

BOARD OF MANAGEMENT

Human Resources and Development Committee Thursday 10 November 2022



Draft confirmed by Chair

Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 10 November 2022 at 5.00pm, MS Teams.

PRESENT: D Mackenzie K Keay
S Hewitt
G Robertson
S Stirling
B Lawrie

IN ATTENDANCE: A Mawhirt (Head of People and Organisational Development) M Sanderson (Executive Secretary)

1. WELCOME

D Mackenzie welcomed members to the meeting.

2. APOLOGIES

Apologies were noted from N Lowden, B Grace, J Carnegie, and J Grace.

3. DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

4. MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING – 15 September 2022

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

5. MATTERS ARISING

There were no matters arising.

6. VP PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

S Taylor summarised the report, highlighting the reopening of the VS scheme and the launch of Thrive with D&A, a programme launched to help tackle the cost-of-living Crisis for both Students and Staff. S Taylor noted the College were offering free soup and roll in the catering outlets for all students and staff. There was a scheme in place, if staff with to donate each month or make a one off payment to support the activities. The team were progressing funding bids to make this initiative sustainable going forward. S Taylor and S Hewitt noted the group were looking at other ways to help tackle the cost-of-living crisis, including showing free films and possibly the World Cup matches at the Gardyne Theatre.

S Taylor noted the Graduation was a huge success and it was good to see students celebrating their success with family and friends. It was noted that all of the speakers at the Graduation, were ex-students.

S Hewitt noted to the committee the care leaver pledge has been extended.

S Taylor noted A Mawhirt and S Stirling had been working on guidance to be issued to staff, in terms of hybrid working. The guidance will help managers navigate conversations with staff around working from campus and from home. The vast majority of teams and activities were now back on campus, but opportunities did exist to enhance services and ways of working by making use of the flexibilities that hybrid working offered.

D MacKenzie asked if there had been an increase in flexible working requests. A Mawhirt confirmed the team hadn't seen a rise, not any more than the usual number of requests.

B Lawrie noted the guidance paper was welcome and created a good balance for staff, although some managers might have difficult conversations with staff who were keen to continue to primarily work from home.

S Taylor highlighted to the committee that Education Scotland had been on campus on Wednesday and Thursday this week. The feedback from Education Scotland was excellent and S Hewitt noted it was good to get this very positive feedback after a difficult few years.

Paper was noted.

7. NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE

S Taylor noted this was usually covered within the VP Report, for the Committee, but that there were some significant developments progressing and it was felt to be worthwhile to provide a more detailed update.

S Taylor summarised the key areas of development nationally and the key risks and areas that might have complications. The cost-of-living crisis was noted as a significant factor due to the impact of inflation on earnings compared with the ability of the sector to afford an increase rising.

This made negotiations more challenging, with S Taylor noting that there had already been strike action in all but one of the years since national bargaining had been reintroduced.

G Robertson asked if Government funding was available to support increases. S Taylor confirmed there was no expectation of additional funding.

S Taylor explained to the Committee there were currently no Unison representatives locally, and only one GMB representative. Work was progressing to seek to identify and encourage local representatives to step forward.

S Taylor noted there was slow progress being made with the national Job Evaluation process, but that the ranked order of College posts was expected soon. Whilst this progress was welcomed, it was noted that some of the bigger areas of likely dispute were still to come, particularly around national salary scales and grades.

Other national disputes were being progressed but had not yet been resolved.

It was noted that work was progressing slowly at a national level in respect of a range of national policies. It was pleasing to note that the menopause policy had been agreed nationally, with this based significantly on work undertaken at D&A.

Locally it was noted that relationships were good and had improved following the strain placed on these by the recent savings plan. S Taylor highlighted to the Committee that the dispute with EIS/FELA had been resolved and it was anticipated that the dispute with GMB would also be resolved soon. Discussions were to be progressed with Unison, but this was difficult given that there were no local representatives.

The resolution of the disputes was welcome, and S Taylor noted that this paved the way for a 'lessons learned' exercise to be progressed.

The Committee welcomed the update and noted the areas of national work being progressed.

8. STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER

S Taylor noted the Risk Register for approval, with no areas of change.

S Taylor noted that the Audit and Risk Committee had agreed to review aspects of the Risk Register, with this scheduled for completion in spring 2023.

G Robertson noted it was positive that the Committee papers, such as the VP reports incorporate the impact of risks.

The Committee approved the paper.

9. HR METRICS

HR Metrics were noted by the Committee.

S Taylor noted the headcount figures are based on the annual staffing return.

The figures were reviewed and a spike in COVID absences, around April time once restrictions started to ease, was noted.

No further questions or comments.

10. MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES

These were noted, and the additional information within the JCF minute was welcomed.

11. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Thursday 16 February 2022, 5.00pm via MS Teams

Action Point Summary

Action	Responsibility	Date
No actions noted		