

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



People, Culture and Wellbeing Committee

Thursday 27 November 2025 at 5.00pm **Room K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus** (MS Teams option available)

Minute of the People, Culture and Wellbeing Committee meeting held on Thursday 27 November 2025 at 5.00pm, in Room K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus.

PRESENT:

Donald Mackenzie	Brian Mooney
Brian Lawrie	Simon Hewitt
Jenna Lawrence	Stephen Oakley

IN ATTENDANCE: Steven Taylor (Vice Principal Support Services and Operations)
Julie Grace (Vice Principal Curriculum and Attainment)
Billy Grace (Head of Estates)
Megan MacQueen (Executive Coordinator)
Abi Mawhirt (Head of People and Organisation Development)
Laurie O'Donnell (Regional Chair)

1. WELCOME

S Oakley welcomed everyone to the People, Culture and Wellbeing Committee meeting, in the absence of D MacKenzie who was joining later.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Robert Young, Neil Lowden, Carri Cussick and Richard Gordon.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST

There were no declarations of connection & interest.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting held on 4 September 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Actions have been closed off and moving the metrics on a 15th month rolling period was still being considered.

Arrangements around the Emily Test 'charter mark' were discussed and it was noted that a group of staff were looking at this alongside the extensive work undertaken on eradicating gender based violence. Further updates would be provided.

6. FINANCIAL SECURITY & SAVINGS UPDATE

S Hewitt provided an update on financial savings. The second consultation paper has been issued, and an email was sent to the Board outlining the timeline and when the final paper will be released. The savings plan remains on track, although the impact will not be visible until next year due to voluntary severance payments and the timing of the academic year.

S Hewitt reported that he met Ben Macpherson (Minister for HE and FE) yesterday, and it appears likely that some additional funding may be allocated to the college sector, although the amount and form remain unclear. Any funding received will apply to the next academic year.

Further proposals are being considered, and final options may change. Voluntary Severance applications had increased, with applications closing on 5 December. A final update will be released next week, and the Board will receive a copy. Progress continues, and more details will be provided at the Finance and Infrastructure Committee.

S Taylor noted that conversations with unions are ongoing, and meetings are held weekly to ensure clear communication. There have been 188 consultation responses in round one and a further 45 in round two. The impact on staff morale has been noted, with this having been the lowest among all savings plans implemented. Lobbying efforts have been positive, with strong collaboration and effective messaging to the press and Scottish Government.

The People Team remains exceptionally busy responding to staff queries and support needs. S Oakley commented that communications have improved and are now more focused and guided, with strong support from the Senior Leadership Team in union discussions. B Lawrie commended the quality of the paper given the challenging circumstances. S Taylor acknowledged that many difficult decisions remain over the coming weeks.

B Mooney requested information on headcount and the impact on remaining staff, and Simon confirmed that the January budget will be a key milestone. L O'Donnell noted the positive media coverage of Simon's recent interviews.

7. PEOPLE, CULTURE & WELLBEING REPORT

D Mackenzie joined the meeting during this item. S Taylor presented his report, noting that health and safety signage has been updated across all campuses and that there has been an increase in near-miss reports. A fire evacuation course is being developed for all staff, and a flexible system for fire wardens during evacuations had been reinforced to accommodate hybrid working.

J Lawrence reported that an online survey was issued to all graduation attendees, and feedback has been overwhelmingly positive. The CDN Awards will take place next week. S Taylor confirmed that wellbeing support continues to be supported and feedback on options and approaches discussed during the weekly union catch up meetings.

The overall mood across the College, while low previously, has improved slightly following the recent walk event and enhanced communications. S Hewitt added that staff who feel secure are continuing to engage, and the Senior Leadership Team is supporting each other through this challenging period. B Lawrie asked how many voluntary severance applications had been declined, and S Hewitt confirmed that none had been declined. It was noted that in addition to savings in areas directly impacted, voluntary severance was also considered as a way of generating redeployment opportunities. D Mackenzie welcomed the report.

8. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

The Committee noted the paper outlining recent updates. Support staff have been offered a three-year deal, and the GMB ballot remains open until 8 December.

The offer had been approved already by Unison, with Unite also expected to vote in favour. If approved, the increases would be applied in the January 2026 pay run.

Job evaluation is progressing slowly due to the lack of project funding required to compile necessary data and complete evaluation steps.

The report was noted.

9. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor reported that no changes were proposed.

10. HR METRICS

S Taylor highlighted the HR Metrics report. Absence rates have increased slightly due to a combination of long-term absences and seasonal short-term absences. There is no evidence that this is linked to the savings plan (given the retrospective timescale for absence reporting).

Staff were reminded of hand hygiene procedures, and it was noted that February 17 will support a significant focus on training and staff development on a day when no classes are scheduled.

11. MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES

The minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee and Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee were noted. Sandy Fowler's achievement as Junior Vice President of Health and Safety was recognised.

B Grace noted that guidance on Martin's Law is still awaited from the Scottish Government, and a sector health and safety meeting will take place in December to (hopefully) consider the draft guidance.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 19 February 2026 at 5.00pm in K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Update on work to eradicate gender-based violence and progress towards the Emily Test 'charter mark' to be provided to a future meeting.	S Taylor	21 May 2026