

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT



Human Resources and Development Committee Thursday 15 September 2022

Draft confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 15 September 2022 at 5.00pm, room Y150 Gardyne Campus and MS Teams.

PRESENT:	D Mackenzie	VIRTUAL:	B Carmichael
	S Hewitt		N Lowden
	G Robertson		
	S Stirling		
	B Lawrie		

IN ATTENDANCE:	L O'Donnell (Regional Chair)	J Grace (Vice Principal)
	J Carnegie (Vice Principal)	M Sanderson (Executive Secretary)
	B Grace (Head of Estates)	A Mawhirt (Head of People and Organisational Development)

1. WELCOME

D Mackenzie welcomed members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from K Keay and S Taylor.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 5 May 2022

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

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6. OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES PAPER

S Hewitt summarised the paper, highlighting that the target before the summer was to save 1.5 million and the College have managed to save 1.8 million. The latest paper has now been shared with Trade Unions, local Union officials and all staff. S Hewitt advised that the 3 Trade Union disputes remain open, but he is confident these can be resolved in the next few weeks.

S Hewitt noted that, due to staff departures, around 320 years of experience has left the College. The college could take some time to recover from the loss of knowledge and expertise.

D Mackenzie commended the team for avoiding compulsory redundancies and praised staff for working as a team.

S Hewitt noted this was an all-staff effort as many staff shared their ideas and suggestions of ways to make savings via the consultation email inbox. The suggestions contributed to amendments to approximately 50% of the original plans. S Hewitt noted that every VS application was scrutinised by the Executive team as a recurring saving was required.

D Mackenzie asked how staff who had had their application for voluntary severance declined were feeling and how motivated they are to continue working at the college. A Mawhirt noted conversations are ongoing with staff who weren't successful in applying for VS.

S Hewitt added the overall feedback from the all-staff event was positive and staff are taking the message seriously, around getting back to just being a College again. Staff are concerned around the long-term future of student recruitment and employment.

B Lawrie asked if there has been a demand in staff working reduced hours to save money. S Hewitt confirmed these types of options have contributed to the saving of 1.8 million, with some staff reducing hours or moving to term time contracts.

7. VP PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

A Mawhirt summarised the report, highlighting that VS is expected to open again at some point.

A Mawhirt confirmed the 2021/22 Support Staff pay offer was approved and negotiations are expected to start again on the 2022/23 pay offer.

A Mawhirt noted that there have been no further developments with the national job evaluation. Union Reps within support areas, have now left the College through retirement or VS and union officials will join the JCF meetings in the short term. A new teacher's union for staff is being launched in college - NASUWT - and B Carmichael has been involved in setting this up. Formal discussions around the new union will take place soon.

A Mawhirt noted that Gail Graham (Quality Manager) has been shortlisted in the College Development Network (CDN) awards for colleague of the year and Student Association for the work carried out around the retention calls.

Paper was noted.

8. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

S Hewitt noted he is hopeful the 2021/22 academic negotiations will be closed off in October.

S Hewitt noted the 2022/23 negotiations are asking for a 11% increase, which could lead to difficult negotiations as the budget only reflects a 2% increase. A Joint National Consultation meeting is scheduled later in the month.

9. HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT

B Grace provided an update on Health and Safety, noting the College have appointed Sandy Fowler as the Health and Safety Officer. B Grace noted that managing COVID-19 requirements has been the major Health and Safety focus over the last year. All mandatory requirements such as fire drills have continued to take place in an adapted manner due to hybrid working, but these will be back to normal once fire wardens are back on campus and in offices.

B Grace noted the number of near misses reported over the last two years, have been extremely low due to the lack of staff and students on campus. B Grace advised that he is keen to see these increase to support accident prevention measures. J Carnegie noted the team are looking at QR codes for staff and students to report near misses and record them.

D Mackenzie asked where Mental Health first aid is being captured and recorded. B Grace confirmed this is recorded through Student Services for students and the People Team for staff.

B Lawrie asked if there are enough qualified First Aiders back onsite. B Grace confirmed there have always been enough first aiders onsite with a rota in place for cover arrangements.

10. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Hewitt outlined the Risk Register and noted the proposal to remove the COVID-19 risk register as a stand-alone risk register with pandemic/major public health incident to be embedded into the main risk register. This will be taken to Audit and Risk Committee next week. HRDC committee approved for this to go to Audit and be removed.

L O'Donnell queried around the compulsory redundancy being featured within the register and what risk this is. **ACTION: S Hewitt to investigate.**

11. HR METRICS

HR Metrics were noted by the Committee.

A Mawhirt noted the staff turnover rate is too low, however the team are comfortable with where the College are with this.

L O'Donnell asked how Sector benchmarking looks. A Mawhirt confirmed the numbers are strong in comparison between other Colleges and the national HR strategic group will take forward formal benchmarking arrangements.

No further questions or comments.

12. COVID 19 UPDATE

S Hewitt noted this has covered within the Health and Safety report and Risk Register. B Grace noted every classroom and workshop have signs up reminding them to ventilate by opening windows etc.

S Hewitt noted staff are transitioning to being back on campus, however the College is faced with challenges of staff returning after two years working from home. S Hewitt noted flexibility is still there and staff can still work from home, where it's suitable.

A Mawhirt highlighted discussions are taking place with staff who are concerned about the impact of not getting the same amount of work done onsite and with other staff who are missing colleagues and feeling isolated working from home.

D Mackenzie asked if long covid is an issue. A Mawhirt confirmed not a huge issue within the College and not a lot of staff are off with long covid. S Hewitt noted national unions are keeping this up the agenda and looking across the sector.

13. MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES

These were noted.

14. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 10 November 2022, 5.00pm via MS Teams

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
Agenda Item 10 – Compulsory Redundancy to be updated in Risk Register.	S Hewitt	15 September 2022