

John Wheatley College
Board of Management
Executive Committee

Minutes of the Executive Committee held on Wednesday 5 August, 2009 at 4 pm in Room MF12/14, East End Campus.

1. Sederunt

The meeting commenced at 4 pm and was attended by:

A Woolley (Chair);
H Ostrycharz (Vice Chair);
E MacArthur; and
B Rooney.

In Attendance

I Graham (Principal);
A Sherry (Assistant Principal);
R Stewart (Clerk to the Board);
J Gow (Chief Finance Officer);
D Sneddon (Human Resources Manager);
and
A McKenna (for recording purposes only).

2. Apologies

Professor A Allison.

3. Terms of Reference

Members noted the terms of reference for the Executive Committee. It was confirmed that the meeting was quorate with 4 (four) members in attendance.

4. Declarations of Interest

The Principal, A Sherry and J Gow declared an interest in *Item 12: Remuneration Survey July 2009 – Senior Post Holders* on the agenda

As a consequence of the declaration of interest, it was agreed that these members of the College Senior Management Team would leave the room when item 12 on the agenda was being discharged.

5. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 23 June, 2009

The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 23 June, 2009.

6. Matters Arising from the Minutes of the Previous Meeting

Item 10: Audit Review – Advice to Colleges Response

The Principal reminded members that from 1 August, 2009, Wylie & Bisset were now employed as the College's Internal Auditors.

He apprised members that Wylie & Bisset would conduct an exercise to validate the College's response, in relation to the issues raised by the Scottish Funding Council following its recent audit review, prior to its eventual submission.

Item 12: Survey of Support Staff Terms and Conditions 2009

The Principal reminded members that at the last meeting of the Executive Committee it had been agreed that D Sneddon would compile a list of support staff posts salaries within the College and how they compared to sector wide posts identified in the survey.

D Sneddon presented members with her report on the post comparison.

She rehearsed that the comparison was based on role titles and that it did not consider the actual duties and responsibilities of each listed post, which would vary across colleges.

Members discussed the contents of the report.

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to note the contents of the report.

7. Scotland's Colleges – Election for Board of Directors 2009

The Principal spoke to the contents of the correspondence. He informed members that the recent Chair nominations process for Scotland's Colleges had resulted in 5 (five) nominations from college Chairs.

He further informed that the number of nominations had exceeded the number of vacancies so a ballot had been held.

I Graham apprised members of the vote he had submitted on behalf of the College.

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to note the contents of the correspondence and the attached ballot paper.

8. Cumbernauld College – Board of Management Agendas

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to note the contents of the above agendas.

9. Stow College – Further Quality Awards

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to note the contents of the correspondence.

10. Scottish Government – Iraqi Direct Entry Assistance Scheme (LESAS) – Access to Further and Higher Education

The Principal spoke to the contents of the correspondence. He apprised members that a 'specific group' of Iraqi nationals, who had to date received direct access to Further and Higher Education as home students under the Home Office resettlement programme, had as an unintentional result of immigration processes, become ineligible for 'home' student status until they resided in the UK for 3 years.

He further apprised that the guidance from the Scottish Government to Universities and Colleges was that the 'specific group' be continued to be eligible for 'home' rate fees and maintenance costs supports.

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to note the contents of the correspondence.

11. Potential Reductions in Public Expenditure – Initial Contingency Planning

The Principal took members through the contents of his report that sought to provide members with sight of a draft document that presented the initial steps which the College proposed to take, in academic / financial year 2009/10 to improve its operational 'headroom' to respond to the possible reductions in Public Expenditure in financial year 2010/11 and beyond.

He apprised that the annex to the report was a draft that sought to take prudent and reasonable steps to prepare the College for material reductions in Public Spending. It was produced following discussions in the College's Management Team in early July 2009.

He further apprised members that the draft report would be considered at the next meeting of the College's Joint Consultative Committee meeting on the 28 August, 2009. The draft report proposed, short term measures, which may be able to offset some of the potential impact of possible cuts beyond the end of the current academic/financial year.

He took members through the proposed measures:

- a) the College would no longer consider the consolidation of contracts of staff on fixed term contracts of employment;
- b) the College would no longer employ staff beyond the recognised retirement age;
- c) the College would scrutinise all requests for new staffing;
- d) the College will offer the opportunity for all staff who are likely to reach their recognised retirement age by 31 July, 2011 the opportunity to take early retirement in a voluntary severance situation;

- e) the College would offer staff who hold contracts for promoted posts in its Academic Structure to give them up (in favour of redeployment back into an appropriate classroom post); and
- f) the College would comprehensively review its teaching staff and support staff structure in mid-academic session 2009/10.

The Principal confirmed that the College was not proposing, in the report, to make any staff members compulsorily redundant (unless, of course, the financial circumstances related to the College's budget, agreed at the last meeting of the Board, changed to its material disadvantage during the course of the current academic/financial year).

D Sneddon informed members that the College would take further legal advice with regards to the proposed measures and that the College was currently working on a draft Redundancy Policy.

A considerable discussion followed on the contents of the draft report.

The Chair stated that he welcomed the early preparation and the contingency planning measures that the College had provided for consultation.

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Principal's report and its annex;
- ii) note the steps being proposed to improve the College's operational 'headroom' beyond the end of the current academic/financial year;
- iii) note that the College would refer the Report's annex to its JCC meeting (scheduled to take place on 28 August, 2009); and
- iv) request the Principal to provide feedback on that meeting to an appropriate future meeting of the Committee or the Board's Personnel and Staffing Committee.

It was noted that the Executive Committee would now act as the Board's Remuneration Committee and, as per its Standing Orders, would from this point in the agenda be Chaired by the Vice Chair of the Board. Ms Ostrycharz duely assumed the role as Chair.

13. Annual Wage Offers to Staff – 2009/10

The Principal spoke to the Depute Principal's report that sought to seek the Remuneration Committee's approval of the annual wage offer which would be made to staff for Academic / Financial Year 2009/10.

He reported that the College's offers had been made within the context of:

- i) Treasury Guidance on Public Sector Pay (which had also been endorsed by the Scottish Government);
- ii) the College's spending plans for 2009/10 which underpinned the Budget approved by the Board at its meeting held on 16 June, 2009;

- iii) a significant restructuring of the remuneration made to staff in Academic / Financial Year 2008/09 (which adjusted rates paid at the College within Sector norms); and
- iv) significantly reduced mortgage interest rates and the rates of inflation in the wider economic environment.

He further reported that the College was intending to make a similar offer to its Operational Managers, Teaching Staff and Support Staff.

The Principal provided members with an overview of the wage offers that were attached to the report as appendices 2, 3 and 4.

He proposed that the offer made was for a rise of 1.3% on all salary grades and that the College was not proposing to make any material or other changes to terms and conditions of employment.

He further proposed that the rise would, in all cases, be back-dated to the start of the pay period.

He recommended that members endorse the offers and authorise the College's Management to commence negotiations with representatives of recognised Trades Unions and Professional Associations at the start of academic session 2009/10.

Members of the Executive Committee discussed the wage offers at length.

Members agreed that D Sneddon would provide members of EIS/FELA, UNISON and ACM Union Branches with a copy of the wage offer for academic / financial year 2009/10 and invite them to begin negotiations within the terms of the College's Recognition and Procedures Agreement.

The Principal reminded members that the College's UNISON Branch had been essentially moribund for the last nine months or so and that the College had sought, in association with national officers from the Union, to resurrect it.

He added that it was a situation that might inhibit constructive progress being made in respect of the College's Support Staff and that if it proved impossible to make progress in these circumstances, other means of taking forward the Support Staff offer may need to be considered.

However, he reiterated that in the meantime, the College would continue to work with national officials to re-establish the effectiveness of the UNISON branch.

Members of the Executive Committee agreed to:

- a) note the contents of the report and its appendices;
- b) endorse the annual wage offers for 2009/10 (as described in appendices 2, 3 and 4 to the report); and
- c) authorise the College to commence negotiations with recognised Trades Unions and Professional Associations in respect of proposed wage rises for Academic / Financial Year 2009/10.

Members of the Senior Management Team left the meeting at this point of the meeting due to the next item on the agenda being a conflict of interest.

12. Remuneration Survey July 2009 – Senior Post Holders

H Ostrycharz spoke to the report that sought to advise members of the findings of the most recent survey of the remuneration made by Colleges in Scotland to Senior Post Holders and Middle Managers.

She provided members with a summary of the report.

B Rooney requested that D Sneddon compile a comparison list of senior staff posts within the College and how they compared to sector wide posts identified in the survey. Members agreed that this would be beneficial and requested that D Sneddon present a report at the next meeting of the Executive Committee.

H Ostrycharz provided members with an overview of the current situation regarding senior staff remuneration.

She further provided members with possible resolutions to the outstanding issues regarding senior staff remuneration.

A lengthy discussion followed by members on the outstanding issues related to the linkage of salaries, consolidation of traveling expenses and the annual wage rise for senior posts.

Members further discussed the retirement of the Principal and the succession planning required.

Members agreed that the College Senior Management Team performed to the highest level and were highly valued by members. It was further agreed that members were more than satisfied with their performance.

It was agreed by members that A Woolley and H Ostrycharz would meet to further discuss senior staff remuneration and that the meeting would be minuted. The minute of that meeting would be issued to members of the College's Senior Management Team and used as a consultation document.

14. Risk Issues to be considered as a consequence of the consideration of the above agenda

Members agreed that the replacement of the Principal, after his retirement, was a major risk.

15. Closure

The meeting closed at 5.10pm with the Chair and Vice Chair thanking all in attendance.

16. Date of Next Meeting

(to be confirmed)

