

MINUTES of the People Committee 1pm 4th April 2022 Great Yarmouth Campus Board Room

Present:	Chair – Alan Debenham (AD) Stuart Rimmer (CEO/Principal SR) Jose Bamonde (JB) Liz Howard (LH) and by video conference Jude Owens (JO)	
In Attendance:	Wendy Stanger – Director of Governance (WS) and Ann Wall Director of People and Wellbeing (AW)	
L/22/04/1	Membership and Apologies	Action
Apologies were received from Tina Ellis (TE).		
L/22/04/2	Declarations of Interest	
There were no declarations of interest.		
L/22/04/3	To approve the Minutes of the last meeting 10 11 21 and any other matters raised previously not otherwise included in the Agenda	
The minutes of 10 11 21 were agreed as a true record.		
L/22/04/4	To review the post meeting action log	
<p>The action log was reviewed.</p> <p>11 7 19 L/19/07/9 succession planning - The People Committee Chair advised that Senior Post Holder (SPH) succession planning had been carried out by the Governance Remuneration and Search Committee in conjunction with the SPHs. It had considered self-assessment, flight risk, development plan and successor internal/external and had produced an overall matrix. This approach could be used across the College. The Director of People and Wellbeing commented that this should be part of the appraisal process and was to be included in updated appraisal training.</p> <p>24 9 19 L/19/09/5 workloads - The Director of People and Wellbeing commented that workload had been raised in the latest staff surveys as an issue. Vacancies and absences and the need to cover the work was exacerbating the issue. The differential pay discussion paper at agenda item 10 addressed some of these issues.</p> <p>The CEO advised that the Senior Team were reviewing the management structure to ensure that it was fit for purpose, addressed current vacancies and ensured that all staff had front line management support. The long-term planning to be introduced in curriculum areas would also help address workloads. There was a need to address system quality issues that led to additional or duplication of work.</p> <p>2 2 21 L/21/02/5 Wellbeing Post - The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the post had been recruited to as part of the People Team restructure but the appointment had not been successful. The role scope was being reconsidered by the People Manager prior to advertising. The College also had in place mental health first aiders. The CEO commented that it was an important area to resource but that if this recruitment was unsuccessful an alternative solution would need to be considered. There was also a need to ensure that the College didn't create a dependency culture with a professional distinction in roles and the support provided.</p>		

Governors agreed the following action:		AW
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Progress update on the actions 11 7 19 L/19/07/9 succession planning; 24 9 19 L/19/09/5 workloads and 2 2 21 L/21/02/5 Wellbeing Post to be provided to the May People Committee meeting. 		
L/22/04/4.1	Follow up action - PMBP department ranking	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the department ranking and advised the Committee on the RAG grading. Progress would be reviewed at the next round of PMBP with managers.</p> <p>Governors commented that the key to the grading needed to be included with the ranking and consideration given to not using a RAG rating where the issue was a binary one.</p>		
L/22/04/5	People and Wellbeing Report (ESFA Strategic Conversation)	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the report which had been used as a briefing paper at the ESFA Strategic Conversation.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the vacancy situation had stabilised. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the current position was now manageable and had improved from the Summer 2021 high of 60 vacancies, some 10% of the workforce. This high number of vacancies had been exacerbated by external funding creating new posts and a higher than usual number of retirees. Mitigation to address the vacancies included a new recruiter post, a long-term subscription with TES and a relocation budget. There were still chronic vacancies in key areas and positions filled by long term agency staff.</p> <p>Governors discussed why staff were leaving. The CEO and The Director of People and Wellbeing commented that due to the pandemic people were less tolerant including with their manager, the current job market provided options and staff were looking for hybrid models of working which wasn't always appropriate in an educational sector.</p> <p>Governors discussed hybrid working and the disconnect within teams that this had created. The CEO advised that the College was to review its working at home policy as it had led to a less collegiate approach and a breakdown in team working. Home working worked for the individual but not for the team and in some cases created extra pressure and workload issues within the team. Successful teams in the College were where the team was working collaboratively with front line management support.</p> <p>Governors discussed the benefit of team building events and noted the work that the College carried out in this area including community and charity work. The CEO advised that the two professional learning events which were to be held at the end of the academic year would be held on site and include team building.</p> <p>The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the current staff absence levels was high and had an operational impact. Covid was for the first time the highest absence reason. Governors commented that there was now a need to manage covid absence, including long covid, the same as any other absence with the support provided as for other absences.</p>		

Governors challenged if the College had a return to work process. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that return to work interviews were held, with referrals made to occupational health or the employer assistance programme where appropriate.

The CEO advised that there was also a need to focus on staff retention. The College was reviewing its fixed term staff to see if these could be extended earlier so that the staff were retained.

Governors commented that the issues raised were being seen across the sector and in other businesses. The Director of Governance referred the Committee to the AOC Report College Staffing Challenges in 2022 <https://www.aoc.co.uk/news/worst-staffing-crisis-in-two-decades-inenglands-colleges>

L/22/04/6 Staff Engagement

L/22/04/6.1 Staff Pulse Survey Results.

L/22/04/6.2 Staff Pulse Survey Action Plan - verbal update

L/22/04/6.3 Best Companies Results Analysis

L/22/04/6.4 Best Companies Staff Presentation

The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the reports and took the Committee through the Best Companies results. The response rate had been high but the results disappointing and the College had reduced from a 2* accreditation to a 1* accreditation. The College will find out on 20th May 2022 if it had a place on any of the Best Companies lists.

Governors discussed the results and noted that:

- Even though the pay review had been a good one and one of the best in the sector it had not been reflected in the fair deal results. This could have been affected by the current cost of living and inflationary pressures.
- Some staff still had a mistrust that their survey results would not be confidential. This mistrust and loss of respect of senior leaders was being seen across all sectors from the Government down.
- A lot of negativity had been caused by the pandemic, the war and the cost of living crisis. This had affected people's attitude to work and a loss of goodwill.
- The College was a business and the staff needed to realise that there weren't infinite resources.
- Not all managers were aligned to the Corporate goals and values and this could damage the organisation and the management outcomes in the survey.
- Management training had been provided by the College but not all managers understood the impact of their behaviour and actions.
- The comparative results data was against other 1* accredited organisations.
- The Engagement Ambassadors had worked hard and had increased the response rate.
- There was a need to celebrate the wins including the big projects that had been funded so that good news was demonstrated to the College.
- Ofsted had not influenced the results as the next inspection was not yet due and was likely to be up to 18 months away.
- The results would be shared with staff along with actions set out as 'we said, we did.'

	<p>Governors noted that the Best Companies results output was not that useful for understanding the results or to help improve the College and consideration would need to be given to continuing with the survey.</p>	
<p>L/22/04/7</p>	<p>Introduction to Investors in People Accreditation and Draft Timeline - verbal update</p>	
	<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing updated the committee on the Investors in People Accreditation process. This reviewed how the College was leading, supporting and improving its people and included surveys, interviews, an assessment and report with recommendations and level of accreditation.</p> <p>Governors challenged if the accreditation was in common use across the sector. The CEO advised that the majority of Colleges had achieved it, it used to be in place at Great Yarmouth pre-merger and accreditation had been included in the Strategic Plan 2020-2030.</p> <p>Governors discussed the accreditation process and the amount of work that this would involve. The CEO commented that the process needed to be used as a vehicle for change, improvement and add value. It would force the College to consider its professional learning, appraisals and have a structured approach to pay.</p> <p>Governors concluded that the accreditation was a lot of work, needed to be communicated well and to achieve it other work would have to be dropped, and it was agreed that this should be the Best Companies Survey.</p>	
<p>L/22/04/8</p>	<p>Gender Pay Gap - published report</p>	
	<p>The Committee noted the gender pay gap report that had been submitted and published as required.</p>	
<p>L/22/04/9</p>	<p>HR System Update</p>	
	<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing advised the Committee on the implementation of the new HR system.</p> <p>Governors raised concerns about the resource needed to implement the system. The Director of People and Wellbeing advised that the implementation was being overseen by a project team and a project lead but that it was recognised that People Team time would be required for a successful implementation.</p>	
<p>L/22/04/10</p>	<p>Confidential</p> <p>[REDACTED] Pay Discussion</p>	
	<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the discussion paper and the Committee considered each proposal in detail.</p> <p>[REDACTED]</p>	

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WS

L/22/04/11

Confidential

Establishment Review Update

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L/22/04/12	Recruitment Policy	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the policy and advised that it had been updated to reflect the current recruitment practises and inclusive recruitment.</p> <p>The Committee resolved to approve:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QD120 Recruitment Policy and Procedure. 		
L/22/04/13	New Menopause Guidance	
<p>The Director of People and Wellbeing presented the new guidance, this was to be launched alongside the college signing the menopause pledge.</p> <p>Governors commented that the guidance was comprehensive. It was likely that legislation would change around menopause and that it could be added as a protected characteristic.</p>		
L/22/04/14	To Review the Risk Register	
<p>The committee reviewed the risk register.</p> <p>1. Has the risk register been reviewed</p> <p>The committee noted that the review was January and that review took place termly.</p> <p>2. Is the Committee content that the risks are relevant and are being updated?</p> <p>The Committee agreed that the register's risks were relevant</p> <p>3. Is the Committee content that the risks are being mitigated?</p> <p>The reports on the agenda had considered action the College was taking to mitigate risks.</p> <p>There was a need to update the mitigation listed to reflect:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The vacancy in the Staff Development and Wellbeing Lead and that the People Team restructure had been completed. • The proposed differential pay proposals – this would have both negative and positive effects and communication of the finalised proposal needed to be managed • Changes in the working at home policy and the negative and positive effects this would have on staff and teams. <p>There was a need to increase the high levels of staff absence through sickness risk to reflect the current high absence position.</p> <p>4. Where a red risk is the Committee assured that appropriate action is being taken</p> <p>The Committee noted that the risk <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> was a red risk and the outcome of the Best Companies survey reflected that</p>		

5.	Where does the Committee have significant concerns? The Committee main concern was the risk <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> and the reports considered at the meeting had looked at how this risk was to be reduced.	
L/22/04/15	Review of Meeting	
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Confidential Items – L/22/04/10 Draft Pay Discussion, L/22/04/11 Establishment Review and the detailed feedback on Best Companies. 2. Risk Management: – as detailed in the risk section 3. Equality & Diversity: any issues discussed which may require an additional Impact Assessment – Differential pay. It was noted that the gender pay gap reporting was not useful in helping address EDI. There was a need to consider EDI cross College in detail rather than just a tokenistic approach. 4. Health & Safety: any issues – High absence rate, Menopause Guidance. 5. Sustainability – carparking and GY re-build and support for public transport 6. Media: any issues discussed to inform local media – Menopause pledge and a prepared statement for when a finalised differential pay proposal was launched 7. How did the meeting go – A good detailed but long meeting. 	