



Board of Management

MINUTES of the MEETING of the HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE held via Microsoft Teams on Thursday 17 September 2020

PRESENT: Innis Montgomery, Chris O’Neil, Andy Gray, Leanne MacKenzie
CHAIR: Innis Montgomery
APOLOGIES: John Wilson, Gillian Galloway
ATTENDING: HR Manager
Board Secretary

There were no declarations of interest.

1. MINUTES

The Minutes of the Meeting of the Human Resources Committee held on 04 June 2020 were **AGREED** as a correct record and were **APPROVED**.

2. OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

- Policies and Procedures – The Board Secretary advised that a link to all policies and procedures would be provided within the Admincontrol site which is currently being set up. This is expected to go live in October.
- CipHR Contract – to be discussed within the Agenda.
- Committee and Chair Evaluations – to be discussed within the Agenda.

3. WORKFORCE PLANNING

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the Director of Organisational Development had updated the strategy document on Workforce Planning, however further work on this is required due to Covid-19 and the impact of this on staff wellbeing.

Currently a staff survey is being created which will focus on:

- staff experiences of working at home during Covid-19
- staff members health and wellbeing
- staff members work preference when able to return to the building.

It was also highlighted to the Committee the importance of the Workforce Plan with regards to:

- The Staffing Resource Panel
- The TSR process.
- The Curriculum Plan.
- CPD Training
- Staff and Student Ratios

- VSS

It was **AGREED** that the HR Manager would prepare a paper on the Workforce Plan for the next meeting to enable further discussion on this matter.

4. **VOLUNTARY SEVERANCE SCHEME - CONFIDENTIAL**

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the VSS will remain open until spring 2021. The Committee was advised that an HR Consultant (Temporary) has been employed to assist with the delivery of the scheme, with identifying alternatives to redundancy and with the SMT restructure.

Confidential discussions on the VSS took place.

The Committee gave their thanks to the HR Team for their exceptional work over the past months and how they have engaged with both staff and unions.

5. **NATIONAL BARGAINING/JOB EVALUATION – CONFIDENTIAL**

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the settlement date of 01 September 2020 for academic pay had been disrupted due to Covid-19. Colleges Scotland have responded to the EIS request and a response from EIS is awaited.

A confidential discussion took place with regards National Bargaining.

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the job evaluations have also been delayed due to Covid-19. Colleges Scotland have this week advised that there may a possible extension until April 2021.

6. **JOB EVALUATION RISK REGISTER – CONFIDENTIAL**

This had been prepared by the Director of Organisational Development with additions made by the HR Manager.

The HR Manager advised the committee that areas which remain red affect the sector as a whole. Currently we are continuing to evaluate the type of service and/or risks to ensure flexibility, efficiencies and reduction of costs however the mitigating actions for some risks are still unknown at present.

7. **HUMAN RESOURCES – QUARTER 4 REPORT – 2019/20**

The HR Manager highlighted the following aspects of her report to the Committee:

- We have a turnover of 1% in respect of core staff which is a decrease of 1.1% from the previous quarter and we have a turnover of 2.6% in respect of total staff turnover which is a 0.7% decrease from the previous quarter.
- We have 394.5 permanent employees and 26 staff on Fixed Term Contracts.
- There were 11 leavers in this quarter which can be broken down as:
 - 6 End of Term Fixed Contracts
 - 3 Resignations

Item 01

- 2 TUPE transfers.
- There were 3 new starts in this quarter with 2 of these being permanent staff and one being a fully funded fixed term contract.
- There had been 9 flexible working requests within this quarter all of which had been approved which will represent a total recurrent saving of 1.6 FTE in 2020/21
- 6 teaching staff transferred to permanent contracts following the completion of 2 years continuous service which represents a total of 3.477 FTE.
- 8 supply assessors were transferred to a permanent contract following the completion of 2 years continuous service which represents a total of 2.7 FTE.
- There are currently 42 staff members furloughed which represents a £132K saving.
- Sickness rates have improved with 254.5 days being taken – 1.1% which is a 1.5 % decrease from the previous quarter. 43.8% of sickness absence was attributable to support staff and 56.2% attributable to academic staff. This is a decrease in respect of support staff but an increase in respect of academic staff.
- In this quarter there were 7 staff who were long term absent – 4 of which have returned, 1 has left and the other 2 remain on long term absence.
- The most common reason for absence in this quarter was mental health followed by stress and anxiety which again identifies the need to focus on the long term effects of Covid-19 on staff's wellbeing.

The Committee gave their thanks for the statistics which were found to be useful and discussions on these highlighted the following:

- Long Term absence of staff from the Finance Team. The Committee noted that capacity within the Finance Team is continuing to be monitored by the Shared Director of Finance with additional support being given by both the HR Manager and the HR Consultant.
- The impact which the conclusion of furloughing at the end of October may have. The Committee noted that most staff have returned to work with only a small amount still furloughed.
- The impact furlough has had on research. With the Committee noting that although there has been delays to some projects this has had not posed any financial detriment to us.
- Catering – concerns with regards reduced income and some staff remaining on the furlough scheme.
- How we are planning to assess what we offer and what staff require with regards their mental health and wellbeing. The Committee noted that the Health, Safety and Wellbeing group will be meeting to discuss the responses from the staff survey. The Committee was advised that the employee assistance programme continues to be promoted to staff and the Wellbeing Team are producing a monthly newsletter.
- The Committee was advised that discussions with HISA mirrors concerns with regards students mental health and wellbeing and it is hoped that the early student experience questionnaire will highlight if this is the case.
- The HR Manager advised the Committee that a campaign which will benefit both staff and students is currently being worked on.

8. EXTERNAL SUPPORT ANNUAL REPORT – **CONFIDENTIAL**

The HR Manager advised the Committee that with regards our Occupational Health Service we have seen improvements with appointments being given in a more timely fashion. Positive discussions have been held with regards the flu vaccine and how this will be rolled out with ELCC staff being a priority to receive this.

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the HR team continue to promote the Employee Assistance Programme and this provision will be reviewed within the new procurement framework later this month.

Confidential discussions took place regarding our HR System and the Committee noted that further discussions are required in order to progress this forward with considerations being given to the length of time it will take for an HR system to be ready to be used.

9. FEEDBACK ON COMMITTEE AND CHAIR EVALUATIONS

The Board Secretary took the Committee through the feedback received from the completed Committee and Chair Evaluations which were carried out offline during the summer.

Discussions on the following actions were discussed:

- Internal Performance Measures – It was **AGREED** that this would be covered by the annual evaluations and that it was felt that appropriate internal performance measures are being received with this being evidenced by the audit trail for the FRP, the VSS and alternatives to redundancies.
- Members having received necessary training – it was **AGREED** that the Board Secretary would ensure that all new Board Members have received their induction and report back to the Committee on this in November. The Committee felt that no further training requirement was needed over and above the core governance training provided.

10. POLICIES AND PROCEDURES FOR APPROVAL

- Special Leave Policy – The HR Manager advised the Committee that this was a newly created policy which draws upon best practice with other providers to ensure that Managers can make consistent decisions. The Committee **APPROVED** the Policy which will now be taken to the Board of Management for final approval.

- Staff Code of Conduct Policy – The HR Manager advised the Committee that the policy had been updated to bring it in line with current legislation, terminology and to ensure legal compliance. The Committee **APPROVED** the Policy which will now be taken to the Board of Management for final approval.

- Staff Recruitment & Selection Policy - The HR Manager advised the Committee that the policy had been updated to bring it in line with current legislation,

terminology and to ensure legal compliance. The Committee **APPROVED** the Policy which will now be taken to the Board of Management for final approval.

However it was highlighted to the Committee the need to ensure the protection of characteristics with regards equality and a discussion on how to bring awareness with regards intersexuality took place. The HR Manager advised the Committee that she would be happy to look at this but felt that this may be a bigger piece of work which encompasses a wider range than just our policies and procedures and it was noted that we would begin to look at a strategic statement with regards inclusion which can then be tested again each policy.

11. EMPLOYEE RELATIONS

The Committee noted the following minutes of meetings:

- Minutes of the Meeting of the JCC – 29 June 2020
- Minutes of the Meeting of the JCC – 04 August 2020
- Minutes of the Meeting of the JCC – 15 June 2020

12. AOCB

The HR Manager advised the Committee that the Partnership Council had begun the process of recruiting a HR Strategic Lead which will encompass a move to a common HR system throughout the partnership. We will continue to monitor how this develops and updates will be brought to the Committee as necessary.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING – Thursday 12 November 2020 at 08.30am.



Signed by the Chair:

Date: 12.11.20