# logo_colourBOARD OF MANAGEMENT

**Human Resources and Development Committee**

**Thursday 9 November 2023**

**Draft**

## Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 9 November 2023 at 5.00pm, in Room A625, Kingsway Campus.

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| **PRESENT:** | N Lowden | D Smith |
|  | B Lawrie | S Hewitt |
|  | K Ditcham | M Beattie |
|  | C Cusick |  |

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| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | S Taylor (Vice Principal / Secretary to the Board) | P Muir (Board Administrator) |
|  | J Grace (Vice Principal Curriculum & Attainment) | K Buchan (HR Manager) |
|  | B Grace (Head of Estates) |  |

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|  | **WELCOME**  N Lowden noted that he was chairing the meeting in the absence of D Mackenzie and welcomed committee members and welcomed M Beattie to his first Human Resources and Development Committee. |
|  | **APOLOGIES**  Apologies were received from D Mackenzie, J Carnegie, J Buchanan, and D Rosie. |
|  | **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 7 September 2023 was approved as an accurate record. |
|  | **MATTERS ARISING**  There were no matters arising. |
|  | **PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT**  S Taylor summarised and highlighted the final elements of the College savings plan and how they have progressed decisions in respect of the remaining pending applications have been made as final staffing and structure changes are progressed.  This has resulted in two further Voluntary Severance (VS) applications being progressed since the last meeting, bringing the total VS savings achieved to c£2.1 million at an estimated VS cost of c£976k.  Given the on-going need for savings, it is proposed that the voluntary severance scheme will reopen again in late 2023 through to early 2024. This would be on an enabling basis, with no specific savings targets or areas to be reduced.  B Lawrie asked if the number of future VS applications could be a concern given recent schemes and asked about the ability to fund future VS. S Taylor noted that as an enabling scheme there were no specific targets, so no specific level of interest was needed. It was noted that future funding of VS was challenging as cash reserved diminished, however, this will continue to be monitored. The scheme generated savings, so was a necessary step going forward.  S Taylor highlighted 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 has been delayed slightly by the government and was expected to be approved around the end of January 2024.  S Taylor noted the developments in the iTrent HR/Payroll system and noted that these changes should support better reporting. As part of this transition, it is proposed that the current structure and format of the HR metrics provided to the HR Committee will be reviewed and any changes brought forward to a future meeting, probably in May 2024. As part of this development, it is anticipated that clearer data will be able to be provided on a basis that requires significantly less manual manipulation. A proposal in respect of planned changes will be brought forward to the Committee once finalised.  S Taylor highlighted the ten-year anniversary for Dundee & Angus College and the recognition of its success.  N Lowden thanked S Taylor for the report. |
|  | **NATIONAL BARGAINING**  S Taylor highlighted the paper, summarising recent developments around a range of national bargaining points. Following conclusion of the 2021/2022 academic and support staff negotiations, arrangements were progressed in respect of the 2022/2023 and then 2023/2024 settlements (effective from 1 September 2022 and 1 September 2023 respectively). This offer equates to almost 10% at the lowest academic salary point. Despite on-going national discussions, no settlements have yet been reached and details around the current situation for each staff group are summarised below.  Negotiations for the 2022/23 and 2003/24 academic staff salary settlements remained difficult, with a final offer of £2000 for 2022/23 and £1500 for 2023/24 on all salary points being rejected and ballots on industrial action returning a majority vote. Notification of planned action consisting of a ‘work to rule’ and action to withhold student results was enacted for Academic Staff from 2 May 2023 with some staff taking part in this action and work was undertaken to minimise the impact (particularly of the resulting boycott) on student progression. Strike action by academic staff was confirmed, with strikes undertaken on 7 and 21 September 2023 and on 2,3 and 4 October 2023. The College remained open on these dates with c30% of academic staff involved in the action and steps were taken to minimise disruption to learning.  Action by support staff on 7 and 21 September 2023 and on 4 October 2023 had resulted in c14% of support staff being on strike.  S Taylor reported further national discussions and the intervention of the Minister, it was proposed that a three-year deal to be considered (2021/22, 2022/23 and 2023/24) with an offer of £1500 on all salary points being made for year 3 alongside the £2000 and £1500 offers for years 1 and 2. This had been rejected by EIS/FELA and Unison, with a counter offer of £8000 being made by EIS/FELA. Discussion in respect of the year 3 settlements are on-going with no immediate signs of a resolution being imminent.  It has been advised nationally that a further EIS/FELA ballot on strike and action short of strike action is likely to be announced in the near future. Assuming this meets the required threshold then further action would be likely to be announced at some point in the new year. A further ballot by Unison was already underway.  Alongside discussion on pay, dispute has also arisen, and discussions are ongoing for a national sector wide guarantee on no compulsory redundancies.  S Taylor highlighted the National Job Evaluation, with work continuing to progress slowly. Concerns have been reported to support unions nationally regarding the accuracy and validity of the job evaluation outcomes created and concern exists that this data (as of September 2018) is reaching a point where it may be too out of date to be reasonably used to inform job evaluation outcomes.  Alongside these issues, concerns also exist around the availability and security of SFC funding that has been ringfenced since 2018 to support the costs of moving to a new pay and grading system. The substantial funds nationally (c£61million) and the current funding crisis across the public sector present a greater risk around: retention, the agreement, and access to these funds.  Brian Lawrie asked about the value to the College of the funds held by SFC to support the implementation of national job evaluation. These amount to £676k per year and are backdated to 1 September 2018 so amounted to £3.3million at 31 August 2023.  These funds are held by SFC (not the College) and would be allocated on implementation of the project with the final arrangements and methodology for this not yet known.  S Taylor noted that National Policy discussions were ongoing. These policies have proven to be challenging with only one policy having been agreed- National Menopause Policy. K Buchan highlighted that the Discipline and Grievance policy is currently sitting with the union, and it was hoped that these would be agreed without too much delay.  The report was welcomed by the Committee. |
|  | **HEALTH & SAFETY ANNUAL REPORT**  B Grace highlighted the Health & Safety Annual Report. He stated the ongoing mandatory training is held through EduCare/TES Institute which is the current Mandatory Training Provider for the College. Training has moved into reoccurring ‘themed years’ with different health and safety themes covered within the mandatory training. This will then form the basis of the ongoing update of mandatory training across the College for all staff, subject to Estates Monthly Monitoring procedure.  Further to the ongoing review of Fire Risk Assessment Procedures within all campuses, it was identified that (with the expansion of hybrid working) there were possible gaps in the availability of staff on campuses to perform the roles of Fire Reporting Officer, Fire Warden, trained Evac Chair operator during an emergency evacuation. To address this, a draft Fire Emergency Evacuation Procedure proposal has been developed with new procedures supported by the placement of 75 new EES boards (Evacuation Emergency Stations) within all 3 campuses.  B Grace reported that Fire evacuation drills were successful and carried out on all three campuses with buildings efficiently evacuated. The arrangements in place had also been identified as good practice by the fire service.  B Grace highlighted the success of the audit undertaken by Henderson Loggie during the early months of 2023. The final report was positive; various strengths demonstrated with two minor recommendations identified, which have been implemented and closed out.  B Grace highlighted the Estates team have managed to successfully secure additional funding to upgrade all current fire alarm systems within the college to the new multi-sensor fire alarms, this allows direct contact and a response to the fire service.  D Smith noted that the volume of the fire alarm was quite low in some areas. B Grace stated he will investigate this and adjust the volume accordingly.  N Lowden praised the report, the developments taking place and the clear and structured approach to these. |
|  | **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**  S Taylor 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**  S Taylor highlighted the HR metrics to the Committee, discussing the FTE and headcount data. This data is easier to gather, giving a more accurate record of staffing data each time.  S Taylor noted that there was an error within the staff absence data arising from double counting due to the transition from Hydrogen to iTrent systems. It was noted that this could be corrected, but would require significant manual intervention to do so. S Taylor asked if the Committee were comfortable to leave this data as it was and transition to the new data. This was agreed and S Taylor and K Buchan assured the Committee that the absence figure differences would rectify over time. Following discussion the Committee confirmed unanimous approval for this approach to be taken. |
|  | **MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES**  Updates from the Joint Consultative Committee and Health, safety and wellbeing Committee were noted with interest. |
|  | **Date of Next Meeting**  Thursday 15 February 2024 at 5.00pm in room A625, Kingsway Campus. |

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