

John Wheatley College
Board of Management
Personnel and Staffing Committee

Minutes of the meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee held on Wednesday 7 October, 2009 at 12.30 pm in Room S/09, Easterhouse Campus.

1. Sederunt

H Ostrycharz (Chair);
E MacArthur ;
R Venditozzi;
R Blyth.

Also in attendance:

A Kirk (Depute Principal);
A Sherry (Assistant Principal);
D Sneddon (Human Resources Manager);
J Wilson (Associate Principal, Quality); and
L McEwan (for recording purposes).

2. Apologies

I Graham (Principal);
R Saez;
A Woolley; and
C Young (Equality and Diversity Advisor).

3. Terms of Reference

Members noted the terms of reference for the Personnel and Staffing Committee. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 4 members in attendance.

4. Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest declared at this point of the meeting. The Chair reminded members that declarations of interest could be announced when discharging the agenda.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee – 30 April, 2009

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 30 April, 2009

6. Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting held on 30 April, 2009

Item 6 - 15 Individualised Staffing Returns

The Depute Principal informed members that the Scottish Funding Council had now modified their system of data collection in respect of the above.

7. Approved Committee Minutes for Information

a) Joint Consultative Committee

i) 20 March, 2009

Following a request from the Chair for an update on the lack of UNISON representation within the College the Depute Principal informed members that following the visit from J Snell and V Fleming of UNISON, the situation remained unchanged.

Members noted that the Depute Principal had since received an enquiry in respect of a staff association from a member of staff. A Kirk informed those present that he would provide an update at the next meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the Joint Consultative Committee minutes of the meeting held on 20 March, 2009.

ii) 18 June, 2009

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the Joint Consultative Committee minutes of the meeting held on 18 June, 2009.

b) Health and Safety Committee

i) 25 February, 2009

The Depute Principal confirmed that 12 (twelve) members of staff had now been trained on the use of defibrillators. Members noted that the training would be refreshed every 6 (six) months.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the Health and Safety Committee minutes of the meeting held on 25 February, 2009.

ii) 4 June, 2009

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the Health and Safety Committee minutes of the meeting held on 4 June, 2009.

8. Correspondence

a) Equality and Human Rights Commission – Launch of Three Year Strategic Plan

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the correspondence which sought to apprise members of the Commission's three year strategic plan, which set out its priorities and work programmes to March 2012.

Members noted the details of the link to allow online access to the plan.

b) University of Dundee – 'The Value of Resolving Disputes' Conference

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the correspondence which sought to apprise members of the conference which would be held in the University of Dundee on Tuesday 10 November, 2009.

9. Human Resources Section – Operational Plan 2009/10

D Sneddon spoke to the contents of the Human Resources (HR) Section Operational Plan for Session 2009/10 which sought to apprise members of the progress made by the HR Section in its annual Operational Plan.

A copy of the Operational Plan for Session 2009/10 for the HR Section was provided for members' information.

Members noted that a report detailing the HR progress against targets would be presented on a regular basis to future meetings of the College's Personnel and Staffing Committee

Ms Sneddon highlighted the main points from the Operational Plan and members noted that a report in respect of Benchmarking would be presented to the Committee at the next meeting scheduled to take place on Thursday 28 January, 2010.

Members further noted that the results of the College's Staff Attitude Survey would be included in a forthcoming College Newsletter.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the report and the Human Resources Operational Plan for Session 2009/10; and
- request the Human Resources Manager to bring forward reports detailing progress against targets for Session 2009/10 to future meetings of the Personnel and Staffing Committee.

10. Human Resource Management – Annual Report Session 2008/09

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the report which sought to give members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee sight of the Human

Resource Management (HRM) Annual Report for Session 2008/09 prior to its consideration by the Board of Management on Wednesday 21 October, 2009.

A Kirk informed those present that the report sought to ensure that members of the Board of Management had current information on the impact, progress and developments of the College's Human Resources (HR) systems and structures.

Members noted that the report was the first such report for consideration by the Personnel and Staffing Committee and the Board.

Following a discussion in respect of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) the Depute Principal reminded members that the current session would be year 3 (three) of the benchmarking agreement which involved 3 (three) other colleges, and as a consequence targets may now be set which would allow the College to focus on areas for improvement and further development.

Following further discussion it was agreed by the Committee that graphs indicating the trends in staff absences be included in the report. This may be developed in future sessions and would allow comparison of data to inform members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the report;
- endorse the Human Resource Management (HRM) Annual Report for Session 2008/09 prior to its submission to the Board of Management on 21 October, 2009.

11. Succession Planning

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of the development of the College's Succession Plan (which would be discussed at its next meeting of the Board which is scheduled for 21 October, 2009).

A copy of an advanced draft of the College's Succession Plan was provided for members' information.

Members noted that there had been considerable opportunity for members of the College's staff to be involved in the drafting of the document.

A Kirk informed members that following discussion with staff representatives and members of the College's Management Teams it was suggested that the 4 (four) basic requirements for staff who would be involved in Senior, Middle and Junior Management were as follows:

- Financial Awareness;
- Personnel Policy and Procedures;
- Corporate Governance; and
- Statutory Compliance.

In response to a question from the Chair, A Kirk confirmed that the current appraisal system looked at team performance rather than individual performance.

A discussion followed on Impact Assessment and Ms Sneddon confirmed that this was an on-going process within the College. Members noted that mentoring and coaching would be introduced to staff in the near future.

The Chair requested that a paragraph be included in the report to be considered by the Board which would indicate that Impact Assessment would prove that the College's Appraisal system was a fair process. The deputy Principal agreed to do this.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the report;
- endorse the draft Management Succession Plan for discussion at the Board of Management meeting scheduled for 21 October, 2009; and
- note the College's approach to the other succession-related issues described in the report.

12. FEDRA – Support from FEDD

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the report which sought to advise the Personnel and Staffing Committee that the College would receive assistance from the Scottish Funding Council's (SFC) FEDD (Further Education Development Directorate) to speed up its implementation of the FEDRA (Further Education Development and Role Analysis) System.

Members noted that, following a request from the Principal to FEDDs to speed-up the implementation of FEDRA during academic / financial year 2009/10 Ms Carol Scott (Depute Principal at Motherwell College) or one of her staff had been recommended by FEDDS to provide the College with such assistance.

A copy of the correspondence sent by the Principal to M Batho of the SFC which requested such assistance was provided for members' information.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and its appendix.

13. Scottish Funding Council Staffing Return 2008/09

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of the content of the 2008/09 Scottish Funding Council (SFC) staffing return which members recalled the College was required to return on an annual basis, the staffing number and related information for the staff it employs during each academic year.

A copy of the following was provided for members' information:

- the SFC Staffing Return for Session 2008/09;

- a summary version of the SFC Staffing Return for Session 2008/09;
- the 2007/08 Staffing Return for the purposes of comparison; and
- the 2007/08 summary version of the SFC Return.

Following discussion of the datum provided members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the report and its appendices;
- note the contents of the College's Staffing Return for Session 2008/09; and
- note that the College had forwarded the report to the SFC by the due date.

14. Scottish Funding Council Report – Comparisons of Human Resource Management

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of the outcome of a Scottish Funding Council (SFC) – funded consultancy which sought to identify best practice in Human Resource Management (HRM) in Colleges, Higher Education Institutions (HEI's) and in the Private Sector.

Members noted that the research was undertaken, on behalf of the SFC, by 4-Consulting Limited.

A copy of the report authored by 4-Consulting was provided for members' information.

Members noted that the research concluded that:

- i) the link between governance and HR Management in FE was not materially different than that which applied elsewhere in the Public and Private Sectors in the UK;
- ii) HR issues should be fully considered in an integrated manner into the processes by which institutional Strategic Priorities are identified;
- iii) Colleges should use key performance indicators (KPIs) to provide the Board with the necessary 'reassurance' that the quality of HR Management is appropriate to both their Strategic and Operational contexts;
- iv) HR Management played an important role in 'Employer Branding' (which might make a College an *Employer of Choice* thereby enabling it to attract and retain staff of the highest calibre);
- v) a means of employee engagement was important securing the commitment of staff to providing a high quality teaching and learning environment for students and other stakeholders;

- vi) there were a number of additional pay and reward initiatives which can be used to augment basic pay and progression paths in an employment relationship;
- vii) pension schemes provided by Colleges were 'attractive propositions' to assist in attracting and in retaining good staff;
- viii) a focus on employee health and wellbeing was seen as a potential areas for further development in Colleges (given apparently high levels of stress-related illness in post-school education);
- ix) whilst some employers operated the principles of partnership working, this was not common in the UK;
- x) there may be a need to develop 'transformational leadership' at all levels in Colleges (which is detailed as showing concern, enabling, accessible, networking and visionary);
- xi) career development in Colleges was not normally delivered on a planned basis which was supplemented by coaching, mentoring and managerial development programmes; and
- xii) organisational development was important in enabling the re-definition of organisational 'shape'.

Ms Sneddon informed those present that reward and retention were important elements when attracting key members of staff.

Following a question from a member Ms Sneddon confirmed that an introduction to College Policies and Procedures was provided by HR for new members of staff immediately upon appointment and that HR were currently working with the College's Web Developer to find ways to make new staff feel more welcome. Ms Sneddon confirmed that SMT regularly consider new initiatives from the HR Section.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Principal's report;
- ii) note the contents of the 4-Consulting Ltd report; and
- iii) request the College to consider the conclusions of the 4-Consulting report when next revising the priorities of the College's HR Management priorities.

15. Professional Development Programme 2009/10

The Associate Principal (Quality) spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of the bids received from staff for Session 2009/10 in respect of financial support for Continuous Professional Development purposes.

Ms Wilson highlighted to members the bids received from staff and members noted that bids received for Session 2009/10 totalled £15,127 which was approximately one third of the Quality / Staff Development Budget.

Members agreed that the College should offer to provide 60% of the cost of the one bid received which was continued from Session 2008/09 and in addition, members agreed that 60% (£6466) should be offered to new bids received for programmes of study in Session 2009/10.

Members noted that in Session 2009/10 it was proposed that 3 (three) members of staff be provided with support in respect of the Teaching Qualification Further Education (TQFE) programme at the University of Dundee. Members further noted that the cost of the support would total £3750. Ms Wilson informed those present that should the Committee endorse the proposal the successful applicants would be selected by ballot.

Members noted that in taking account of the proposals for provision of financial support totalled £10,598 which was circa 23% of the Quality / Staff Development Budget for Session 2009/10.

Members endorsed the Chair's sentiment that the College's Professional Development Programme was an excellent initiative.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the report;
- agree to offer staff 60% of course fees for continuing and new programmes of study;
- agree to support 3 (three) members of staff to undertake the TQFE at the University of Dundee; and
- endorse the implementation of the Professional Development Programme for Session 2009/10.

16. Equality and Diversity Awards

The Human Resources Manager spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of an outline of the applications submitted on behalf of the College in respect of recognition for work and initiatives undertaken in its commitment to Equality and Diversity.

Members noted that the College had submitted 2 (two) separate entries in recognition of its 'Day of Diversity'. One entry was with Scotland's Colleges Annual Awards 2009, under the project category 'Promoting Equality and Diversity' and the second entry was with the Herald Society Awards 2009, Category 11 – Equality Initiative of the Year.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report; and

- request the Human resources Manager to bring forward a further report to a future meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee.

17. Employee Counselling Service – 1 August 2008 – 31 July 2009

The Human Resources Manager spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of the number of referrals to the Employee Counselling Service during the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

Members noted that a total of 4 (four) members of staff used the Employee Counselling Service for structured counselling during this period.

Members further noted that 3 (three) members of staff accessed the 'Out of Hours Helpline' throughout the reporting period.

Ms Sneddon informed members that a total of 7 (seven) employees used the service in Session 2008/09 compared to that of 11 (eleven) in Session 2007/08.

Members noted that the Employee Counselling Service was regularly promoted in the Staff Newsletter.

Members of the personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the Human Resource Manager's report.

18. Staff Turnover Indices – 1 August 2008 – 31 July 2009

The Human Resource Manager spoke to the contents of the report which sought to apprise members of the staff turnover and stability ratio for the academic year 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

Members recalled that the College annually reported the staffing information by wastage rate and stability factor as recommended by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development.

Members noted that the College advertised 26 (twenty-six) support staff posts in Session 2008/09 and noted the Wastage Rate of 7.77% and Stability Rate of 91.78%.

Members further noted that the College advertised one academic post in Session 2008/09 which remained vacant at the date of the meeting and noted the Wastage Rate of 3.71% and Stability Rate of 95.28%.

Ms Sneddon informed members that the Wastage Rate for Temporary Academic Staff was 71.23% and the Stability Rate was 70.00%. A discussion followed in respect of the figures and members agreed that the figures were misleading. It was therefore agreed by members that the focus should be on Permanent Academic Staff and Support Staff.

A discussion followed on whether the Staff Turnover Indices should be included in the Human Resources Annual Report or whether a separate report was more useful.

Members of the personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and its appendices.

19. Staff Attendance Report – 1 August 2008 – 31 July 2009

The Human Resources Manager spoke to the contents of her report which sought to apprise members of staff attendance statistics for the period 1 August 2008 to 31 July 2009.

Members noted the following:

- the total absence rate for Permanent Staff was 5.15% which was attributable to a rise in long-term absence and a decrease in short-term absence;
- the total absence rate for Support Staff was 5.00% which compared to 2.96% in Session 2007/08;
- the total absence rate for Permanent Academic Staff was 5.28% which compared to 3.53% in Session 2007/08; and
- the total absence rate for Temporary Academic Staff was 4.04% which compared to 1.81% in Session 2007/08.

Ms Sneddon then spoke to the contents and data included in the remainder of the report and members agreed to note its contents.

The Chair expressed her concern in respect of the rise in staff absence rates. Ms Sneddon informed members that this was largely due to long-term absences.

Members noted the serious impact on teaching as a consequence of Academic absences and a discussion followed on retention and attainment. The Depute Principal informed members that this was largely due to an increase in serious and complex illnesses suffered by Academic staff this session.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- note the contents of the Human resources Manager's report and its appendices; and
- request the Human Resource Manager to bring forward a further report to a future meeting of the personnel and Staffing Committee.

20. Revised No Smoking Policy (Referred from Board of Management Meeting held on 25 August, 2009)

The Depute Principal spoke to the contents of the College's revised No Smoking Policy which had been approved by the Board of Management and referred to the Personnel and Staffing Committee for further comment.

In response to a question A Kirk informed members that students smoking in College toilets was not an issue and that it occurred approximately once per academic year.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to note the contents of the report and the revised No Smoking Policy which had previously been approved by the Board of management.

21. Risk Management – Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda

Members agreed that there were no Risk Issues to be considered as a consequence of the business discharged at the meeting of 7 October, 2009.

22. Closure

The meeting closed at 1.40 pm with the Chair, H Ostrycharz, thanking members for their attendance and contribution to the meeting.

23. Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee would be held on Thursday 28 January, 2010.