

**Minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on Monday 7 November 2011 at
5:30pm in Conference Room 1, the Astral Centre**

Present:

Bob Blizzard : Governor
 Kevin Howes : Governor
 Alastair King : Governor
 Bob Mee : Governor
 Simon Summers : Principal
 Ashley Reynolds : Chair/Assistant Governor

In Attendance:

Ruth Harrison : Assistant Principal
 Teresa Miller : Vice-Principal
 Anthea Scowen : Head of HR
 Charles Reynolds : Clerk to the Corporation

All were welcomed to the first committee meeting in the new business cycle. A special welcome was extended to Anthea Scowen who was attending her first meeting since being appointed Head of HR.

Apologies for absence had been received from Alan Debenham, Evelyn Hicks and Deanna Law.

Agenda Item	Notes	Action
1.	<p>Disclosures of Interest</p> <p>There were no disclosures of interest relevant to the agenda items.</p>	
2. 2.1 2.2	<p>Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair for the forthcoming year</p> <p>Chair</p> <p>It was proposed by Kevin Howes that Ashley Reynolds be Chair. Ashley Reynolds accepted the nomination which was seconded by Bob Mee.</p> <p>The vote was unanimous in favour.</p> <p>Ashley Reynolds chaired the meeting from this point.</p> <p>Members of the Committee expressed their thanks to Kevin Howes for chairing the Committee over a number of years.</p> <p>Vice-Chair</p> <p>It was proposed by Bob Blizzard that Alastair King be Vice-Chair. Alastair King accepted the nomination which was seconded by Bob Mee.</p> <p>The vote was unanimous in favour.</p>	

<p>3.</p>	<p>Minutes of the Previous Meeting</p> <p>The minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on 13 June 2011 were agreed to be a correct record and were signed by the Chair.</p>	
<p>4.</p> <p>4.1</p>	<p>Matters arising from the minutes and not agenda items</p> <p>Equality and Diversity Update (previous agenda item 5)</p> <p>The Clerk confirmed that the requested changes to this document had been made prior to its submission for approval to Corporation.</p>	
<p>5.</p>	<p>Correspondence</p> <p>Letters had been received by the College from the following unions giving notice of an official Industrial Action Ballot.</p> <p>NASUWT GMB ATL UNISON</p> <p>It was confirmed that the outcome of the UNISON ballot had been a vote in favour of strike action. All correspondence related to the issue of public sector pensions.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Investors in People Update</p> <p>This agenda item was presented by Ruth Harrison who reminded members that it had been agreed the College would seek to achieve the basic award, significantly because of cost. The assessor would be visiting College for four days from the 22 November. Arrangements would need to be made for the Chair of Corporation to meet with the assessor on the first morning. Bob Mee, as the previous Chair agreed to deputise if this was needed.</p> <p>Ashley Reynolds questioned the value of the award and its relevance to College need. Responding, Ruth Harrison advised that it was necessary to have the accreditation in order that the College could make certain bids for funding. In response to a question on process it was confirmed that it was mostly interview based.</p> <p>Members thanked Ruth Harrison for her update which was received.</p>	<p>Clerk</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Human Resources Data Report</p> <p>Presented by Anthea Scowen who apologized for the delay in issuing the paper. The delay had been necessary to solve a software issue which was resulting in the production of incorrect data. It was believed that a solution had been found and that the report as issued, was now giving accurate information.</p> <p>Referring members to the meeting paper, Anthea Scowen provided an update on staffing levels and changes by category of employment, disability, ethnicity, age and gender. Each section was subject to a thorough review.</p>	

	<p>In response to a question on exit interviews, it was confirmed that past interviews had been via the use of questionnaires which did not always produce good response rates. Currently the interviews were face to face but Anthea Scowen confirmed there was a view to mix the approach by using both methods to get the best possible response rates.</p> <p>On ethnicity and with response to the community benchmark figure it was confirmed this was based on 2001 census data. New data from the 2011 census would be available in 2012.</p> <p>The final part of Anthea Scowens report was to provide updates on recruitment and absence management.</p> <p>The Chair invited comment from the members. There was a discussion on the need for the College to control staffing costs extremely effectively. It was agreed that getting the right balance between 'contracted' and 'casual' staff whilst maintaining and improving quality was critical. There was an issue for the committee to be clear about how best to monitor this to ensure the desired outcome. It was acknowledged that one way of doing this was to look at overall staffing costs to see if the required efficiencies were being made.</p> <p>Ashley Reynolds asked if the College was affected by the Agency Workers Directive. Responding, Anthea Scowen confirmed there was very little impact. Currently there were four members of staff who were affected and they were being brought into the College staffing roll.</p> <p>In the absence of any further discussion Anthea Scowen was thanked for her report which was received.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Staff Survey 2011 Outcome</p> <p>This agenda item was also presented by Anthea Scowen. Once again members were referred to the meeting paper which summarized the findings from the survey.</p> <p>It was confirmed that the response rate to the survey, which was hard copy questionnaire based, had been low at 23.3%. This was an increased level of participation that in 2010. It was confirmed that the College was looking at how this situation could be improved significantly, one suggestion being the use of electronic forms.</p> <p>Members discussed thoroughly why it was felt that the response rate was so low. Bob Blizzard questioned the validity of the responses because of the low level of involvement of staff. Various suggestions were put forward including the use of targeted sampling as opposed to a global survey and offering incentives to complete and return the questionnaire whether hard copy or electronic. There was however, agreement on the need to increase the response rate.</p> <p>With specific reference to the outcome of the survey and in setting the scene, Anthea Scowen confirmed that in most areas there was an improvement in staff perceptions over the previous year and that compared to the national benchmark College responses were 10% higher than the General FE national average.</p>	

	<p>Each section of the report gave details of the key findings and recommendations made by staff. The sections covered were Morale, Leadership and Management, Internal Communication, Induction and Staff Development, Appraisal and Individual Performance Reviews; Customer Care and Responsiveness. Each section was reviewed in detail.</p> <p>In response to a question on follow-up from recommendations it was confirmed by Ruth Harrison that these were included into the College Quality Improvement Plan and clearly referenced to the Staff Survey. In discussion it was seen as a good idea in preparation for the next survey to focus on what recommendations had been made this time and most importantly, what the College had done to respond. It was also agreed that it would be helpful for the Committee to receive a progress report at the next meeting on what had been done.</p> <p>Members thanked Anthea Scowen for her report which was received.</p> <p>At this point Alastair King left the meeting.</p>	Clerk / AS
<p>9.</p>	<p>Chairs Annual Report 2010/2011</p> <p>The annual report was presented by the Clerk confirming that the format was as had been used in previous years.</p> <p>The purpose of the report was to provide Corporation with a summary of the previous year's activities of the Committee. The report once received by Corporation would also be published on the Corporation Web page.</p> <p>Ashley Reynolds suggested there could be merit in looking at the level of detail in section 5 as part of the review of Governance he understood was to take place. He did not however suggest any specific changes should be made especially as the minutes of the committee meetings were made public. He also suggested a link to College values might be helpful.</p> <p>Having reviewed the Annual Report it was proposed by Bob Mee and seconded by Bob Blizzard that it be approved.</p> <p>The vote was unanimous in favour.</p> <p>For clarity it was agreed to add dates after the Chairs name at the end of the report.</p> <p>At this point, Bob Blizzard left the meeting. The Clerk advised that if a further member left the meeting it would become inquarate.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Chair's Report to Corporation</p> <p>It was agreed that the following would be reported to Corporation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> >Appointment of Chair and Vice-Chair >The outcome from the staff survey and need to improve response rate. 	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>There were no items of any other business.</p>	

12.	Date and Time of Next Meeting The next meeting of the Personnel Committee will take place on 6 February 2012. The time and venue to be confirmed.	
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