



*To promote lifelong learning for individuals and industry 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 13<sup>TH</sup> JULY 2009**

#### **Members:**

Roger Abraham  
Sam Bell  
Steven Dowbiggin OBE  
Don Gratton  
Huw Jones Owen (Chairman)  
Malcolm Parkinson  
Vacancy

#### **Present:**

Sue Adams, Clerk to Governors  
Nick Evans, Director of Estates and Buildings  
Damien Fallon, Director of Finance  
Madeline Hall, Head of College  
Simon O’Hear, Personnel Manager

Before the meeting commenced the Chairman asked about filling the vacancy on the committee. The Clerk advised that the vacancy would be reported to the next meeting of the Governing Body through the report of the Clerk to Governors.

#### **1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies were received from Roger Abraham and Malcolm Parkinson.

#### **2. MINUTES OF THE PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2009**

RECEIVED the minutes of the Personnel Committee meeting held on the 12<sup>th</sup> March 2009 for decision.

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

**3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING  
PERSONNEL COMMITTEE MEETING HELD ON THE 12<sup>TH</sup>  
MARCH 2009**

RECEIVED paper “3”, report of the Personnel Manager for information

**3.1 Item 5 – Review of all policies, procedures, plans and practices through  
the Equality Impact Assessment process by end of June 2009**

NOTED that:

- i. nineteen equality impact assessments had been undertaken since the last Personnel Committee and another twenty assessments have been started;
- ii. the June deadline for completion of the review process had been postponed until the end of December 2009 as other priorities needed to be addressed as a result of the reduction in funding for 2009/10 and the volume of work required to complete the reviews;
- iii. the volume of work was more than originally anticipated because the Personnel Manager had been running a parallel process of rationalising, redeveloping and assessing existing personnel policies and procedures;
- iv. other members of the Equality Impact Assessment Team were also rationalising, redeveloping and assessing policies in other areas of the college’s work;
- v. no revised personnel policies or procedures had been undertaken for consideration by this meeting as the Personnel Manager had been focussing on supporting staff who were dealing with the current restructuring.

**3.2 Item 5.1 – 5.6 – Probationary Procedure and Capability Procedure**

NOTED that the consultation process with staff had been completed and no major changes had been suggested.

**3.3 Item 4.2 – Health and Safety Coordinator vacancy**

NOTED that:

- i. the vacancy had been incorporated in the review of the Estates and Buildings Division and health and safety responsibilities will be incorporated within the new structure;
- ii. an additional coordinator post has been included in the new structure;
- iii. the existing post of Facilities Officer will have a health and safety focus.

**3.4 Item 4.3 – Personnel Service Standards and related Customer Satisfaction Survey for Managers**

NOTED that circulation of the Customer Satisfaction Survey for Managers had been postponed until late November 2009 to allow the support given during the restructuring process to be evaluated.

**3.5 Item 4.4 – HR Annual Plan**

NOTED that:

- i. no material changes had been suggested to the HR Annual Plan and it had been adopted throughout the college;
- ii. the Personnel Manager was working through the various elements/ action points of the plan.

**3.6 Item 4.6 – new Performance Management Scheme with competences**

NOTED that:

- i. the launch of the new scheme had been postponed because the SMT felt that given the current climate of reorganisation (and with some redundancies being negotiated) it was not an appropriate time to introduce a new concept;
- ii. the on-line video that had been produced to support the new scheme had not been received until May (and needed some refinement);
- iii. the pilot of feedback element of the new scheme would be undertaken by the Estates and Buildings Division (partly being restructured), managers in all areas and the Personnel Section;
- iv. the Personnel Manager reported that the SMT want a positive launch of the new scheme and felt the timing of the launch would be important to it's success;
- v. that the scheme would be launched in the Autumn term.

**3.7 Item 6 – Equal Opportunities monitoring, recruitment and retention of staff.**

NOTED that:

- i. there has been a reduction in the proportion of applications for vacancies which are received from those with ethnic minority backgrounds
- ii. a discussion of the actions being taken by the college to encourage applications from those from ethnic minority backgrounds including:

- creating better links with ethnic minority groups/ organisations to raise the profile of the college;
  - advertised vacancies in the local press which covers areas where there is a diverse population;
- iii. advertising job vacancies in ethnic minority papers such as “The Voice” and “Asian Age” has not proved successful in securing more job applicants from minority backgrounds;
  - iv. the college now advertises on fifty different websites to include specialist and local websites which has increased the volume and quality of job applicants in general.

#### **4. REPORT OF THE PERSONNEL MANAGER**

RECEIVED paper “4”, report of the Personnel Manager for decision

NOTED that this was a decision paper and not an information paper as stated on the agenda and paper;

##### **4.1 “Manor Matters”**

NOTED the production of the July 2009 issue of “Manor Matters”.

##### **4.2 Resignations, appointments and vacancies**

NOTED:

- i. staff resignations, appointments and vacancies since the last meeting of the Personnel Committee;
- ii. Sam Bell asked for his thanks to Tom Cole to be recorded for the support he had provided to the Allotment Associations and their question and answer sessions which had been very much appreciated;
- iii. the Head of College advised that Tom Cole was a long serving member of staff and also paid tribute to him on behalf of the SMT for his contribution to the School of Horticulture and the college. The Head of College advised that Tom Cole would be continuing to maintain links with the college.

##### **4.3 Sickness Monitoring**

NOTED:

- i. there was an increase in the average number of days taken by staff for sickness by one day from 2007;
- ii. the Personnel Manager reported that following the introduction of a new procedure for reporting staff sickness, the level of sickness notification had increased. It was not entirely clear if the increase reflected increased sick leave or improved recording of sickness absence;

- iii. the impact of the long term sickness absence on the average day's sickness for all staff;
- iv. when comparing the average days sickness for 2008 with that of 2006, members needed to be aware that, whilst the college does have staff on long term sickness leave at present, there were significantly less periods of long-term sickness absence during the 2006 period;
- v. the average days sickness for the college for the 2008/09 period was below the Sector average;
- vi. sickness absence continued to be monitored and managed through college procedures.

#### **4.4 2009/10 inflationary/cost of living award and staffing budgets**

NOTED that:

- i. the final recommendation of 1% made by the AoC to the joint Trade Unions was rejected. On the 30<sup>th</sup> June 2009 the AoC increased their final recommendation to 1.5% on all salaries and allowances from the 1<sup>st</sup> August 2009 and this has been recommended to the sector;
- ii. the financial position of the college would be reviewed six months into the new financial year and consideration given to reinstating any inflationary increase as soon as possible subject to affordability (exclusive of back pay);
- iii. if the 1.5% recommendation from the AoC is adopted the college's pay would have a shortfall of approximately 2% based on 0.5% from last year and 1.5% for 2009/10;
- iv. if governors decide to pay the awards (0.5% plus 1.5%) from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2010 the cost to the college will be £58,782.25 in 2009/10 and that this had not been included in the current budget.

#### **4.5 AoC Review of national pay recommendation negotiations**

NOTED that:

- i. the national review by the AoC of negotiations has been concluded and has determined that the AoC will continue to negotiate with the joint Trade Unions to agree a national pay recommendation;
- ii. the college had contributed to the survey and given the college's support to the AoC continuing to negotiate a recommendation which gives the college and sector a specific FE benchmark.

#### **4.6 Management Training**

NOTED that:

- i. the two days management training on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> July which covered “Managing Difficult Behaviour” and “Discipline” (Day 1) and “Recruitment and Selection” (Day 2) had been highly successful;
- ii. the training had been delivered by the Personnel Manager and would be repeated on the 20<sup>th</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2009;
- iii. the Personnel Manager was endeavouring to undertake “one-to-one” sessions with three managers who had been unable to attend the scheduled training sessions;
- iv. the Personnel Manager will review whether there is a need to delivery further management training sessions during 2009/10;

#### **4.7 Review of Risk Management – Human Resources**

NOTED that:

- i. the Personnel Manger had reviewed the current risk levels and proposed the following amendments to schedules:
  - HR1 Ensuring the college has sufficient staff at the required grades/quality in a period of ‘refocusing’;
  - HR2 Ensuring the college complies with relevant HR legislation
- ii. no further risks were identified;
- iii. the final column on the Risk Review Schedule had been amended to “Net Risk” (rather than “Residual Risk”) at the instigation of the Health and Safety Committee;
- iv. a new system which would introduce a more scientific process to assess the “net risk” was being incorporated into the risk review process;
- v. at the present time the legal cover for employment issues with the NFU does not give the college supported access to the college’s preferred legal employment advisers. The NFU currently uses DAS who allocate a solicitor to the college but there is no continuity between DAS and the legal advice line the college utilises for employment advice. This is causing inconsistencies in the advice being given and processes being followed. The Director of Estates and Buildings and Personnel Manager were currently in discussion with the NFU to negotiate to ensure the legal cover provided allows the college to access their preferred employment advisers.

**RECOMMENDED TO THE GOVERNING BODY that the risk review schedule for Human Resources be amended as detailed above to include the updated “net risk” calculation and is incorporated into the college’s overall risk management document being presented to the full governing body meeting for approval.**

**5. DATE OF NEXT MEETING: 9<sup>th</sup> November 2009 at 4.00pm**

