

UNIVERSITY HOSPITALS OF LEICESTER NHS TRUST**MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE (PCC) MEETING HELD ON
THURSDAY 31st JULY 2025 AT 11:00 AM – VIRTUAL MEETING VIA MS TEAMS****Voting Members Present:**

Professor I Browne, OBE – Non-Executive Director (Chair)
 Dr R Abeyratne – Director of Health Equality and Inclusion
 Dr D Barnes – Deputy Medical Director (Responsible Officer)
 Dr A Haynes MBE – Non-Executive Director
 Mr A Inchley, Non-Executive Director
 Ms E Meldrum – Deputy Chief Nurse
 Ms J Houghton – Non-Executive Director

In Attendance:

Ms B Cassidy – Director of Corporate and Legal Affairs
 Ms Z Marsh – Deputy Chief People Officer
 Ms K Ceesay – Deputy Chief People Officer
 Mr R Manton – Head of Risk Assurance
 Ms N Patel – Corporate and Committee Services Officer
 Mr R Manton- Head of Risk and Assurance
 Ms M Smith- Director of Communication and Engagement
 Mr J Melbourne- Chief Operating Officer
 Ms L Kasatkin- Head of Health and Well-being and Staff Experience
 Ms J McCarthy- Head of Learning and Development
 Mr D DelGreco - People Lead Experience and Engagement

ACTION**RECOMMENDED ITEMS****77/25 Freedom To Speak Up Q1 Report**

Ms R Moss, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian, presented the Q1 Freedom to Speak Up report and noted a reduction in overall case numbers from Q4 and no red-rated concerns. However, she reported an increase in perceived detriment cases, all of which were raised through managerial channels rather than the Guardian service and investigated via the executive route. She explained that demographic data was excluded due to low case volume but would be included in the Q2 cumulative report. She highlighted a shift in the highest reporting staff group to nursing and midwifery, potentially linked to organisational changes and increased concerns around worker safety and wellbeing. She mentioned the satellite sites had been added to reporting and that efforts to increase presence in these areas were ongoing. She noted that the Guardian service remained strong despite upcoming governance changes under the NHS 10-year plan and would continue to comply with National Guardian's Office requirements. Ms B Cassidy, Director of Corporate and Legal Affairs supported the report's findings, noting the significance of the shift in reporting voices and anticipating further developments, particularly with potential industrial action.

Ms E Meldrum, Deputy Chief Nurse, asked whether the increase in nursing and midwifery concerns related to staffing or income loss from reduced bank shifts. Ms R Moss, Freedom to Speak Up Guardian replied that wellbeing issues were a key factor and offered to provide a deeper analysis in the next report. Ms J Houghton, Non-Executive Director, raised concerns about the rise in wellbeing-related cases and asked what actions were being taken to support staff. Ms Z Marsh, Deputy Chief People Officer responded that she Ms B Cassidy and the Freedom to Speak Up Guardians had been meeting regularly to review trends and adjust support offers accordingly.

The PCC Non-Executive Director Chair thanked the team for their efforts and was assured with the report presented.

Recommended – that the Freedom to Speak Up Report Q1 to be approved and Trust Board endorsement of this update be sought.

RESOLVED ITEMS

78/25 WELCOME AND APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from, Ms C Teeney, Chief People Officer

79/25 CONFIRMATION OF QUORACY

It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate.

80/25 DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS

There were no declarations of interests made at this meeting.

81/25 MINUTES

Resolved – that the Minutes of the meeting held on 26th June 2025 (papers A1 refer) be confirmed as a correct record.

82/25 MATTERS ARISING

Paper B updated members on the position of actions from previous PCC meetings. Where updates were not available, these would be sought from the relevant leads outside the meeting and included in the next iteration of the Log.

Resolved – that the report be noted, and any verbal updates be included in the next iteration of the PCC Matters Arising Log.

**Named
Leads**

83/25 CONSIDERATION OF BAF RISKS IN THE REMIT OF THE PEOPLE AND CULTURE COMMITTEE

83/25/1 Board Assurance Framework (BAF)

Ms K Ceesay, Deputy Chief People Officer, presented the Board Assurance Framework to the Committee. She noted that the ratings still reflected the three strategic risks currently listed on the risk register culture, capability, and capacity. There was nothing that needed to be escalated to PCC at that time. She added that looking ahead to the cycle of business and the BAF, they intended to bring forward an item to the next PCC committee focused on the digital agenda. This update would align with the capacity risk, particularly in relation to automation and system optimisation. She concluded by saying there was nothing further to flag, and that all gaps were captured in the register.

Ms J Houghton, Non-Executive Director, raised concerns about cultural gaps, and noted that while cardiac surgery was a major area of concern, other cultural issues flagged by Trust should also be acknowledged. She also suggested clarifying the timeline for digital automation, emphasising that progress was already underway ahead of the March 2026 completion date. Ms K Ceesay, Deputy Chief People Officer, confirmed both points would be addressed, with updates

included in the next Chief People Officer report. Mr R Manton, Head of Risk and Assurance, reassured the group that cultural risks were documented and would be cross-referenced appropriately.

Mr J Melbourne, Chief Operating Officer, emphasised the emotional impact of digital transformation on staff. Ms K Ceesay, Deputy Chief People Officer confirmed that a comms strategy was being developed to support the rollout of automation. Mr D Barnes, Deputy Medical Director, highlighted concerns from medical automation workshops. Ms L Kasatkin, Head of Health and Well-being and Staff Experience shared that the “Supporting Colleagues Through Change” initiative had launched to help staff navigate organisational transitions. Ms R Abeyratne, Director of Health, Equality and Inclusion, raised a broader question about board-level AI literacy, which prompted Mr A Inchley, Non-Associate Director to outline three key areas for ongoing board awareness: operational opportunities, staff impact, and ethical considerations. Ms J Houghton, Non-Executive Director, suggested scheduling regular updates from Group Chief Digital Information Officer to ensure the board remains informed. The PCC Non-Executive Director Chair concluded by emphasising the need for clear indicators on staff experience and effective mitigations, reinforcing the importance of transparent communication and opportunity framing throughout the transformation.

The PCC Non-Executive Director Chair was assured on the contents of the report.

Resolved – that the (A) contents of this report be received and noted.

And (B) to schedule a future update from Digital Transformation Team.

84/25 FOR EXPLORATION / NAVIGATION

84/25/1 Report from the Chief People Officer

Ms K Ceesay, Deputy Chief People Officer, reported that the recent industrial action from Friday to Monday saw a 75% walkout, comparable to previous rounds. She said further analysis was underway to assess absence levels and identify any hotspots. Ms K Ceesay, Deputy Chief People Officer, also explained that in response to shifting immigration guidance, the team had expedited 19 sponsorship certificates to safeguard colleagues, which was well received. She noted that the MARS scheme was in its second week. She confirmed the successful transition to monthly pay, with estates and facilities to follow in September, and said a detailed paper on automation would be presented next time.

Ms Z Marsh, Deputy Chief People Officer, followed with an update on the civility and respect programme, noted that tailored in-person sessions would begin in September, supported by online learning. She said Dr Chris Turner would lead awareness sessions on the clinical and non-clinical impact of incivility. She confirmed that a fuller assurance update on culture and capability was scheduled for September.

Ms J Houghton, Non-Executive Director, asked whether the ongoing resident doctors’ strike and potential nurse action should be considered strategic risks. Ms Z Marsh, Deputy Chief People Officer replied that the situation was being closely monitored and updates would be provided. She confirmed that themes from the WDES data were embedded in the EDI strategy delivery plan.

Mr A Haynes, Non-Executive Director, raised the importance of aligning workforce efforts with the 10-year plan’s focus on economic inactivity, suggesting targeted interventions for deprived populations. The PCC Non-Executive Director Chair agreed and emphasised the need for improved use of population health data. Ms R Abeyratne, Director of Health, Equality and Inclusion added that neighbourhood work could help bridge gaps in data maturity and suggested linking those efforts to committee discussions.

The PCC Non-Executive Director Chair was assured on the contents of the report and concluded with several follow-up points, including clarifying the scope of the regional agency rate cap, ensuring AI rollouts avoid unintended bias and requesting a more detailed report from the Amica

service to better understand demand and demographics.

Resolved – that the (A) contents of this report be received and noted.

CPO

And (B) to provide a more detailed report from Amica at a future meeting and to include who is using the service, where they are located, and the reasons behind the demand.

CPO

84/25/2 UHL Winter Support Plan 2025-26

Ms L Kasatkin, Head of Health and Well-being and Staff Experience introduced the first iteration of the winter support plan and explained that it was designed to supplement business-as-usual activity in anticipation of seasonal pressures and ongoing organisational change. She noted that the plan would evolve through continued engagement. She added that the team was prioritising cost-of-living support, noting rising food and fuel prices, and was working with local councils to ensure staff could access external resources alongside internal support.

Mr A Inchley, Non-Executive Director Chair, responded positively, saying the plan was well received. The PCC Non-Executive Chair appreciated the plan's broader scope beyond flu and its attention to underlying drivers of staff absence. He emphasised the importance of delivering support in a way that preserved dignity, particularly for economically vulnerable staff, and commended the thoughtful approach. The PCC Non-Executive Chair was assured on the contents of the report.

Resolved – that (A) the contents of this report be received and noted.

84/25/4 Sexual Safety NHS Charter Annual Report 2025 (Reducing sexual harassment and assault)

Mr D DelGreco, People Lead Experience and Engagement presented the Q1 update on Trust's delivery against the NHS England Sexual Safety Charter, signed in October 2023. He confirmed that initial actions had been completed by July 2024 and assessed against both the NHSE framework and the Work Protection Act. He reported that 90% of staff had completed mandatory training, and a clear policy was in place to guide both managers and staff. He highlighted improvements in reporting mechanisms, including the "report and support" tool, and noted that support structures were being strengthened through targeted education for HR and managers. He outlined priorities for the coming year, including improved access to reporting and a new comms campaign linked to the kindness initiative.

Mr A Haynes, Non-Executive Director, raised concerns about known hotspots such as theatres and endoscopy, suggesting better triangulation of data and alignment with the civility and respect programme. Mr D DelGreco, People Lead Experience and Engagement agreed, noting overlap with initiatives like the BMA pledge and violence and aggression workstreams. Ms E Meldrum shared her experience overseeing sexual safety investigations and stressed the need for clearer language and increased investigative expertise.

The PCC Non-Executive Director Chair reflected on previous board development sessions and encouraged the team to incorporate national best practice into future reporting for added assurance.

Resolved – that (A) the contents of this report be received and noted

84/25/5 Update from Workforce Training and Education Steering Group

Ms J McCarthy, Head of Learning and Development, presented the workforce training and education

update on behalf of the subgroup, noting that the meeting minutes and overview were included for reference. Julie emphasised the importance of triangulating data from learner evaluations, face-to-face feedback, and survey results to inform action plans. She clarified discrepancies in mandatory training figures between reports, explaining that the CPO report reflected live data at the time of writing.

Ms J McCarthy, Head of Learning and Development, celebrated the milestone of 2,000 staff completing UHL apprenticeships and shared that Trust had been ranked 65th in the Sunday Times Top 100 Employers for Apprenticeships. She also noted recent graduation events and the Department for Education's dual delivery model between nursing development and learning and development teams. Assurance was provided that levy income, safeguarding, and compliance processes were in place.

The PCC Non-Executive Chair welcomed the progress, particularly around apprenticeships, and acknowledged the challenges posed by upcoming funding changes. Mr A Inchley, Non-Executive Director raised question of the introduction of a digital champion alongside the existing maths champion. Ms J Carthy, Head of Learning and Development confirmed that a digital champion was already in place, along with several others, and described UHL's involvement in the FutureDot programme, supported by NHS England. Mr A Ichley, Non-Executive Director, later commented on the EDI strategy, suggesting it should more clearly reflect how EDI is embedded into routine processes. Ms R Abeyratne, Director of Health, Equality and Inclusion reiterated that EDI must be treated as a patient safety issue and fully integrated into clinical workflows.

Resolved – that (A) the contents of this report be received and noted

85/25 ITEMS FOR NOTING

Resolved – that there were no items for noting.

86/25 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Resolved – that there were no further items of business.

87/25 IDENTIFICATION OF ANY KEY ISSUES FOR THE ATTENTION OF THE TRUST BOARD

Resolved – that the following items of business be recommended to the Trust Board for approval or highlighted to the Trust Board for information: -

- Minute 77/25– Freedom To Speak Up Q1 Report

88/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Resolved – that the next meeting of the People and Culture Committee be held on Thursday 25th September from 11:00am via MS teams.

The meeting closed at 13:00pm

Ninakshi Patel – Corporate and Committee Services Officer

Cumulative Record of Members' Attendance (April 25-March 26)

Voting Members

<i>Name</i>	<i>Possible</i>	<i>Actual</i>	<i>% Attendance</i>
Prof I Browne (Chair)	4	4	100
Dr R Abeyratne	4	3	100
Dr A Haynes	4	4	100
Ms J Houghton	4	4	100
Mr J Melbourne	4	3	50
Ms E Meldrum	4	4	100
Mr D Barnes	4	2	50
Ms C Teeney	4	3	100