

**Minutes of the Human Resources Committee held on  
9 June 2009**

Present: Mrs Lynne Kent  
Mrs M Hopwood  
Mrs J McAllister

In attendance: J Stott (Clerk)  
S Shaw (Deputy Clerk)

Apologies: Dr R Dugdale, Mr P Brown

Meeting commenced: 19.05 pm  
Meeting closed: 20:40 pm

The Clerk opened the meeting.

**01/09 Disclosure of financial and/or personal interest**

There was no disclosure of financial and/or personal interest.

**02/09 To agree agenda and order of business as circulated**

The agenda and order of business were agreed.

**03/09 To appoint a Chair and Vice Chair to the Committee**

The Clerk asked for nominations.

- (i) Phill Brown was nominated, seconded and appointed to the position of Chair of the Committee.
- (ii) Lynne Kent was nominated, seconded and accepted the position of Vice Chair of the Committee.

In the absence of the Chair the Vice Chair took the meeting

**04/09 To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 11 November 2008**

The minutes were approved.

**05/09 Matters arising**

- a) 18/08 The meeting received an update on the introduction of the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) which will go live from the 12 October 2009. Employees for whom the Vetting and Barring Scheme will apply can apply to register

with the ISA from July 2010 with registration becoming compulsory from November 2010.

- b) 23/08 b) The meeting agreed to receive a training item on 'an organisational approach to dealing with workplace stress' at their next meeting.

**06/09 To consider the HR Strategy and contribute to its updating**

The Principal introduced the item and explained that the extract of the HR Strategy had been taken from the Strategic Plan. She outlined for Members the changes that had been made to update the document. She highlighted, in particular:

- 1 Section 2.2.2 - on maintaining and developing the College's employment policies
- 2 Section 2.2.3 - a reference to the LLUK Workforce Development Strategy and updated figures on the number of staff with at a least a level 4 teaching qualification. She reported on the good progress made on the introduction of a better qualified workforce.
- 3 Section 2.3.5 and 2.3.6 – Employer Responsiveness and Personalisation as continuing priorities.
- 4 2.3.7 – the new Equality & Diversity e-learning training module 'Respect'. In answer to a question it was agreed to investigate if Corporation members can undertake the training.
- 5 2.3.10 – that Functional Skills and the Foundation Learning Tier would be important developments going forward.
- 6 2.3.11 – the College will continue to identify staff who need support for a first level 2 qualification
- 7 2.4.2 – the College will continue to convert Lecturing posts to Instructor posts, where appropriate.
- 8 2.4.2 – the role of the Development & Performance Unit which has been successful in supporting the work of the Assistant Principal's
- 9 2.4.2 – the successful first year of the Essential Skills Sector.

A discussion took place and, in answer to a question, the Principal confirmed that the College had been careful only to use Instructor posts rather than lecturer posts where this was appropriate and had not attempted to negotiate a change to the contracts of any serving Lecturers with a view to a transfer to an Instructor contract.

**07/09 To consider a sickness absence report**

The Principal introduced the item and highlighted the following:

- for the period 01.06.08 to 31.05.09 the working days lost as a percentage of days available increased to 3.83% from 3.56%.
- the top 3 (out of 18) notified reasons by working days lost were Operation/Recuperation (350 days); Depression/Stress (334 days); Flu/Virus (216 days)
- the top 3 (out of 18) notified reasons by spells of absence were Stomach/Gastro (70 spells); Flu/Virus (66 spells); Cold (32 spells)
- the number of days lost per spell had gone up from 5.17 to 6.00.

Members were told that the College Administrator had introduced a routine that on a quarterly basis he produced a sickness absence report that covered the previous 12 months. Any employee with 6 or more absences in that period is investigated with the Line manager and further action, if appropriate, is considered. Members were informed that in the first report there were 11 staff that had 6 or more absences but this number had reduced to 6 by the third report.

The report was received

**08/09 To consider national recommendations and settlements/offers for the pay of staff and the Committee's advice to the F&GP Committee**

The Principal presented a paper outlining progress to date with pay negotiations. She informed members of the settlements/offers for Teachers' pay and Local Authorities. She also outlined the main points of the joint TU's pay claim which was considered by the AoC National Joint Council on the 5<sup>th</sup> June.

It was reported that the AoC had made an offer to the TUs of an increase of 1% on pay. She informed the meeting that the College would receive an increase of less than 2% in funding from the LSC in 2009/10.

A discussion followed and, in answer to a question, the Principal explained that the College needed to wait for the final outcome of the national negotiations. It was agreed that the College needs to keep under review the annual leave entitlement of certain staff and the working week.

*The following recommendation on the pay of staff for 2009-10 was agreed to be put to the F&GP Committee: that, subject to affordability, the Corporation should aim to equal or better the AoC offer.*

**09/09 To receive a report on the nature of the external activities of the Principal**

The Clerk presented the report on the nature of the external activities of the Principal.

Members acknowledged that the Committee had been very rigorous and robust in maintaining this routine for approximately 10 years in the aftermath of the Halton College affair. It was agreed that it would no longer be necessary to continue this routine in future.

The Committee suggested that the new Principal might want to include, in his report to the Corporation from time to time, a brief update on his external contacts and key areas of work undertaken.

The report was received.

**10/09 (a) To receive a report on Employment Issues and Developments**

The report, prepared by the College Administrator, was presented by the Principal. She drew Members' attention, in particular, to:

- 1 the increase in the statutory holiday entitlement to 5.6 weeks from the 1 April 2009
- 2 the repeal of the Dispute Resolution Procedures on the 6 April which are replaced by a new ACAS Code of Practice.
- 3 the latest update on the introduction of the Vetting and Barring Scheme which comes into force on the 12 October 2009.
- 4 the extension of paid maternity leave to 12 months from April 2010.

The report was received.

**(b) To receive a report on Health and Safety Issues and Developments**

The Principal presented the report from the Health and Safety Officer.

She reported on progress he had made since his appointment and the successful relationship being built with the LSC in respect of Health and Safety.

She drew Members' attention, in particular, to:

1. the E-Learning Training modules he had introduced
2. the extension of CCTV across all premises
3. new legislation
4. the accident/incident rates. She informed the meeting that the accident/incident rates are reviewed on a termly basis by the Health & Safety Committee.

The report was received.

**11/09 To agree the format for the Committee's annual report to the Corporation**

The format used in previous years was agreed:

**12/09 (i) To review the Terms of Reference for the Committee**

The Clerk presented the item.

Following a discussion it was agreed:

- to split term of reference number 1 into two to read:
  - 1) To monitor the implementation of the College's Human Resource Strategy
  - 2) To receive reports on matters such as staff sickness absence, equality & diversity monitoring, employment developments, health & safety developments etc.
- to reword term of reference number 4 into a new number 5 as follows:
  - 5) To consider the Corporation's annual pay policy, national recommendations and settlements/offers for the pay of staff in like sectors and the Committee's advice to the F&GP Committee.

**(ii) To identify any training needs for the Committee or individual members**

The meeting agreed to receive a training item on 'an organisational approach to dealing with workplace stress' at their next meeting. It was agreed to ask the Health & Safety

Officer to attend for this item.

**13/09 Any other business**

(a) Date of scheduled meetings to December 2009

**Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 6.30pm**