



**MINUTES OF THE PEOPLE, FINANCE AND ORGANISATIONAL
DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE HELD AT 9.30AM ON THURSDAY
30 SEPTEMBER 2021 (VIA ZOOM DUE TO COVID-19)**

PRESENT: Mr T Haslett - Committee Chair
Mr J Dennison - Non Executive Director
Ms N Lappin - Non Executive Director

IN

ATTENDANCE: Mr M Bloomfield - Chief Executive
Ms R Byrne - Director of Operations
Mr B McNeill - Programme Director CRM &
Strategic Infrastructure
Mr P Nicholson - Interim Director of Finance
Mrs C Mooney - Board Secretary

APOLOGIES: Ms M Lemon - Interim Director of Human
Resources

1 Apologies & Opening Remarks

Mr Haslett noted that apologies had been received from Ms Lemon and explained that he would chair today's meeting which would focus on finance, in keeping with the arrangement that Committee meetings would alternate between finance and HR.

2 Procedure

2.1 Declaration of Potential Conflicts of Interest

The Chair asked the meeting to declare any potential conflicts of interest now or as the meeting progressed.

2.2 Quorum

The Chair confirmed the Committee as quorate.

2.3 Confidentiality of Information

The Chair emphasised the confidentiality of information.

3 **Previous Minutes (PC30/09/21/01)**

The minutes of the previous meeting held on 8 July 2021 had been agreed by e-mail and **APPROVED** on a proposal from Mr Dennison and seconded by Mr Haslett.

4 **Matters Arising (PC30/09/21/02)**

Mr Dennison asked that the two actions from the July meeting relating to a paper around Key Performance Indicators and a presentation from the Clinical Psychologist in the Belfast Trust should be brought to the December meeting of the Committee rather than 'deferred to a future meeting' as had been noted.

Mr Bloomfield agreed to look at this in Ms Lemon's absence.

Mr Dennison said it was his expectation that, while the focus of the Committee meetings would alternate between finance and HR, members would receive updates in relation to the actions from the previous meetings.

It was agreed that Mr Bloomfield and Mr Dennison would discuss outside of the meeting.

Ms Lappin pointed out that, in the 2021-22 year, there had been six Committee meetings scheduled. However she suggested that in the next schedule of meetings, the number of meetings should increase to eight to allow sufficient focus on HR and Finance. She agreed to discuss further with Ms Lemon and Mrs Mooney. Ms Lappin acknowledged that the Committee was at an embryonic stage and there was a need to understand clearly the business to be transacted as well as ensuring Directors had the capacity to service an increased number of meetings. She suggested that this should be discussed in the first instance by the Trust Senior Management Team.

The Committee **NOTED** the Matters Arising.

5 **Structure and Format for financial reporting (PC30/09/21/03)**

The Committee Chair stressed the importance of ensuring there was no overlap or duplication of financial reporting at the Committee with that of the Audit Committee. He said that he believed the focus of the People Committee should be to look at expenditure and budgets in detail in order to get a better understanding of the information contained in the broader report considered by Trust Board. The Committee Chair noted that the intention would be to improve the format for financial reporting as well as improving financial management and accountability arrangements in the Trust.

The Committee Chair advised that Non-Executive Directors had also considered other Trusts' finance reports in their deliberations.

During the ensuing discussion, members discussed which aspects of the various reports they favoured and Mr Nicholson agreed to reflect this in the October Trust Board finance report.

Ms Lappin said that she very much welcomed the discussion and acknowledged that other Trusts' budgets were much larger than NIAS and, on this basis, she did not expect to have a lengthy report.

Ms Lappin reminded the meeting of the financial management workshop in April 2021 and how the information presented should assist Board members in better interrogating the information and ask pertinent questions. She referred in particular to the area of capital expenditure and said that, at the time, she had asked for work to be undertaken to ensure that monies received were fully utilised. Ms Lappin was of the view that it would be helpful for the Committee to be briefed on what steps had been taken and cited this as an example of further narrative which the Committee would find helpful.

Mr Bloomfield commented on the importance of recognising the difference in budget size between Trusts as well as the range of services other Trusts provided. He said he would be happy to liaise with Mr Nicholson in the development of the new format of finance report with a view to having this presented at the October Trust Board and reminded members of the need for distinction between information needed for Committee and Trust Board consideration. Mr Bloomfield also pointed out that, whereas other Trusts carried

over significant underlying deficits with the exception of the cash-releasing savings requirements, NIAS did not have a recurrent deficit and continued to forecast a breakeven position.

Referring to the reporting of deficits in other Trusts, Mr Dennison noted that NIAS tended to report a breakeven position and he alluded to the statutory obligations of Trusts to breakeven. He acknowledged that, in making certain financial assumptions, the Trust had not yet received those allocations and he questioned why the Trust did not report deficits. He also asked whether the Trust would be better reporting a deficit with the likelihood of the DoH providing additional resources to cover the deficit.

Responding to Mr Dennison's point in relation to financial assumptions, Mr Nicholson indicated that the positive NIAS financial position was as a result of efforts over many years and that the Trust did not have similar underlying deficits as other Trusts. He explained that, in normal circumstances, if a Trust had a deficit, the Health and Social Care Board (HSCB)/Department of Health (DoH) would ask the Trust to develop savings plans in order to address the deficit. Mr Nicholson acknowledged the uniqueness of the past 18 months and said that it would be counter-intuitive to develop savings plans which would diminish services and place further pressure on existing services. He stressed the importance of being aware of the level of income assumptions and the potential implications if such assumptions were unrealistic. Mr Nicholson said that, at Month 5 of the financial year, he was as confident as he could be at this point that the financial assumptions made by the Trust were indeed realistic.

Ms Lappin referred to the fact that, at Month 5, NIAS was already forecasting a breakeven position. She sought further clarification about the deficit position of other Trusts and asked whether other Trusts had forecasted deficit positions on in-year budgets or whether Trusts were carrying forward deficits year-on-year.

Mr Nicholson explained that the underlying deficits may change during the year as a result of other pressures within the Trust and said that Trusts would be working with the HSCB/DoH to develop plans to address the deficits.

Ms Lappin put forward a suggestion that, if Trusts had historical deficits and had further pressures in-year, this would in fact mean

that the deficit would be based on the Trust budget and queried why NIAS was in a different position.

In response, Mr Nicholson explained that NIAS had managed its financial position so the Trust would not have a rolled-forward financial deficit. He advised that, had the Trust not been successful in obtaining, for example the funding for Agenda for Change pay award, there would have been a significant gap in the Trust baseline which would have rolled forward to the following financial year.

Mr Bloomfield commented that a number of Trusts were working on long-term plans to reduce their underlying deficits. He suggested that there was an element of risk involved in terms of financial assumptions but was of the view that it reasonable to assume a breakeven position at this stage.

Mr Bloomfield said that, while the Trust had not been prevented from maintaining and delivering additional services in-year, the Trust was currently at capacity and would not be in a position to deliver anything further or spend more at this time. He clarified that the Trust could not, for example, commence recruitment around the CRM model but that the use of in-year resources, whether it was for overtime or temporary staff, was regularly reported by Mr Nicholson to the HSCB and DoH.

He suggested that, to move to the position suggested by Mr Dennison, would mean the Trust knowingly committing funding without any source of funding having been identified which it could not do. Mr Bloomfield assured members that the Trust utilised all recurrent and non-recurrent funding in order to provide the best level of service possible.

Mr Nicholson reiterated the fact that the Trust had been able to use all available funding. He referred to the fact that the Trust had received £0.5 million last year as well as £2.5 million this year in respect of CRM and said the Trust expected further growth in this next year. He said that he was not aware of any areas where the Trust had not received the necessary funding, particularly in the context of the pandemic.

In response to a question posed by Ms Lappin, Mr Bloomfield confirmed that the Trust did not have more funding than it could utilise. He referred to the scrutiny of prospective posts by the

Senior Management Team and the fact that any posts approved were only approved on a temporary basis until 31 March 2022 as recurrent funding was not available beyond that time.

Mr Bloomfield reminded the meeting that the Operations Directorate utilised approximately 75-80% of the Trust budget for frontline operations and confirmed that the availability of staff, not funding, was the main constraint but stressed that the Trust could not recruit significant numbers beyond its funded establishment.

The Committee Chair thanked members for their contribution to this discussion.

6 (i) **Financial Plan 2021-22 Update (PC30/09/21/04)**

Mr Nicholson drew the Committee's attention to two key figures within the Revenue Resource Limit, namely the £9.4 million of assumed income and £12.6 million in relation to Covid-19.

He explained that the detail on page 22 of the papers was part of the monthly monitoring returns received by the DoH and the HSCB and set out the breakdown of the £9.4 million assumed income. Mr Nicholson advised that the Trust was working through a process of review with the DoH and HSCB and the completion of the necessary investment proposals to release these funds. He added that he had received e-mail confirmation that elements of this funding would be made available to the Trust.

Continuing Mr Nicholson referred to the importance of the accuracy of the estimate and the confidence in terms of receiving the assumed income. He acknowledged that, should the Trust not receive the assumed income, there would likely be a requirement to stand down services or develop savings plans to achieve breakeven. Mr Nicholson further acknowledged that some of the detail was still being worked through. He cited the example of the pay award for which the Trust had assumed that the full costs of the increase would be met. He indicated that the potential impact of holiday pay on overtime had not been included and reminded the meeting that this issue had resulted in the Trust accounts being qualified.

Mr Nicholson took the Committee through the detail of the table set out on page 22 and alluded to the recurrent and non-recurrent nature of funding. He indicated that there had been increased costs in relation to cleaning, personal protective equipment and staff welfare and he did not foresee these reducing over the coming years.

Ms Lappin suggested that it might be helpful for the Committee to have some narrative around the figures provided within the report.

The Committee Chair, noting that the transport costs contained expenditure on VAS/PAS, said that this was not clear from the heading and questioned whether this should in fact be included. He referred to the payroll expenditure and noted that this included overtime costs. The Committee Chair alluded to another Trust finance report where costs had been presented within Directorates and said that he had been keen for Directors to manage their respective budgets.

Mr Bloomfield acknowledged that work was ongoing to ensure Directors were clear as to their respective budget. He accepted that there was further work to do in this regard and said it would be important for Directors to be accountable and have the flexibility and independence to make decisions within their own budgets.

Ms Lappin said she would support a further breakdown of the table on page 23 showing the monthly expenditure.

Mr Dennison expressed his concern at the potential for the Trust not to receive an allocation as a result of the in-year monitoring exercise and sought further clarification around the decision making process as to which services might be stood down, the development of a savings plan and the impact of such a savings plan. He said that such clarification would be helpful as the Trust moved to a new format of financial reporting.

Mr Nicholson acknowledged that to have to reach such a position would be concerning. He explained that other Trusts had examined the potential for reducing overtime as a means of releasing savings, however, for NIAS, as approximately 80%

of the Trust budget was for frontline services, such a move would result in reduced cover. He said that, in order to develop a savings plan, Directors would examine those elements of the budgets where savings could be made in the first instance without having an impact on service delivery.

Agreeing with the points made by Mr Nicholson, Mr Bloomfield advised that other Trusts would undertake a similar exercise and indicated that the options to deliver in-year cash releasing savings were very limited. He reminded the meeting that, while Directors would be able to provide examples of where it might be possible to identify savings, these would have an impact on service delivery and he did not believe it would be necessary to do this in-year.

Mr Dennison believed that it would be important to have a sense of where the Trust might potentially identify savings should the need to do so arise. He suggested that it would be important to identify this as a risk on the Corporate Risk Register as well as identifying mitigating actions. Mr Dennison referred to the importance of having a contingency plan and believed that Trust Board should be advised of the potential for the Trust to identify savings.

Ms Lappin alluded to the point made by Mr Dennison in relation to the need to develop a savings plan and said it was clear that the impact on service delivery would result in a deterioration in response times. Referring to the financial position at August (month 5), Ms Lappin said she was unsure as to what was within the budget heading 'Legal Expenses and Other Service' and queried whether this could be paused in order to identify savings. Likewise, she queried the £373,000 for 'Board Members' and said she would appreciate further narrative as to what this budget heading included.

Ms Lappin agreed with the Committee Chair's earlier comments in relation to Directorate budgets and said it would be helpful for members to have sight of these on a regular basis. She referred to the fact that the Committee would not focus on finance until its February meeting and suggested that a Directorate budget breakdown by spend could perhaps be included in the Finance report for the December Trust Board as

well as detail on actions being taken to address any overspends.

Mr Bloomfield said that it was his intention that the Board would receive regular reports on Directorate expenditure and that this reporting would become a core part of the overall Board Finance report.

The Committee **NOTED** the update received in relation to the Financial Plan 2021-22 Update.

(ii) **Use of Voluntary & Private Ambulance Service Providers (VAS/PAS) (PC30/09/21/04)**

The Committee Chair referred to page 28 of the papers which listed the providers of private ambulance services. He said that it was presumably ultimately the Trust's wish to provide such services through permanent employees and acknowledged that the Trust had utilised these services as a means of providing further support, particularly during the pandemic.

Referring to the list of providers, the Committee Chair sought confirmation from Mr Nicholson that the services had been procured appropriately and that the necessary contracts were in place. He also enquired as to the Trust's plans for the use of VAS/PAS in the future.

Mr Nicholson confirmed that all VAS/PAS services had been procured appropriately and he referred to the framework contract let through the Business Services Organisation (BSO) which provided the Trust with a range of providers. Mr Nicholson indicated that, in some instances, providers may be engaged through a Direct Award Contract (DAC). He said that there had also been some instances where providers may employ sub-contractors and he confirmed that, while this was permissible within the contract, it was only allowed with NIAS' permission. Mr Nicholson acknowledged the significant expenditure on VAS/PAS but pointed out that expenditure had reduced marginally from the previous year.

Ms Byrne noted that Mr Nicholson had referred earlier to the framework specification agreement in place and advised the meeting that she was working with Ms Charlton around the

development of a robust monitoring and assurance process in terms of adherence to the framework.

The Committee Chair referred to the significant expenditure on VAS/PAS and asked if there was financial cover within the RRL or had the Trust been able to cover this expenditure from Covid-19 monies.

Mr Nicholson confirmed that it would be covered from the Covid-19 monies received by the Trust.

Mr Bloomfield advised that discussions were ongoing within the Trust as to how some of the funding currently used for VAS/PAS could potentially be used to recruit additional staff. He pointed out that the expenditure for VAS/PAS was within the £12.6 million of Covid-19 funding.

Ms Lappin asked if the Committee needed to examine VAS/PAS costs in greater detail and said that the Board had asked that, where possible, expenditure on VAS/PAS should be reduced. She suggested that it would be helpful to have some narrative around the spend as it would be important to have a clear audit trail if the Trust was asked to justify its expenditure on VAS/PAS.

Referring to page 28 of the papers, Ms Lappin queried how expenditure on the Voluntary Car Service (VCS) compared with previous years.

Mr Nicholson acknowledged that patient taxi costs had increased and noted that VCS costs had reduced during the year. He explained the reference to voluntary driver taxi costs and explained that historically a number of voluntary drivers were also taxi drivers. Mr Nicholson reminded the meeting that the VCS had been stood down at the start of the pandemic and had only recently recommenced.

Ms Byrne referred to the development of dashboards and said that this would provide data on the detail around the usage of VAS/PAS in terms of the types of calls, the appropriateness of these calls and said that this would help in informing the Trust's workforce planning. She acknowledged that there was a need to better articulate the work being done to improve the

management of independent contracts, their utilisation and impact

Ms Lappin accepted that this work might straddle a number of Committees and said that members would look to Directors to decide where best to bring such information for consideration.

Mr McNeill said that the work carried out over the last number of years had identified that the Trust was 4,500 hours short of cover per week. He pointed out that, until this shortage was addressed, the Trust would continue to depend on VAS/PAS to deliver services and close the gaps.

Mr Bloomfield agreed with the point made by Mr McNeill. He alluded to the reference to the framework specification and stressed the importance of ensuring that VAS/PAS were adhering to the required IPC standards; were using the appropriate equipment; had appropriately trained and qualified staff and were responding to appropriate calls. He said that the further work being carried out around the development of the framework would help in providing the Committee with the necessary assurance.

Ms Byrne alluded to the complexities involved in this work and said that the decision taken at the start of the pandemic to transfer PCS staff to support A&E colleagues had resulted in the Trust needing to utilise VAS/PAS to a greater extent.

Ms Lappin said she appreciated that work was being progressed in this regard but believed it was important to have such discussions at Committee level. She suggested that, when considering the inclusion of some narrative around VAS/PAS, reference should be made to how the Trust had considered in-house options to meet the need and what actions had been taken as a result.

The Committee **NOTED** the update received in relation to the Use of Voluntary & Private Ambulance Providers.

(iii) **Use of HSC Leadership Centre Associates (PC30/09/21/04)**

Mr Nicholson drew the Committee's attention to the paper outlining the process for the engagement of HSC Leadership

Centre Associates as well as a summary of the spend including the project and the associated costs. He confirmed that the information had been reviewed by the Trust's Senior Management Team.

Mr Nicholson said he wished to draw the Committee's attention to two issues in particular, namely that SMT had to approve the use of an Associate in the first instance and the importance of using the agreed process to engage an Associate.

Responding to a question from the Committee Chair, Mr Bloomfield explained that the HSC Leadership Centre documentation for engagement of an Associate required the Trust to provide a specification for the role and the time commitment involved. He added that the Trust would then be provided with a number of Associate CVs to consider. Mr Bloomfield indicated that an Associate would be engaged to undertake discrete pieces of work and would liaise regularly with the relevant Director. He said that the Committee would receive regular updates.

The Committee **NOTED** the update received in relation to the Use of HSC Leadership Centre Associates.

(iv) **Use of Staff Substitution (PC30/09/21/04)**

Mr Nicholson explained that the Trust used Staff Substitution to support specific work streams, generally in situations where expertise should normally be available in-house but capacity was insufficient. He advised that support provided to NIAS by the Association of Ambulance Chief Executives (AACE) had been classified as staff substitution.

Mr Nicholson reminded the meeting that AACE had provided support to NIAS for a number of years and provided additional capacity in areas where NIAS had historically limited, if any, resources. He said that AACE had played a particularly significant role in the planning for and implementation of the new CRM codeset in November 2019. Mr Nicholson reminded the meeting that Mr Bloomfield had provided the June Trust Board with an overview of the support provided in 2020-21 as well as the agreed programme of support in 2021-22.

Ms Byrne was of the view that engagement with AACE had raised NIAS' profile resulting in the Trust's involvement in a number of national groups. She said that she had found AACE support invaluable and had provided the Trust with resilience moving forward.

The Committee Chair noted that the Trust's planned expenditure with AACE had reduced over the last year.

Mr Bloomfield referred to the significant role played by AACE around CRM and said that, as the Trust moved to increase its capacity, the use of AACE would reduce over time.

Mr Dennison expressed his support for the Trust engaging with AACE. He referred in particular to the 2019 benchmarking exercise undertaken by AACE and said he had found that report interesting to read as he took up his position as NED with the Trust.

Mr Dennison suggested that AACE might be able to provide some assistance to Ms Lemon around the progression of the HR Strategy. He further suggested that it would be practical and constructive for the Committee to receive a presentation from AACE on their involvement with the Trust.

Ms Lappin said that, in her capacity as Trust Chair, she had had the opportunity to hear from AACE colleagues at first hand and had found it helpful.

Mr Bloomfield agreed with this suggestion and undertook to speak to Mr Flaherty with a view to making the necessary arrangements.

The Committee **NOTED** the update received in relation to the Use of Staff Substitution.

(v) **Use of Overtime (PC30/09/21/04)**

The Committee Chair acknowledged the fact that the Trust had was a significant reliance on overtime. He stressed the point that overtime was not an entitlement and the Trust had found it increasingly necessary over recent months to use overtime to ensure the provision of services for a number of reasons,

including vacancies, planned and unplanned absences and additional cover or programmes of work. The Committee Chair recognised the complexities associated with reducing and replacing overtime with increasing staff numbers.

Mr Nicholson drew members' attention to the report and acknowledged that expenditure on overtime was significant. He pointed out that, given the varying requirements for overtime throughout the year, expenditure varied. However he indicated that overtime was consistent between years with, on average, expenditure of approximately £6 million per year.

Mr Nicholson further pointed out that the vast proportion of overtime expenditure related to frontline services and Control.

Mr Bloomfield reminded the meeting that the Trust's proportionately high reliance on overtime was the reason why the Trust accounts had received a qualified opinion.

Mr Nicholson explained that the pandemic had impacted on overtime and clarified that increased staff absences due to Covid-19 had limited the pool of available staff to work overtime. However the Trust was still required to provide services.

Continuing, Mr Nicholson advised that, in an effort to fill more overtime shifts, the Trust had availed of a scheme which had been introduced regionally offering enhanced overtime rates. He acknowledged that this had in some instances resulted in unintended consequences, for example 'difficult to fill' shifts had attracted the premium rate and had been filled but at the detriment of other shifts. Mr Nicholson explained that the Resource Management Centre managed this dynamic process.

Mr Nicholson referred to the Internal Audit recommendation in relation to the payment of overtime to Band 8 and above staff and confirmed that the DoH had introduced regional initiatives to allow the payment of overtime to these staff but that this was in specific circumstances and was time limited.

Ms Lappin said she had found it interesting that overtime appeared to be consistent over a number of years. However she expressed concern that overtime expenditure between

April – July 2021 had been considerably higher than the same period in 2020-21 and in 2019-20. She queried whether Mr Nicholson was concerned at this and whether there was potential for an early warning that overtime expenditure could be significantly more this year than the average £6 million.

Responding, Mr Nicholson clarified that the scale for the current year differed slightly and reminded the meeting that the current costs only covered a four month period. He advised that the Operations Directorate had a substantive budget for overtime and said that, as well as covering additional shifts, the budget covered 'involuntary overtime', ie when shifts ran beyond the end of the shift.

Ms Lappin commented that overtime was not necessarily shared evenly throughout the workforce. She asked whether the Trust had put arrangements in place to monitor the extent of overtime worked by staff and the potential implications for safety.

Mr McNeill explained that the Global Rostering System (GRS) allocated shifts and monitored the allocation of overtime with appropriate action then being taken by the Resource Management Centre (RMC) to prevent staff from accessing overtime if there were any safety concerns.

The Committee Chair suggested that the overtime costs should be included within the payroll section in the finance report.

The Committee **NOTED** the update received in relation to the Use of Overtime.

(vi) **Capital Programme 2021-22 (PC30/09/21/05)**

Mr Nicholson advised that the Trust had received a Capital Resource Limit (CRL) allocation of £7.747 million which included allocations for Fleet & Estate, ICT and Backlog Maintenance. He explained that expenditure had traditionally been profiled towards the end of the financial year due to a number of factors, including business case approval, the availability of funds, procurement timescales, supplier capacity, internal capacity, project risks and lead times.

Mr Nicholson added that expenditure on fleet was profiled to the end of the financial year to maintain a smooth fleet age profile and he reminded the meeting that the Trust had a five-year fleet replacement business case in place.

He clarified that there were a large number of business cases for which funding was only available in-year and said that the risks experienced by the Trust had been compounded by a number of factors including EU exit, the global movement of goods, the global availability of raw materials and the associated costs, production and delivery of materials. Mr Nicholson said that the Trust continually reviewed its capital schemes to ensure it understood and mitigated against such risks. He expressed concern in relation to the global issues and said that the Trust Fleet Manager was exploring alternative options.

Mr McNeill explained that of particular concern to the Trust was the provision of Peugeot Boxer vehicles which the Trust purchased for conversion to PCS vehicles. He advised that the delivery which had been expected at the end of September had been delayed. He added that the Fleet Manager was in regular contact with the supplier to assess the risk of the vehicles not being delivered in time. Mr McNeill said that such delays would impact on the availability of capital monies set aside for conversion. He acknowledged that, while such delays were outside the Trust's control, the Fleet Manager continued to work closely with the Finance Department and DoH colleagues.

Referring to the dynamic management of the capital programme, Mr Nicholson said that the Trust also considered the potential for other schemes to be brought forward and said that Trust officers were constantly working with HSCB and DoH colleagues in this regard.

Mr Nicholson referred to a number of significant IT developments, in particular the completion of the REACH programme. He alluded to Body Worn Videos and said that, while the Trust had received funding for this, it would be necessary to conduct a public consultation which could potentially impact on the timescales around the deliverability of the project and the availability of funding.

The Committee Chair queried whether Estate should be removed from 'Fleet and Estate' within the CRL allocation table contained within the paper. He suggested that some elements of the Estate budget could relate to backlog maintenance and that it might be more appropriate to have 'Estate and Backlog Maintenance'.

Mr Nicholson explained that the Trust had limited ability to move between schemes and advised that £250,000 had been allocated for backlog maintenance.

Ms Lappin sought confirmation that the funding would roll forward to the next financial year for those items that might be unavailable in the current financial year.

Mr Nicholson referred to the nuances involved and acknowledged that the Trust had limited flexibility to roll forward funding. He explained that currently, should the Trust underspend on its capital monies in-year by £1 million, for example, that resource would be lost to the Trust and the £1 million would be the first call on the following year's CRL allocation.

Mr Nicholson acknowledged the challenges presented by the capital programme and reminded the meeting that the budget was significant at approximately £8 million.

The Committee Chair suggested that the October Trust Board should be briefed on the potential impacts on funding.

The Committee **NOTED** the update received in relation to the Capital Programme 2021-22.

10 **Date of next meeting**

The next meeting of the People Committee will take place on Thursday 9 December 2021 at 10am (arrangements to be confirmed).

Consideration would be given to face-to-face meetings if permitted.

11 **Any Other Business**

Mr Dennison acknowledged the work involved in producing the papers for today's meeting and asked Mr Nicholson whether he had the necessary resources within the finance team to assist around the new format of financial reporting.

Mr Nicholson thanked Mr Dennison for his comments and noted the pressures placed on all staff as a result of vacancies and Covid-19. However he said that he planned to address the issue of vacancies within the Finance Directorate in the coming months.

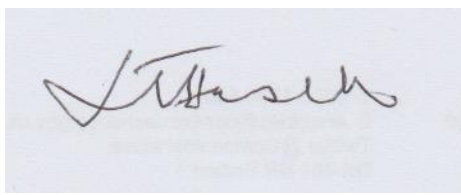
Mr Bloomfield said he fully supported and would encourage Mr Nicholson in addressing these vacancies and added that it would be important that these were progressed as soon as possible.

Ms Lappin said that she did not underestimate the pressures placed on Directors. She welcomed the comments from the Chief Executive around ensuring the necessary resources were available to Directors within their respective structures to deliver on the work required.

The Committee Chair thanked those present for their contributions during the meeting and was of the view that the Committee was moving in the right direction with regard to the information being presented.

THIS BEING ALL THE BUSINESS, THE CHAIR DECLARED THE MEETING CLOSED AT 12.30PM.

SIGNED:

A rectangular box containing a handwritten signature in dark ink. The signature is cursive and appears to be 'J. Hasek'.

(electronically signed due to Covid-19)

DATE: 29 November 2021