

St Raphael's Hospice

Meeting of the HR Committee held at St Raphael's Hospice, London Road,
Cheam, Sutton, SM3 9DX with video call access

At 10:00 on Tuesday 8th July 2025

Members: Paul Holmes (PH – Chair – virtual)
Hazel Borthwick (HB – Co-opted Committee member)
Manjit Lall (ML – Committee member)
Norman McWhinney (NM – Chair of Trustees)

In attendance: Nick Stevens (NS – Joint CEO)
Rebecca Trower (RT – Joint CEO)
Natalie Page (NP – Head of People Services)
Ginny Toubal (GT – Volunteer Services Manager – items 1-2)
Anna Machin (Governance – AM – virtual)

Actions arising

Agenda item	Action	Responsible	Timeline	Ref.
5. Risk Register	Place Risk Register on next meeting agenda	Natalie Page	October 2025 Committee meeting	08.07.25/01

1. Welcome, apologies for absence and declarations of interest

The Chair welcomed Committee members to the meeting. There were no declarations of interest in relation to items on the meeting agenda.

2. Volunteer Services Update & Dashboard

Ginny Toubal confirmed that the Volunteer Data is being fully cleansed and so will be presented in full at the next meeting. The new Raiser's Edge database is working well (with more functionality than NaturalHR) and volunteers' details are being checked. There has been positive feedback on key new volunteers, and continued recruitment is prioritised for Retail volunteers including a recent Recruitment Fair and identifying candidates that can support the in-house Lottery. There was good engagement in the Clearance events and sign-up for an upcoming Wedding Fair. The revised Investing in Volunteers timeframe has been set for the autumn.

The Committee noted the Volunteer Starters and Leavers information, and recognised the range of activities undertaken within the last quarter. Recent training and meetings for key groups of volunteers, such as Ward Companions, have worked well. The Committee understood the environment for Retail volunteers is competitive, but Natalie Page shared the benefits of the Applicant Tracking System (ATS) in helping with online applications, tracking and follow up.

3. Review of minutes from 29th April 2025 & actions arising

The Committee approved the minutes as an accurate record of proceedings, and the update on actions was noted including the latest status update on shifting the HR system and six months' notice will be given to NaturalHR once the new system is selected. A deep dive is being included in each agenda, with the ATS being the focus for this meeting.

4. Update on HR Activity

Natalie Page shared key points from the HR paper through the presentation:

- The objectives for this coming financial year have been set for the team, that build into the overall Management Plan. It is felt that they are achievable and will enhance HR activity across a range of areas.
- The ATS Business Case has been approved internally and data cleansing is being undertaken on the existing, underperforming HR system to also align with payroll.
- Key processes have been reviewed including maternity, retail volunteers and payroll - alongside reviewing the AIG life assurance cover and carrying through a certain number of suspension and dismissal cases. The HR team supported the appointment of the new Consultant and Housekeeping Manager to the team.
- Information requests from the ICB have been responded to, alongside Hospice UK.
- The team are pleased with the new volunteer system, NXT, that will help with internal transparency around applications.
- Key upcoming priorities include full development of the Pay Policy, including Long Service Award and written agreements with Bank staff, formalising and tightening the induction, appraisal and starter/ leaver process, and accompanying this with HR Handbooks. The staff induction process will be developed, alongside streamlining the annual staff declarations. There is opportunity to better use the apprenticeship levy, and a sponsorship licence will be ended. A staff and contractor intranet will be set up to enable quick access to key documents and policies. Full reviews and audits will be undertaken for DBS, WHA and absence reporting data. There is a vacancy for a Mental Health First Aider. The volunteer team will continue to be supported.

The Committee noted the summary information on Starters, Leavers, Recruitment, Absence, and Employee Relations. Some additional contextual information was shared on this data.

The Committee asked about the type of data shared with the ICB, and this has included information including starters and leavers, and ethnicity data for staff (internal records are also a priority for improvement). St Raphael's also contributes certain data to Hospice UK, which is voluntary, and helps collection of aggregate data on the sector. Given data has been cleansed, reasons for any changes in data compared to past submissions were explained, and assurance was given that data sets are only issued for which there is confidence in the accuracy of the content. Alex Rudkin (Director of Quality & Governance) reviews all data sets. The Committee emphasised the value in the new HR system being self-service, for example so that staff can update their personal data.

More detail was shared on the Consultant recruitment and options to staff this post until the appointed candidate starts in 2026. Confirmation was given that the Consultant team had given full input on the plans, and their preference is to continue in the current set-up rather than hold too much ad hoc interim staffing, and they recognise the skills and contribution that the chosen candidate will bring. The final decision on the Clinical Fellow role has not yet been taken – the Clinical Quality & Governance Committee also hold oversight of this recruitment from a clinical capacity perspective.

The Committee recognised the range of priority activities that the team is gradually managing through and thanked them for their work. Natalie Page confirmed that the new HR team member has made a very strong start.

The Committee emphasised the importance of the foundational work on HR documentation and accurate paperwork, which the team is prioritising, with empowerment of line managers also being vital. The role of Mental Health First Aiders can also be adjusted – for example to include some Positive Mental Health ambassadors, accompanied by strong support by line managers.

The Committee received assurance that a watching brief is being held on the Employment Rights Bill, with changes around the number of 'zero hours' contracts held by the Hospice and 'day one rights' coming in. This is why the focus is in particular on contractor arrangements (for example bank staff) and documentation being formalised, as a bedrock for these requirements then coming in.

5. Departmental Risk Register

This item will be brought to the next meeting for review, to enable comprehensive updates by the HR team.

6. Deep dive: Applicant Tracking System

Quotes were sought from four system providers, of whom three shared providers. The chosen ATS Jobtrain offers strong functionality for example templates that will save significant time for the HR team and also correspondence between colleagues, and is embedded into the website in St Raphael's branding. It will enable functionality such as sending job alerts, securing key personal detail from applicants that is stored securely, and sign-off approvals for posting new roles.

7. Any Other Business and Dates of future meetings

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as 7th October 2025 from 10am-12pm.

The Committee held a short closed session following the meeting, subject to a separate minute.

The meeting ended at 11.45am.

Approved.....

Date.....