



“To promote lifelong learning through the understanding and enjoyment of flowers, trees, plants and animals for career, business, educational and leisure purposes”

**PERSONNEL COMMITTEE
MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON
6TH MARCH 2008**

Members: Huw Jones Owen (Chairman)
Roger Abraham
Sam Bell
Ken Crowther (Vice Chairman)
Steven Dowbiggin OBE
Donald Gratton
Phyllis Oborn MBE

Present: Sue Adams, Clerk to Governors
Janet Hughes Hallett – Finance Manager
Nick Evans, Director of Estates and Buildings
Madeline Hall, Head of College
Simon O’Hear, Personnel Manager

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Sam Bell (attending the Governance Conference 2007/08), Roger Abraham (prior commitment) and Steven Dowbiggin OBE who was representing the college at an event at 10 Downing Street at the personal invitation of the Prime Minister.

2. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 27TH NOVEMBER 2007

RECEIVED the minutes of the Personnel Committee Meeting held on 27th November 2007

The minutes were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2007

There were no matters arising.

4. REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL MANAGER

RECEIVED paper 4, report of the Personnel Manager for decision

NOTED:

4.1 “Manor Matters”

- i. the production of the February 2008 edition of “Manor Matters”;

4.2 Resignations, Appointments and Vacancies

- i. although members recognised a number of appointments had been made, some concern was expressed at the number of outstanding vacancies;
- ii. the Personnel Manager advised that there was not a problem generally with staff recruitment;
- iii. some posts had been offered to suitable candidates after the personnel papers had been circulated to members e.g. Personnel Assistant, PA to the Director of Estates and Buildings;
- iv. interviews were arranged to recruit to the garden staff vacancies following the promotion of existing postholders (causing a “knock-on” effect). The appointment to the post of Health and Safety and Gardens Operations Coordinator was being delayed until the second tranche of Senior Gardener recruitment had been completed;
- v. a number of posts were being re-advertised as initial advertisements had not secured a suitable candidate;
- vi. some difficulty was being experienced in recruiting staff to posts within the Finance Section
- vii. members asked to be kept informed of posts where it was proving difficult to appoint a suitable candidate.

4.3 Subsistence Rates

- i. the Finance Manager and Personnel Manager had undertaken a benchmarking exercise which revealed the college’s subsistence rates were slightly outdated.

RESOLVED that (subject to F&GP approval) proposed subsistence rates detailed below be adopted and that the appendix in the Business Expenses Protocols which sets out the maximum subsistence rates is changed to reflect these new rates and that the tea rate is removed.

Breakfast	£5
Lunch	£7
Dinner	£10

4.4 Equality Impact Assessment

- i. following staff training, provided by Dr. Christine Rose, a specific Equality Impact Assessment Team of nine managers was established to complete equality impact assessments on all college policies, procedures, plans and practice.
- ii. the Personnel Manager would be mapping the college's policies, procedures, plans and practice;
- iii. the Personnel Manager would be taking the lead on all staff policies and providing guidance to others in terms of process;
- iv. the requirement is to have reviewed all policies, procedures, plans and practice by the end of June 2009. The college has set a target in its Quality Improvement Plan (QIP) that 66% of policies, procedures, plans and practice will be reviewed and assessed by December 2008;
- v. achievement of the QIP target would form a large part of the Personnel Manager's work over the coming months;
- vi. the Personnel Manager would not only be undertaking Equality Impact Assessments on staff policies but would also take the opportunity to bring policies and procedures in line with best practice;
- vii. the Personnel Manager advised members that over the next year there would be an increase in the number of policies presented to the committee for their consideration.

4.5 Implementation of the restructuring of the Personnel Section

- i. the new post of Personnel & Payroll Assistant within the Personnel Section has been advertised on a 20 hour basis rather than 18 hours to ensure a consistent level of service is provided. This can be managed from within existing budgets due to a reduction in hours of another team member (who would be undertaking a term-tem role focussing on supporting staff development);
- ii. the Personnel Manager was pleased to report that the post of Personnel and Payroll Assistant was now under offer.

4.6 Personnel Service Standards

- i. the personnel team were in the process of reviewing the personnel standards to create a more comprehensive set of standards for the team. The process would be completed during March;
- ii. a customer satisfaction survey was being developed which would be circulated to managers once the review of service standards was completed.

4.7.1 **Compliance with the new Instrument and Articles of Government**

- i. the College's disciplinary and grievance procedures for senior postholders and the Clerk to Governors were compliant with the revised Instrument and Articles of Government;
- ii. the College also complies with the requirements in terms of the appointment, assignment, grading, appraisal, pay and conditions of service of senior postholders and the Clerk being determined by the Governing Body;
- iii. the Chief Executive is operationally responsible for the administration of policies and procedures for all other staff (within policies strategically agreed by the Governing Body).

4.8 **Appeal against Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) decision to cancel Capel Manor's registration**

- i. the CRB had advised the college that it did not meet the minimum annual requirement of one hundred disclosure requests during 2007 (92 disclosures had been completed);
- ii. the Personnel Manager had successfully appealed against this decision based on three key points:
 - Capel Manor College, because of its specialism, particular range of students (children and vulnerable adults) and the way the college is structured has a particular need to use and rely on CRB checks for all staff and this is clearly more efficiently administered by its own counter-signatories.
 - The college is rapidly expanding, requiring the need for more staff and a range of volunteers. The college expects to exceed the 100 minimum checks per year during 2008 and subsequent years.
 - The college is currently introducing a strategy for re-checking existing teaching staff which will increase the annual numbers by 10 each year.
- iii. The Personnel Section would continue to monitor the number of disclosures made annually;
- iv. Members congratulated the Personnel Manager on successfully appealing the CRB's decision.

4.9 **Association of Colleges (AoC) Equality Group**

- i. Members congratulated the Personnel Manager on becoming a member of the AoC Equality Group following a competitive selection process;
- ii. the Equality Working Group would be preparing joint agreements on guidance for the sector on equality and diversity issues.

4.10 **Local Government Pension Scheme (LGPS)**

- i. the changes to the LGPS will include basing employee contributions on salary earned and increasing the employers contribution to the scheme from 15.4% to 18.5% from the 1st April 2008. The new scheme will provide enhanced benefits for members.
- ii. a policy will be produced to outline when employees are re-allocated into the new percentage bands (when required) on an on-going basis;
- iii. at the present time the option of amending (as appropriate) the employee's contribution to the scheme would be to action this whenever there is a change in salary;
- iv. as the changes have only recently been received by the Senior Management Team other options will also be explored (once a year or upon contractual change). A detailed recommendation will be presented to members at the summer term meeting of the Personnel Committee;
- v. the increase to the employer's contribution had been built into the 07/08 budget.

4.11. **"Two Ticks" Award** (a disability symbol)

- i. the college had been meeting the five commitments needed before achieving this award;
- ii. the Personnel Manager had previous experience of gaining this award and had successfully made an application to Job Centre Plus to secure the award for the college;
- iii. by using the "two ticks" symbol the college will make it clear to disabled people that Capel Manor welcomes applications from them and are positive about their abilities;
- iv. the award also shows existing employees that the college values their contribution and will treat them fairly should they become disabled.

5. INTRODUCING A CHILDCARE VOUCHERS BENEFIT FOR ALL STAFF

RECEIVED paper 5, report of the Personnel Manager for decision

NOTED that:

- i. Childcare vouchers are a popular form of childcare assistance provided by employers which offers a simple solution to the problem of recruiting and retaining key employees who have childcare responsibilities;

- ii. Employees who have children can sacrifice up to £55 per week (£243 per month) of their salary and received childcare vouchers instead. These can be used to pay for childcare.
- iii. employee saves on both tax and National Insurance;
- iv. the college, as the employer, will also make a saving on National Insurance. The employer's saving will be offset by the administration charges of the childcare vouchers provided (between 5% and 9% of the total voucher value depending on the type and size of employer). Therefore there would be no cost implication in introducing the scheme;
- v. Members congratulated the Personnel Manager on securing an excellent rate of 5% administration charge from Accor Services who would be the college's childcare voucher provider.

RESOLVED that the college introduces a childcare voucher scheme with effect from May 2008 with Accor Services that will comply with the Inland Revenue rules.

6. MILEAGE RATES

RECEIVED paper 6, report of the Personnel Manager for decision

NOTED that:

- i. the college currently offered two generous sets of mileage rates which were inherited from the Local Authority on incorporation:
- ii. the two rates (one for academic staff and one for business and learning support staff) are now causing some confusion, particularly with staff who have separate lecturing and technician part-time contracts;
- iii. rates vary according to engine size which does not align with current environmental and sustainability thinking as the rates reward staff whose cars have bigger engines;
- iv. the Personnel Manager has contacted other colleges and most, for example Southgate, Enfield and Stanmore, have one rate for all staff which is aligned to Inland Revenue rates;
- v. the college also reduces the mileage rate to 25p per mile when staff travel outside the 25 mile radius of the college;
- vi. the proposal is to align mileage rates for all staff with the Inland Revenue rates and abolish the 25 mile radius provision. The use of Inland Revenue rates would greatly simplify the administration of mileage claims;

- vii. the Inland Revenue rates reflect standing costs such as depreciation, insurance, road tax, running cost, servicing and repairs;
- viii. advice had been received from the Association of Colleges (AoC) that changes could be made unilaterally and could be dealt with on a case-by-case basis;
- ix. Members felt this was a sensible move forward but expressed some concern that staff views of the proposal had not been solicited;
- x. the Personnel Manager advised that for administrative purposes it would be beneficial for the college to introduce the new scheme from the 1st April 2008 (new tax year);
- xi. from the overall modelling undertaken it is expected that the college's mileage expenses will reduce in 2008/09 when compared to 2007/08.

RESOLVED that:

- i. the Personnel Manager be asked to seek staff's views on the proposal before formally approving any revised mileage rates;**
- ii. due to the time frame and administration benefits of introducing the scheme from the 1st April 2008, the Personnel Manager was asked to make a further report directly to the Governing Body meeting on the 9th April 2008.**

7. REVISION TO THE COLLEGE'S STAFF CHARTER

RECEIVED paper 7, report of the Personnel Manager for decision

NOTED that:

- i. the Staff Charter, which is also included in the college's Welcome Booklet, had been significantly revised and updated;
- ii. the revised charter had been circulated to staff for comment;
- iii. further amendment will be made dependent on staff comment and reported to members as appropriate.

RESOLVED to adopt the revised charter attached as appendix 1 to the paper

8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 16th June 2008 at 5.00pm