

Minutes of the Huish People Committee Meeting  
Monday 22 February 2021 at 5:30pm  
Via Microsoft Teams

**Present:** Moira Reynolds (Chair), David Griffin, Barbara Barratt, Karuna Tharmananthar and Victoria Harrison.

**In attendance:** Emma Fielding (Principal), Steve Chattell (CPO) and Bettina Walker (Clerk).

**MINUTES**

**PER 13 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** **Action**  
All members of the Committee were present.

**PER 14 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**  
The Committee noted that David Griffin was a RHT Board Director, but that there were no conflicting items on this agenda.

**PER 15 3. MINUTES AND MATTERS ARISING**  
**3.1 \*Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes dated 12 October 2020 be approved and signed as a true and accurate record.

**3.2 \*Matters Arising and Review of Key Risk**

The Committee noted that the matters arising were picked up under agenda items for this meeting.

The Committee noted the one risk allocated to it by the Audit Committee for review:

- We fail to retain and recruit a highly competent and committed workforce, and agreed that no changes were needed to the risk classification.

The Committee discussed risk item ST04, asking why safeguarding was not included as a key risk. The Principal stated that the key risk was that the College did not comply with all legal requirements, which included safeguarding but also requirements for Health & Safety, Human Resources and other law. Separate, underlying risk registers and mitigating actions were in place.

**PER 16 4. \*COMMITTEE TERMS OF REFERENCE**

The Clerk reported that the Committee Terms of Reference had been revised to reflect the three items picked up during the FE Commissioners' visit. These were to do with clarity over membership, including co-opted members, not bringing in extra governors for quoracy purposes and revisions in line with equality and diversity standards.

The Committee noted the proposal to rename the Committee the "Huish People Committee" and supported the change.

The Committee also noted that, due to the proposed academisation, further changes to the remit and terms of reference of the Committee may take place as part of the eventual Academy governance structure.

**RESOLVED:** that the Terms of Reference for the Huish People Committee be recommended to the Corporation for approval.

**PER 5. \*INTRODUCTION TO THE HUISH PEOPLE STRATEGY**

**17** The Chief People Officer (CPO) presented the Huish People Strategy and RAG rated progress against the various areas of the strategy's action plan. This was a working document, which was kept under constant review and updated regularly.

The Committee noted the amber rating for vacancies filled and noted the wish to improve the filling of vacancies first time from the current 67% upwards.

The Committee commented that there were a number of policies that were past their due date for review and were rated red. The CPO reported that the approach had been to review policies as the HR team undertook a piece of work, and to have a phased approach, which would mean staggering reviews in future.

The Committee asked if a timetable of planned reviews and their priorities could be circulated. The CPO reported that there were a number of policies that were likely to have little in the way of revisions needed, and these could be turned around quickly. **CPO**

The Committee also commented that a list of policies that were delegated for the Committee to approve as opposed to those needed for recommendation to the Corporation for approval, would be helpful. **Clerk/CPO**

The Committee noted that the agenda items were arranged in the same way and order as the items on the Huish People Strategy.

**6. ATTRACT, RECRUIT AND RETAIN OUTSTANDING STAFF**

**PER 6.1 Staff Turnover**

**18** The annualised staff turnover for the autumn term from September to December was 15%. This was based on 14 leavers, 4 leavers due to fixed term contracts coming to an end and 3 were managed in the 'best interests of the College'.

The Committee noted that the staff turnover was running at 8%, which the CPO stated was low for the education sector. The Committee discussed the possible impact of the pandemic on staff turnover. The CPO commented that the staff turnover across the whole of the Multi Academy Trust was lower than in previous years, indicating that staff were staying in current jobs.

The Committee asked if the report in future could give national comparison benchmarks, and also a trend analysis. **CPO**

**PER 6.2 Gender Pay Gap Reporting Requirements 2021**

**19** Normally organisations were required to report and publish their gender pay gap information by 30 March of the following year. However, there was a national debate on whether organisations would be required to report in 2021. It was the College's intention to complete this piece of work whether required or not, to ensure a good understanding of any pay gap and to be able to take action where required. A copy of the report would be shared with the Committee when completed. **CPO**

**PER 6.3 Policy Review - Probation**

**20** There are no significant changes to the Probation Policy other than to clarify the difference between a probationary review and a review of the performance for a newly promoted member of staff.

There was, however, a discrepancy between the probation period stated in the Senior Postholder Contract, which was 6 months, and the current probation period in the policy of 12 months. The Committee recommended that both should be six months.

**Resolved:** to recommend to the Corporation that the Probation Policy be approved and the probation period for Senior Postholders brought into line with the Senior Postholder contract which states a probation period of 6 months.

## **7. MOTIVATE, ENGAGE AND INSPIRE STAFF**

### **PER 21 7.1 Staff Survey Outcome**

The Staff Survey was conducted in November 2020 over a two-week period. Overall, the feedback was positive in terms of staff engagement, leadership, Safeguarding and Equality & Diversity knowledge. The latter indicated that mandatory training was effective.

The areas of focus from the survey were:

- being consulted on change: this comment was likely to be due to quick decisions having to be made due to the rapidly changing external environment the College was operating in
- review against performance objectives: this would be picked up in the new appraisal process during the summer term.
- accessing Continuing Professional Development: this had been picked up as part of the Quality Improvement Plan (QIP)

Governors noted that the survey results would not result in a specific Staff Survey Action Plan, particularly in the context of academisation. The areas of focus were being picked up in other ways.

Just over half the staff had responded to the survey, and although this was a good for a response to a survey, it was hoped that more staff would participate in the future. Some smaller “temperature check” style surveys would take place over the next few months.

### **PER 22 7.2 Teachers Pay**

The national Teachers’ Pay award had been agreed with an increase of 2% backdated to 1 September 2020 and a further 1.25% from the 1 May 2021. Although this was higher than anticipated, the CFO had confirmed that it would be covered by the budget.

The Committee noted that Support Staff already had a two year pay deal agreed last year which had given a further 2.5% from 1 January 2021.

## **8. BUILD TALENT, CAPABILITY AND CAPCAITY AND SUCCESSION PLANNING**

### **PER 23 8.1 Early Leaders Programme**

The College had instigated an Early Leaders Programme, which was designed for staff to develop succession into management and leadership positions. The first cohort of 12 Early Leaders were halfway through their programme, and the feedback was very positive. A second cohort of 12 and possibly a third, meant potentially another 24 undergoing leadership and management training was planned.

### **PER 24 8.2 Bite-size Continuous Professional Development (CPD)**

The Bite-size CPD was designed as a series of short CPD sessions for all staff to access with a new topic made available on the third Monday of every month. The first offer on “Difficult Conversations”, had gone live in January, and had been well received. This programme was part of the measures put in place as part of the QIP.

The College had so far used a proportion of its CPD investment for teaching staff, as this was seen as critical for raising standards, and to help provide critical training when teaching went online. There was, however, a separation between this type of CPD and the more sustainable kind, suitable for all staff.

All CPD was recorded in staff files.

## **9. PROMOTE, SUPPORT AND STAFF WELLBEING**

### **9.1 Analysis of Staff Absence**

**PER 25** Staff Sickness Absence during the autumn term September to December was recorded at 2.38% of contracted time, with long term sickness accounting for nearly 2%. Staff with long term sickness were being well managed with a business like, but empathetic approach.

Sickness absence in teachers accounted for less than 1% of the total absence. 39 of the 454 days lost were as a result of stress.

It was thought that working from home as specified during the national pandemic lockdown, had helped to reduce sickness absence: in 'normal times' anything less than 4% for the sector was good.

### **9.2 Stress Management Tools**

**PER 26** The Senior Management Team had been introduced to a series of tools to support them in reducing stress within their teams. The tools were based on research conducted by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and the Health and Safety Executive. The tools focussed on management behaviour and competency in the work environment.

These management tools were currently being reviewed to see if the approach could be adapted for delivery to the wider college management team.

### **9.3 Policy Review – Allegations Against Staff**

**PER 27** The CPO proposed that the Richard Huish Trust policy replace the current College policy, and the Committee agreed that common policies, where they were relevant, should be used.

The Committee discussed the scenario where an allegation was made when a member of staff left the College, and noted that this was covered with the notice period during which the staff member remained employed.

**RESOLVED:** The Committee approved the Allegations Against Staff Policy.

## **10. CULTURE OF CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT WITH HR SUPPORT**

### **PER 28 10.1 Appraisal Process 2020/21**

The interim PRAD had been introduced in the autumn term as no appraisal process had taken place in the summer term of 2020. The interim PRAD was a simplified process focussing on 'what went well' and 'what could have been better, and any training needs coming from the process. 99% of staff had completed their Interim PRAD.

### **PER 30 10.2 New Appraisal - update**

A Working Group was in place and was reviewing the feedback received on the proposed new Appraisal Process. There would be a core part of the document and then different aspects appropriate for teaching or support staff. The plan was to roll out the new process after Easter for completion during the summer term, but to make this more of a working document rather than an annual appraisal.

## **11. Staffing Structure with Right People**

### **PER 31 11.1 Resource planning update**

The 2021/2022 Staffing Meeting was planned for late February. During this meeting application numbers and progressing student numbers would be reviewed to forecast the staffing requirements against current staffing, and to establish areas of shortage or areas where the College was potentially over resourced for 2021/22. An action plan would then be put in place.

### **PER 32 11.2 Policy Review – Redundancy Policy**

The main proposal for change to the policy was to move senior management responsibility for making redundancies from the Principal to other senior managers within the College structure. This

would ensure that the Principal could be objective and impartial, and would be available to consider formal appeals. The Committee considered this a good approach.

**Resolved:** to recommend to the Corporation that the Redundancy Policy be approved.

## 12. Excellence in Safeguarding

### PER 33 Safer Recruitment Post Audit Action Plan Update

The Safeguarding Consultant, Lyn Bourne, had returned in late December to quality assess the College's Single Central Record, and to review progress on the Action Plan resulting from her previous visits. The feedback was very positive, with specific comments highlighting progress made: the recruitment process was robust and in line with safer recruitment recommendations. There were few on-going recommendations all of which had now been actioned.

The CPO reported that he was planning to simplify the SCR, to separate out the Staff Training Records. This would mean that the SCR remained compliant with legislation, but any gaps in training records, would not compromise the integrity of the SCR.

The CPO was working with the Clerk to look at the SCR records kept for Governors. The comments on the file cover sheets were not always helpful especially when it came to records held for longer serving Governors. A risk assessment was taking place for each Governor's record so that evidence could be shown. All relevant documentation was being asked of new governors.

The Committee asked if a full copy of Lyn Bourn's report could be circulated to members.

**CPO**

## 13. Any Other Business and Date of the next meeting

There was no other business to report.

The date for the next Meeting was noted as Monday 14 June 2021.

There being no further business the meeting ended at 7.00pm

Chair

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Date

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