

John Wheatley College
Board of Management
Personnel and Staffing Committee

Minutes of the Personnel and Staffing Committee held on 11 May 2005 at 12.30pm, in the Boardroom of Strathclyde European Partnership, 94 Elmbank Street, Glasgow.

1. Sederunt

The meeting commenced at 12.30pm and was attended by:

A Woolley(Acting Chair due to absence of Ms Ostrycharz);
D O'Brien;
J Kerrigan;
I Graham; and
M Forsyth (from 12.40pm).

In Attendance:

A Kirk (Depute Principal);
A Sherry (Assistant Principal);
D Sneddon (Human Resources Manager); and
S Wilkie (for recording purposes only).

2. Apologies

H Ostrycharz; and
A McFarlane (coopted member).

Mr Woolley informed members that Ms Ostrycharz was recovering well.

3. Terms of Reference

Members noted the terms of reference for the Personnel & Staffing Committee. It was confirmed that the meeting as quorate with 5 members in attendance.

4. Declaration of Interest

There were no declaration of interest expressed at the Committee meeting.

5. Minutes of the previous meeting of the Personnel & Staffing Committee held on 31 January 2005.

The minutes of the previous meeting were taken as read. They were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 31 January 2005

Ms Forsyth joined the meeting at this point.

6. Matters Arising from the minutes of the previous meeting

Item 12 – Senior Lecturers’ Workload Review

Mr Graham reported that he was still awaiting comments from the Senior Lecturers’ Forum on the findings contained in the external consultant’s report. He reminded members that this group of staff have had numerous opportunity to comment therefore it was not reasonable to further delay the acceptance of the report.

The Principal further reminded members that the review had been conducted during September and that this was normally a busy time for all College staff and that the workload for some of these staff may be somewhat lower in term time.

I Graham added that it was anticipated the whole management structure would be reviewed during session 2005/06 as the College planned for the development of the new East End Campus and the opening of the Bridge at the Easterhouse campus.

In response to questions the Principal confirmed that further staff development on effective time management would be organised for the Senior Lecturer cohort during session 2005/06 if the Senior Lecturers’ Forum deemed this to be of value.

The Principal also informed members that it was anticipated that a development event on the outcome of the Pacific Institute survey on Cultural Effectiveness would be organised for late August 2005.

7. Minutes of and Matters Arising from previous meetings

(a) Draft JCC Minutes of meeting held on 17 December 2005

Mr Woolley referred to item 4 – Matters arising – Item 6 Library Development – Meeting with Library Staff: 27 October 2004 seeking an update on progress.

The Depute Principal informed members that a productive meeting had taken place recently which had considered the detail of the Service Level Agreement between the College and Glasgow City Council. He further informed members that the College continued to consult collectively with Unison branch officials and individuals.

(b) Health and Safety minutes held on 9 December 2004

Members noted the contents of the minutes.

(c) Draft Health and Safety Minutes of meeting held on 31 March 2005

Members noted the contents of the minutes.

(d) Draft Equal Opportunities Development Forum minutes of meeting held on 10 March 2005.

Members noted the contents of the minutes.

8. Correspondence

a) SPPA – The Pensions Increase (Review) Order 2005

Members noted this correspondence.

(b) SPPA – Winding Down Applications

In response to questions D Sneddon informed members that the College had received no requests under this scheme.

Members noted this correspondence.

(c) ASC – Local Government Pension Scheme in Scotland: Consultation

I Graham reported that a review of this scheme would emerge in due course.

Members noted the correspondence.

9. Staff Attendance Report – 1 November 2004-31 January 2005

D Sneddon spoke to her report reminding members that as part of the College monitoring systems it regularly recorded staff attendance figures and reported these to the Committee.

She drew members' attention to the appendices that contained the attendance information split into the various staff groups represented in the College's workforce. These were:

- * Established Permanent Staff;
- * Support Staff;
- * Established Permanent Academic Staff; and
- * Temporary Academic Staff.

D Sneddon explained that table 1 and table 2 recorded an increase in absence rates of permanent staff and support staff. She added that the

increase was mainly attributed to the rise in the number of staff absent on long-term sick leave.

She highlighted that temporary academic staff absence rates had decreased over the period.

The HR Manager further highlighted the information which recorded academic year comparative information and informing members that these figures demonstrated a downward trend.

D Sneddon reported that during the first quarter in academic year 2004/05 there were 195 days were lost due to stress related conditions involving five members of staff. During the second quarter of academic year 2004/05 there were 237 days lost due to stress related conditions involving seven employees. Of the seven members of staff involved three had continued absences over the two quarters. Five employees have issues perceived to be work related and two experienced personal difficulties.

I Graham informed members that Baker Tilly, the internal auditors, have reviewed absence management as part of the internal audit programme and that a report would be presented to the next Audit Committee, which is to be scheduled to be held in June 2005. The report would subsequently be referred to this Committee for further consideration.

The Principal further informed members that the findings of the Internal Auditors reported that a number of line managers and supervisors were failing to carry out return to work interviews in accordance with the Board's Absence Management Policy. I Graham reported that as a result of this finding he had written to all managers and supervisors advising them of the need and importance of carrying out these interviews.

The Principal informed members that the Board's absence policy would be reviewed during session 2005/06 with consideration given to revision of the 'trigger points' when the absence management procedures come in to operation. He further informed members that it was anticipated that that the College's Occupational Health Adviser would play a more prominent role in this process.

In response to questions D Sneddon informed members that line managers had been issued with a format which was designed to act as a template for return to work interviews and that a staff development programme had be delivered to support the introduction of the policy. The Principal informed members that further staff development sessions on return to work interviews would be provided for all line managers in August 2005.

The Principal reminded members that both programme and project teams had identified staff absence as the number one threat to the College when they had conducted their annual SWOT analysis as part of the development Planning process for session 2005/6.

I Graham asked members to note that since incorporation the College had experienced a high level of long- term absence as a result of serious

illness and that there was little the College could do in these circumstances to improve attendance.

A Woolley noted that staff absence impacts directly on the learning experience of students. The Principal confirmed all research demonstrated that it was important for students to have consistency in teaching staff in order to create an effective learning environment.

D Sneddon referred to table 5 and reported that 303 days had been lost due to short-term intermittent absence in the second quarter with 205 days lost due to long-term absence.

She further reported that in the second quarter there were five academic staff absent on long-term sick leave at any one time. In addition there were six support staff absent on long-term sick leave at any one time during this period as opposed to three in the first quarter. Two temporary academic staff were absent on long-term sick leave in this reporting period compared to three in the previous quarter.

The HR Manager also informed members that the College continues to monitor and review the application of its Attendance at Work Policy and Procedure.

In response to questions the Depute Principal informed members that as teaching staff, in the main, worked in a number of locations it was not possible to link absence to working in any one building or location.

The HR Manager informed members that the College was currently developing a Well-being Policy which was intended to promote a range of options which would encourage a healthy lifestyle. She reminded that this policy was being developed as a result of the Well-being survey which was conducted by external consultants. She also informed members that a number of staff focus groups would be established to review the draft policy document as part of the consultation process.

Mr Graham advised that a copy of the audit report would be presented to a future meeting of this Committee for consideration.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the report and its appendices;
- ii) request the Human Resources Manager to bring the revised Attendance at Work Policy and procedure to a future meeting of the Committee;
- iii) request the Human Resources Manager to bring forward a report on the outcome of the focus groups to a future meeting of the Committee;
- iii) request the Human Resources Manager to bring the College's draft Well-being Policy to a future meeting of the Committee; and
- v) request the Human Resources Manager to bring forward a further report to a future meeting of the Committee.

10. Revised Code of Discipline

D Sneddon spoke to her report reminding members that the College had undertaken to review its Code of Discipline in light of the recent changes in legislation and new Policies and Procedures introduced in the College.

She reported that a copy of the Code of Discipline would be issued to managers and staff in due course.

The Human Resources Manager informed members that a draft copy of the revised Code of Discipline had been considered at meetings of the Joint Consultative Committee held on the 7 January and 1 April 2005. In response to questions D Sneddon confirmed that a number of changes had been made as a result of comments received from the local Trades Union branches and that they had endorsed this final draft. The Depute Principal informed members that the Trades Unions had adopted a positive approach to the revision of this code and that this was welcomed by College managers.

In response to questions the HR Manager informed members that the College's Solicitor had reviewed the draft Code of Discipline and was content that it conformed with the appropriate legislation.

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

- i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report and its appendix;
- ii) request the Principal to seek approval of the Code of Discipline at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Management for immediate implementation; and
- iii) note that the revised Code will be issued to all levels of management and staff once approved by the College's Board of Management.

11. Revised Grievance Procedure

D Sneddon spoke to her report informing members that the College had undertaken to review its Grievance Procedure in light of the recent changes in legislation introduced under the Employment Act 2002 and the Employment Act 2002 (Dispute Resolution) Regulations 2004 which came into effect on 1 October 2004.

She reported that the Procedure was considered at the Joint Consultative Committee on 1 April 2005 for further comments. No comments had subsequently been received from the Trades Unions. D Sneddon also informed members that this document had been reviewed the College's legal advisors and they were content that it met the requirements of the appropriate legislation.

The Depute Principal informed members that the Trades Unions had adopted a positive approach to the revision of this procedure and again this was welcomed by College managers.

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

- i) note the contents of the Human Resources Manager's report and its appendix;
- ii) note that managers will receive suitable training and development in the operation of the procedure and the management of grievances; and
- iii) request the Principal to seek approval of the revised procedure at the next scheduled meeting of the Board of Management for immediate implementation.

12. Disability Symbol User Review

D Sneddon spoke to her report informing members of the College's continued use of the Disability Symbol as a quality kite mark for its employment policies and procedures.

The HR Manager reported that she had met with a representative from the Employment Services Agency (ESA) for the annual review of the College status as a Disability Symbol User. She reminded members that this review included employment policies, procedures and monitoring of the support which the College offered to those with a disability. As a result of this review the ESA that the College will retain its status as a Disability Symbol User.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Human Resource Manager's report;
- ii) note the College's continuous status as a Disability Symbol User; and
- iii) note that Disability awareness training shall take place on an on going basis

13. Employee Counselling Service

The HR Manager reported on the number of the referrals to the Employee Counselling Service (ECS) during the period August 2004 and January 2005. She informed members that a total of six (6) staff used the service during the period of August 2003 – January 2004. Four (4) were self-referrals and two (2) were voluntary. For the period 1 August 2003 to 30 June 2004 a total of ten (10) employees used the Employee Counselling service.

For the period of 1 August 2003 to 30 June 2004 a total of twenty-six (26) employees used the 'Out of Hours Helpline'.

Members of the Personnel and Staffing Committee agreed to:

- i) note the contents of the Human Resource Manager's report;
- ii) note the College's continual use of the Employee Counselling Service and the number of referrals; and
- iii) request the Human Resource Manager to bring a report on the outcome of the survey on the service to a future Committee.

14. Risk Register

The Principal reminded members that as part of the Board's approach to Development Planning for sessions 2005/08 all Standing Committees were being asked to review the College Risk Register. He also reminded members that a revised draft of the Risk Register would be considered by the Board at the meeting scheduled to be held in June 2005.

Mr Woolley requested members to review the Risk Register and forward any specific comments to A Sherry in his role as Secretary to the Board.

15. Closure

Having discussed all items on the agenda the Chair of the Committee thanked members for their attendance. The meeting closed at 1.10pm.

16. Date of Next Meeting

Members were advised that the next meeting of the Committee would be confirmed.