

# **John Wheatley College**

## **Joint Consultative Committee**

**Minutes of the Joint Consultative Committee held on Friday 5 November 2004 at 2.30pm in T26, Third Floor, Easterhouse Building.**

### **1. Sederunt**

The meeting commenced at 2.30pm and was attended by:

J Knowles, EIS/CLA;  
M Woods, EIS/CLA;  
Y MCCAig, Unison;  
F Ross, Unison;  
I Graham, (Chair);  
A Sherry (Assistant Principal);  
D Sneddon (HR Manager);  
F Doyle(ACM) (from 2.40pm); and  
A Inglis (Assistant Principal)

#### **In attendance**

S Wilkie, (Minutes)

### **2. Apologies**

Joss Dunn, EIS/FELA  
A Kirk (Depute Principal)

### **3. Minutes of the Previous Meeting held on 21 May 2004**

The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read.

Mr Knowles advised that at the last meeting there was a discussion about classroom observation - appeals procedure however this had not been reflected in the minute. It was agreed that the nature of the discussion would be reflected in the minute and in other documentation subsequently produced in this respect. The minutes were amended to note the EIS/FELA branch's wish to have incorporated an appeal in respect of the conclusions of the assessment of any external evaluator.

Subject to this agreed amendment the minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 20 August 2004.

#### **4. Matters Arising from the Minutes of meeting held on 20 August 2004**

There were no matters arising from the meeting held on 20th August 2004.

#### **5. Correspondence**

##### **a) Scottish Executive - The Need for a Professional Body for Staff in Scotland's Colleges**

Mr Graham reported that the College's response to this consultation exercise was included on the agenda as item 8.

Members agreed to note this correspondence.

##### **b) ASC Circulars**

##### **i) Circular 04/74 SPPA: Teacher's Superannuation (Scotland) Amendment Regulations 2004**

Members agreed to note this correspondence.

##### **ii) Circular 04/101 - Scottish Executive Draft Budget 2005-08**

Mr Graham advised that the budget for further education would be increased by 14% in real terms over a 3 year period compared to a 17% increase for the HE sector.

The Principal reported that there was no specific reference (at this stage) in this circular relating to a return to a national wage framework for FE colleges though there had been indications that this was a factor in Scottish Executive thinking when framing the allocation for the sector. He reminded members that the College Board had supported the retention of national collective bargaining at Incorporation and had regularly sought its restoration. He reminded trades union representatives that they too had a role to play in influencing the Scottish Executive in this matter.

**(c) SPPA - Review of the Scottish Teachers' Superannuation Scheme Consultation Paper**

The Principal referred to the letter from SPPA and advised members that the consultation period will run until 14 January 2005.

Mr Graham reported that the College would not be responding individually however that it would contribute to the Association Scottish Colleges response.

Mr Knowles informed the committee that the EIS would be responding and that he had made available information provided by the national body to all members via the intranet.

Members agreed to note this correspondence.

**d) Unison - Change of UNISON Regional Officer**

The Principal informed members that the College was seeking to arrange a meeting with new Regional Officer as was its practice.

Members agreed to note this correspondence.

**6. Library Development - Meeting with Library Staff: 27 October 2004**

Mr Inglis reported that this minute was the first formal group meeting with Glasgow City Council on the redeployment of the College's Library staff to the City's Cultural and Leisure Services department as part of the development of the services to provided at the Bridge. The Principal reminded members that this new facility would provide enhance library resources for both the local community and students. Furthermore the transfer would afford the existing College library staff far greater career opportunities than those current available within the College.

The Assistant Principal reported that the College had provided Glasgow City Council with the existing terms and conditions, job descriptions and salary scales of the Library staff. He confirmed that the City Council had provided the College with the same information.

Mr Inglis reported that the minutes of the meeting scheduled to held on 17 November 2004 would be presented to the next Committee meeting.

Mr Graham advised that a working group should be established to discuss operational issues relating to the transfer of Library services to Glasgow

City Council. In response to questions he confirmed that TUPE would apply to this transfer. He also confirmed that individual meetings would be held with all current College library staff to discuss the transfer.

The Principal emphasised that he was encouraged to see that the College Library staff were now pursuing professional qualifications which would further enhance their career opportunities following transfer to the City Council.

Mr Graham reminded members that all library staff would be transferring to the City Council and that the Service Level Agreement would cover both the Easterhouse and Shettleston (or its replacement at Haghill) buildings.

The Principal reported that a library would be incorporated into the new East End campus and that this would be operated under the Service Level Agreement. He informed members that this would provide a public library to a community which had previously not enjoyed such a service. In response to questions the Principal confirmed that the College currently allocated significantly more funding to purchase library resources than the City did for its library provision in Easterhouse. He further reported that this the SLA with the City would enable the College to gain access to further discounts, particularly with regard to the purchase of book stocks. However the Principal would seek to increase the allocation made for library resources (if resources permitted) as it was recognised that a range of new subjects would be delivered in the new east End campus.

Ms McCaig reported that the library staff were concerned about their future. The Principal again reiterated that it was anticipated that there would be little if any difference in the range of tasks which they currently undertook that this transfer would enhance their career opportunities.

Mr Graham noted that he would be delighted to meet with Unison to discuss the transfer. Ms McCaig advised that she would liaise with library staff and report back to the next scheduled meeting of this Committee. The Principal welcomed this proposal.

## **7. JWC response to EIS/FELA on Classroom Observation**

Mr Knowles thanked the Principal for his response on 1 October 2004.

Mr Knowles asked Mr Graham to confirm again that the de-brief to individual members of staff would be confidential. The Principal advised that this process would be entirely confidential and the College would only be informed if there was a health and safety matter, an issue in relation to equality legislation or that the member of staff required immediate support

to deal with particular challenging behaviour exhibited by students. He stressed that the College saw this as a supportive, developmental model which had been designed to enhance the quality of the learner experience and provide staff with skills required to meet the needs of a range of learners. He emphasised that the College was not seeking to link this exercise to either disciplinary procedures or to identify people for promotion. He also reiterated that it would not be linked to performance related pay (PRP).

Mr Knowles asked what would happen if a member of staff gave two poor observations. Mr Graham replied that the observation is not graded, strengths and areas for development would be highlighted by the observer and discussed with the person observed. It was anticipated that any areas for development would be agreed and that, where appropriate, potential staff development explored. The Principal confirmed that it would be the responsibility of the staff observed to identify suitable development programmes, as is currently the case where an individual believes s/he requires development. He informed members that if College - wide staff development issues were identified by the consultant in the annual report to the Board a suitable programme would be provided as is currently the case (as part of future Quality Day programmes).

In response to questions the Principal confirmed the annual report would be considered by the JCC prior its presentation to the Board and that if there were fundamental disagreements the EIS/FELA branch could produce a minority report. However he was not anticipating this would be the case. He reminded members that in recent HMIE reports none of the lessons observed had been graded as unsatisfactory and that the College had disagreed with a fair grading. He opined that this exercise would reassure the Board of the quality of the learner experience, highlight good practice and identify staff development which would enhance the skills of staff.

Mr Knowles asked if the members of staff did not come forward and ask for additional training would they be disciplined. Mr Graham replied that this was not likely the intention is to help people and again stated that the College would be unaware of the areas for development which had been identified by the consultant for individual members of staff.

Mr Graham advised that he would be happy to attend a branch meeting to talk to staff about this process. Mr Woods noted that this would be helpful. Mr Knowles would liaise with Laura Crouchman to ascertain when Mr Graham was available.

Mr Graham reiterated that each member of staff would receive a detailed debrief that would last approximately 1 hour.

Mr Knowles asked that Classroom Observation should now be referred to as 'Evaluation of the Learning Experience'. Mr Graham agreed (he noted that HMIE used both terms interchangeably).

A Sherry confirmed that Dennis McCartney was visiting the College on 10 November 2004 to meet with Branch Officials. The Principal reminded EIS/FELA representatives that if they believed that D McCartney was not appropriate for the role described the College would seek an alternative. A Sherry reminded members of D McCartney's extensive experience in the FE sector and in particular his role as both an Associate Assessor and now as a Part-time HMIE. He further reminded them DMcCartney had participated in two HMIE reviews of the College and was fully conversant with its ethos and the challenges it faced.

Mr Knowles commented he believed that the majority of staff members felt the College's approach was positive.

The Principal agreed to amend the College's paper on the Evaluation of the Learning Experience to reflect these discussions. A copy of that document would be forwarded to the EIS/FELA branch in due course.

## **8. Draft JW Response to 'The Need for a Professional Body for Staff in Scotland's Colleges.'**

Mr Graham spoke to this report and advised members of the Scottish Executive's consultative paper related to the proposal to establish a 'professional body' for staff employed in further education colleges in Scotland.

The Principal advised that the College has, in the past, opposed such proposals as a consequence of:

- a) the potential inflexibility such a body may bring into the FE sector;
- b) different quality regime which applied to colleges and schools (Colleges are inspected far more regularly than schools);
- c) the findings of HMIE confirm that the majority of teaching appraisals in Colleges is either 'good' or 'very good';
- d) the costs associated with the body for both colleges and their staff; and
- e) the introduction of other reviews/audits of colleges and their staff.

The Principal noted that the college is not opposed Continuous Professional Development and had allocated considerable resources to such activities (this had been confirmed in sector-wide benchmarking exercises).He reminded members that the College both supported staff

undertaking the TQFE and the PDA ITT. In addition there were a range of other staff development activities which staff accessed. He confirmed that the document does not seek to include support staff in the proposed professional body and in the view of the College this fails to recognise the collaborative approach to learning and teaching across staff groups which characterises FE. He further highlighted that the proposed new body not apply to Higher Education staff at a time when the Funding Councils are to be merged.

Mr Graham confirmed that the College's response would be sent to the Scottish Executive later this month.

It was noted that the Executive wished responses from individual members of staff. Notice of how this could be done would be circulated with the next pay slips given to teaching staff. The response date was the 30 November 2004. Mr Knowles expressed his personal views about the use of the GTC for such a purpose. He added that the EIS/FELA would nationally support the proposals made by the Executive.

Members agreed to:

- a) note the contents of the Principal's report;
- b) note the proposal to establish a 'Professional Body' for Staff in Scotland's Colleges;
- c) agree the College's response;
- d) request the Principal to respond to the Executive on or before the 30 November 2004 deadline for submissions. and
- e) refer the College's response, for information, to an appropriate future meeting of the Committee.

## **9. Proposed Organisational Culture Effectiveness Survey**

Mr Graham reported members that as the meeting had been re-arranged Richie Cameron, Head of Regeneration at the Pacific Institute was unavailable (as a consequence of the rearranged date of the meeting).

The Principal advised that the approach outlined in the documentation would enable the College to chart possible differences in perceptions between staff and management and enable steps to be taken in future plans to address any such gaps. He confirmed that all responses would be confidential and that questionnaires would be analysed by experts employed by the Pacific Institute.

Mr Graham reported that those members of staff selected by the Pacific Institute would be sent a questionnaire to complete. In some

circumstance staff would be requested to complete two different questionnaires as various aspects of the College were being examined. A Sherry confirmed that the questionnaires would be issued in early December 2004. It was anticipated that the report would be available by mid January 2005.

Mr Graham emphasised that there was an article in the Newsletter advising staff of this exercise and Richie Cameron would provide an article for the November newsletter.

Members agreed to:

- f) note the contents of the Principal's report and its appendix;
- g) not the College's participation in a Pacific Institute Organisational Culture Effectiveness Survey (OCES) on the terms described in the report's appendix;
- h) in the light of conclusions of the OCES , further investment in the Pacific's Institute development programme; and
- i) request the Principal to arrange for the Institute's staff to make a presentation to a future meeting of the Board in respect of the OCES conclusions.

## **10. Building Specifications**

Mr Graham advised members that the document included in the agenda was version 2 of the Design brief for the new building.

The Principal noted that all staff has been given a chance to make comments of the new build and thanked everyone who had responded. He commented that this support had further influenced and significantly the information provided to the architects.

He hoped staff would be able to see the influence they had in the final designs.

The Principal reported that there remained a funding gap however the College was confident that it could obtain the necessary resources for the new campus. He outlined, briefly, how he expected this to be overcome.

## **11. Draft Annual Account Report**

Mr Graham noted that the annual account report was unaudited and therefore cannot be placed in the public domain. The College is prohibited from placing Accounts before the public until they have been approved by the Auditor General for Scotland in February/March 2005.

The Principal advised that the College made a very small operational surplus of £14k in 2003/04. However Audit Scotland had not yet completed their external audit task and this figure may alter. In response to questions the Principal confirmed that it was anticipated that the College remain surplus even if changes were required.

It was noted that the costs staff absences had reduced the planned surplus.

Members noted this report and its appendix.

## **12. Additional Capital Allocation**

The Principal advised members that the College received £162,220 from the Scottish Executive to enhance the teaching/learning environment in the College.

Mr Graham reported that the College proposed to allocate:

- (i) £85,000 on listed projects which are detailed in the Operational Plan(appendix 2); and
- (ii) £77,000 towards the up-grading of ICT infra-structure in the Easterhouse Building.

This would make significant improvements to the Easterhouse building (he noted that the next 3 years formulaic capital grant would be deployed to support the East End Campus development.

Mr Graham advised that the following up-grades carried out with these additional resources:

- (i) existing PC's within classrooms in the Easterhouse campus replaced with flat screens;
- (ii) interactive whiteboards to be installed in most classrooms;and
- (iii) multi-media projectors to be installed in more general classrooms.

The Principal advised that the issue of laptops for lecturers is being addressed.

Members noted the content of the Principal's report.

### **13. Options for the development of Glasgow Centre Colleges**

Mr Graham confirmed that the SFEFC held a consultation meeting on the 14 September 2004 on the Estates Development for Colleges located in Glasgow City Centre.

The Principal noted that it is likely that the 5 (five) Colleges will be located on one site though at least two colleges opposed this solution. He informed members that the Board had expressed its disappointment at the lack of progress being made in this matter.

The Principal left the meeting at this time (4pm).

### **14. Scottish Executive Spending Plans**

Mr Sherry spoke to this paper and advised members of the Scottish Executives Spending Plans for financial years 200506.

Members noted this correspondence.

### **15. Grade Review - Bursary Officer Post**

Ms Sneddon spoke to her report informing members of the proposed change to the grading of the Bursary Officer post to reflect the changes to remit and responsibility of this post.

Ms McCaig queried the proposed change to line manager contained in the revised job description as currently the post was managed by the Depute Finance manager. Ms Sneddon agreed to review this matter.

Members agreed to note the contents of this report.

### **16. Revised Grievance Procedure**

Ms Sneddon spoke to the report on the revised grievance procedure and inviting comments.

Mr Knowles noted that the procedure required to be considered by the Joint Negotiating Committee. Ms Sneddon acknowledge this but informed members that it had been brought to this meeting to enable members to comment prior to the JNC.

Following discussion it was agreed that members would provide any comment to Ms Sneddon by 12 November 2004.

Members agreed to:

- (a) note the contents of this report.
- (b) note that managers and all staff will receive suitable training and development in the operation of the procedure and the management of grievances;
- (c) request the Human Resources Manager to make the necessary arrangements for a Joint Negotiating Committee; and
- (d) request the Human Resources Manager to present a revised copy of the Grievance Procedure at a future meeting of the Personnel and Staffing Committee.

## **17. Revised Equal Opportunities Policy**

Ms Sneddon spoke to her report on the revised Equal Opportunities Policy and welcomed comments.

The Human Resources Manager advised that this policy has been updated in light of new legislation.

Ms Sneddon asked members to provide comments by 12 November 2004 and advised that she would be happy to meet with Unions if required to further discuss the proposed revisions

Members agreed to:

- a) note the contents of this report and its appendix;
- b) note that managers and all staff will receive suitable training and development to raise their awareness in relation to equal opportunities on an on-going basis and
- c) request the Human Resource Manager to present a revised copy of the Equal Opportunities Policy at the next scheduled meeting of the Joint Consultative Committee.

## **18. Revised Equal Opportunities Annual Review Session 2003-2004**

Ms Sneddon spoke to the report informing members of the College's workforce profile as of 31<sup>st</sup> July 2004 and its ongoing progress in the area of equal opportunities.

Ms Sneddon reported that the staffing figures for sessions 2002/03 and 2003/04 which are included in this document.

The Human Resources Manager proceeded to highlight key areas of the report inviting comment from members.

Mr Sherry informed members that the Chair of the Personnel and Staffing Committee welcomed this document and the comprehensive nature of the report.

With no further discussion members noted this report and its appendices.

## **19. Support Staff Forum**

Mr Sherry advised that this item is presented to this Committee for information purposes only.

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

## **20. Staff Attendance Report - 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 to 31 July 2004**

Ms Sneddon spoke to the report highlighting the absence statistics for the period 1<sup>st</sup> May 2004 to 31<sup>st</sup> July 2004.

The Human Resources Manager reported that absence rate for permanent staff was starting to come down however the number of short-term intermittent absence increased in the fourth quarter when compared to the third quarter.

Ms Sneddon reiterated to members that the Absence policy is designed to be supportive and not to punish staff.

The Human Resources Manager confirmed that the total cost of absence remains a problem for the College and cost the College £300,000 last year.

Ms Sneddon advised that there was an error on page 6 third paragraph down ' of the remaining ten employees' this should read four(4).

Members noted this report and its appendices.

## **21. Family and Parental Leave Policy and Personal and Domestic Leave Policy**

Ms Sneddon spoke to this report informing members of the staff usage of the College's policies in this area.

Ms Sneddon reported that a total of 42 applications were received in session 2003/04 from 19 staff members. Of the 19 staff 10 were from support staff and 9 were academic, 12 were female and 7 were male.

Members agreed to note the Human Resources Manager' report.

## **22. Staffing return 2003/2004**

Mr Sherry spoke to this report and advised members of the contents of the 2002/2003 staffing return to the SFEFC.

The Assistant Principal reported that the College's total headcount of staff was 253 in 2003/2004 compared with 269 in 2002/2003. The figures for teaching staff were 174 and 182. For support staff the equivalent figures were 79 and 87.

Members agreed to note the contents and its appendices.

## **23. Closure**

The meeting closed at 4.35pm.

## **24. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is scheduled for Friday 17 December at 2.30pm venue to be confirmed.