

John Wheatley College
Board of Management
Joint Consultative Committee

**Minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee held on Friday 1 April 2005
at 2pm, in the Alex Viola Suite (Room SO9), Easterhouse Campus**

1. Sederunt

The meeting commenced at 2pm and was attended by:

I Graham (Chair);
A Kirk (Depute Principal);
F Doyle (ACM);
Y McCaig (Unison);
D Sneddon (HR Manager);
S Smith (ACM)(from 2.05pm);
A Allan (EIS/FELA)(from 2.35pm);
J Knowles (EIS/FELA) (from 2.35pm); and
M Woods (EIS/FELA)(from 3.05pm)

In Attendance:

A Inglis (Assistant Principal);
A Sherry (Assistant Principal);
S Wilkie (for recording purposes only);
M Brennan (Financial Advisor to |Board); and
B Forrest (Chief Accountant) .

2. Apologies

None

3. Minutes of the meeting held on:

i) 17 December 2004

The minutes of the meeting were taken as read. They were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 17 December 2004.

ii) 7 January 2005

The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read. They were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 7 January 2005

4. Matters arising from the minutes of the meetings held on 17 December and 7 January 2005

17 December 2004

a) Regrading of Senior Administration Assistant

A Sherry spoke to the report informing members that the previous report submitted to this Committee on 17 December 2004 had an error in the actual cost to the College. He advised that the financial impact to the College was £546.17 instead of £265 which was detailed in the previous report.

Members noted this change and re-iterated their approval of the proposed regrading on this basis.

b) Item 6 – Notes of the Glasgow Colleges’ Principals’ meeting, 1 November 2004

The Principal informed members that Bill Miller, formerly MEP for Central Scotland, had been appointed by SFEFC to head the review of the estates strategy for City Centre colleges.

c) Item 12 – Greater Easterhouse Arts Company (GEAC) – Progress Report

I Graham reported that this project is running approximately one year behind schedule.

7 January 2005

a) Item 7 – Review of Senior Lecturer Workload

I Graham informed members that the EIS/FELA had not submitted a report therefore the College would proceed with the next stage.

It was noted that the Review had not revealed any significant issues of work overload for Senior Lecturers. The Workload Review would form part of the ‘evidence base’ of any wider review of the College’s management structures during 2005/06.

5. Additional Minutes

i) Transfer of the College Library to Glasgow City Council – 27 October 2004

Member noted the contents of these minutes

ii) Transfer of the College Library to Glasgow City Council – 19 January 2005

I Graham informed members that these minutes were included for information as agreed with the Unison branch officials.

Being no questions or comments members noted the contents of these minutes.

UNISON representatives expressed satisfaction with the College's consultation on both an individual and a collective basis.

iii) Support Staff Forum – 13 January 2005

The Principal reported that these minutes and item iv) had been placed on the agenda in error. He informed members that these minutes are routinely considered by SMT and not by the JCC.

He also indicated that he believed that it was not appropriate for a member of SMT to chair this Forum. This defeated the purpose of seeking to involve other supervisors/managers in decision making process.

iv) Draft Support Staff Forum – 3 March 2005

This item was considered above.

v) Draft Equal Opportunities Development Forum

Members noted the contents of these minutes.

vi) Draft Equal Opportunities Development Forum

Members noted the contents of these minutes

6. Correspondence

a) SFEFC

i) 21st century further education in Glasgow city centre

Members noted this correspondence.

ii) Merger proposals from Scottish Further Education Colleges – Revised Guidance

Member agreed to note this correspondence from the SFEFC.

b) ASC

i) Local Government Pension Scheme in Scotland: Consultation

Mr Graham confirmed that the College is only an admitted member of this scheme and noted that the College does not, as a consequence, have influence on decisions taken in respect of its management. He informed members that the College would seek legal advice on the appropriateness of national ballots when there was no national bargaining framework for Further Education colleges.

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence.

ii) Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA) consultation on the review of the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme (STSS)

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence.

c) SPPA – Superannuation (Teachers) Circular Number 2005/1

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence.

d) The Educational Institute of Scotland (EIS) – Academic Freedom: the Case for Legal Protection

The Principal reported that the correspondence from the EIS wishes to see the a statutory right to academic freedom extended from Higher Education to FE lecturers. He opined that as teaching programmes in FE colleges were based on Scottish Qualification Authority, or other external awarding body, frameworks the scope to deviate from the proscribed curriculum was extremely limited and these circumstances the extension of the legal right to academic freedom would not fundamentally alter how lecturers delivered teaching programmes.

Nevertheless the College would consider the implications of a possible change in the law and, if necessary, amend College policies and contracts of employment to ensure compliance. It was noted that the Further and Higher Education (Scotland) Bill was not yet on the Statute Book.

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence.

e) EIS – School Children in Colleges

The Principal reported that this correspondence is for information purposes only.

f) Project Initiatives – Certificate in Personal Safety Awareness

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence.

g) EIS/FELA John Wheatley College Branch Representatives

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence which indicated the new EIS/FELA Branch official structure from the College (following the recent AGM).

h) NHS Greater Glasgow – Consultation on the proposal to relocate the Glasgow Emergency Service base

The Principal reported that Emergency Services for the NHS would be relocated to the Easterhouse Community Health Centre later this calendar year. This put the College within easy reach of a mobile paramedic team.

i) Evaluation of Learning and Teaching Pilot: Establishment of Steering Group

Mr Graham confirmed that Alan Sherry, Jean Wilson, Jan Fella and Catherine Blake would be the representatives on the Steering Group to review the evaluation of learning and teaching pilot. He reminded members the College EIS/FELA branch had nominated J Fella and C Blake.

He also indicated that, if the EIS/FELA Branches wished, the minutes of the Steering Group could appear routinely on the agenda of the JCC (for information purposes).

j) Review of Teaching Provision

I Graham informed members that this report on the reconfiguration of teaching provision was considered at the Board of Management held on 17 March 2005.

The report was available for the generality of staff in the College's Libraries and Information Centres. In addition the next edition of the College newsletter would carry an article in this respect.

The Principal reported that he had responded positively to a suggestion from the EIS/FELA Branch to their involvement in the review of the future management of Widening Access Programmes. A formal response was awaited.

The Principal noted this correspondence is being presented to this Committee for information purposes only.

7. Draft Child Protection Policy and Procedures

The Principal reminded members that they had previously been offered the opportunity to comment on the draft policy and procedures and that changes had been made to reflect the comments received. He reported that the Board had approved the attached policy at its meeting held on 17 March 2005 and that agreed that it should be implemented with immediate effect.

Mr Sherry reported that an appropriate programme of staff development would be undertaken to support the introduction of the policy at future Quality Day Events.

The Principal informed members that, in addition, College managers would ensure that the policy and procedures were considered at programme and project team meetings.

The Depute Principal stated that it would be beneficial for staff to attend sessions in which team are briefed together. Ms Sneddon confirmed that everyone would be briefed by mid May 2005.

Members noted the introduction of the Child Protection Policy and its associated procedures.

8. Further Education National Training Organisation (FENTO) Annual Report 2003-2004

Members agreed to note the contents of this correspondence.

9. Construction Workshops Assistants Posts

S Smith spoke to this report informing members that this report sought to apprise members of the outcome of the review of these two temporary posts. He informed members that the report recommended that these posts should become permanent in order to support the increased curricular provision offered in Construction. In addition the report also recommended that the posts be regraded to scale points 10-12 to more appropriately reflect the duties of the post.

Y McCaig informed members that the Unison branch supported the proposal to make these post permanent and the recommended re-grading.

The Principal reminded members that these posts would be advertised externally in line with College procedures and the two temporary members of staff currently employed in these posts would be eligible to apply. He informed members that it was anticipated that these posts be advertised in the Evening Times and Job Centres in early May 2005.

Members of the Joint Consultative Committee agreed to:

- j) note the contents of the Associate Principal's report and appendices;
- iii) note the increase in remuneration of the Workshops Assistant posts from scale point 8 to scale points 10-12; and
- iii) note that these posts would be advertised externally.

10. Senior Lecturer Workload

The item was not discussed as a report had not been submitted by the EIS/FELA branch for circulation with the papers for this meeting and that no representatives of the EIS/FELA were present at this time.

11. Absence Management – Possible Reforms of Existing Policy - Discussion Paper

Mr Allan and Mr Knowles joined the meeting at this point.

I Graham spoke to the report informing members that this paper proposes a number of possible 'reforms' of the College's Sick Absence Management Policy and Procedures.

He noted that the College's absence rate is slightly below 10% of its staff at any one time and that this has adverse impact both on the learner experience, as recognised by staff in the College SWOT analysis. He reiterated the detrimental impact of high rates of absence on the College's financial security. He also indicated that high sick absence rates contributed to the KPMG Sector-wide Benchmarking exercise indicating that utilisation of staff at the College was amongst the poorest in Scotland.

The Principal informed members that one approach being considered by the College is to remove the current entitlement to sick pay from the contractual arrangements of both teaching and support staff. This would entail a 'buy out' of existing terms and conditions in future wage offers in return for staff agreeing that sick pay entitlement beyond statutory minima should be the individual responsibility of each member of staff by the purchase of appropriate insurance policies.

He also suggested restrictions on the use of GP sick notes by referral of absentees to the College's Occupational Health Advisers.

I Graham informed members of the three less radical approaches to change the existing policy and associated procedures.

He invited the trades unions to bring forward their own proposals on this matter for consideration. Meetings would be arranged by the HR manager to explore these in due course.

The Principal advised that this is the first stage of consultation and that the College would bring back further proposals to reform the current procedures to the JCC for consideration in due course. He expected new procedures to be in place by the start of Session 2005/06. Members noted this target.

12. Teaching Staff – Pensions

D Sneddon informed members of the number of teaching staffing numbers currently in the Scottish Public Pensions Agency (SPPA).

She reported that a total of 68 established and 102 temporary academic staff are currently employed at the College and of those 59 established staff and 55 temporary staff are members of the Pension Scheme.

D Sneddon reported that in order to encourage staff to make provisions for their pension those staff who are not currently members of the SPPA would be provided with the appropriate forms and a copy of the SPPA's 'Easy to Read Guide' to enable them to make an informed decision with regard to pension provision.

The Principal reminded members that the College encouraged all staff to join the appropriate occupational scheme and noted that management and trades unions routinely produced a joint statement to that effect. Similarly emphasis on the importance of Superannuation was made in staff induction programmes.

Members of the College's Joint Consultative Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report; and
- (ii) note that staff who are not members of the Scottish Public Pensions Agency will be sent the appropriate forms and the 'Easy to Read Guide' by the Personnel Section.

13. Revised Grievance Policy

D Sneddon spoke to her report informing members that constructive and positive discussions had taken place during the consultation exercise on the revision of the Grievance Policy. She reported that a number of amendments proposed by branch officials had been included in the revised document. She informed members the revised would now be considered by the Personnel and Staffing Committee at its next scheduled meeting.

The Depute Principal commended the input from branch officials in the revision of this policy. These had improved considerably the initial draft. The Principal thanked the JCC for its assistance in this matter.

Members of the College's Joint Consultative Committee agreed to:

Members agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report and its appendix;
- ii) note that managers and all staff will receive suitable training and development in the operation of the procedure and the management of grievances; and
- iii) request that the Human Resources Manager bring a revised copy of the Grievance Procedure at a future meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee.

14. Revised Code of Discipline

I Graham reminded members that they had considered this document at a previous meeting and that this was the final draft which would in due course be considered by the Personnel and Staffing Committee. He also reminded the Committee that a number of modifications had been made to this document as a consequence of earlier comments made by members. He invited members to make any final comment which they have on the revised Code of Discipline.

There being no further comments the Principal informed members that this document would be considered at the next scheduled meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee (prior to being placed on the agenda of the next meeting of the Board).

In response to questions the Principal confirmed that if the Personnel and Staffing Committee proposed substantial amendments to the revised Code of Discipline these would be considered at a future JCC prior to consideration by the Board of Management.

Members agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report and its appendix;
- ii) request that the Human Resources Manager present the revised copy of the Code of Discipline at a future meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee; and
- iii) note that the revised Code will be issued to all staff once approved by the College's Board of Management.

15. Grade Review – Personnel and Payroll Staff

D Sneddon spoke to her report informing members of the developments in the duties and responsibilities of the Human Resources and payroll staff. She noted that the duties and responsibilities of the Senior Payroll Officer and Payroll Assistant and the Administration Assistant (Personnel)

had changed considerably from those contained in the current job description. She further highlighted changes to the role of the Personnel Officer and the Administrative Assistant- Personnel.

The Principal informed members that a job evaluation exercise would be required to be conducted in order to assess whether a grade review was required for the above posts. It was his view that to ensure 'objectivity' an external consultant should be engaged to undertake such a review and to produce a report for consideration at the JCC. He reminded members that the College had engaged a consultant for a similar task during the current session.

This approach was welcomed by members.

In response to questions the Principal informed members that the appropriate staff would be advised of the job evaluation exercise by the HR Manager and that it would be undertaken by an external consultant.

Y McCaig confirmed that Unison endorsed the engagement of an external consultant to undertake the job evaluation exercise.

Members agreed to:

- (i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report and its appendix;
- (ii) agree that these posts be independently reviewed; and
- (iii) request that the Human Resources Manager bring a further report detailing the outcome of the review to an appropriate future meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee.

16. Review of Temporary Library Assistant Post

Y McCaig spoke to her report informing members that Unison proposed that the existing temporary library assistant post should become a permanent post within the support staff structure.

Following discussion it was agreed that the post should be made permanent. The Principal reminded members that this post would be advertised externally in line with College policy (despite the fact that the post was one which was expected to transfer to the City Council). He informed members that when the advert is being prepared that the duration of the post as an employee of the College must be included and information that this post would be transferred to the City Council in October 2005 would also be required.

Members endorsed the Unison proposal to make permanent the Temporary Library Assistant post and the College's approach to filling the vacancy.

17. Annual Accounts for Year ending 31 July 2004

The Principal reminded members that they had previously received a copy of the Annual Accounts, in confidence, prior to the Auditor General for Scotland agreeing to their publication. He informed members that the published Accounts remained unchanged from the version which they had previously received.

However, the Auditor General had now 'cleared' the Accounts for general dissemination.

B Forrest informed members that the College's Annual Accounts were placed before Parliament on 8 March 2005 and that the College could now place this document in the public domain. He also informed members that copies had been placed in both College Library and Information Centres. He reminded members that College was required to submit the Annual Accounts to the Scottish Further Education Funding Council in December 2004 and that this had been done (on schedule).

Members of the Joint Consultative Committee agreed to note the contents of this report and its appendix.

18. Educational and Technical Qualification and Professional Development – Teaching Staff

D Sneddon informed members that the purpose of this paper was to review the College's position in relation to staff who do not hold or subsequently attain the qualifications for entry to teacher training programmes offered by approved Scottish Universities. It also considered approaches to assist teaching staff to maintain an appropriate level of professional development both in terms of subject expertise and teaching skills.

The Human Resources Manager informed members that currently a lecturer employed by the College full-time or part-time, established or temporary, on a conditional contract by reason of their lack of any element of the specified technical and educational qualifications required for the post is placed on a scale point five increments below that to which would be entitled under the procedures for determining initial salary placement on the basic lecture scale if they held the appropriate qualifications. The lecturer is not entitled to incremental progression until they attain the appropriate educational and technical qualifications. On attaining the qualification the salary placement is immediately recalculated and the necessary adjustments made.

D Sneddon reported that the College had undertaken a review of staff qualifications in academic year 2003/04. As a result of this exercise number of staff were identified as not having the necessary qualifications to gain entry to teacher training programmes. The concerned staff were contacted and all but three members of staff subsequently attained the necessary qualifications. However not all staff provided appropriate

evidence that they had attained the required qualifications despite repeated written requests.

In response to questions, D Sneddon reported that J Wilson had been provided with the details of those staff who do not possess appropriate entry qualifications in order to enable the College to offer appropriate staff development opportunities to these individuals.

The Human Resource Manager confirmed that the College is committed to continuous professional development and makes funds available to staff to assist them develop both personally and professionally. She reminded members that the Scheme of Salaries and Conditions of service for Lecturing Staff states that a period for the attainment of entry qualifications to teacher training programmes was to be determined by the College. She further reminded members that individuals will be offered reasonable training and support from the College to facilitate the attainment of the appropriate qualifications.

The Principal restated that the College would support staff to attain appropriate entry qualifications and he reminded members that the College continued to pay the fees for staff on TQFE programmes. He indicated that this review had been prompted, in part, by the possibility that staff would have to 'register' with a 'Professional Body' at a future date to have a licence to practice as a College Lecturer. He reminded the Committee that the EIS had campaigned for this during the recent consultation undertaken by the Scottish Executive in respect of this matter.

In these circumstances the Principal informed members that the College proposed that from the commencement of session 2005/06 it will be necessary for staff to obtain the entry qualifications for TQFE programmes within two years if they do not already meet the entry requirements. The HR Manager would advise all staff in this situation with this deadline.

In response to questions the Principal confirmed that staff members who do not have hold appropriate qualifications would be informed of this contractual requirement in writing.

He advised that it would be the responsibility of individual lecturer's to obtain qualifications in contractual time. There would not be a remission of teaching for this purpose.

J Knowles informed members that the EIS/FELA branch welcomed this approach to ensuring that all staff had the necessary qualification to progress to teacher training programmes.

Ms Woods joined the meeting at this point.

There was considerable discussion on the nature of professional 'refreshing' for teaching staff in terms of both subject and pedagogical skills. A Sherry reminded members that the College routinely included sessions on teaching skills during the Quality Day programme. Furthermore he reported that the College had been invited to join a consortium of ten

colleges who would seek to organise placement experiences for teaching and support staff to enable them to update their professional skills. Members welcomed this development.

Members of the Joint Consultative Committee agreed to:

- (i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report; and
- ii) consider and report to the next Joint Consultative Committee on how this process will be progressed.

19. Presentation by the Financial Adviser to the Board – The Analysis of the Benchmarking Exercise by KPMG

M Brennan gave a brief presentation to members on the analysis of the benchmarking exercise conducted by KPMG on behalf of SFEFC. He spoke briefly about the following areas:

Benchmarking of costs 2002/03
Financial accounts for year 2002/03

2002/03 reports - sector comparative report
 management practice profile
 individual college report

Teaching costs
Premises costs
Management Practice Profile

A number of members asked for a more detailed breakdown of figures. In response M Brennan agreed that he would provide a more comprehensive report for the appropriate future meeting.

Mr Graham informed members that copies of the KPMG have been placed in both College Library and Information Centres for the more general information of staff.

20. Closure

Having discussed all items on the agenda the Chair of the Committee thanked members for their attendance. The meeting closed at 3.40pm.

21. Date of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee would take place on Friday 20 May 2005 at 2.30pm in Room SO9, Easterhouse Campus.