# logo_colourBOARD OF MANAGEMENT

**Human Resources and Development Committee**

**Thursday 7 September 2023**

**Draft**

## Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 7 September 2023 at 5.00pm, in Room A625, Kingsway Campus.

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| **PRESENT:** | D Mackenzie | D Smith |
|  | B Lawrie | K Buchan |
|  | S Hewitt | D Rosie |
|  | C Cusick |  |

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| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | S Taylor (Vice Principal) | P Muir (Board Administrator) |
|  | A Mawhirt (Head of People & OD) | J Grace (Vice Principal) |
|  | K Buchan (HR Manager) |  |

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|  | **WELCOME**  D Mackenzie welcomed Committee members. |
|  | **APOLOGIES**  Apologies were received from J Buchanan, N Lowden, S Stirling, J Carnegie, and B Grace |
|  | **DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST**  There were no declarations of interest or connection. |
|  | **MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**  The minute of the meeting held on Thursday 4 May 2023 was approved as an accurate record. |
|  | **MATTERS ARISING**  There were no matters arising. |
|  | **2023/24 KEY PRIORITIES FOR STAFF**  S Hewitt highlighted the success of the two all staff development days at the start of session. This included the College’s ‘traditional’ welcome back to the new academic year at Gardyne campus with operational updates from a range of teams.  S Hewitt had welcomed staff to the event and set out the priorities for the year ahead- the importance of sustainability, stability, and support. C.400 staff had attended the session, with around 250 in person and 150 online viewing the live stream. The afternoon saw a range of sessions available to staff, with academic staff engaging with the Quality team and support staff able to choose from a range of inputs.  S Hewitt stated the feedback on the format and organisation has generally been positive with staff enjoying the opportunity to get back on campus in larger groups, catch up on what is happening and reconnect with colleagues.  The key messages for the year were summarised and S Hewitt noted that he was keen that there was a consistency around the use of these to inform priorities and developments.  J Grace highlighted the sustainability for staff- she expressed that this sustainability is translated into meetings, with managers providing clear, concise, and calm leadership which is filtering through their staff and reflecting onto their hard work as teams.  C Cusick praised and recognised the openness and transparent culture that the college provides to staff and students.  The report was welcomed by the Committee. |
|  | **MORE SUSTAINABLE COLLEGE SAVINGS PLAN OUTCOMES**  S Hewitt summarised progress in respect of the financial sustainability papers, with the College proactively managing the financial situation to seek to provide financial stability and sustainability going forward. S Hewitt stated it remained a challenging time for the College, however it is in a better financial position than before with a solid foundation to work from.  S Hewitt highlighted that work and discussions had progressed significantly in terms of the savings needed, with the total savings achieved sitting at £2.7 million relative to the £2.5 million target through a combination of savings and additional income. This represented a c10% savings taken out over the two years, without any compulsory redundancies being required.  S Hewitt noted that engagement with Trade Unions remains positive, with good working relationships to support staff through a difficult and challenging situation.  Recruitment continued to be a focus, with all areas actively recruiting students and although recruitment had been initially challenging, student numbers have increased.  S Taylor highlighted as the savings plan has progressed, an increased number of Voluntary Severance (VS) applications have been received and approved. This has supported the savings plan outcomes and assisted the College to match staffing needs against revised curriculum and operating plans and needs.  C Cusick raised a suggestion with regards to the College savings plan and suggested a four-working week may be beneficial. S Taylor stated this idea had already been considered with ongoing discussion and consultations however, as J Grace explained this was challenging as the College was committed to providing a full five-day working week to apprentices and schools.  Overall substantial progress had been made across all points of the savings plan, with the key elements outlined within the June 2023 implementation paper almost complete. The combination of voluntary severance, natural vacancies, non-pay savings and increased income has allowed the College to meet the minimum £2.5million target outlined within the plan and, importantly, allowed the College to remove the risk of compulsory redundancy in respect of this.  S Taylor discussed the Audit Scotland Report that had recently been published. This report identified the risks to the college sector’s financial sustainability, stating they have increased since their previous report in 2022, in which they reported that change was needed to ensure the sector’s financial sustainability in the long term.  The impact of the savings plan were discussed and J Grace noted that student numbers had only declined by 4% despite a reduction in 9% of courses offered. This was welcomed as an increase in efficiency and also as evidence of more limited impact on student opportunities whilst still supporting financial sustainability.  Progress in respect of the savings plans and the information provided around the related changes was welcomed.   1. **VP PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT (INC NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE)**   S Taylor noted the feedback from the Voluntary Sevarance (VS) scheme, with an increased number of VS applications received and approved. Applications started early last year, saving almost 40 FTE, with some applications still to be finalised. This has supported the savings plan outcomes and assisted the College to match staffing needs against revised curriculum and operating plans and needs.  Developments around national bargaining were noted. S Taylor highlighted the ongoing negotiations for both academic and support staff. Negotiations for the 2022/23 and 2003/24 academic staff salary settlements remain difficult, with a final offer of £2000 for 2022/23 and £1500 for 2023/24 on all salary points being rejected and a ballot on industrial action returning a majority vote.  Both EIS/FELA and Unison had commenced strike action, with the first day taking place on 7 September. Around 39% of academic staff and 225 of support staff had taken part in the action at D&A.  S Taylor highlighted that the College was pleased to confirm a local union representative for Unison. Richard Gordon (IT Technician) has been appointed to this role and is currently completing the national training required to become a fully approved representative.  Unison officers have attended the College in recent weeks to seek to encourage further representation, and the College has worked with representatives from the national Unison FE branch in respect of the savings plan.  S Taylor stated the Scottish Government is in the process of amending legislation to create the roles of Trade Union Nominated Board Members for Colleges. This new legislation is planned to come into effect from January 2024 with elections and appointment of these new Board members planned to take place in October/November 2023.  S Taylor highlighted the importance of the Thrive with D&A project. A significant and valuable support for our students and many staff. Following consideration by the Executive team, and reflection / evaluation from the Students’ Association, it has been confirmed that the Thrive initiative and work will continue throughout 2023/24.  D Mackenzie asked about the impact of VS in terms of courses and activity and S Taylor stated that every Voluntary Severance (VS) application is considered on a case-by-case basis, matching the applications against the changes in the course portfolio and looking at the organisation impact and financial benefits.  A Mawhirt summarised development sin respect of lecturer registration arrangements with the General Teaching Council of Scotland (GTCS) highlighting that this would now allow almost all college staff to progress with their GTCS membership.  Changes to the structure of the People Team, progress around the iTrent project and maternity leave arrangements for A Mawhirt were noted.  The report was welcomed and the Committee passed on their best wishes to Abi. |
|  | **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**  S Taylor noted the review being undertaken of the Risk Register but highlighted that no changes were proposed in respect of the risks allocated to the Human Resource and Development Committee.  The paper was approved. |
|  | **HR METRICS**  HR Metrics were noted by the Committee. |
|  | **MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES**  The Joint Consultative Committee (JCF) and Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&W) minutes were noted. |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  Thursday 9 November 2023, 5pm, Room A625, Kingsway Campus |

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| **Action Point Summary** |  |  |
| **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Date** |
| No action points noted |  |  |