



## PEOPLE AND REMUNERATION COMMITTEE – MAIN MINUTES

Thursday 1 December 2022

Governors	Type	Initials	Attendance	Apologies
Claire-Jane Rewcastle	Chair of Committee – Independent Governor	CJ	X	
Sarah Stewart	Committee Member – Independent Governor	SS	X	
David Alexander	Committee Member – Principal / CEO <i>Committee Member for People items only.</i>	DA	X	
Lisa Crichton-Jones	Committee Member – Independent Governor	LCJ		X
<b>Attendees</b>				
Ivan Jepson	Director of Business Development and Innovation	IJ	X	
Julie Skinner	HR Strategic Consultant	JS	X <sup>^</sup>	
Sara Reay	Senior People and Organisational Development Business Partner	SR	X <sup>^</sup>	
Jeremy Cook	Deputy Principal: Finance and Resources	JC	X <sup>^</sup>	
Nicola Taylor	Director of Governance & Compliance / Clerk	NT		X
Suzanne Clark	Corporate Admin Manager	SC	X	

<sup>^</sup>Attended for part of the meeting.

### PR/136 1. Chair's Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies from Lisa Crichton-Jones and Nicola Taylor were noted.

**The Committee agreed that the meeting was quorate.**

No conflicts of interest were declared at the start of the meeting and members were reminded to declare any conflicts that arose during the discussions in the meeting.

**PR/137 2. Minutes of the People and Remuneration Committee meeting dated 17 October 2022**

The minutes of the meeting on 17 October 2022 were agreed as a correct record.

**PR/138 3. Matters Arising**

The action log was noted.

DA confirmed that the review of the Committee terms of reference was ongoing.

Proposed Committee KPIs were included within agenda item 4.

Emerging themes and response rate per campus from the recent staff engagement survey were included within agenda item 5.

***The update was noted.***

**PR/139 4. Core People Key Performance Indicators**

The report was presented by JS and the following was noted:

- KPIs have been proposed for the areas where there are the biggest organisational challenges.
- Each area has been given a main KPI with a second optional KPI if the Committee would prefer to have this additional information.
- Recruitment and retention have been separated.
- Wellbeing has been added.
- EDI KPIs and objectives will form part of the College's annual EDI report.
- An appendix has been included to give the Committee an understanding of the workforce profile.

The Committee were asked for feedback on the KPIs and for their preferences in terms of frequency of reporting.

**The Committee discussed the following:**

- Work is ongoing in relation to strategic priority KPIs and how these fit with Committee KPIs. As part of these discussions it has been agreed to include staff turnover as a Board KPI.
- It was proposed that other Board level people KPIs be considered when the new HR Director takes up post in the new year.
- The 8 KPIs shared were felt to be pertinent and members commented that the information relating to these areas will be valuable and of use.
- The KPIs can be further refined when the HR Director joins. JS confirmed that the report has been discussed with the new appointment and they have had the opportunity to have input. Discussions have also taken place with LCJ and CJR.
- The proposed KPI relating the staff engagement survey was to be very important.
- CJR welcomed the workforce breakdown included in the appendix and was encouraged by the level of data that had been provided. It was **agreed** to proceed with all 8 of the proposed KPIs, subject to further refinement as required.

***The Committee approved the KPIs and the proposed frequency of review.***

## PR/140 5. Staff Engagement Survey Update

The report was presented by IJ and the following was noted:

- Response rates by campus have been provided. In the main these have increased with the exception of the Academy for Sport.
- The College's staff voice group has looked to do a deeper dive on emerging themes. A number of sessions were arranged to engage with staff. There has been a mixed response and a breakdown of attendance at the sessions was provided. It is planned to provide an update to staff on the feedback received.
- Discussions are taking place on different ways to increase engagement, recognising that there is more work to do.

### **The Committee discussed the following:**

- SS queried the level of staff engagement arising from the follow-up activity. SS recognised the increase in the survey return rate, however overall completion was still just over 50% and this, combined with the level of uptake in attending the recent drop in sessions, was worthy of further consideration.
- IJ confirmed that he had expected a greater response to the feedback sessions. The Executive Team are now looking to work with the College's wider senior management group to identify ways in which to generate an increase in levels of staff engagement.
- DA highlighted that all aspects of engagement are showing an upward trend. In terms of the themes so far, there are a number that the team are already aware of and have already started to engage with staff on. It was suggested that the level of engagement could be an element of people not feeling too exercised at the present time therefore not coming forward. As mentioned by IJ, the Exec Team are looking to meet with senior managers to discuss staff engagement. This dialogue will seek to reinforce the importance of engagement and it was suggested that the current staff group be expanded to create focus groups who could also consider what is working well.
- CJR questioned whether there was faith in staff that their comments would be taken seriously. DA advised that levels of engagement have increased and satisfaction scores are positive. There are regular communications with staff and there has been a positive impact from the staff voice groups. Staff roadshows took place recently where pay was discussed and some staff stayed back to engage in discussion with the Exec Team. The pay proposal was reviewed, based on conversations and feedback, which should give staff confidence. CJR was assured that further work will be undertaken in the new year.
- IJ added that informal engagement also takes place to engage with staff and on any matters arising where this can be done. There are many routes where staff are able to provide their views. IJ indicated that he would look at a way of capturing the wider ongoing engagement that takes place with to give the Committee assurance that engagement is taking place.
- CJR advised that whilst there was still work to do, she was very encouraged by the report and confident that this work will continue when the new HR Director takes up post.
- CJR noted her appreciation for the detail included within the report.

***The report was noted.***

## PR/141 6. Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement

The report was presented by IJ and the following was noted:

- There is no statutory requirement for the College to publish a Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking statement.
- Only organisations who have a turnover in excess of £36m are required to publish an annual statement.
- Approval is being sought to produce a statement as it is considered to be best practice.

**The Committee queried the following:**

- CJR asked how the College ensure the statement is fully understood by staff. IJ confirmed that he has engaged in discussions in relation to the monitoring of the statement. The statement is shared with the College's safeguarding team and via other routes, working with individual departments to cascade across the organisation to ensure it is considered in day to day operations. The statement is fully embedded in procurement processes and the importance of the statement is fully understood. The statement also sets out the policy and regulatory framework which ensures this is captured across the College.
- CJR questioned whether the statement was referenced within safeguarding training. IJ to review and confirm. DA advised that there are policies and a framework in place to ensure the College operates in an appropriate way.
- IJ added that the statement was part of the procurement process for subcontractors.

**Action: IJ to confirm whether the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement is referenced within the College's safeguarding training.**

***The Committee agreed to recommend the statement for Board approval at the Board meeting on 13 December 2022.***

**PR/142 7. Employee Code of Conduct**

The report was presented by IJ and the following was noted:

- The Code of Conduct has been drafted following the updating of the Keeping Children Safe in Education statutory guidance.
- The Code of Conduct specifically includes low-level concerns, outlining what these are and how they can be reported.
- The Code of Conduct has been shared with Trade Union colleagues for review, with a discussion to follow.

The intention is to implement the Code of Conduct, with the support of the Committee, and share with staff once agreed with trade unions.

**The Committee queried the following:**

- SS requested confirmation of the steps that will be taken to share with Board members as the scope of conduct indicates that it applies to governors. IJ confirmed that he is currently working with the Director of Brand and Learner Experience on a communications plan which will include governors.

**The Committee discussed the following:**

- IJ confirmed that it will be reiterated with staff that any concern, however low level, should be reported for appropriate follow-up.
- DA added that discussions with Trade Unions in relation to the Code of Conduct are ongoing. It is envisaged that the Code of Conduct will be shared at a future Board meeting for further discussion. DA to work with the Director of Governance and Compliance on how best to share the information and augment with governor safeguarding training.

**Action: DA / NT to discuss options for Board engagement.**

*The report was noted.*

**PR/143 8. Strategic Risk Register**

*JC joined the meeting at 12.43pm*

The report was presented by JC and the following was noted:

- The risk register has been shared with all Committees and the Board.
- The risk register was subject to scrutiny by the Audit Committee at their recent meeting.
- There are 13 risks identified on the register which has reduced from 21 in 2021/22.
- Following a recent suggestion, the register will be updated to include a horizon scan and consider potential risks facing the College and the sector. This will include LSIPs and the ONS review and is intended to keep governors updated on the risk landscape.

JC highlighted that the Committee has specific responsibility for one risk which falls directly within its remit and which is aligned to the recruitment and retention of staff. Members were asked to consider whether this appropriately captured strategic risks in the scope of the Committee.

**The Committee discussed the following:**

- CJR confirmed that retention and recruitment is the key risk appropriate to the Committee's remit. It was felt that the risk accurately covers the College workforce.
- SS agreed adding that the rating of the risk was appropriate, given the environment in which the College is operating.
- CJR added that she had also considered the proposed KPIs for the Committee and felt that the risk register was accurate on all levels.
- JS agreed with the feedback from governors adding that the risks included on the register needed to be those of the highest concern.
- JC confirmed that all managers across the College are undertaking significant work on operational planning and risk management is included within this. Any areas of risk identified through this process will be considered as to whether they need to be escalated to strategic level, where appropriate, with the Executive Team monitoring any items that may have a strategic impact.
- JS highlighted an ongoing concern in relation to specific industries being more difficult to recruit and retain staff in.

*The report was noted.*

*JC, SR and JS left the meeting at 12.52pm.*

**PR/144 9. Employment Tribunal Case Update**

*Covered under a confidential minute.*

*The report was noted.*

**PR/145 10. HR Staffing Update**

*Covered under a confidential minute.*

*The report was noted.*

**PR/146 11. Update on 2022/23 Pay Discussions**

*Covered under a confidential minute.*

*The report was noted and the awards for senior post holders were approved.*

**PR/147 12. People and Remuneration Committee Annual Report**

*The report was noted.*

**PR/148 13. Any Other Business**

CJR indicated that she would be interested in knowing more about how the cost of living crisis is impacting on staff and whether this is having a direct effect on mental health and absence. CJR would also like to understand what the College is doing to support staff.

DA indicated that these challenges have been considered as part of pay discussions. Discussions are taking place with the College's catering provider to ensure that there are affordable options available to staff. Catering facilities have also been established at each campus allowing staff to bring in and prepare their own food. It was confirmed that an update will be provided at the next meeting. Discussions are also ongoing with the Citizens Advice Bureau regarding support and advice for staff. At this stage, there is no increase in sickness absence or reports of concerns for general wellbeing.

CJR referred to the recent incident at the Skills Academy for Construction and questioned whether the College's Occupational Health Provider are able to provide any support for staff. DA confirmed that the College were continuing to respond as required following the incident. The College's Occupational Health provider are able to provide support where required. There have not been any referrals made in response to the incident, to date.

**Action: Update on cost of living crisis to be provided at the next meeting.**

CJR closed the meeting by sharing her appreciation for the efforts of IJ over recent months in leading the pay discussions and supporting the HR team as the interim Head of HR. IJs patience and sensitivity were commended.

**PR/149 14. Date of Next Meeting**

2 March 2023 at 12pm.