



**Minutes of the meeting of the Personnel Committee held on  
Tuesday 1 December 2009 at 5.00 pm in Room 3F102a**

**Present:** Bruce Gilbert (Chair)  
Peter Vaughan  
Carol Runciman

**In Attendance:** Richard Hinde, Clerk to the Governing Body  
Chris Leng, HR Manager  
Anne Tyrrell, Deputy Principal Resources

The meeting started at 5.15pm.

**09.27 Apologies for Absence / Declarations of Interest**

Action

Apologies were received from Alison Birkinshaw, Jennie Cook and Terry Wolf. Chris Leng declared an interest in relation to agenda item 7 (College Staff Pay Award 2009/10).

**09.28 Minutes of Previous Meeting – 25 June 2009**

The minutes and confidential minutes were approved as an accurate record and signed by the Chair.

**09.29 Matters arising**

a) Action Summary Sheet

The Action Summary Sheet was considered and progress noted.

b) Any Other Matters Arising

There were no other matters arising not dealt with elsewhere on the agenda.

**09.30 Committee Terms of Reference and Schedule of Business  
2009/10**

The Clerk presented the report with the proposed Terms of Reference for the Personnel Committee which had been revised and presented in a new format as previously requested by the Search & Governance Committee. The Committee's proposed Schedule of Business for 2009/10 was also considered.

Discussion took place about Safeguarding and the role of the Committee in this regard. The Deputy Principal Resources explained that SMT was due to meet the following week to discuss the issue of Safeguarding and its reporting. The Chair stated that he would welcome consideration being given to Safeguarding and

its interaction with governance reports to Governing Body Committees. The Chair also wished to record his appreciation of the revised governance self assessment procedure that had been implemented this year and noted that the governance self assessment session on 21 October 2009 had been very constructive.

Members ***agreed to recommend*** the Governing Body to approve the Personnel Committee's Terms of Reference. Members also ***approved*** the proposed Schedule of Business for the Personnel Committee for 2009/10.

### **09.31 Health, Safety and Welfare Update**

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the Health, Safety and Welfare Report for the summer term 2009, which was considered by the Committee. The report included accidents statistics for the summer term 2009 and incidents reported to the HSE under RIDDOR; the results of Health & Safety Audits completed to date; feedback from the College's LSC Regional Health & Safety visit; and an analysis of the College's current position against the Good Practice identified in the HSE report on leading Health & Safety at Work.

In relation to the College's LSC Regional Health & Safety visit, it was reported that the overall assessment had been "good and improving". With regard to Health & Safety audits it was reported that a new audit format had been developed based on the Common Inspection Framework and that this now included a whole section on Safeguarding. A Safeguarding Group had also been set up which encompassed health & safety, equality & diversity and child protection.

The Chair queried whether it might prove beneficial to invite Governor Curriculum Links to see how a health & safety audit was carried out in their Link area. It was also felt that within the audit there could be a little more emphasis on how the College's students felt in relation to their own health and well-being. The Chair wished to record the Committee's congratulations on the number of health & safety audits that had been carried out to date, and on the strong results that had been achieved.

### **09.32 Employee Relations Update - Minutes of Latest Meetings with Trade Union Representatives**

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the minutes of the previous meetings on 24 April 2009, 8 May 2009 and 19 June 2009 outlining the key themes which had been considered.

It was reported that the meetings that had taken place had been

very positive even though they had taken place during the period of the College's re-structure. It had been found that the format of holding policy consultation meetings and then a business meeting had worked well. Nothing further had been heard in relation to the UCU's proposed ballot on the AoC's recommended pay award.

**09.33 College Staff Pay Award 2009/10**

This item was treated as confidential for which a separate confidential minute was produced.

**09.34 Reports and Updates**

a) Workforce Profile Information

The Human Resources Manager presented the report on the College's workforce profile as at 30 September 2009, which contained details of College staff numbers and Full Time Equivalents (FTEs); turnover; sickness absence; ethnicity; age; and length of service.

It was reported that Full Time Equivalents (FTEs) were slightly down but that this was due to the loss of some posts last year. It was noted that the gender mix of staff was approximately one third male to two thirds female. However, in terms of full-time and proportionate teaching staff the gender balance was less than 3% apart. Turnover of support and teaching staff had reduced significantly (and was below AoC benchmark data) whereas turnover of management staff had increased. However, this increase was said to be consistent with the sector.

Sickness absence rates had reduced to just less than 3% and compared favourably with other FE colleges and the education sector generally. Consideration was then given to the reasons for absence and comparable figures supplied by the AoC.

With regard to ethnic and age profiles, it was reported that the proportion of "non-white" staff had increased slightly to 1.8%, whereas the age profile of College staff appeared to be reducing.

b) Performance Review Compliance

The Human Resources Manager presented a copy of the compliance report for Performance Reviews, as at 23 November 2009.

It was explained that at this time in the academic cycle the College was only reporting on full-time and proportionate staff. Part-time variable hours data had only recently been fed through to Heads of Division and, as such, it was too early to report on Performance Review compliance for this group of staff.

## Action

It was noted that overall compliance as at 23 November 2009 was 40%. The College's Strategic Plan provided that 95% of full-time and proportionate staff should receive Performance Review objectives by 31 January 2010. The Human Resources Manager stated that a lot of work had been undertaken in this regard and that the College was confident that the target figure would be achieved. The current figure of 40% related only to those members of staff where all the necessary documentation had been returned and processed. An update on compliance for part-time variable hours staff would be presented at the next meeting of the Committee.

HRM

### c) Child Protection Training Update

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the summary of training provided in Child Protection since 2008/9. It was noted that in relation to OFSTED inspections, Safeguarding was a limiting grade, and delivering appropriate staff training on Safeguarding was therefore of high importance. However, there had been some confusion on what constituted "appropriate training". Clearly, staff with direct contact with learners required a higher level of training than staff whose job role did not routinely bring them into learner contact.

In response to uncertainty in the sector the AoC recently met with OFSTED. The discussion included what OFSTED meant by "appropriate training". OFSTED had agreed to clarify the wording in the inspectors' handbook and would relay this to the AoC, which would then be shared with colleges.

It was noted that it was a condition of employment for all College new-starters that they undertook the online Safeguarding training as a minimum within one month of their employment starting. Appropriate training also had to be repeated every two or three years depending on level.

The Chair queried how the College assessed how successful its Safeguarding training was being. It was suggested that it would be useful at future meetings of the Committee for a report to be provided outlining the number of cases that had arisen and confirming that they had been followed up and dealt with appropriately. It was also queried whether this might also be a valuable Governor training exercise.

DPR

### d) Update on Management Development Programme

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the summary of the College's management development programme for 2009/10.

It was reported that the programme covered a mix of mandatory

and optional training and sought to achieve a balance between providing core management training that managers needed in order to perform to the optimum level, whilst at the same time recognising that managers' time was often difficult to find in the context of undertaking demanding roles. It was reported that the training had been well received by staff.

e) Tutor Utilisation – Termly Report

The Deputy Principal Resources presented the report showing that current planned utilisation across all Divisions was 94.44% compared to 87.7% in November 2008 and a minimum target of 95%.

This ranged from over 100% in Maths & Numeracy and Child Studies to 84.79% in Health & Social Care for staff on tutor contracts only (i.e. excluding Learning Assistants).

Tutor Utilisation also needed to be set in the context of a managed approach to Reduced Class Contact (RCC) which had impacted on utilisation. This was part of a drive to ensure efficient use of College staffing, which also included more frequent monitoring and action points.

### **09.35 Policy Updates and Developments**

a) Amended Management of Sickness Absence Policy

The HR Manager presented the report and explained that the Policy had been updated and improved in one important respect (having already been approved by the Committee on 23 February 2009). In Appendix A the College had introduced the concept of a referral to a formal sickness absence meeting which could result in the issuing of a formal absence warning. This replaced referral to the College's Managing Individual Performance Policy which had been contained in the Policy originally approved in February.

The Personnel Committee **resolved to approve** the amended Management of Sickness Absence Policy.

b) Grievance and Mediation Policy

The HR Manager presented the proposed Grievance and Mediation Policy. It was explained that this policy was an updated version of the College's Grievance Policy. Sharon Devlin, Senior HR Adviser, was now an ACAS-trained mediator, and as such was able to provide a mediation service to staff.

The College had incorporated reference to mediation within the Grievance Policy, which had been re-titled Grievance and Mediation Policy. This would provide staff with a further means of

resolving grievances via mediation. It was hoped that by offering a mediation service fewer complaints would proceed to the formal grievance process.

The Personnel Committee **resolved to approve** the Grievance & Mediation Policy.

c) Adverse Weather Policy

The HR Manager presented the College's proposed Adverse Weather Policy which was considered by the Committee. It was explained that the College did not currently have a policy which set out the College's approach to when staff could not get to work because of bad weather.

This Policy sought to clarify the expectations of the College of its staff in circumstances of bad weather. It also set out the approach to staff receiving paid time off in the event that it was impossible or dangerous for staff to attend work, either because it was physically difficult to do so, or because childcare arrangements were disrupted, for example if a school was closed.

The Personnel Committee **resolved to approve** the Adverse Weather Policy.

d) Time off In Lieu Guidance

The HR Manager presented the College's proposed Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) Guidance which was considered by the Committee.

It was explained that this guidance set out to establish a consistent and fair approach to TOIL. The College recognised that staff worked additional hours from time to time, and it was important to ensure that there was a consistent approach to TOIL by managers to ensure that staff were treated equitably throughout the College.

The Personnel Committee **resolved to approve** the Time Off In Lieu (TOIL) Guidance.

e) IT Security Policy

The HR Manager presented the report with the College's proposed IT Security Policy which was considered by the Committee.

It was explained that the Policy set out the College's legal obligations and those of its users. It clarified acceptable use, IT security and data protection issues, and how the College managed these.

The Chair queried whether the title of this Policy was correct as it

appeared to relate to more than IT security and to be an over-arching IT policy. Discussion took place about what College students received in this regard. It was explained that such information was contained in the Student Handbook, was referred to in student induction, and appeared on screen every time a student logged on to a College computer.

The Personnel Committee ***resolved to approve*** the IT Security Policy.

**09.36 Any Other Business**

None.

**09.37 Date of Next Meeting**

Monday 22 February 2010 at 5.00pm.

The meeting closed at 6.30pm.

**Signed:**

**Chair:**

**Name:**

**Date:**