

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Human Resources and Development Committee Thursday 7 May 2020

Draft confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 7 May 2020 at 5.00pm via Teams.

PRESENT:

K Keay	D Fordyce
D Mackenzie	G Ritchie
T Pirie	B Carmichael
S Stirling	

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Taylor (Vice Principal)	B Grace (Head of Estates)
M Sanderson (Executive Secretary)	A Mawhirt (Head of People & OD)

1. WELCOME

K Keay volunteered to chair the meeting in the absence of the Chair and Vice Chair. K Keay welcomed members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies received from P Milne, G Bissett, S Hewitt and J Carnegie.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest. D Mackenzie noted his employment with Michelin PLC.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 14 November 2019

Minute of the previous meeting was approved as an accurate record.

5. MATTERS ARISING

Staff Absence – S Taylor noted that the national comparator metrics had not been updated yet.

It was noted that staff absence was being recorded differently due to COVID 19 situation and staff who are absent due to COVID 19 are not being recorded as a sickness absence to avoid possible triggers within the absence management and payroll systems.

6. COVID 19 IMPACTS AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR STAFF

G Ritchie noted that there had been a major impact on the College with regards to COVID 19, but that the College had adapted really quickly and had set up remote working systems for both students and staff, with online courses and training.

G Ritchie stated that, ironically, the Cyber Attack had put the College in a positive place with regards to dealing with incidents, using the Business Continuity Plan and adapting ways of working.

G Ritchie highlighted that the College, and Gail Graham (Quality Manager) in particular had taken the lead in negotiations and discussions with SQA with regards to progressing student outcomes. The complexity of this work was noted, including the different approaches adopted by each awarding body.

G Ritchie highlighted the significant loss to income to the College through commercial and other services.

Initial thoughts around arrangements for the start of session 2020/21 were discussed and G Ritchie stated that the College was considering a later start date and were planning ahead to implement additional social distancing and health and safety measures.

D Mackenzie asked if this has had an impact on student numbers and the likely need for staff reductions. G Ritchie stated that the Scottish Funding Council (SFC) had been clear that 2020/21 funding would be released as planned and noted that SFC were being flexible around credit targets and student numbers. It was noted that there were no plans to cut staffing and that arrangements would be progressed to ensure that staff were utilised fully to support the return to face-to-face teaching alongside increased remote delivery.

S Taylor highlighted that revised SFC guidance had meant that Colleges and Universities could access the furlough scheme to cover staffing costs in certain areas. This had been progressed rapidly over the past 2 week period and 303 roles within the College had been furloughed. It was noted that the one-to-one conversations with these staff had been positive. S Taylor advised that the College was seeking to recover c £240k per calendar month in wage costs through this.

S Taylor summarised the approach taken to furlough and stressed the importance of highlighting that this was not a reflection on the role or value of those staff, but reflected that they were those staff that were more clearly eligible for furlough.

K Keay asked if unions had been supportive in the decision to furlough staff. S Taylor confirmed they had, and stated that the College was paying 100% of staff wages and pension contributions. S Taylor stated that the unions had agreed a joint statement on furlough arrangements which had supported a positive video message from the Principal to explain the situation.

7. VP PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

S Taylor provided a summary of the report to the Committee. This was welcomed.

8. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

G Ritchie provided an update to the Committee regarding National Bargaining. G Ritchie noted that the pay deal with Academic Unions is in place until September and that a new pay demand had been received from EIS-FELA. G Ritchie highlighted that the national Job Evaluation process was still ongoing with support unions, however the COVID-19 situation had had an impact on this. S Taylor noted that work was progressing slowly, however there was no timeframe as to when this would be completed.

K Keay asked how Colleges received National Bargaining updates and if this would change with the departure of G Ritchie. G Ritchie confirmed that the Employers Association group send regular updates and that S Taylor and (going forward) S Hewitt were members of the Employers Association group.

The update was welcomed.

9. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor summarised the risk register and highlighted additional areas within the register relating to COVID-19. It was noted that these areas were also being picked up through a detailed recovery report to go to the full Board meeting in June. K Keay stated that it was good to see the work undertaken and the division between the two risk registers.

K Keay asked if working from home guidelines were covered by the risk register. S Taylor noted the remote working hub for staff, and confirmed that risk assessment guidance was in place for staff in respect of work space and DSE regulations as well as good practice support and guidance on home working.

S Taylor noted that a short 'pulse' survey was due to go out to staff to see how they feel about working remotely.

T Pirie noted that the risk register was impressively thorough.

The revised Strategic Risk Register was approved.

10. HR METRICS

This paper was noted for information. K Keay thanked S Taylor and the team for pulling this information together given the COVID-19 and cyber incident disruptions.

11. MEETING MINUTES / UPDATES

The minutes of the JCF meetings were noted. G Ritchie highlighted that a good relationship had been developed with the unions and noted that the minutes sometimes didn't capture the positive nature of the discussions held. K Keay welcomed this update.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next Human Resources and Development Committee will take place on Thursday 17 September 2020, room A214, Kingsway Campus.

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
There were no actions arising		