

MINUTES of the meeting of the People Committee 10 February 2026

9.30am on Teams

Present:	Committee Chair – Rachael Botley (RB) Ian Lomax (IL) Tina Ellis (TE) Katie Kerridge (KK) Vicki Paterson (VP) Paul Padda (Principal and CEO)	
In Attendance:	Wendy Stanger – Director of Governance (WS) and Ann Wall Director of People and Wellbeing (AW).	
P/26/02/1	Membership and Apologies	Action
Apologies – none as all in attendance.		
The meeting had been changed to Teams, and it was discussed whether, in future, it could be held at Great Yarmouth to assist the staff governor with attending. It was agreed to rotate meetings.		
P/26/02/2	Declarations of Interest	
There were no declarations of interest related to business on the agenda.		
P/26/02/3	To approve the minutes of the last meeting 30 09 2025, and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the agenda	
The minutes of 30 09 2025 were approved as a true record of the meeting.		
P/26/02/4	To review the post meeting action log	
The action log was reviewed.		
Pay Strategy – Governors noted that this action was on hold pending discussion at the Board Away Day in March. The Director of People reminded the Committee that they had previously reviewed the draft Pay Strategy, which had since been further considered by the Senior Management Group. The Principal advised that, at the Board Away Day, the Senior Management Group planned to present a range of scenarios and options, including benchmarking data for schools and local providers, as well as analysis of the impact of job evaluation.		
HR System – The Director of Governance advised that an update was included within the People Update. The Audit Committee had reviewed the recent Systems Audit, which covered all College systems, and the agreed actions were now currently being implemented by the College.		
P/26/02/5	People Update including KPIs	
The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the report and provided an update. Absence levels remain high, although lower than the previous year, with the majority being short-term absences, which have created challenges in arranging cover. The College continues to offer strong proactive and reactive support to staff, including access to a virtual GP service and support from the Wellbeing Officer. Staff engagement was reported as positive, supported by engagement ambassadors, staff listening groups, and constructive relationships with the trade unions. The Pay Award, staff celebrations and recent College-wide events had been well received. Further insight will be gained through the current staff survey. The College's training provision continues to progress well and has been designed to meet the curriculum teams' needs, including access to National College resources.		

	Governors challenged whether the College was recruiting high-quality staff and queried the level of current vacancies. The Director of People and Wellbeing explained that most recruitment takes place during the summer, and time-to-hire data is affected by long-standing vacancies. The College has a dedicated Recruitment Lead, and this role needs to demonstrate impact. The Principal commented that, on occasion, the College had appointed candidates who were not of the highest calibre and emphasised the importance of avoiding panic recruitment. The Director of People and Wellbeing added that, at times, the decision is between re-advertising a role or appointing the best available candidate at that time. Governors stressed that accepting lower-quality appointments would not support the College's aspiration to become outstanding; poor appointments carry significant risks and are ultimately unacceptable for students. The Principal highlighted the importance of considering how the College presents itself, its narrative, story, and reputation, to prospective applicants. The Staff Governor commented that the College should continue to promote the strong staff development offer and its positive achievements, which may also support recruitment efforts as well as developing staff from within. Governors reviewed feedback from exit interviews and queried whether the reasons provided had been ranked. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that only key themes were listed, with no ranking applied, and that not all leavers chose to participate in an exit interview. The only unexpected theme was "job security," given that no roles are currently at risk. Governors suggested that this may relate more broadly to the nature of working in the education sector or to the specific roles being vacated. Governors also queried the impact of student behaviour on staff retention and recruitment. The Director of People and Wellbeing explained that senior leaders are working to challenge the perception that "all students are an issue." While some students do present with more challenging behaviours, which are impacting staff and other students, the majority do not. The College is exploring the Norfolk Steps behaviour model and considering a wider rollout. Norfolk Steps training had previously been provided to two Assistant SEND Managers, and has since been delivered to Foundation lecturers, with plans to roll it out more widely across the College. The Principal noted that this topic could be explored further at the forthcoming away day, particularly in relation to curriculum design, timetabling, and whether the College should adopt a more controlled learning environment. Governors agreed the following action: Governors to be given access to the National College resources, provided this can be done at no cost to the College.	AW
P/26/02/6	Job Evaluation	
	The Director of People and Wellbeing and updated on the timeline for the new Job Evaluation Scheme. The scheme was chosen as it is based on the AoC framework and is therefore more applicable to the roles within our setting, and will evaluate all roles within the College that are non-teaching. All job descriptions need to be agreed to ensure that they are correct before they are added to the new system. The People Team were currently under-resourced due to staff leaving, and this could impact the project's timescales. Governors queried which scheme would be used for the evaluation of current roles. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that, for new roles or for existing roles where a manager has agreed a revised job description that more accurately reflects the duties and has requested evaluation, the current job evaluation scheme would continue to be used, as the new scheme is not yet operational. As the new scheme is currently paused, staff cannot request that their roles be evaluated. The new job evaluation process requires all agreed job descriptions to be uploaded before it can be utilised for assessments. The Principal emphasised the importance of ensuring that all job descriptions are reviewed and agreed between managers and staff so that they can be loaded into the new system. The	

forthcoming Pay Review will need to take account of the outcomes of the job evaluation process, and this may impact the overall amount available for a cost of living increase. Governors discussed the potential risks and costs associated with the new job evaluation scheme. The Director of People and Wellbeing highlighted the risk that some roles may not be evaluated at a higher level, resulting in frozen remuneration, and this would require careful management. Governors agreed the following action: • A report on the Job Evaluation Scheme implementation and timeline will remain a standing agenda item, as part of the People Update.		AW
P/26/02/7	Gender Pay Gap 2025	
The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the report and outlined the College's results along with the underlying reasons. The report showed that the gender pay gap had widened, including when compared with others in the sector, which is largely attributable to the higher proportion of female employees occupying roles within the lower pay quartiles and overall, two-thirds of the College's workforce are female. The College offers a strong reward package, including flexible working arrangements, generous annual leave, a competitive pension scheme, and a comprehensive wrap-around support offer. Governors commented that gender pay gap reporting is often misunderstood and does not indicate an equal pay issue. The Director of People and Wellbeing confirmed that the College pays all staff equally in line with established pay scales; however, the concentration of women in lower-graded roles results in the pay gap reflected in the statutory reporting. The College continues to have a high proportion of women in leadership positions, with the Strategic Management Group being 50% female and the Senior Leadership Group 67% female. The only way the reported gap would narrow would be by attracting more men into the lower-paid roles.		
P/26/02/8	Confidential	
	Review and Lessons learnt from Settlement	

P/26/02/9	Review of Risk Register	
1. Has the risk register been reviewed – Yes, February 2026. 2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated – Yes. 3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated – Yes and the summary report set out the changes with mitigation and causes updated. 4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken - High levels of staff absence remained a red risk. This had been reviewed as part of the People Update and was a standing item within it. 5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns – There were no additional significant concerns identified. Governors agreed the following action: Risk Register to be fully reviewed to ensure that the risks, causes, and results accurately reflect the people and well-being remit, including the risk of litigation, quality of staff recruitment and job evaluation.		AW
P/26/02/10	Agenda Planning	
None in addition to that already minuted.		
P/26/02/11	Review of Meeting	
1. Confidential Items – details of the settlement case. 2. Were Learners prominent in discussions – quality of recruitment and effect on learners discussed. 3. Risk Management: any issues discussed which may require an additional Assessment: None 4. Health & Safety: any issues discussed which may require an additional Assessment – None 5. Equality & Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact – Action taken regarding settlement and neurodivergent staff support and training. 6. Sustainability: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment. None 7. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media: Staff adverts and how to present roles in the media. 8. How did the meeting go? Worked well on Teams and kept to time		