



HUDDERSFIELD NEW COLLEGE FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

Remuneration & Personnel Committee held on 11th October 2021 from 5pm via Teams

Confirmed Open Minutes.

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

In attendance: Ms A Williams, Mr M Smith-Connor, Ms Paddon

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.

It was noted that the minutes of the last meeting are to be addressed under agenda 5.

Staffing Matters : College staff in attendance.

3. Year End Staffing Report 2021

Ms Secker explained to the committee that the annual staffing report provides an overview of staff related activity in terms of turnover, absence, casework and any relevant contextual factors relevant to the period of review – up to 31st July 2021.

The following key points were raised throughout discussions:

The committee was informed that both Headcount and FTE has continued to increase year on year for the last 3 years. In 2020-21 the headcount reached 247. At the start of 2021-22, it is 249. The committee noted that the current headcount is nearing the 250 threshold for Gender Pay Gap reporting; clarification was therefore sought on whether the 250 headcount was a threshold for other staffing related declarations that the college would be expected/required to make. Ms Secker advised that statistics about ethnic diversity may in time be required but is not currently covered by legislation.

The overall sickness absence (including Covid 19 related ill-health) per FTE in 2020-21 was 7.4 days, below the agreed absence tolerance level of 7.5 days. Ms Secker confirmed that other Covid 19 related absence such as self isolation during 2020-21 had been monitored and recorded separately. Time was taken for the sickness absence analysis to be considered against the limited SFCA benchmarks and CIPD trend highlights available.

The committee was informed that sickness absence levels will continue to be monitored rigorously with a view to try and continue to reduce sickness absence levels, especially amongst support staff. Ms Secker explained that this will include supporting managers and Heads of Faculty in continued robust absence management by actively managing high level of long term sickness absence as well as persistent short term sickness absence concerns .

Ms Secker advised the committee that mental ill health absence is the most common cause of both long and short term absence at the college; there does not appear to be any common underlying causes for this increase although Covid 19 may have impacted on mental health resilience in general. Given this rise, the college continues to follow advice and offer support to employees through an employee assistance programme (EAP), counselling services, occupational health services and individual risk assessments to aid return to work. In order to further mitigate against mental ill health absence a number of health and safety and well-being initiatives are also in place including Staff Wellbeing Group (Director of HR is a member), weekly well-being calendar of activities, flu jab provisions and 60 adult mental health first aid qualified members of staff.

Ms Secker confirmed that covid 19 related ill health and self isolation was a constant throughout 2020-21. The committee was advised that HR throughout this period undertook personal risk assessments for all staff who were Clinically Extremely Vulnerable (CEV), BAME, pregnant and over 60 years of age (not 65 as recommended by the DfE but in line with best practice published jointly by the Teaching Unions), at each point that government advice was amended. The committee was informed that as from august 2021, with a full return to site, HR have continued to carry out full risk assessments for all CEV staff and pregnant staff in their 3rd trimester and have developed a reduced process for risk assessing others in line with government/teaching union advice. The committee was satisfied with this.

It was noted that there had been a small increase in staff turnover in 2021 compared to 2019-20; from 11.7% to 13.5%, the committee was advised that all leavers left for legitimate reasons. These included retirement, promotion, new career directions, end of fixed term contracts etc.

The committee was advised that absence management meetings remain relatively consistent with last year but there has been an increase in performance management meetings, which may be evidence that managers are developing confidence in managing more challenging staffing matters. Three grievances was also received, an increase on previous years. Two were managed informally, in line with the college's grievance policy. One was managed formally but a snot upheld.

Ms Secker confirmed that recruitment activity was intense during the year. All vacancy posts were however filled and the college structure fully staffed for start of academic year 2021-22. A total of 84 posts (internal and external) were recruited to last year, an increase of 40% from the previous 60 vacancies recruited to during 2019-20.

It was noted that 3 employees during 2020-21 had failed to meet the required standards due to live and ongoing performance concerns. The committee was satisfied that all performance reviews had taken place as per the colleges calendar with timeframes clearly communicated amongst staff.

The committee considered at length the format and content of the report. The consensus view was that the report in its current format better served operational needs rather than governance oversight and assurance purposes given the detailed, albeit high level, data included about departmental performance and associated staffing issues. For this reason the report was determined as confidential by the committee.

It was viewed by some members that the report would still serve the committee with only data being included for staff numbers of 5 or above, any less should not be recorded but stated as 'less than 5' in order to ensure staff members remain unidentifiable. It was therefore agreed appropriate for Ms Secker to resubmit a revised version of this report for the committee to comment upon at its next business meeting in order to determine whether members are satisfied that any revisions to the format still enabled the committee to hold the senior leaders to account for efficient and efficient staff management.

Resolved:

- **That the report be received**
- **For the revised content of the report to be submitted at the next committee meeting for consideration.**
- **For the staffing report to be classed as confidential.**

4. BAF : Difficulty to recruit and retain high quality staff possibly 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 possibly leading to gaps in business continuity, skills, knowledge and experience.

Time was taken to consider the residual risk level in light of external contributing factors outside of the college's control – namely Brexit and its possible impact on future recruitment. Ms Williams and Ms Secker confirmed that there has been no current negative impact on recruitment or retention of staff but all present agreed it pertinent to remain mindful of the effects of Brexit, post covid. It was therefore agreed necessary for SLT to revisit and increase the assigned residual scores of this risk to better reflect the national context - taking it from green to amber.

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

- **For the risk owner to revisit the residual risk scores to better reflect the national context.**

**5. Staff Pay Framework and Awards: Update
National Joint Council (NJC) Teachers' Pay Agreement 2021/22**

Ms Williams informed the committee that she had received notification that the NJC Staff Side (teacher trade unions) have accepted the Employers' Side pay offer for 2021/22. The following offer was agreed to take effect from 1st September 2021:

- A 1% across the board increase
- An additional 0.5% increase on pay points 6, 7 and 8

This agreement, as recommended by the NJC, should cost no more than 1.1% of paybill, is in line with the SFCA pay consultation remit, provides a cost of living pay increase for teachers within the sector and is at the edge of affordability for colleges.

The committee noted that the recommended pay award was well within the budget allocation previously approved by the Corporation in July 2021. The committee therefore endorsed for senior leaders to initiate the pay award for teaching staff with immediate effect.

Ms Williams advised members that meetings with UNISON on their 2021/22 pay claim for NJC support staff will continue later this month and will take full account of this agreement. The committee asked to be kept informed of the negotiations for support staff.

Resolved:

- **That the update be received.**
- **For the teachers' pay award to be initiated with immediate effect and for the Corporation to note the outcome of negotiations regarding teachers' pay.**

Ms Williams and Mr Smith – Connor left the meeting at this point.

Remuneration Matters : Committee members and Clerk only (Ms Paddon remained for agenda items 6 and 7)

6. Confidential Minutes from meetings held on 29th June 2021 and 15th July 2021.

Resolved:

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

7. Principal Succession Planning – Update (confidential)

Ms Paddon left the meeting at this point.

8. 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 2020 to 31 July 2021. The Clerk confirmed that the data included within the report had been extracted from the college's end of year accounts and will be included within the members report and financial statements, submitted to the external auditors, which will also be published on the colleges website by 31 January 2022, once approved the corporation.

The Committee approved the content of the report, subject to agreed amendment.

Resolved:

- In accordance with the AoC SPH Remuneration Code the Committee approved the report, subject to the one amendment, for presentation to the Corporation and for insertion into the annual report and accounts rather than being published as a stand alone document.

9. Any other Business.

There was no other business.

10. 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.
- 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

11. Determination of confidentiality

It was determined that the supporting papers regarding agenda items 2, 3, 5,6 7,11, 12, 13 should remain confidential given the nature of their contents.

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

12. Performance review of Clerk. (confidential)

13. Performance of Principal (confidential)

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

15. Date of next meeting:

- 19th October 2021 via Teams with Pentir from 12pm (conclusion of site visit regarding Principal recruitment)
- 22nd March 2022 from 5pm via Teams (for committee business purposes)