# logo_colourBOARD OF MANAGEMENT

**Human Resources and Development Committee**

Thursday 2 May 2024 at 5.00pm **Room A625, Kingsway Campus**

## Minute of the Human Resources and Development Committee meeting held on Thursday 2 May 2024 at 5.00pm, in Room A625, Kingsway Campus.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **PRESENT:** | Donald Mackenzie | Stephen Oakley |
|  | Brian Lawrie | Simon Hewitt |
|  | Neil Lowden | Matthew Beattie |
|  | Carri Cusick |  |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **IN ATTENDANCE:** | Steven Taylor (Vice Principal Support Services and Operations) | |
|  | Karen Buchan (HR Manager) | Billy Grace (Head of Estates) |
|  | Penny Muir (Board Administrator) |  |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
|  | **WELCOME**  D Mackenzie welcomed committee members to the Human Resources & Development Committee meeting. |
|  | **APOLOGIES**  Apologies received from Julie Grace, Jackie Buchanan and Daniel Rosie. |
|  | **DECLARATIONS OF CONNECTION & INTEREST**  There were no declarations of interest or connection. |
|  | **APPOINTMENT OF A VICE CHAIR**  One nomination was received from S Oakley for the position of the Vice Chair. The Committee approved this nomination. |
|  | **MINUTE OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**  The minute of the meeting held on 15 February 2024 was approved as an accurate record. |
|  | **MATTERS ARISING**  There were no matters arising. |
|  | **PEOPLE, OD & COMMUNICATIONS REPORT**  S Taylor summarised the paper, noting that it remained important for the College to achieve savings and manage costs and that the voluntary severance scheme has been reopened from the end of April 2024, until the end of the academic session.  S Taylor summarised the application numbers and savings achieved to date and noted that further work on this would progress over the coming weeks.  S Taylor highlighted the Digital Strategy & Development Support progressing over recent months and stated that efforts have been concentrated on exploring opportunities particularly for teams and subjects where there has been a notable reliance on photocopying and paper assessments.  S Taylor highlighted that efforts are underway to enhance staff proficiency and familiarity with the adoption of new technologies. This initiative includes promoting Artificial Intelligence and systems such as Power Automate to streamline work processes, as well as the utilisation of Power BI to strengthen the foundation for data-driven analysis and decision-making.  It was noted that a Special Interest Group was focusing on Artificial Intelligence and was exploring the appropriate application of AI within educational and business contexts, delineating its potential uses, as well as establishing guidance and good practice regarding its use.  D Mackenzie noted the rapid evolution of technological developments and asked about the challenges of ensuring that student work had not been created by AI. S Taylor noted that this could be a challenge and that AI generated text did not always show up on anti-plagiarism tools. S Taylor noted that the key to this was around the interaction between staff and their students and teaching staff being aware of the level of knowledge and development that their students were showing so that any change would be recognised. This included the use of discussion and active questioning with students.  S Oakley stated that he agreed with this and noted that it was very clear where assessment work was presented that differed from what was being seen in the class or through discussion and interaction with students.  S Taylor noted that the staff survey had closed that day, with c470 responses achieved and high level results similar to previous surveys. It was acknowledged that while there are areas of strength, there is also a need for concerted efforts in other areas to address lower scores and some persistent areas of feedback.  B Lawrie enquired whether the results of the survey could prompt adjustments to the people strategy and S Hewitt confirmed that this was the case and emphasised the flexibility of the strategy to adapt and address the identified needs and priorities highlighted from the survey results.  S Taylor emphasised the continued progress of CPD activities and support initiatives facilitated by the Academic Development Teams and Learning and Teaching Mentors. This included plans to undertake an online survey with academic and support staff groups. The survey aims to identify areas for development and gather insights into preferences regarding the delivery and provision of CPD support.  S Taylor noted that the annual staff awards ceremony is scheduled for June 20th and extended an invitation to Board members who may be interested in attending.  The report and update on key points and developments was welcomed. |
|  | **REVISED PEOPLE STRATEGY**  S Taylor noted that the final draft of the updated strategy had been provided to help inform discussion alongside the presentation.  S Taylor stated that the People Strategy was currently undergoing updating and would be subject to future change upon the implementation of the new College strategy.  S Taylor provided an overview of the People Strategy highlighting its purpose to support and align the overall delivery of the college's objectives. The strategy aims to enhance the staff experience, provide guidance and support for Organisational Development (OD) and People Team services, and establish a clear direction for the College, focusing on two main areas. Improving staff experience to contribute to the overall delivery of the college's objectives and ensuring the delivery of high-quality HR and OD services by the team.  S Taylor outlined the key themes from the People Strategy, and highlighted the range of strategic objectives and key tasks that would support achievement of these.  Monitoring progress and outcomes was also essential, with an emphasis placed on ensuring that the HR metrics and reporting already in place highlighted the information and data needed to assess the success of the strategy. S Taylor noted that this reporting should be easily seen in reports around activities such as the staff survey outcomes, Joint Consultative Forum (JCF) minutes, HR metrics, Board reports and ultimately in the overall College outcomes and student results.  C Cusick expressed appreciation for the detailed overview provided and asked about the focus on diversity, stating that she would like to see more explicit and active inclusion activity highlighted in the document. S Taylor acknowledged this, noting that it was in the strategy but could be outlined more clearly.  C Cusick stated that she felt that the references to the importance of staff efficiency and productivity suggesting a need for strengthened language in acknowledging efforts related to staff reward, recognition, flexibility, and professionalism. S Taylor noted this feedback and agreed to revisit the wording in both sections to ensure it accurately reflects the organisation’s commitment to these aspects. **S Taylor to progress.**  D Mackenzie asked about the steps the team should take to validate its effectiveness. In response, S Taylor emphasised that validation would occur through reporting and monitoring processes, ultimately aligning with the achievement of the overall College strategy and outcomes. K Buchan added that the People Strategy group are actively involved in this development and has committed to examining the data to assess the effectiveness.  D Mackenzie thanked S Taylor for the update. |
|  | **NATIONAL BARGAINING UPDATE**  S Taylor highlighted this report, noting that despite on-going national discussions, no settlements have yet been reached.  Since the last update, funding allocations have been released and that the funding remains flat cash, with the removal of all additional funds such as the Flexible Workforce Fund and funding for addressing digital poverty and student counsellors. S Taylor clarified that both the unions and employers had been told that there will be no additional funding from the Government.  S Taylor highlighted the on-going industrial action, with College engagement standing at around 20% of staff on each strike day. Unison has announced a strike day for Monday the 13th of May, while EIS has declared a further 9 strike days from May into June.  Expressing frustrations, S Hewitt underscored the ongoing challenges in finding a short-term solution, noting the Scottish Government's assertion that there is no additional funding to be made available. It is apparent that flat cash funding is the best-case scenario, and planning for this over the next few years is necessary and essential.  D Mackenzie asked about the mood within the College and S Taylor highlighted the desire from staff was mainly for the deal to be settled, the strikes to stop and payment of the increases to be made.  C Cusick raised concerns about the impasse and the on-going impact of strike action of students and also staff. S Taylor highlighted with flat cash decisions become incredibly challenging. He stated that there needed to be a change of approach or different intervention to change things nationally and stated that lessons needed to be learned from past experiences, including appointing a neutral chair for national bargaining. However, opinions on this varied. S Taylor noted that some element of compromise on all sides is crucial to progress.  S Oakley highlighted the positive relationship between trade unions and the College locally, emphasising that there was open communication and collaborative problem-solving.  D Mackenzie noted the concern of the Committee at the lack of national progress, but welcomed the comments regarding local arrangements and thanked S Taylor for the detailed update. |
|  | **STRATEGIC RISK REGISTER**  S Taylor summarised the paper presented, noting that there were no changes to the risks allocated to the Human Resources & Development Committee.  B Lawrie noted the new risk added in March 2024 (3.12) and asked if this should be allocated to the Human Resources & Development Committee. It was confirmed that it should, and this would be updated. **S Taylor to progress.**  The paper was approved. |
|  | **HR METRICS**  S Taylor highlighted that an error had been found in the FTE data resulting in the comparative data being inaccurate. This would be updated for the next meeting. **S Taylor to progress.**  C Cusick questioned the increase in work related stress absences within the HR Metrics, rising from 12 to 19 cases. S Taylor explained that while these numbers did fluctuate over time and gave an assurance that there were active conversations and ongoing input through the People Team to pick up on and resolve issues, with progress being continuously reviewed.  K Buchan stated that stress at work typically results from a combination of factors, with very few cases solely attributed to work-related issues.  C Cusick asked about the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) training completion rate, which stood at 73% of staff, leaving a quarter of the staff yet to complete it. S Taylor acknowledged that this completion rate was not high enough and noted that this would be picked up when this training came around again on the usual rolling cycle.  D Mackenzie asked about engagement and completion of Development Reviews activities. S Taylor confirmed that this was an annual rolling cycle of reviews, with follow-ups conducted as necessary. It was noted that work was progressing to transfer the process online which would streamline operations for staff, managers and the OD and People Team. Moving to an online system would facilitate easier tracking and enable targeted support or encouragement in specific areas.  K Buchan emphasised a shift towards prioritising quality conversations to support staff, rather than the focus on completing paperwork and noted that the system in place was designed to encourage a natural flow of discussions, allowing managers to engage with individuals when it suited them, without becoming overly focused on the documentation.  The Committee noted the range of HR Metrics. |
|  | **MEETING MINUTES/UPDATES**  The Joint Consultative Committee (JCF) and Health, Safety and Wellbeing (HS&W) minutes were noted.  B Grace reported that Health and Safety training among managers and staff was nearly complete, with significant engagement and positive feedback. B Grace noted that it was planned that Sandy Fowler, the Health & Safety Officer be invited to the next meeting to present on the work being progressed around Health, Safety and Wellbeing.  B Lawrie stated that he welcomed the minutes and the range of areas and issues they covered. He noted that he also liked the use of full names in the attendance list (rather than just first initials) and asked that this be adopted for Board papers, S Taylor noted that this could be done. **S Taylor to progress.** |
|  | **DATE OF NEXT MEETING**  Thursday 5 September 2024 at 5.00pm in Room A625, Kingsway Campus |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Action Point Summary** |  |  |
| **Action** | **Responsibility** | **Date** |
| Revise the People Strategy | S Taylor / K Buchan | 31 May 2024 |
| Allocate responsibility for risk 3.12 to the HR&D Committee | S Taylor | 5 June 2024 |
| Correct comparative FTE in HR metrics and reissue | S Taylor | 31 May 2024 |
| Display full names in the attendance section of minutes | S Taylor | 28 May 2024 |