

MINUTES OF THE FIFTH MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, ON TUESDAY 18 MARCH 2008 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Mr H Faulkner (Chair)
Mrs J Doherty
Dame Geraldine Keegan
Mr S Murphy (Director)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Duffy (Assistant Director, Human Resources)
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

5.1 APOLOGIES

None

5.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 7 JANUARY 2008

It was proposed by Dame Geraldine Keegan seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

5.3 MATTERS ARISING

4.3 (3.3) (2.9) Associate Lecturer Agreement

The Assistant Director reported that information was being gathered at sector level with a view to examining if the Agreement breached equality legislation.

5.4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

It was agreed to take this item later in the meeting. See separate minute.

5.5 APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS (Ref: paper SC5.5)

The Assistant Director reported on recent staffing movements. It was noted that one offer of employment had been withdrawn due to inaccurate information being supplied by the candidate.

Members noted the paper's contents.

5.6 STAFFING ISSUES (Ref: paper SC5.6)

The Assistant Director outlined requests from 3 members of staff

- A request to extend a 2 year career break for a further year
- A request to permanently reduce full-time working hours for domestic reasons
- A request for 8.5 days unpaid leave to facilitate marriage arrangements

It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Dame Geraldine Keegan and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the requests be granted.

5.7 LEGAL CASES UPDATE (Ref: paper SC5.7)

The Assistant Director reported a case where an agreement to settle out of court has been reached subject to approval by DEL. On the proposal of Mrs Doherty seconded by Dame Geraldine Keegan it was agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the arrangement be accepted subject to approval by DEL.

5.8 DRAFT POLICY ON FLEXIBLE WORKING (Ref: paper SC5.8)

The Assistant Director outlined the details of the policy emphasising the need for consultation with staff, etc. In reply to a question she said that the policy particularly referred to parents and carers to cover legislation requirements. Consideration was given to e-mailed suggestions by the GB Chair that the policy should not disadvantage students and that there should be no additional cost to the College. The Assistant Director pointed out that the policy would be subject to a consultation process. On the proposal of Mrs Doherty seconded by Dame Geraldine Keegan it was agreed to recommend that the Governing Body approve the policy subject to no significant changes as a result of the consultation process.

5.9 ABSENCE REPORT: QUARTER ENDING 31 DECEMBER 2007

The Assistant Director tabled the quarterly report which showed an overall total lost time rate of 5.2%. The Assistant Director outlined reasons for higher than desired rate which was mainly due to long term absences. She drew members' attention to the Bradford weighting which highlighted repeated short-term absences. She mentioned that, in relation to reasons for certified absences, there was particular concern for staff who were off due to work-related stress which included the offer of counselling. In comparison with other colleges for the year ending August 2007, NWRC percentage absence was slightly below the sector average. Finally the Assistant Director suggested a notional cost of the absences was £134000 for the quarter based on average salary figures. Members noted the report which they had found very helpful.

5.10 POTENTIAL REDUNDANCIES

The Director outlined the history of discussions with DEL on redundancies in the College due to restructuring. As a result DEL had now agreed to 6 initial redundancies being effected in the 2008/09 year with the College responsible for the redundancy and added years payments (£156000 and £351698 respectively with compensatory savings in staff salaries). The Director had had discussions with the persons affected to ascertain their circumstances. On the proposal of Dame Geraldine Keegan seconded by Mrs Doherty it was agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the 6 persons be granted retirement on the grounds of redundancy and that they be given due statutory notice. The Director indicated that DEL was making a business case to DFP for further redundancies in the 2008/09 year.

The Director reported a further case of 2 redundant posts amongst non-teaching staff. Possible re-deployment was being examined at present. It was proposed by Dame Geraldine Keegan seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed to recommend to

the Governing Body that the two posts be made redundant and that alternative employment be sought for staff affected.

5.10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No business was conducted under this heading.

Date of next meeting. It was agreed to meet on Monday 19 May 2008 at 4.00pm in Strand Road.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 5.15pm