below budget, largely due to lower than anticipated registration volumes during the period.

- 22 cases had been completed in line with the FTP frontloading plan, delivering approximately £111k in savings based on revised external legal provider costs, with current performance projecting full-year savings of approximately £1.2m.

- A £400k frontloading contingency had been included in the budget, which would be kept under review and released if no longer required.

9.3 The Committee noted that the payroll underspend reflected vacancies across a number of departments, including within the FTP directorate where recruitment remained a priority. Activity in this area continued to be monitored through regular reporting to ELT, with budget holders working with HR to track progress and maintain realistic forecasts.

9.4 The Committee thanked the Financial Planning and Analysis Manager for the report.

10 Partner Report

10.1 The Partner Project Lead introduced the report outlining performance during quarter 4, noting that no significant issues were identified.

10.2 The following key points were highlighted:

- Recruitment performance remained strong with all relevant key performance indicators (KPIs) met, and voluntary turnover maintained within the 8% target.

- Preparatory work for several campaigns had resulted in reduced recruitment activity, with 34 campaigns and approximately 90 vacancies progressing into the current quarter.

- Partner costs remained broadly stable compared to the previous quarter, with a minor overall increase. While costs had reduced across most areas, there had been an increase within FTP activity.

10.3 The Committee thanked the Partner Project Lead for the report.

People

11 Partners EDI annual report

11.1 The Committee received the equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) annual report from the Partner Project Lead.

11.2 The report provided an overview of EDI data for 2025-26, focusing on applicant and recruitment data, and a comparison between the current partner cohort with the registrant pool. A more detailed analysis by individual profession had been included following a request from the Committee.

11.3 The following key points were highlighted:

- Two inaccuracies were identified within the report: in point 2, the figures of partners and partner roles had been presented the wrong way around, and point 5.3 displayed a higher number of males interviewed, which was incorrect.

- Following internal discussions, comparisons focused on nine professions with more than 30 partners to avoid misleading conclusions from smaller sample sizes.

- Differences in gender representation were highlighted within certain professions, notably paramedics, where the partner pool did not reflect the increasing proportion of younger female registrants. Targeted engagement was underway to encourage greater representation.

- The age profile of partners remained weighted towards older individuals, reflecting experience requirements. However, improvements had been seen in attracting younger applicants through recent recruitment activity.

- A higher proportion of partners identified as white compared with the registrant population, reflecting demographic differences over time with many partners from older age brackets. As the register has become increasingly ethnically diverse, partner recruitment would continue to be monitored to assess progress in attracting a more diverse applicant pool.

- Recruitment data indicated underrepresentation of some ethnic minority groups at the appointment stage, and unconscious bias training had been delivered to interview panel members to support fair and inclusive recruitment practices.

- The proportion of partners declaring a disability was higher than that of registrants, which was regarded positively and aligned with the organisation's Disability Confident status.

11.4 The Committee noted that the nature of registrant roles had evolved over time, with many now operating in more advanced practice settings, and that training was key in supporting this. This included planned refresher training for over 200 registration assessors who were also working with the Education team on the new standards of education and training, and ongoing programmes were also in place for FTP roles.

11.5 Contractual arrangements also ensured partners' skills remains current, including fixed-term appointments for certain roles and requirements for some assessors to demonstrate continued professional development outside their partner role to be reappointed.

11.6 The Committee thanked the Partner Project Lead for the report and noted the benefits of access to improved registrant data.

12 Employee Forum update

12.1 The Committee received a verbal update from the Employee Forum Chair.

12.2 The following points were highlights:

- The Forum was currently in a transitional period, with four representatives in post and recruitment ongoing to fill remaining vacancies.

- The terms of reference had recently been reviewed, with consideration being given to providing representatives with different areas of interest to lead on.

- Work was underway to improve communications, including reviewing tone of voice and developing standard templates for regular engagement with staff and new starters, with the aim of increasing awareness of the Forum as a channel for feedback.

- Early discussions had commenced on enhancing visibility through a broader range of channels, including digital media, as well as increasing the forum's presence at all-staff meetings and organisational events.

12.3 The Committee discussed how agenda items for the Employee Forum were determined, and as part of the ongoing review of the terms of reference, consideration was being given to introducing defined areas of focus for representatives. It was noted that the forum operates within a clearly defined remit, including matters relating to policy changes, organisational change, internal communications, learning and development, and EDI, with other established channels available for issues outside of this scope.

12.4 The Committee thanked the Employee Forum Chair for the update and recognised the value of sharing insights from the Committee with the wider workforce.

13 Annual freedom to speak up report 2025-26

13.1 As agreed, consideration of the annual freedom to speak up report 2025–26 was deferred to the private session of the meeting under any other business.

14 Capital expenditure policy

14.1 The Financial Controller introduced the updated capital expenditure (capex) policy, setting out the approach to identifying, recognising and managing capital expenditure.

14.2 The following key areas were noted:

- The policy had been updated to improve alignment with accounting standards and to provide clearer guidance and practical examples on distinguishing capital and operational expenditure.
- The policy emphasised the importance of accurate classification of costs, ensuring that all capital expenditure is appropriately coded and recorded within the fixed asset register to support financial control and reporting.
- The updated policy had been reviewed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC), as well as internal and external auditors, with no concerns raised.

14.3 An error was noted within the contents page, where a reference to training of the internal team was included but not reflected within the main body of the policy.

Action: The Financial Controller would amend the policy to correct the contents page.

14.4 The Committee noted that references to timesheets within the policy did not reflect current practice. It was clarified that an Excel-based time allocation template is used to record staff time attributed to capital projects, enabling appropriate allocation of staff costs.

14.5 The Committee noted the policy had also been submitted to the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee and questioned whether it was necessary for the policy to be reviewed by both Committees prior to submission to the Council for approval. The Executive Director of Corporate Affairs confirmed that this approach aligned with the standing orders of both Committees, reflecting the financial and strategic aspects of the policy, and that this approach had previously been endorsed by the Committee as part of a broader review of committee standing orders. It was further noted that, should the Committee hold a strong view on this matter, the approach could be revisited and discussed further with the Council. The Committee concluded that there may be alternative approaches to structuring Committee oversight, which may merit further exploration in future.

15 Investment portfolio update

15.1 The Head of Business Change provided an update on the investment plan for 2026–28, highlighting the evolving approach to prioritisation and delivery across the portfolio.

15.2 The following key points were highlighted:

- The investment plan is now based on a 24-month planning cycle, refreshed annually and with mapping activity across quarters to respond to changing priorities, improve visibility of carry-over activity between cycles and support sequencing of work.

- Activity across the portfolio had been consolidated into a structured set of programme areas, enabling prioritisation and phasing of work to ensure that delivery remains manageable and aligned to organisational capacity.

- Investment priorities are structured across three tiers, with tier 1 focused on core regulatory and transformation activity including FTP, CRM development and data and automation. Tier 2 focused on customer contact and regulatory performance; and tier 3 aimed at core investment on secure platforms and operational services.

- A number of programmes had delivered key milestones over the previous 12–18 months, including progress across data and intelligence, customer contact, legal services, partner systems and cyber security, contributing to improved operational capability and resilience.

15.3 The Committee discussed the linkages between programmes, projects and the wider technology roadmap, noting the importance of clearly demonstrating how these interdependencies are managed to ensure effective delivery and alignment across the portfolio.

15.4 The development of key indicators was noted, including the increasing focus on resourcing trends, forecasting and alignment with financial data. It was highlighted that further work was underway to improve visibility of resource pressures and ensure that data is used effectively to identify areas of constraint and inform prioritisation.

15.5 The Committee discussed the proposed governance structure and the prioritisation of projects across multiple interdependent workstreams. The Committee sought clarity regarding the accountability for setting priorities and the practical operation of the governance arrangements. It was clarified that delivery had been simplified through grouping related activities and through overlapping membership across governance groups, supporting alignment and continuity. While the structure appeared complex in presentation, it was intended to provide greater discipline and focus in sequencing delivery. The Executive Director of Education, Registration and Regulatory Standards clarified that strategic priorities were set by the Executive Leadership Team, in conjunction with Committees and Council. The Technical Design Group ensured alignment with IT infrastructure and strategy and the Change and Benefits Forum considered wider organisational impacts. Programme-level oversight was being strengthened through a programme advisory function to manage interdependencies and mitigate unintended consequences of project-level decisions.

Action: The Head of Business Change would reflect on how best to illustrate the interaction between governance groups, including roles and responsibilities, within future investment portfolio reports.

15.6 The Committee emphasised the importance of maintaining a balanced view of performance, including openly identifying challenges as well as successes, particularly when working with government who are in a position to provide support. It was noted that discussions around support had taken place, particularly around capacity concerns within the IT and Digital Transformation team which is fundamental to delivery of important projects.

15.7 The Committee discussed the presentation of provisional resource trends and queried whether these were currently expressed in terms of people days per month and if a financial measure may provide a more meaningful basis for assessing impact.

Action: The Head of Business Change would review the metrics used for reporting provisional resource trends and to confirm if the current measurement represents people days per month.

15.8 In discussing the reporting of benefits, it was noted that financial benefits were currently more heavily weighted towards FTP activity, which reflected the maturity of those programmes. It was clarified that the benefits graphs were not intended as a comparison as they represented different initiatives. The FTP number were high as that was the representation of the large benefits associated with Front loading. Ongoing work in the workplan continues to develop and mature approaches to measuring and reporting benefits across the wider portfolio.

15.9 The Committee thanked the Head of Business Change for the report and welcomed the focus on tier 1 investment priorities, noting the importance of building on core foundations.

The meeting was briefly adjourned.

16 Technology roadmap delivery update

16.1 The Committee received the biannual update from the Head of IT and Digital on progress against the technology roadmap over the previous 12 months.

16.2 The following key points were highlighted:

- The roadmap continues to be structured across three core areas: user experience, data, intelligence and automation, and flexible and secure platforms, with delivery now progressing through the medium-term phase.

- The website proof of concept had been deliberately paused, with activity shifted to align with wider customer experience developments.

- Prioritisation of programmes placed increased emphasis on accelerating delivery of the single CRM programme due to its strategic importance and interdependencies with other initiatives. It was highlighted that progress had previously been impacted by capacity constraints following the 2025 cyber incident, but that this programme was now a key area of focus for 2026–27.

- Complexities with the data platform programme, particularly in relation to FTP data, had resulted in delays to delivery. Revised plans were in place to progress registration data, impacting the timing of internal self-service reporting milestones.

- Positive progress had been made in relation to infrastructure, with the network transformation programme delivering the migration of systems to the cloud.

- The operating model within the customer contact programme had been agreed and focus was now on design and delivery phases.

16.3 The Committee noted the plan for 2026–27 priorities and recognised the positive momentum across the roadmap.

17 Digital and artificial intelligence (AI) strategy

17.1 The Head of IT and Digital presented the strategy, setting out the refreshed vision, objectives and overall approach to digital transformation.

17.2 The following key points were highlighted:

- The strategy builds on significant progress over the past four to five years, during which core registrant processes have been digitised, improving accessibility and user experience.

- There has been a strengthening of data governance, including the introduction of defined data ownership, minimum datasets and increased completeness across key data sets.

- The development of the data platform has improved EDI data capture, providing a rich source of information for the data hub to support analysis and decision-making.

- In-house automation capability has been established, initially focusing on FTP workflows.

- The migration away from legacy technologies is now largely complete, transitioning the organisation to modern, secure digital platforms.

- AI adoption has progressed in a number of areas including fraud detection, document redaction and delivering improvements in registrant response times.

- High-quality data was noted as critical to effective use of artificial intelligence (AI), alongside demonstrating value and return on investment before scaling activity.

17.3 The Committee noted the importance of ensuring that AI developments are underpinned by clear governance, ethical assurance and robust data foundations, with staff training to support capability building and effective adoption.

17.4 The importance of clear prioritisation was recognised, given capacity constraints and the need to demonstrate value and return on investment for AI initiatives. It was noted that department developments and the wider regulatory scope of the organisation would need to be considered, alongside alignment with the delivery of the corporate strategy.

17.5 The Committee thanked the Head of IT and Digital for the presentation and additional comments would be welcomed via email.

Governance

18 Committee forward plan

18.1 The Committee noted the forward plan for 2026. It was noted that a face-to-face session would be held later in the year.

19 Resolution to move the meeting to private session

19.1 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 Committee's functions.

19.2 The meeting was briefly adjourned.