
MINUTES OF THE SIXTH MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE NORTH WEST REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD IN THE BOARDROOM, STRAND ROAD CAMPUS, ON MONDAY 19 MAY 2008 AT 4.00 PM

PRESENT: Mr H Faulkner (Chair)
Mrs J Doherty
Mr S Murphy (Director)
Mr E Beattie (ex-officio)

IN ATTENDANCE: Ms K Duffy (Assistant Director, Human Resources)
Mr B Henry (NI Director, Lifelong Learning UK) for item 6.8
Mr D McClelland (Secretary)

6.1 APOLOGIES

Dame Geraldine Keegan

6.2 MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 18 MARCH 2008

It was proposed by Mr Murphy seconded by Mrs Doherty and agreed that the minutes were an accurate record of the meeting.

It was agreed to take item 6.8 at this point in the meeting.

6.3 MATTERS ARISING

5.6 Staffing Issues. The Chair reported that the recommendation had been adopted by the Governing Body.

5.8 Draft Policy on Flexible Working. The Chair reported that the recommendation had been adopted by the Governing Body and the policy was now out for consultation.

5.10 Potential Redundancies. The Chair reported that the recommendations had been adopted by the Governing Body and that the appropriate procedures had been enacted.

6.4 CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

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

6.5 APPOINTMENTS AND RESIGNATIONS (Ref: paper SC6.5)

The Assistant Director reported on recent staffing movements. She mentioned the case of a permanent appointee who had not taken up post. The Chair and members noted, with regret, that a member of staff had died while in service. Members noted the paper's contents.

6.6 STAFFING ISSUES (Ref: paper SC6.6)

The Assistant Director outlined requests from members of staff as follows:

- 1 member requesting a career break for 1 year
- 1 member requesting an extension to a 2 year career break for a further year
- 2 members of staff requesting a temporary reduction in working hours
- 3 members of staff requesting an extension to reduction in working hours
- 3 members of staff requesting a permanent reduction in working hours

All requests have the support of line managers and the Director.

It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Murphy and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the requests be granted.

6.7 LEGAL CASES UPDATE (Ref: paper SC6.7)

The Assistant Director reported on 2 cases:

- one where a hearing was scheduled for early June
- the other where settlement had been agreed.

6.8 VISIT FROM LLUK REPRESENTATIVE

The Chair welcomed Mr Brian Henry, NI Director for LLUK, to the meeting. In his presentation Mr Henry mentioned the following issues

- LLUK works with 5 constituencies of employers: community learning and development, FE, HE, libraries archives and information services and work based learning
- The role of LLUK is to identify gaps in skills which will be required by employers in future years and to work with Sector Skills Councils (SSC) to develop the occupational standards which need to be set to raise skills levels. LLUK was seeking to ensure that statements of competency based on these standards would have European-wide recognition. It would then be up to education and training organisations to deliver training incorporating these standards. In the FE sector, these changes will require lecturers to have a flexible response to new demands
- Overarching skills required throughout the lifelong learning sector and identified by LLUK included continual professional development, leadership and management and ICT competence
- A NI Skills Adviser was being appointed to oversee the performance of SSC

Members then raised a number of issues with Mr Henry including

- LLUK's link with DEL – Finance from DEL would require delivery of training on the standards set
- Duplication of training – LLUK researches the standards, others deliver the training
- Post graduate teaching qualification for lecturers – new competencies were being developed taking changes into account
- Part-time lecturers – they will need proper professional qualification in order to deliver training

The Chair thanked Mr Henry for providing members with a valuable insight into the work of LLUK.

Mr Henry then left the meeting.

6.9 ASSOCIATE LECTURER AGREEMENT (Ref: paper SC6.9)

The Assistant Director reported on discussions which had taken place at sector level. Because of the potential adverse impact on equality it had been agreed that the Agreement should be brought back to the Lecturers Negotiating Committee seeking to have it set aside. The Committee would be kept informed of developments. In reply to a question the AD stated that the Agreement was having a significant adverse effect on equality if implemented in NWRC.

6.10 HEAD OF SCHOOL – SALARY SCALE (Ref: paper SC6.10)

The Assistant Director indicated that, with restructuring due to merger, staff appointed as Head of School had now additional responsibilities. It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Beattie and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that Heads of Schools be paid on payscale 6.

6.11 HARMONISATION OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE (Ref: paper SC6.11)

The Director outlined the current situation in relation to variation in practice across College campuses. It was agreed that an exploratory meeting with Unions should take place while legal opinion was sought. The Director indicated that September was the preferred time for implementing harmonisation and that notice to staff could be withdrawn if there was acceptance of the Pilling agreement.

6.12 REPORT ON STAFF OVERTIME (Ref: paper SC6.12)

The Assistant Director presented data summarising staff overtime. The Director indicated that the total expenditure for teaching staff overtime represented less than 1% of total staffing costs. Apart from Estates there was no overtime budget for non-teaching staff. It was agreed that, in future, it would be sufficient for the Committee to receive an annual end of year report on this issue.

6.13 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

6.13.1 Fair Employment Monitoring Return. The Assistant Director distributed the Return to members for consideration at the next meeting.

6.13.2 Procedure for POCVA checks. The Assistant Director described the difficulties which had arisen, particularly with part-time staff and for students on placement, due to changes in procedure introduced by the new agency responsible for carrying out the checks. It related, in particular, to persons who had a delayed appointment date following disclosure breaks in service. It was agreed that, should service be resumed after a break of up to 3 months, the check would be regarded as valid subject to the completion of a satisfactory risk assessment. For longer breaks in service a new POCVA check would be requested from the agency.

6.13.3 Sick Leave Regulations. The Assistant Director outlined the case of a member of staff who had recently returned to limited duty after experiencing serious injury

through a car accident. She was now having to face further serious medical problems. It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Murphy and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that normal arrangements for sick pay be provided for the person concerned.

6.13.4 Amendment to Recruitment and Selection Policy. (Ref: paper SC6.13.4) The Assistant Director tabled an amendment to the Panel Arrangements described in the policy to reflect the appointment of Heads of School as line managers. It was proposed by Mrs Doherty seconded by Mr Murphy and agreed to recommend to the Governing Body that the policy be amended as proposed.

6.13.5 Letter of Condolence. It was agreed that the Chair of the GB would write a letter of condolence to the family of Mr Mervyn Simpson who had died recently and who had been a member of the Temporary Executive Committee prior to merger.

Date of next meeting. The next scheduled meeting is on Monday 3 November 2008 at 4.00pm in Strand Road. Should business warrant, a earlier meeting may be called.

This being all the business the Chair closed the meeting 5.30pm