



## HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

*Minute of Meeting held on 19 July 2016*

The meeting commenced at 1030 hours.

Mr Smith chaired the meeting in the absence of Ms Inglis on holiday.

Mr Smith welcomed Mr Gall to his first meeting of the Committee, and welcomed Ms Grant in her capacity as observer.

**PRESENT** – I Gossip, J Henderson, J Gall, R McGregor, K Milroy, A Simpson, A Smith (Chair), R Wallen

**IN ATTENDANCE** – E Hart, P May, P Kesson

**OBSERVER** – S Grant

**1. Apologies for Absence**

Apologies were received from C Inglis.

**2. Minute of previous Meeting**

The Minute of Meeting held on 17 May 2016 was approved.

**3. Matters arising from previous Meeting**

The Committee noted a paper providing updated information on matters arising from the meeting held on 17 May.

**4. Report to the Committee by the Principal**

The Committee noted a paper providing information on: HR Performance Indicators; Colleges Scotland Employers' Association; visits by MP and MSPs; visit by former staff; annual staff inter-campus football tournament; and staff barbecue and social evening.

Mr Wallen commented that it was very encouraging to note the participation of so many staff in the joint social events.

**5. Matters for Discussion**

**5.1 HR Priorities and Strategy**

The Committee considered a paper providing information on key HR priorities.

Information was provided on Distance Travelled from May 2014 to date and on HR priorities going forward.

Members acknowledged the significant amount of work undertaken to date and the full implementation of 10 out of the 13 priorities.

Ms Hart commented that the College's staff induction process will shortly be reviewed and refreshed and aligned to the new Probation Policy.

It was noted that, once established, matters relating to the Core Working Group to develop the new Employee Engagement Strategy will be reported to the HR Committee.

Members noted the information provided.

## **5.2 National Bargaining**

Ms Hart reported in her capacity as the College's representative on Colleges Scotland's Employers' Association.

Members were informed that the support staff trade unions have rejected the revised pay offer for 2016-17 and have now announced their intention to ballot on industrial action on the current offer and on failure to implement key aspects of the 2015-16 agreement.

Ms Hart reported that following agreement on the pay award for 2015-16 and 2016-17 the teaching staff union (EIS) are now querying the basis on which the £100 element has been implemented.

Ms Hart said that Colleges Scotland has now set up a Workforce of the Future Group with three sub groups focussing on key areas, and commented that it is clear that the Employers' side is looking at very different ideas from the EIS in terms of modernising working practices.

Mr Wallen commented that, in being part of national collective bargaining, it is unfortunate that the College is now involved in matters over which it has no control. Mr Wallen added that it is not a favourable position for the College to be in as NESCol staff are currently the highest paid in the sector and benefit from good working terms and conditions.

Mr Milroy said it was important to look at what is right for the College and its staff from a management point of view.

It was agreed that, at its next meeting, the HR Committee would discuss and agree key areas of terms and conditions which the College should seek to protect for staff, prior to consideration of this matter by the full Board.

It was noted that matters relating to National Bargaining would be discussed with the Minister for FE, HE and Science on her visit to the College scheduled for 16 August 2016.

## **6. Matters for Information**

### **6.1 Key Health and Safety Performance Indicators**

The Committee noted a paper providing information on key performance indicators relating to the health and safety function.

Information was provided on: accident statistics; work placement visits; approved contractor list; workplace dust monitoring; food hygiene inspections; and accidents at Aberdeen Sports Village.

Ms Simpson commented that she still had concerns about the disproportionate number of accidents at Fraserburgh Campus. Mr Wallen informed her that the Health and Safety Manager was ensuring that there is a standard reporting process and a standard approach to managing health and safety issues across all campuses.

## **6.2 Report on Organisational Development Activity**

The Committee noted a report providing information on the key activities undertaken by the Organisational Development Team during AY2015-16 and an indication of targets and plans for AY2016-17.

Information was provided on Teaching Qualification in FE for Lecturers; assessor awards; verifier awards; other professional qualifications supported by Organisational Development; other major activities; and plans for 2016-17.

In response to a query, Mr Wallen said he would ascertain the number of teaching staff employed for over 5 years who have yet to achieve the TQFE.

Ms Hart agreed that, going forward, the information provided on TQFE targets would be presented in a clearer format.

Ms Hart was asked to consider revising the targets for assessor and verifier awards.

## **6.3 Outcome of the Internal Audit of Human Resources**

The Committee considered a report on the outcome of the Internal Audit of Human Resources which took place in May 2016.

Members noted that the audit focussed purely on Human Resources compared to previous audits which also encompassed the payroll function.

Ms Hart informed Members that she was confident that all the issues highlighted in the report had either been addressed or had a plan in place to address them.

Ms Simpson commented on the vast improvement made in the past year.

Mr Scott joined the meeting for consideration of agenda item 6.4.

## **6.4 Outcome of the Internal Audit of Payroll**

The Committee considered a report on matters relating to the findings of the recent internal audit review of payroll.

Mr Scott informed Members that, as the previous payroll audit had shown deficiencies it had been decided that a further audit would be undertaken in the current year.

Mr Scott informed Members that a breach of regulations and processes had come to light recently which, had the payroll audit not been scheduled to take place, would have led him to request the Principal to ask auditors to review the area. Mr Scott confirmed that there had been no financial loss to the College and the matter had been dealt with operationally.

Mr Scott advised that six of the seven high graded weaknesses had been brought to the attention of the auditors prior to the audit commencing, and that an investigation had identified a number of recommendations which would be considered by the Audit and Risk Committee at its meeting later in the day.

Members were informed that an action programme had been developed and that all recommendations would be fully implemented by the end of August 2016.

Mr Scott said that the Audit & Risk Committee will be requested to recommend that a follow-up audit of the implementation of recommendations is sought before the end of the calendar year so that Members can be assured that all weaknesses have been addressed.

In response to a query Mr Scott confirmed that a previous internal audit of payroll had shown some fundamental failings and these were subsequently addressed; however the recent audit had identified a further set of failings. Mr Scott advised that many of the failings have already been addressed and that going forward payroll processes will mainly revert back to the approaches adopted by the former Aberdeen College.

Mr Scott said that a business case has been prepared for a new payroll system and monies have been earmarked in the IT projects budget for next year, but that the project was yet to be considered for approval by the College's ITSB.

Ms Hart commented that she felt it was critical for the College to invest in a new software solution for payroll, noting that at present the College was dependent on the skills of one member of staff due to a reliance on manual workarounds.

The Committee noted the information in the report.

Mr Scott left the meeting at this time.

#### **7. Summation of Business and date and time of next Meeting**

The Secretary gave a summation of the business conducted. The next meeting of the Human Resources Committee is scheduled to take place on Tuesday 13 September 2016.

The meeting concluded at 1140 hours.