

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Human Resources and Development Committee Thursday 5 May 2022

Draft confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 5 May 2022 at 5.00pm via Teams.

PRESENT:

D Mackenzie	B Lawrie
S Hewitt	K Keay
D Fordyce	B Carmichael
S Stirling	

IN ATTENDANCE:

S Taylor (Vice Principal)	J Grace (Vice Principal)
J Carnegie (Vice Principal)	M Sanderson (Executive Secretary)

1. WELCOME

D Mackenzie welcomed members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from N Lowden, B Grace and A Mawhirt.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST

S Taylor highlighted the paper explaining the definitions for a connection and an interest. There were no declarations of connections or interests.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 17 February 2022

Minute of the previous meeting was approved as an accurate record following correction to note that apologies had been received for D Fordyce.

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES PAPER

S Hewitt summarised the paper, highlighting that at least £1.5 million needed to be saved from the 2022/2023 budget.

S Hewitt noted that recruitment had been declining, and the student demographic was changing, with more 16 and 17 year-olds applying for College.

It was noted that the paper summarised the need for a difficult balance between cuts and investing in areas of growth and new technologies to enhance the curriculum.

S Hewitt noted there have been a series of discussions with managers since the paper was issued to begin to pull together proposals for consultation within a second paper to be published to all staff by 16 May.

J Grace noted the recent curriculum review involved all curriculum departments and they had met with every team. There was an overview of the curriculum portfolio to see if it remained fit for purpose, are students succeeding and does it have a purpose for the future. Decisions on the future course portfolio would be made based on evidence of need and success.

J Carnegie highlighted 80% of costs were staffing, which made any savings plan difficult to enact without impacting on jobs. As noted in the financial strategy, within the remaining 20% there was very little scope for savings due to increases in fuel, gas, electricity etc.

J Carnegie noted that the Scottish Government were investing money in carbon management and the College was aiming to maximise funding from other projects or opportunities. There would be a more in-depth update at the Finance and Property Committee.

D Fordyce asked if it was an increasing challenge around how the College could make these savings with a tight budget already. S Hewitt noted that it was and noted the need to reprioritise and invest in some areas, with cuts in others.

B Lawrie noted the paper was extremely helpful and noted that the statement about continuing to thrive was important.

S Taylor noted that the paper was a first outline of the challenges faced and stated that the next steps were around difficult discussions with Managers and staff. The next part of the consultation process would be a proposal paper, outlining changes proposed and their impact on staffing.

S Taylor noted the unions were aware of the process and would be updated again before the proposals paper was published. It was noted that any staff / staff groups who will be affected in the paper, would also be notified before the paper was published.

The People team were available to support conversations with managers and further information and support would be available, including confirming any redeployment opportunities that may arise.

D Mackenzie noted the various plans and structures in place and stated that the thoughts around the process were clear and detailed, and asked what staff morale was like? S Hewitt noted it had been mixed and that some staff were oblivious to the paper or felt that it would have no impact to them, whilst others were concerned or were overthinking and overanalysing.

Students were the prime focus for staff, with the term coming to an end in the next few weeks.

B Carmichael noted the paper was like the budget cuts around 2010, and some staff seemed to have the attitude they won't be affected.

D Mackenzie asked if the Senior Leadership Team had considered any additional actions that might be needed to increase awareness. S Hewitt confirmed the next paper would be more detailed and would be picked up by staff. Principal briefing sessions were also arranged for when the paper was published.

S Taylor highlighted that, in governance terms, the detail of the paper would impact on most committees and more details would be available for the Finance and Property and full Board meetings.

7. VP PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

S Taylor summarised the report, highlighting that National Bargaining disputes and discussions were ongoing. S Taylor noted, strike days were planned, with these increasing to three days next week. The uptake for strike action at the College was relatively limited, which has allowed students to attend College and most classes to go ahead as normal. Some class groups had been more affected due to the strike days always landing on the same weekdays.

S Taylor noted that there had been little government engagement in the action, and it had been left to the unions and employers to seek resolution. B Carmichael noted that he had picked up significant unhappiness around the scale of the planned strike action, from those that supported it as well as those that didn't.

S Taylor noted support staff negotiations are ongoing and Unison had announced a ballot for industrial action.

B Lawrie noted the update on job evaluation and asked about the constraints on the project. S Taylor noted the job evaluation was still at the scoring stage, so no financial impacts were known, but that the government had allocated £12 million funding to the Scottish funding Council (SFC) to support the cost of salary changes.

S Taylor highlighted there had been a positive reaction to the recent staff survey and that a full update on this was planned for the Board strategy event. A New Ways of Working (New WoW) event for staff and students was planned for 19 May.

8. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

This item was covered under Agenda Item 7.

9. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor summarised the Risk Register and this was approved by the Committee. A review of the need for a separate COVID Risk Register would take place in due course.

10. HR METRICS

HR Metrics were noted by the Committee.

D Mackenzie asked if temporary staff were likely to be impacted by savings plan proposals. S Taylor noted that temporary staff may be impacted first but noted that the transfer to permanency arrangements had reduced flexibility in this area.

An error was noted on table 2 of the report and a correction would be issued after the meeting.

11. COVID 19 UPDATE ON HEALTH & SAFETY, LEADERSHIP, WAYS OF WORKING & COMMUNICATION

S Hewitt noted the update was summarised in the VP report. S Hewitt highlighted COVID cases were decreasing but this was expected as testing had been removed. S Taylor added arrangements around testing and self-isolation had changed and if staff had COVID symptoms and elevated temperature, they are advised to stay away from work for 5 days.

J Carnegie added that face coverings were still encouraged in crowded places and CO2 monitoring was still in place.

It was noted that staff and students were generally relaxed around the change in regulations, but that some were nervous. The majority were not wearing masks.

S Taylor noted that the College had adopted the 'Distance Aware' scheme and were reminding students and staff that others may be concerned about being in busy places or interacting with larger groups.

The update was welcomed.

12. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

TBC.

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Agenda Item 10 – Update table 2 in Metrics	S Taylor	13 May 2022