



**NON-CONFIDENTIAL MINUTES
GOVERNANCE & PEOPLE COMMITTEE MEETING**

17th November 2025 at 5pm

Virtual via Microsoft Teams

Committee Members present: Jade Renville
Stuart Hill

In attendance: Steve Chattell (CPO)
John Abbott (CEO)

Clerk: Helen Wells (Governance Specialist)

MINUTES

G&P	1. MEETING FORMALITIES	Action
25/53	1.1 Welcome and apologies for absence The chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Directors noted that Dominic Lynch had stepped down from the committee and was therefore no longer included in the membership. There were apologies from Pat Flaherty and Catherine Christie. In lieu of the Chair and Vice Chair being unable to attend, committee member Jade Renville chaired the meeting with the agreement of the other director present. The meeting was quorate.	
25/54	1.2 Declaration of interests None of the committee members present had declarations to make in relation to items on the agenda.	
25/55	1.3 Minutes of the previous meeting Directors RESOLVED to approve the minutes of the previous meetings were accurate and the Chair consented for her electronic signature to be used to formally sign them off.	
25/56	1.4 Matters arising Directors discussed the matters arising report, agreeing items as complete or pending as recorded on the accompanying paper.	
	2. PEOPLE	
25/57	2.1 People update The CPO described the way in which some of the data sets have been revised to offer more helpful insights for directors. He gave an example of this in relation to staff turnover, where the data can look significantly different at points in the year due to statutory resignation timeframes for teachers. The data in future also be shown as averaged out over the year on a rolling 12-month cycle to present the actual profile of staff turnover. Directors welcomed the change in approach. It is hoped this will give a more accurate representation of what is happening over time. A similar approach has been adopted for staff sickness. Staff sickness has increased at the moment, the CPO cited the time of year seeing an expected increase in sickness but this remains low overall.	
25/58	Is there anything beyond the seasonal illnesses driving the current increase in staff sickness? It was not thought that there are any other causes; it was normal for sickness to increase at this time of year but is also normal for it to level off early in the new calendar year.	
25/59	West Buckland has small numbers which can skew data, but when combining sickness with turnover is there anything to be concerned about?	

Signed:...Stuart Hill..... Date:...2nd February 2026.....

No, the school have some long-term sickness which has impacted on the overall data. Short term sickness is low, this is normally an indicator of other issues.

**G&P
25/60** Staff turnover has not yet met the 11% target in the last two years, this remained an ambitious target, but overall turnover was relatively consistent at 15%.

**G&P
25/61** **Is the 11% a local or national target?**
This is a Huish based target which has evolved based on what the trust can access on information about benchmarks, which is extremely limited. The 11% is an ambitious target based on what has been achieved historically by the trust. Directors reflected that some turnover is healthy, but some or too much of certain kinds of turnover can be unhelpful. The CPO confirmed that the turnover reported is that this is turnover that is not within the control of the trust.

**G&P
25/62** **Can both types of turnover be reported to directors?**
The CPO agreed this was possible.

ACTION: At future committee meetings report on the different kinds of staff turnover. **CPO**

**G&P
25/63** **2.2 Analysis of Gender Pay Gap Report**
The CPO provided a snapshot of the organisation's gender pay gap report as of March 2025, this needs to be published in February at the latest. The gender pay gap reduced, compared to the previous year's snapshot, by about 3% across the mean and median. This was driven mainly by the compression of the pay spines by the increase in the minimum wage and knock on effect on the pay spines. The gap is driven predominantly by the number of people working in the lower quartiles who are predominantly female (taking on part time, term time work) and is a reflection of wider societal pressures and culture. It is also reflective of wider data in education. The top quartile is constituted by the executive team and middle population of teachers. The third quartile is senior admin posts and teachers and lower quartile being teaching assistants and nursery practitioners. He confirmed a more detailed report will come to directors ahead of publication by February 2026. Directors noted the report and explanation were helpful.

**G&P
25/64** **What else is happening to help reduce the gap as far as possible?**
Pay is regulated through national agreements so there is no gap in gender pay possible for men and women who are doing the same job at Huish. Wording of adverts is carefully considered to avoid any potential bias in advertising roles. The greatest obstacle is that of cultural and societal norms around females being more likely to seek term time/part time roles to support their other responsibilities generally relating to caring for their own children.

**G&P
25/65** **Is there any benchmarking data on this across other organisations?**
In education the gender pay gap is generally around 15-20%. Compared to some other industries there are societal biases the other way that are traditional for that type of occupation.

**G&P
25/66** Directors noted that progress has been made over time, noting that there remains opportunity to break down these barriers and that effort should continue to reduce the gap. They reflected whether there were more opportunities to focus on men entering the lower tiers of the trust's workforce and making the roles more attractive for men to enable them to take on more family oriented caring responsibilities.

3. PAY AWARDS

**G&P
25/67** The CPO reminded directors that Huish is signed up to nationally agreed pay scales for all staff at the trust, where they exist.

**G&P
25/68** **3.1 Pay recommendations – Sixth Form Teachers**
Sixth form college staff are on a different pay contract to that of school teachers. There remains a dispute on the pay offer nationally, whilst this remains unresolved the pay offer has been approved subject to directors' agreement. This has been allowed for at 4% in the budget. The terms and conditions have been approved pending any further updates if an agreement is reached at a later date.

Signed:...*Stuart Hill*..... Date:...2nd February 2026.....

RECOMMENDATION: Directors RESOLVED to recommend the pay recommendations for sixth form college teachers to the full board for approval.

3.2 Pay recommendations – Principal and Headteachers

The CPO gave an overview of how pay levels for headteachers are determined based on the leadership scales at the schools. The committee reviews the proposal ahead of board consideration for approval. Prior to the committee there was a joint meeting to review pay between the CEO, CPO, Chair of Governors (CoG) and Headteacher (they left room after performance against targets was considered).

Directors discussed the pay awards as presented on the supporting confidential paper.

The following minute was confirmed as confidential.

G&P

25/68

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G&P

25/77

3.3 Pay recommendations – Headteacher Pay Review Board (HTPRB)

The CPO described how the HTPRB seeks to give consistency in decision-making when determining teachers' pay, including recommendations for teachers applying for the Upper Pay Scale (UPS). Applications for UPS were anonymised and then considered by all HTs to agree the outcome without bias. Directors reflected on the strength of the process in reaching fair and informed recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION: Directors supported the proposed HTRB pay recommendations to take forward to the full board.

G&P

25/78

4. GOVERNANCE

4.1 Skills Audit analysis 2025/2026 and committee memberships

The Governance Specialist presented the skills audit analysis for the current academic year. She noted that there were no significant skills gaps indicated for the board overall, but there remained a need for more directors to be recruited to bolster the overall number of directors and robustness of committees. Directors reviewed the audit summary and agreed that there are a broad range of skills and experience across the board enabling challenge to the executive. The committee discussed the current vacancies for specific roles across committees, noting that there are a number of variables to be determined prior to filling them. The Governance Specialist will work to ensure that this is clearer at the next full board meeting.

G&P

25/79

4.2 Combining of A&R and F&GP Committees proposal

Directors discussed the proposal which had already been discussed and supported in principle by the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Governance Specialist noted it was being brought to this committee in terms of the governance remit but also as it included all of the members of the current Audit & Risk Committee. Directors agreed to be pragmatic and that if it was necessary to combine the committees then they would be supportive of doing so until such time as it was possible to separate them. They confirmed that ideally the committees should not be combined.

Recommendation: Directors agreed to support the proposal to combine the A&R and F&GP committees if the position became untenable to operate them separately.

G&P

25/80

4.3 Board diversity report

Directors discussed the latest board diversity report, noting that they appreciated its clarity and were mindful of the generalised nature of the statements to ensure no individual was identifiable due to the small numbers involved. They noted that there were some useful points raised to consider about the future composition of the board but that there were challenges in recruiting a more diverse board when relying solely upon volunteers with the right skills sets coming forward.

G&P

25/81

4.4 Governance Procedures

Signed:...*Stuart Hill*..... Date:...2nd February 2026.....

The Governance Specialist outlined the new Governance Procedures which draw together the existing detail from the Scheme of Delegated Authority (SoDA) about how Local Governing Boards (LGBs) operate and place them in the same document as a number of other related procedures, including appointment processes. This is part of the move to streamline the scheme of delegation to make it more user-friendly and relevant day to day. Directors indicated they were satisfied with the proposal and would provide further feedback if relevant ahead of it being recommended for at the appropriate juncture by the board.

RECOMMENDATION: Directors recommended the Governance Procedures for approval by the full board.

G&P
25/82

4.5 Oversight and Intervention Policy Statement – Draft

Directors noted the proposed policy statement as part of the exercise to streamline the existing SoDA; the approach to financial oversight and intervention currently sits within one of the appendices. The Governance Specialist described how this policy statement seeks to outline, more broadly than in just financial terms, the trust's position and approach to identifying and supporting academies who may require assistance. The CEO added that the approach seeks to act as a fall-back position of support as, in normal circumstances, LGBs should provide effective oversight and the first port of call would be to provide further assistance to them to enable this. Directors voiced they were supportive of a consistent approach to oversight and intervention but welcomed seeking the views of other directors before this is taken forward for approval by the board.

Clerk

ACTION: Share the proposed Oversight and Intervention Policy Statement with directors for further discussion.

G&P
25/83

4.6 LGB Governor updates and appointments

Directors reviewed the proposed appointment and **RESOLVED** to approve the recommendation.

G&P
25/84

5. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

5.1 Agenda for next meeting

Directors noted the agenda.

G&P
25/85

5.2 Confidential items

The committee agreed that papers marked as confidential would remain confidential and that relevant sections of the minutes in relation to pay would also be kept confidential.

G&P
25/86

5.3 Any other business

Directors agreed to take a further item in relation to executive pay.

The CPO and CEO left the meeting.

G&P
25/87-
88

The following minute was confirmed as confidential.

G&P
25/89

5.4 Dates of future meetings

Directors noted the dates as 2nd February 2026 and 2nd June 2026

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.20pm

Signed:...Stuart Hill..... Date:...2nd February 2026.....