

**Minutes of the Personnel Committee (PER1011-2)**  
**held on Monday 7 February 2011**  
**in Room C108**

Action

Present:

<b>David Wood</b>	<b>Chair</b>	<b>Guy Adams</b>	<b>Foundation Member</b>
<b>Ann Helsby</b>	<b>Member</b>	<b>Hollie King</b>	<b>Member</b>
<b>Peter Avery</b>	<b>Principal</b>		

In attendance:

Clerk to the Corporation

Personnel Director

The meeting opened at 5.34 pm and was quorate throughout

**PART 1 : MEETING FORMALITIES****1. Apologies for absence**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 11 October 2010 PER1011-1**

The Minutes were agreed as a correct record and signed by both the current chair and the chair of the previous meeting.

**3. Matters Arising**

Reference PER1011-1/II/4, members noted that the Redundancy Procedure may be subject to invocation during the next planning period, and that the procedure had stood the test of invocation recently in the case of two recent exceptional cases.

The Sixth Form Colleges Secretariat had very recently advised colleges that the LIFO (Last In First Out) criteria has once again been included on the list of potential redundancy criteria. The College may decline to include the LIFO criteria on the grounds that it can be discriminatory.

There were no other matters arising which are not dealt with under the agenda for the current meeting.

**PART II: ISSUES FOR THE MEETING****1. Staffing Update**

Update on Pay Award Consultation for 2010-11

It was noted that a settlement in respect of Support Staff had been agreed at 0.75%, with the Teaching Staff settlement still pending. The College considers it a matter of importance that the two settlements correspond and would not wish to implement a settlement which is more preferential to teachers. The Support Staff settlement is with effect from September 2010.

It was also noted that the College is now subject to a pay freeze for two years, although this does not cover incremental payments. Incremental drift is currently costing the College c£55k, less than 1% of the annual salary costs. The Personnel Director is seeking guidance about pay/conditions generally, and about how incremental drift might be managed. Cessation of payment of increments would necessitate a change to the terms of conditions of appointment of individual members of staff.

The negative implications of the College moving away from a nationally agreed pay scale are significant, and any decision to move away from current arrangements would be deferred as long as possible into the spending review period.

### Staffing

The Principal noted that there have been two recent occasions when the Disciplinary Procedure has been invoked:

- It was reported that a member of staff had had a casual sexual encounter with a student of the College, although at the time the student's status was not known to the member of staff. After an investigation, the Police declined to pursue the case. Further investigation by the College concluded that there had been a serious error of judgment by the member of staff, who subsequently resigned. Close co-operation with other local educational institutions and safeguarding authorities has ensured effective and prudent action in relation to working arrangements in respect of the member of staff.
- The Principal had received an anonymous report in respect of a member of staff who was alleged to have had an improper relationship with a former student of the College. A significant and substantive investigation had been carried out and it was concluded that there was no case to be pursued.

Members noted that there is a Course Manager appointment due to take effect after the Easter vacation and received an assurance that the appointment has been a long-standing and planned appointment to address the identified weakness in curriculum provision in respect of IT.

### Update on Succession Planning

In discussion of succession planning, the Committee noted that there are three main areas of focus in consideration of how the College will develop its leadership and management arrangements over the coming period:

- provision for the post of Vice Principal once the current Vice Principal: Resources retires at the end of the current academic year;
- the role of the five recently appointed Directors who have responsibilities in respect of curriculum and other activities;
- and the provision within the Instruments and Articles of Government concerning appointment of senior post holders, and the arrangements for any

temporary appointment to the post of Principal or any other senior post when such a post is not subject to a contract of employment with the Corporation.

The Principal tabled a paper which summarised the current position of leadership and management in the College.

Members noted that some of the cost saving anticipated through the retirement of the current Vice Principal: Resources had already been subsumed into the costs of appointing the current five Directors. The strength of the new leadership and management team and the reorganisation of management duties generally negate the requirement for the post of Vice Principal: Resources; the Committee noted that the need for this post would not exist following the retirement of the current incumbent.

The current leadership and management team share day-to-day management responsibilities working on a rotational basis, the process allowing a clearly identified manager to be in charge of operations at any given time. Additionally, all members of the team undertake significant duties outside the College, representing both the Principal and the College, and acting as ambassadors with significant individual responsibilities.

It is recognised that at any given time, the College must have the Principal as a senior post holder. Although the Instruments and Articles make no specific requirement for an additional senior post holder (apart from provision in respect of the appointment of a Clerk to the Corporation), it is considered best practice to have at least one other senior post holder who is able to act as Principal in the event of any unforeseen incapacitation of the Principal. The Instruments and Articles of Government set out the arrangements in respect of the appointment of senior post holders when there is a vacancy or anticipated vacancy.

Guy Adams made the following recommendations to the Corporation:

- The success of the new leadership and management structure means that the duties of the Vice Principal: Resources have been subsumed into the five Director roles (Directors of Curriculum: Enrichment, Estates, Business Development, Quality, and Student Services). The senior post holder position of Vice Principal: Resources should, therefore, be determined as redundant upon the retirement of the current incumbent
- The five Directors should assume the title 'Assistant Principal' in respect of each of their roles to reflect their significant responsibilities, and to promote and give gravitas to the ambassadorial roles which they undertake on behalf of the College. This change of title will not attract any salary enhancement.
- In order to effect prudent succession planning, there should be adequate provision to ensure that there is another senior post holder appointment in addition to that of Principal. The Committee tasked the Principal with seeking appropriate ministerial dispensation to ensure that the Corporation is satisfied that the appointments process it will adopt to make any such appointment/s does not compromise the Corporation's statutory obligations.
- Subject to evidence of ministerial dispensation to deviate from provision contained within the Instruments and Articles of Government, the five directors (Assistant Principals) be invited to apply for senior post holder appointments,

subject to an appointments process to be approved by the Corporation. Any such senior post holder appointment/s will not attract any salary enhancement.

- In the event that there is no ministerial dispensation to deviate from provision contained within the Instruments and Articles of Government about appointment of senior post holders, the Committee must make a further recommendation to the Corporation about action in respect of succession planning and any appointment to a senior post holder position.
- The Instruments and Articles of Government set out the procedure to appoint an acting Principal if there is no senior post holder deputy at the time of any unplanned incapacitation of the Principal. In order to plan for such an eventuality in any interim period when there is no additional designated senior post holder, the Principal will make available to the Chair of Corporation information concerning an appropriate nominee from the non-senior post holders. In order to ensure compliance with the Instruments and Articles of Government, the Chair of Corporation will make a case to the Secretary of State for that nominee to be appointed as Acting Principal.

The above recommendations to the Corporation were seconded by David Wood and agreed *nem con*.

## **2. Review of the Capability Procedure**

The Personnel Director noted that there had only been some very minor typographical changes to the Procedure, and that the Procedure had withstood the practical test of invocation.

David Wood recommended the Capability Procedure for approval by the Committee. This was seconded by Hollie King and agreed *nem con*.

## **3. Review of the Stress Management Policy**

The Personnel Director noted that the Policy had been subject to only very minor typographical changes since its last review. There had been no invocation of the Policy.

Members noted that consideration should be given to how all members of staff might be canvassed about their level of satisfaction generally, including views on stress.

The Personnel Director will make provision for staff training which will focus on the potential triggers/indicators of stress, particularly useful as the new leadership and management team come into contact with a wider range of employment issues generally.

Guy Adams recommended the Stress Management Policy for approval by the Committee, with subsequent review in 2013. This was seconded by Ann Helsby and agreed *nem con*.

## **4. Professional Review and Development**

With the new leadership and management team taking full ownership of the Professional Review and Development process, there has been fresh impetus and added engagement with the process throughout the College. The process has been used to significant positive effect even at a time when the lack of external training opportunities might have limited the usefulness of the process. Members noted the

continuing value and importance of the process, and that the target for completion should remain high, reflecting both the Corporation and College commitment to the importance of the process.

Ann Helsby recommended that the Corporation approve a target completion rate for Professional Review and Development interviews/reporting of 85%. This was seconded by Guy Adams, and agreed *nem con*.

#### 5. Development Planning

In consideration of the draft Development Plan, members gave their specific consideration to section 1.10 *to derive increased flexibility and energy from the new leadership and management structure*. Consideration was given in the light of the appended recent *Staff Bulletin*. Members noted the considerable positive impact of the new leadership and management team, and the way in which the Staff Bulletin is an intrinsic part of ensuring effective communication within the College, providing governors with practical evidence which they can use in their assessment of the new arrangements.

#### 6. Any Other Business

Members noted the following points:

- That the College will need to make budgetary savings in the order of £375k in the next period in response to the cuts in funding from the Young Peoples' Learning Agency. Governors recognised the significant challenges of planning for the next period, and that every effort would be made to avoid the need for redundancies.
- The student march which took place on 4 February resulted in the suspension of one student on the grounds of the inappropriate nature of his placard. The march generated significant positive interest from the media.
- The social networking site 'Little Gossip' continues to give rise to significant concern within the College; it has been blocked from use via the College network. The inappropriate nature of much of the material posted on the site has generated two formally reported incidents within the College. Despite significant representations to the appropriate authorities, the site continues to operate, and the position will be closely monitored.

There was no other business.

#### 7. Date of Next Meeting

The date of the next meeting is Monday 28 March 2011.

The meeting closed at 7.09 pm.

Signed as a correct record.....

Date.....