

MINUTES of the People Committee 9am 10 November 2020 Conference Call

Present:	Chair – Alan Debenham (AD) Albert Cadmore (AD) Tina Ellis (TE) Pippa Byrne (PB)	
In Attendance:	Wendy Stanger – Director of Governance (WS) and Ann Wall Director of People and Wellbeing	
L/20/011/1	Membership and Apologies	Action
Apologies – Stuart Rimmer (SR) Gemma Head (GH) and Debbie Pring (DP)		
It was agreed to take agenda item 10 followed by 9 first.		
L/20/11/2	Declarations of Interest	
There were the following declarations of interest in relation to agenda items 9 and 10.		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Director of Governance • Director of People and Wellbeing 		
It was agreed that these declarations didn't preclude full participation in the meeting.		
L/20/11/3	To approve the Minutes of the last meeting 16 3 20 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda	
The minutes of 16 3 20 were agreed as a true record. The Committee noted that the meeting schedule for 19/20 had been disrupted due to Covid.		
L/20/11/4	To review the post meeting action log	
The action log was reviewed.		
L/19/07/9 - The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that a SLG meeting was to be held end November to discuss succession planning and an update would be brought to the next meeting.		
L/19/09/5 – Workloads were being reviewed in light of Covid. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that this was a Union priority.		
L/20/11/5	Annual HR Report as considered by Sept's Corporation	
The Committee discussed the annual HR report which had been considered by September's Corporation.		
Governors challenged manager to staff ratio and staff cost as a % of income. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the Senior Team were reviewing the college structure to ensure that it was the right one for future development and this would include staff to manager ratios.		

Governors noted that staff utilisation needed to be tighter managed so that the contribution rate required was achieved.

Governors noted that the sickness rate had increased and challenged what the rate of sickness had been seen in term 1. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that term 1 had seen a lot of anxiety amongst staff and this had been exacerbated by the local food factory covid outbreaks. This had affected sickness levels as well as staff behaviour and performance. The sickness levels for 20/21 would be the highest for a long time due mainly to mental health and covid related issues. This though wasn't unique to the College.

Governors noted that the College had to remain open and it was clear that the College was doing all that it could to mitigate risks and to be flexible to staff's needs. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that there was heightened sensitivities amongst staff and a rising desire from staff and unions to teach remotely. A home working policy was in place and teaching staff were being allowed to carry out their admin time at home.

Governors noted that days lost to mental health issues almost doubled in the 2019/20 academic year and challenged what support was in place. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the College had put support in place including cover for the Wellbeing Coordinator post, Wellbeing Champions, peer support from HR and counselling. Support from the college counsellors was being provided to the person covering the Wellbeing Coordinator post too.

L/20/11/6	People Strategy Progress Review
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The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the review of the People Strategy and advised of progress made. Progress had been detrimentally affected by Covid and the vacancy in the People Manager role.

Governors discussed digital skills and highlighted the need to ensure that we had a future ready workforce. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the College had appointed a Digital Learning Manager to implement the Digital Strategy which included ensuring all staff had the digital skills they needed for their role.

Governors noted that the communication with staff had been good during closure, as evidenced in the staff surveys, and this needed to be built upon at all levels. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the current management population needed developing to ensure that they had the ability and the soft skills required to be a manager and CPD was being put in place.

The Governors were pleased to note the progress made despite the challenges presented by Covid and the People Manager vacancy. It was especially encouraging to see the progress being made on staff wellbeing as evidenced by external recognition at the AOC HR conference.

L/20/11/7	Appraisals	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the update on the annual appraisals and advised that only 57% had been completed.</p> <p>Governors commented that appraisals were an important part of a manager's role and challenged what support had been put in place for managers and whether there was a consequence to non-completion. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that managers had been through appraisal training, presentations had been made by HR and HR support provided. Letters of concern had previously been added to managers file for non-completion and these had a detrimental effect on manager's wellbeing. She advised that the appraisals that had been completed were not of a good standard and culturally appraisals were not prioritised.</p> <p>Governors challenged the completion timescale and whether this needed changing. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that this year the appraisal window had been 26th June 2020 to 31st October 2020. Consideration was being given to extending this to a year-long process as this would ensure that managers could carry the appraisal out at a time suitable for their department.</p> <p>Governors commented that appraisals were an important part of a manager's role and there was a need for managers to prioritise them. The College would not achieve outstanding if it didn't comply with its own values and the basic roles of being a manager.</p>		
L/20/11/8	The Best Companies Survey	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the update on the Best Companies Survey and advised that the College had postponed the survey to Summer 21. In the meantime staff surveys would continue to be carried out on specific areas with the results reported to Governors.</p>		
L/20/11/9	Pay Strategy – Confidential until announced	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the draft strategy. The aim of the strategy is to enhance recruitment and retention, to ensure a fair and equitable package of reward and benefits and to meet the College's strategic aims.</p> <p>Governors discussed the advanced practitioner pay scale point for teachers. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that this would be a level on from the top of the grade and would have a set criteria. Governors noted that this would tie into the College's policy of 'growing our own.'</p> <p>Governors commented it was important that the College was seen to be a real living wage employer.</p> <p>Governors discussed the gender and ethnicity pay gap. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the gender pay gap may be detrimentally affected by the TUPE in of the catering staff and that currently the college doesn't have the information to collate an ethnicity pay gap so will need to collect this prior to completing a test report.</p> <p>Governors challenged the use of market supplements. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that these were used rarely and were mainly for the trade roles.</p>		

Currently due to the economic environment the College was not struggling to recruit.

Governors challenged when welcome payments would be used. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that this would only be used with approval of the senior team. It had been used once recently to help with relocation.

Governors discussed performance related pay (PRP). The Director of People and Wellbeing commented that the College would require a major cultural change for PRP to be implemented successfully. It was noted that teaching staff could not progress on the grades without being qualified. Governors agreed that PRP was not currently appropriate but did not agree that it should be ruled out entirely and that currently should be added to the PRP statement in the Strategy.

Governors discussed the proposal around total reward package and flexible benefits and agreed that it was important that employees were aware of the total reward package. They agreed that staff should be able to purchase additional leave but not sell leave back to the College as it was important that staff took their leave entitlement.

Governors discussed pensions and the options for change that could be available and agreed that there was a need to review.

The Committee agreed that the strategy was clear and well written with set pieces of work that would not de-stabilise the College. It was important that the Committee received regular progress reports on its implementation.

Governors agreed to recommend the Strategy to Corporation for adoption, subject to item 8 being changed to 'The College does not currently adopt performance related pay as a mechanism to reward staff.'

L/20/11/10	Pay Review - Confidential
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The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the pay review and explained the financial constraints and the options that were being recommended.

Governors noted that following the last merger L6FC staff retained their terms and conditions which are different to ECC staff and contain different pay scales. L6FC employment contracts stipulate that their pay will increase in line with Sixth Form College Association pay scales, whereas pay awards for ECC staff are made by the College. Under the TUPE regulations the College are unable to change L6FC contracts in order to remove this disparity. All new staff are recruited on ECC terms and conditions which will gradually remove the differential pay rates.

Governors challenged if the L6FC staff could be moved onto ECC terms and conditions or the sixth form pay increase not implemented. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the College had sought legal advice and had been advised against this.

Governors challenged what terms and conditions were used when staff changed roles. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that all roles were advertised

and appointed on ECC terms and conditions. The Senior Team were to review the management structure across the college to ensure that it was fit for purpose.

Governors challenged if increments were automatic or subject to performance. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that they were automatic and that the College didn't use performance related pay. If increments were to be removed or changed this would be a contractual change and if they were removed for new starters this would lead to further pay inequity.

Governors challenged if any pay award was affordable, given the effect of Covid on maritime and commercial income. It was agreed that it was the role of Finance and General Purposes Committee to consider this. It was noted that the Strategy 2020-2030 included the aim of developing a flexible reward strategy that makes annual provision for cost of living increase, increases lecturer pay to national upper quartile and becoming a real living wage employer.

Governors discussed the union's proposals and noted that they were requesting a larger increase than that contained in the proposals. The Corporation was only able to make an award if it was affordable.

Governors agreed the following actions:

- **Clarity on the amount of staff who will not receive an increment or pay award if the options are implemented to be included in the report.**

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Governors agreed, subject to ensuring that the award was affordable, to recommend to Finance and General Purposes and Corporation:

Option 3

- **Band B points 10 and 11 (30 staff) are removed and all staff on Band B are moved to point B12 which is increased by 2% to £9.44 per hour (cost in year 1 c.35k - £50k including on costs) to accelerate and achieve the College's strategy to be a National Living Wage employer. This would affect 96 staff.**

Option 4

- **The FE lecturers pay scale is increased to include an additional scale point at £35k which would give the lecturers at the top of the scale a salary increase of £712 (2.08%), cost in year 1 c.50k – 70k including on costs. This would also allow other lecturers to progress through to the top of the scale during annual incremental progression. This would affect 121 staff.**

Option 7

- **Make no change to the incremental pay progression currently offered.**

Option 8

- **The SFCa cost of living will continue to be applied however, going forward this will need to be accommodated from the overall existing sixth form pay budget. Income in the 6th form year on year is falling and future savings will need to be made, by the non-replacement of**

posts , to ensure the increase continue to be viable at a reasonable contribution rate		
L/20/11/11	Risk Register	
<p>The committee reviewed the risk register.</p> <p>1. Has the risk register been reviewed</p> <p>The risk register had been reviewed and a summary added which makes it a lot easier to review.</p> <p>2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated</p> <p>The Committee was content that the risks were relevant and were being updated.</p> <p>3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated</p> <p>The Committee were content that mitigation had been put in place and that the items on the agenda included areas of mitigation.</p> <p>4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken</p> <p>Risk S04T02 - <i>A workforce which is disengaged and unmotivated and with too many staff who are underperforming and too few staff who are excelling in their roles.</i> This has moved to red due to the issue with non-compliance with appraisal process and performance management. Appraisal issues had been reviewed at agenda item 7.</p> <p>Risk S04T06 - <i>High levels of staff absence through sickness.</i> Sickness had increased due to covid and its knock on effect on mental health and wellbeing.</p> <p>Mitigation had been put in place through the risk assessments, including individual ones. Clinically very vulnerable were working from home, SLG were now being held remotely and the SMG meeting with social distancing in place.</p> <p>5. Where does the Committee have significant concerns</p> <p>The Committee had significant concerns around non-completion of appraisals, performance management and the rise in sickness due to mental health issues.</p>		
L/20/03/10	Review of Meeting	
<p>1. Confidential Items – Pay review until announced</p> <p>2. Risk Management: no additional</p> <p>3. Equality & Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – no</p> <p>4. Health & Safety: any issues – Currently underpinning decisions</p> <p>5. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media – new governors</p> <p>6. How did the meeting go – good meeting that covered a lot of issues</p>		