



HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Remuneration & Personnel Committee held on 23rd November 2020
from 5pm via Zoom

Unconfirmed Minutes.

Present: Ms R Drury (Chair), Ms L Summers, Mr K Webb, Mr J Dawson, Ms R Sivori
(attendance: 100%)

In attendance: Ms A Williams, Ms K Rogerson and Ms L Secker.

Clerk: Mrs C Coupland

1. Apologies for Absence/ Declaration of Interest

There were no apologies for absence.

There were no declarations of interest from Committee Members.

2. Minutes from Meeting held on 20th May 2020

Resolved:

- **That these be accepted as a true record of the meeting**

3. Matters arising

a. Staffing Policy Reviews

It was noted that all policy reviews were to be addressed under agenda item 7.

b. Internal Audit Report : Assurance Review of Continuous Professional Development (CPD)

The clerk reminded the committee that the corporation had asked for the internal audit report on the assurance review of CPD to be shared with members.

The clerk explained that the report had been formally presented to the audit committee in June 2020. The review considered the arrangements for identification, delivery and monitoring of CPD for staff at the college. The overall assurance assigned was reasonable. One important and one routine recommendation were made related to the college's CPD recording processes. No operational effectiveness matters were raised for consideration. The Clerk confirmed that a follow up review will be undertaken by the internal auditors findings of which will be presented to the audit committee in June 2021.

The Committee welcomed the sharing of the audit findings and were of the view that the assurance review served as a further assurance source to support the green assurance level assigned to the linked risk at its last meeting in May 2020.

Resolved:

- **That the audit assurance review be received**
- **That there be no change to the previously assigned green assurance level for the risk: CPD and Leadership Development of Staff**

4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Annual Report 2020

Ms Secker explained to the committee that the annual Equality, Diversity and Inclusion report is presented for review to ensure that due regard to positively contributing to the advancement of equality and good relations and to identify actions to work towards a more diverse workforce, where appropriate. Ms Secker also went on to explain that where available, comparative data from the Kirklees 2018 Census has been included.

Ms Secker advised members that the full suite of data is only available from 2019-20 onwards, due to the difficulties previously experienced in obtaining complete and reliable data from the HR database. Going forward the report will continue to build up comparative data. The committee however welcomed the report especially the staff recruitment and selection monitoring data and the analysis commentaries to guide discussions.

The committee deliberated over applicants' gender as well as ethnicity and the conversion rates for each applicant group into appointed applicants. Committee members were mindful that more male applicants were appointed during 2019/20 however the gender balance of the staff workforce remains to be predominately female. It was also noted that the employee ethnicity data showed a significant rise for staff that identify themselves as white British – 83% (an increase of 13% over 2019/20 and 2020/21) in comparison to other ethnicity groups, with 90.9% of applicants appointed during 2019/20 also of white British heritage; despite receiving a diverse range of applicants for vacancies. It was acknowledged that these data trends were not comparative to Kirklees census data and/or the diverse college community. The committee also acknowledged that shortlisting data for each group was currently not available; members were of the view that it would be useful to receive this information in future editions of the report. Ms Secker agreed to look into this for it may require more systems development.

The committee accepted that applicants are to be appointed on merit, which may explain the difference in profiles between applicants and appointments, but members were of the opinion that deeper analysis would be beneficial in providing quality assurance to the senior leaders and also to governors that recruitment selection processes remain robust and eliminate discrimination.

The committee also agreed with Ms Secker's view that the data could be improved in terms of sexual orientation and Religion and beliefs. Ms Secker is encouraging staff to fully complete their personal profiles, in the database self-service function, twice yearly. Time was therefore taken for the committee to offer ideas to Ms Secker on how best to promote and encourage early disclosure from applicants for all vacancies.

The committee also asked for Ms Secker to recheck and validate the calculations downloaded from the database given some identified discrepancies.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received**
- **For future editions to include available data on the profiles of applicants being shortlisted**

5. Year End Staffing Report 2019/20

Ms Secker reminded the committee that they are to receive the report in order to oversee performance management on the corporation's behalf, by seeking assurance that all staff related activity is monitored, reviewed and responded to appropriately.

It was noted that there has been a big reduction in number of absences given the closure of the college as promoted by lockdown and working from home and although there had been a slight increase in staff leavers during 2018/19; staff retention has since stabilised for 2019/20.

Ms Secker advised the committee that COVID 19 absences have been recorded differently to identify staff members who are ill and unable to work as opposed to those that are well but having to isolate at home; which is not working time. It was noted however that the report was misrepresenting the level of absence as those staff that were working from home were actually being included in the working days lost data. Ms Secker agreed to rectify this.

Ms Secker explained that the HR risk assessment, which supplements the main college COVID 19 risk assessment, has identified high risk employees enabling HR to make contact with all staff throughout the summer and support them in return to their work this academic year. A survey for staff was also undertaken in the summer term to help support HR in identifying and responding to anxious staff.

All agreed that tracking and monitoring of staff mental wellbeing ensures that HR can appropriately identify any patterns on and triggers for staff behaviour to enable the college to take proactive steps in further supporting staff.

Clarification points were addressed during discussions to enable all members to fully understand the report contents. It was also noted that the full details relating to resignations may inadvertently identify staff members; it was therefore agreed that less information is to be included into this report section going forward so as to best protect staff identity given the low numbers; a suggestion was made to use two separate categories – voluntary (for personal progression) and involuntary (for dismissal, end of contract etc). It was also agreed appropriate to limit the review period to 3 years not 5 in future. Ms Secker welcomed these contributions.

Resolved

- **That the report be received.**

6. Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy

The committee recognised that the health and wellbeing agenda needs to be championed from the top of the organisation. Members therefore welcomed the opportunity to receive details of how the college is leading on staff health and wellbeing.

Ms Rogerson explained that the college has always invested in a caring and supportive working culture and taken a proactive approach to engaging with employees when they're at work. But, in recognition that COVID-19 continues to bring significant changes to college life, with many staff having to adapt to new ways of working; senior leaders were of the view that it was necessary and timely to relaunch and promote the college's strategic approach to Staff Health and Wellbeing at HNC.

The Committee, on reviewing the You Matter @HNC strategy, were of the view that it made clear that at HNC the staff remain to be the most valuable and valued resource at the college and that health and wellbeing is really important, especially as the college adjusts to new ways of working during the ongoing pandemic. Members agreed that it clearly demonstrated that the College is committed to providing a working environment which actively promotes the positive health and wellbeing of staff. The strategy promotes the 5 Pillars of Health and Wellbeing across College and through these, all staff will have access to a wide range of activities and support that will encourage and support them to develop positive health and wellbeing. The committee was keen to understand how the effectiveness of the strategy will be monitored and reviewed by senior leaders; Time was taken to consider what positive impact indicators could include.

Ms Rogerson also advised the committee that the COVID-19 pandemic has raised senior leaders' concerns about people's health and well-being including mental health as the implications of the ongoing pandemic have been significant. A COVID 19 staff wellbeing survey was therefore issued to all staff to help SLT identify the key priorities in order to support staff to manage their wellbeing at work. Over 120 staff have taken part and have submitted their responses by the deadline date of Monday 9th November. Ms Rogerson explained that data analysis is ongoing; headline information will therefore be presented to the Governors via the corporate report at the corporation meeting on 17th December 2020. The committee welcomed this approach.

Resolved:

- **That the Staff Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy be received**

Ms Rogerson left the meeting at this point.

7. Staffing Policy Reviews

Ms Secker advised the committee that the policies had been resubmitted for review building upon the feedback received at the last meeting.

Ms Secker explained that changes to the Policy text had not been highlighted due to the comprehensive nature of the changes made. For each policy however, the proposed amendments and reasons for each change were made clear on the summary page.

Attendance Policy

The College is committed to taking all possible reasonable steps to protect employees' physical, mental and emotional health and wellbeing, while working collectively as appropriate with individual employees, managers and trade union representatives to manage sickness absence and ill health in a supportive manner and through full exploration of all available options to enable the employee to attend work on a regular basis.

Post deliberations the committee agreed to the revised policy subject to the amendments agreed namely:

- The removal of reference to 8.4 days trigger as this is a public sector target rather than publicised HNC absence target.
- The removal of the reference to specific actions of Director of HR where possible
- The removal of the referral to separate process for Principal and Clerk; for this policy applies to all employees.

Capability Policy

The committee was of the view that the proposed policy provides a frame work to help and encourage staff to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of work. Members agreed that the policy is designed to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all, in relation to capability action taken in response to performance concerns. Sanctions taken will be determined by the available facts relevant to each case. This policy therefore specifically applies to the issues of alleged professional capability and competence

Post deliberations the committee agreed to the revised policy subject to the amendment agreed namely to remove reference to a separate process for Principal and Clerk; for this policy applies to all employees.

Disciplinary Policy

This policy provides a frame work to help and encourage employees to achieve and maintain acceptable standards of work. It is designed to ensure consistent and fair treatment for all, in relation to capability action taken in response to performance concerns. Sanctions taken will be determined by the available facts relevant to each case. This policy therefore applies to the issues of alleged professional capability and competence.

Post deliberations the committee agreed to the revised policy subject to the amendments agreed namely:

- to remove reference to a separate process for Principal and Clerk; for this policy applies to all employees.
- To determine whether contacting the regional union representative is a courtesy or legal requirement and who qualifies for this time. Should this be a legal requirement the relating paragraph would need strengthening to clarify this.

Staff Development Policy:

Ms Secker explained that this Policy sets out the College's commitment to the current and future development of staff skills, expertise and ability in support of: the College's Vision to remain an Outstanding College; the Strategic Goals of the College (as outlined in the College's Strategic Plan); departmental quality improvement plans (QIPS); and the job or career related aspirations of individual members of staff.

This policy makes clear that the College recognises that effective staff development is not only vital to College or team or individual goals and ambitions but also makes a contribution to the development of a happy and healthy staff and a great place to work.

The clerk confirmed that under the current scheme of delegation, the staff development policy is owned and approved by the senior leadership team and shared with the committee for information and the opportunity to comment.

Policy approval Process

The committee noted the lack of Union feedback from the last review, but were of the view that the three policies requiring corporation approval should be re-circulated again with a clear deadline for feedback. The committee agreed it sensible to presume union feedback should no feedback be received by the deadline. The outcome of the union feedback is to be reported back to the committee at its next meeting.

Resolved:

- **The committee agreed to the revised policies being shared with union representatives for feedback.**
- **The outcome of the union feedback is to be presented at the next committee meeting.**
- **That the Staff Development Policy be received.**

8. Staff Pay Framework and Awards: Update

Local documents determining staff terms and conditions:

The Committee is to review bespoke local documents, in particular the annual working time document and the determined allowances for teachers with extra managerial responsibilities when fundamental changes are deemed required at point of annual review and/or concerns arise as to its affordability once outcome of national negotiations are known.

Ms Williams explained that the Working Time Document for 2020-21 had been reviewed and the changes made by Senior Leaders to the working time document are to take account of the Covid 19 pandemic and the DfE guidance published on 1st September 2020 and that calculations fall within the contractual commitment of:

- 1265 hours per annum
- 38 weeks per annum
- 5 additional days per annum for staff development

The committee noted that this document was for information only as the direction of the 1265 is determined by the Principal.

Resolved:

- **That the working time document be received.**

The criteria for heads remuneration

Ms Williams advised the committee that a formal review had been undertaken on the criteria for heads remuneration and that no changes have been made for this academic year. .

Resolved:

- **That the criteria for heads remuneration be received.**

Staff Pay Award 2020/21:

Ms Williams reminded the committee that the Support Staff Pay Award was concluded in 2019-20. It was a two year pay award deal and approved by Governors for implementation at Huddersfield New College. It was a staged pay award and the final stage will be implemented from January 1st 2021: a further 2.5%

The Teachers Pay Award however was a one year pay award for 2019-20 only. This too was approved Governors for implementation at Huddersfield New College. This year's pay award is still under negotiation. The NEU have claimed a 7% pay award. The NAS/UWT have refused to claim an award. The SFCA are advising Colleges budget for a final award of about 3%. We have budgeted for a 3% pay award.

Post deliberations, the committee concluded that should the Teachers Pay Award be agreed at 3% from September 1st 2020, which will be higher than the Support Staff Pay Award for this year, it would be prudent for Governors to revisit the support staff pay award for this year, for the corporation have always kept Teachers and Support Staff Pay Awards equal.

Resolved:

- **That the update be received**
- **For the committee to revisit the support staff pay award for 2020/21 should the final Teacher Pay Award be agreed at a higher rate.**

9. BAF Assurance Review : Difficulty to recruit and retain high quality staff possible leading to gaps in business continuity, skills, knowledge and experience

The Committee considered the assurance review presented for the individual risk; Difficulty to recruit and retain high quality staff possible leading to gaps in business continuity, skills, knowledge and experience

From discussions had, members were of the opinion that the risk continues to be managed well by the college as captured within the comprehensive updates to the report.

Members agreed that an overall green assurance level shall be assigned to the risk.

Resolved:

- **To assign Green overall assurance**
- **For the Clerk to update the Master BAF**

Ms Secker and Ms Williams left the meetings at this point.

Remuneration Matters : Committee members and Clerk only

10. Framework for remunerating / compensating Governor(s) : Biennial Review

The Clerk advised the committee that the framework for remunerating / compensating Governors had been reviewed and no changes are proposed.

The committee noted that the framework and criteria continues to be based upon the general principles as first agreed by the corporation as well as the AoC guidance on remunerating Chairs of Governing Bodies and the National Charity Commission Guidance.

Resolved:

- **To note that the biennial review of the framework has been undertaken and no changes are required.**

11. Remuneration & Personnel's Annual Report

The Clerk reminded the committee that on adopting the AoC's SPH Remuneration Code; the Remuneration Committee must produce an annual remuneration report to the governing body each year to provide sufficient assurance to the governing body that the Remuneration Committee has effectively discharged its responsibilities. Furthermore, the college must also publish the Remuneration Annual Report.

The Clerk presented the draft report to the Committee for consideration. The Clerk explained that the template provided by the AoC has been used to produce the required report, as agreed by the Committee at its last meeting. The report covers meetings during the year from 1 August 2019 to 31 July 2020. The Clerk confirmed that the data included within the report had been extracted from the college's members report and financial statements, submitted to the external auditors, which will also be published on the colleges website by 31 January 2021, once approved the corporation.

After deliberation, the Committee approved the content of the report. Members asked however for the college's median pay, currently reported as £24k, to be rechecked to ensure that it has been calculated on an FTE basis and not using actual salaries.

Resolved:

- ***In accordance with the AoC SPH Remuneration Code the Committee approved the report for presentation to the Corporation and for publication on the colleges website once received by the Corporation, subject to the recheck of the college's median pay.***

12. Principal succession planning:

All present were of the view that a dedicated meeting, to take place before the end of the term, was required for this agenda item to enable members to have an informed discussion on principal succession planning.

Resolved:

- **For the Clerk to confirm a further date and time for the committee to meet before the end of the term.**

13. Any other Business.

There was no other business.

14. Learner Impact Reflection

The impact of discussions and scrutiny of the College's work in improving the outcomes and experience for all learners was considered and the following agreed:

- Assurance received that the College continues to provide a welcoming, safe and supportive environment for all students and staff to develop personally, academically and professionally.
- Scrutiny of the College's staffing report ensures Governors' focus, challenge and support in improving teaching and learning experiences for Students.
- Effective leadership, enables HNC to continue to provide the best learning experience and enrichment opportunities for all students and thereby improve their life choices and their life chances
- Effective absence monitoring of staff ensures that students benefit from stable learning experience.
- A staff body to reflect student population and local demographics provide as a positive role model for students
- By improving the health and wellbeing of staff, the college is creating a more motivated, engaged and high performing workforce – resulting in outstanding teaching and learning on site and/or online and student outcomes.
- Assurance that the Remuneration & Personnel Committee is able to fulfil its delegated responsibilities.
- Assessing a pay award needs to balance rewarding achievement and retaining good staff with awareness of local and national sensitivities and constraints
- The corporation is committed to demonstrating its leadership and stewardship in relation to remuneration and in doing so helps to protect the college's reputation and provide greater assurances to key stakeholders and partners, including the student community and wider society

15. Determination of confidentiality

It was determined that the supporting papers regarding agenda items 7, 9, 16 and 17 should remain confidential.

The Clerk left the meeting at this point. The committee chair was assigned as note taker in Clerk's absence.

Confidential Remuneration Matters: Committee members only

16. Performance review of Clerk. (confidential)

17. Performance of Principal (confidential)

18. Remuneration Benchmarking Data : Principals Pay. (confidential)

18. Date of next meeting: to be confirmed by the Clerk