

MINUTES

Minutes of the Health and Safety and Human Resources Committee meeting held on Tuesday 23 February 2021 at 3.30pm via Microsoft Teams.

Present: Tony Martin (Chair), Jen Anderson, Jade Burnett, Garry Dickson, Hugh Hall

In Attendance: Sue Reekie, Zeldia Franklin-Hills, Mark Goodall, Alastair Leadbetter, Karen Stenhouse, Marianne Philp

1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed those present to the meeting.

2 Working Relationships: Trade Unions and Management

Pete Jones (EIS representative) joined the meeting. It was noted that the UNISON representative had sent apologies due to other commitments, and had instead submitted some written feedback which the Chair read out. There was a discussion about working relationships between Trade Unions and Management with the following key points noted:

- Working relationships between management and Trade Unions were positive and cordial.
- All discussions were conducted in a spirit of openness, willingness and mutual respect.
- Whilst there may at times have been differences of opinion expressed, this was to be expected and was handled in a professional manner by all involved.
- There was a range of formal and informal communication routes used which also allowed some issues to be addressed more quickly and efficiently.
- Some decisions had been taken recently in response to the Covid-19 pandemic situation where the Trade Unions felt that their input to decision-making could have been useful to the College.

The Chair of the Committee thanked the Trade Union representatives for their input to the meeting. He also advised that the Board of Governors overall had been extremely impressed by the way staff had responded to the Covid-19 pandemic situation, demonstrating their professionalism and commitment to students, and thanked everyone involved.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting: 27 October 2020

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as an accurate record.

4 Matters Arising / Actions Outstanding

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was agreed that, as the information requested in action 1 would not become available until after campuses reopened as normal, this information would routinely be included in future reports at the start of each academic session. The other two actions outstanding were marked as complete.



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5 Health and Safety Update

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that:

- A full Covid-19 Risk Assessment had been undertaken in accordance with Scottish Government guidance
- Arrangements for social distancing, blended learning, communications, cleaning and remote working were all in place, and best practice was being shared amongst colleges
- Information on the number of Covid-19 cases was given and it was noted that no cases had originated in the College
- There had been no RIDDOR reportable incidents in the period, and no other incidents reported since the last meeting
- A key area of activity was supporting staff to undertake safe working practices at home, which included the provision of extra equipment

It was noted that health and safety of students and staff remains an overarching priority when making all decisions. Members of the Committee noted that significant additional work undertaken by the Health and Safety Team and other staff over the past year, and commended them on the exemplary approach taken.

6 Succession Planning

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was confirmed that implementation of the formal part of the Succession Planning Policy had been delayed due to additional work caused by the implementation of the new HR information system whilst remote working, and that this would be picked up as soon. A number of informal opportunities had progressed, for example staff acting-up in temporary roles, leading on workstreams, participating in secondments, etc. It was confirmed that plans were in place to progress with the formal measures soon and a further update would be provided to the Committee in due course.

7 Equalities Mainstreaming Progress Report

The contents of the papers that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that the College had a public sector equality duty to report on equalities. Once approved by the Board of Governors, the report would be published on the website.

It was noted that staff and students are not always willing to disclose information relating to protected characteristics, and the College was trying to make it clearer why this information was requested and how it was being processed to encourage completion. In addition, the ability of staff and students to access their own information and update it may further support this objective.

It was noted that the report was very comprehensive and a lot of detail had been included and members thanked staff involved for the collation of the information.

Decision: To recommend to the Board of Governors the approval of the Equalities Mainstreaming Progress Report.

Responsibility: S Reekie/Z Franklin-Hills

Deadline: 17 March 2021



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8 Equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap Report 2020

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that the College had a public sector equality duty to report on this issue. Once approved, the report would be published on the College's website.

It was confirmed that a few recent changes had impacted on the gender pay gap. Plans were in place to re-run the report prior to the summer and compare the figures again to see if it is simply a timing issue, or to investigate further if required.

It was highlighted that sector comparisons should become available towards the end of the year after reports had been published which would give a benchmark position for Fife College.

Decision: To approve the equal Pay and Gender Pay Gap Report 2020.

Responsibility: Z Franklin-Hills

Deadline: 31 March 2021

9 Age Profile Update

The contents of the report that had been circulated were noted. Members were reminded that this report had been requested at the last meeting. It was confirmed that the College does have an aging workforce, and that this could be addressed as part of the overall workforce planning and succession planning initiatives and would require a long-term approach. It was suggested that work could be developed in a few key areas and evaluated to see what works or does not work before rolling out further.

There was a discussion about health and wellbeing support and it was confirmed that this was being taken forward in various ways, and linked in to the results of the recent staff pulse survey. It was noted that different support and social interactions were in place between various departments and that good practice could be shared and rolled out.

Committee members confirmed that the approaches being taken were appropriate and that the situation should continue to be taken forward as suggested.

10 Delivering the Human Resources Strategy and Workforce Plan 2018-23

The contents of the paper that had been circulated were noted. It was highlighted that three priorities had been agreed for this academic year:

- Digital Interfaces
- Transformation of the OD and HR function
- Employee engagement

Updates on progress were given in relation to each of these areas. In addition, the Covid-19 pandemic situation had resulted in additional work for staff as well as students and had impacted on the work of the team. Pulse surveys had been issued to staff and various additional support measures put in place. The College restructure had also moved forward, and there remained a small number of areas where there was still potential overstaffing.

It was confirmed that feedback from staff was that a hybrid working model would be preferred in the future and this gave opportunities to explore potential new ways of working. A report on



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Lessons from Lockdown had been drafted and this might also inform ways of moving forward. Members commented that it may also impact on the requirements of the new campus, and it was confirmed that the learning would be fed into the project, which would be academically led. The Principal advised that significant work was being undertaken to reshape and refocus our plans and that information would be presented to the Board and/or relevant Committees as and when appropriate.

11 Update on National Bargaining

Members were advised that:

- A pay settlement had not yet been agreed with UNISON and negotiations continued
- There was now a national dispute relating to the post of Trainer/Assessor and discussions were ongoing in this regard

12 Minutes from Committees

The contents of the minutes from Joint Consultative Committee meetings held between 6 November 2020 and 15 January 2021 were noted.

13 Date of Next Meeting

Tuesday 1 June 2021 at 3.30pm