BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

People, Culture and Wellbeing Committee

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

PRESENT:	Donald Mackenzie	Brian Mooney
	Brian Lawrie	Simon Hewitt
	Robert Young	Richard Gordon
	Carri Cussick	Ronnie Donegan
	Simon Hewitt	
IN ATTENDANCE:	Steven Taylor (Vice Principal Support Services and Operations)	
	Megan MacQueen (Executive Coordinator)	

1. WELCOME

D MacKenzie welcomed everyone to the People, Culture and Wellbeing Committee meeting and welcomed R Donegan to her first meeting as board member.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from Neil Lowden, Jenna Lawrence, Julie Grace and Billy Grace.

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 11th November 2025 were approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Items scheduled for the May meeting remain in progress and will be carried forward.

6. FINANCIAL SECURITY & SAVINGS UPDATE

S Hewitt provided an update confirming that the projected deficit had reduced to £800k, with £1.7m of savings identified, largely due to VS departures at Christmas. He noted that staff had performed admirably during a challenging period and that the All-Staff Development Day was well received. The 2026/27 forecast shows a £0.5m deficit, pending budget adjustments.

S Taylor confirmed a total reduction of 35 staff had left due to the savings plan, 31 through VS, and summarised the consultation approaches adopted and ongoing union engagement.

D Mackenzie asked how staff morale and engagement was fairing and R Gordon noted that there was some continuing anxiety among staff, though morale has improved following the All-Staff Day.

Questions regarding the timing of savings were addressed by S Hewitt, who confirmed earlier action prevented further budget deterioration. Reviews and changes to service delivery and priorities have been undertaken in areas where staff have left, with some of these ongoing. S Taylor confirmed that a 'close out' paper would be provided for staff following the final savings changes still to be implemented and that this would also be shared with the Board.

S Hewitt advised that the staff headcount has been reduced by 17.5% over five years.

B Mooney asked if £1.2m in savings relates to staffing and how this impacted on the level of service provided. S Hewitt confirmed it was and that ongoing tracking of unmet student demand.

R Young asked what impacts had been seen on overall services and outcomes for students and S Hewitt stated that early retention had remained strong. S Taylor confirmed that overall student satisfaction, retention and recruitment had all remained similar or improved from the previous year. This was welcomed.

It was noted that more financial details would be shared with the Finance and Infrastructure Committee and that an update would also be provided to the March Board. Meeting.

7. PEOPLE, CULTURE & WELLBEING REPORT

S Taylor summarised the report, confirming that the All-Staff Development Day involved 115 activities and was attended by 460 staff. A formal evaluation will be shared in May.

S Taylor noted positive lobbying efforts regarding sector funding and confirmed that the College will be the first employer case study for Fair Work with SFC. He also confirmed ongoing HR legislative updates in respect of the Employment Rights Act were being provided through Thorntons.

8. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

S Taylor reported that the new CES Director will visit next week. A national pay claim has been submitted by EIS/FELA, with this above inflation, although negotiations have not yet begun. No significant progress had been made on the national Job Evaluation project.

9. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

No changes were proposed.

10. HR METRICS

S Taylor highlighted the report. Three grievances in the previous quarter were not linked to savings. Some resignations came from unsuccessful VS applicants.

Completion levels for mandatory training were discussed, and it was confirmed that these would increase over the year, with the final completion date in July 2026. An update will be available at the next meeting.

The increase in stress-related absence was noted and S Taylor advised that some of these were linked to the savings process.

The Committee noted the report

11. MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES

The Committee noted the papers provided for information.

12. AOCB

D Mackenzie highlighted the recent press coverage in respect of health and safety concerns within welding facilities at another college and asked if arrangements were in place to avoid any similar issues at D&A. S Hewitt and S Taylor both advised that clear risk assessment, H&S auditing and follow-up arrangements were in place, with no concerns raised.

Following the meeting the H&S team confirmed that, within welding and other areas, we have appropriate Local Exhaust Ventilation systems in place which require statutory maintenance inspections carried out by external specialist contractors annually. These arrangements were monitored.

R Young noted that he had recently supported the College at a STEP-Up event and commended Steph Tom for her input and engagement in organizing and supporting this.
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13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 21 May at 5.00pm in K-TO-624, Kingsway Campus

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Evaluation Report on Staff Development Day to be presented.	S Taylor	21 May 2026