



PEOPLE COMMITTEE – MAIN MINUTES

Thursday 10 October 2024 – 4.00pm to 5.30pm

Boardroom

Governors	Type	Initials	Attendance	Apologies
Lisa Crichton-Jones	Chair of Committee – Independent Governor	LCJ	X	
Michael Wood-Williams	Committee Member – Independent Governor	MW	X*	
Claire-Jane Rewcastle	Committee Member – Independent Governor	CJR	X*	
David Alexander	Committee Member – Principal / CEO	DA	X	
Richard Wensley	Committee Member – Staff Governor	RW	X	
Clerk				
Nicola Taylor	Director of Governance & Compliance	NT	X	
Presenters / Attendees				
Vicki Casey	Director of People & OD	VC	X	
Jeremy Cook	Deputy Principal Finance & Resources	JC	X	
Lori Casson	Head of People	LC	X	
Sharon Kinleyside	Health and Safety Manager	SK	X^	

*Attended via Teams / ^Attended for part of the meeting

P/042 1. Chair's Welcome, Apologies and Conflict of Interest

The Chair welcomed the attendees.

There were no apologies to report. 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.

P/043 2. Minutes of the People and Remuneration Committee

A. 13 June 2024 – Main Minutes

The Committee **reviewed** the main minutes from the previous meeting and **agreed** that they were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

B. 13 June 2024 – Confidential Minutes

The Committee **reviewed** the confidential minutes from the previous meeting and **agreed** that they were a true and accurate reflection of the meeting.

The minutes were approved.

P/044 3. Matters Arising / Action Log

VC presented the action log and provided the following updates:

- Equality Impact Assessments (EIA) had recently been discussed at the College EDI Steering Group. The College were looking to review and redesign the EIA form and provide training for managers on completion. Inclusion impact assessments were also being considered, and this would include event planning and decision making. The Committee **agreed** for this action to be marked as complete.
- The College's next EDI data collection would take place this calendar year and the confidentiality of this would be reiterated to staff. The Committee **agreed** for this action to be marked as complete.
- Timescales were being added to actions and the Chair agreed to confirm timescales upon agreement of future actions.
- The Staff Survey presentation for Board hadn't taken place due to resource being focussed on recruitment. This would be considered for the Staff Survey in 2025. The Committee **discussed** as to whether further information relating to the College staff survey should be highlighted at Board level at the November 2024 meeting. It was agreed for NT, DA, VC and MWW to consider this as part of Board agenda planning.

Action: MWW, DA, VC and NT to consider a staff survey update at the November 2024 Board meeting.

- The HR Team would arrange investigation training for Board Members. Initially, the independent members of the People Committee would receive training, with an open invitation to all other Board Members.

Action: VC to arrange investigation training for independent People Committee members with an open invitation to all other Board Members.

All other actions had been marked as complete / closed with updates provided within the report.

The report was noted.

P/045 4. Strategic Progress Reporting – People Strategy

VC presented the report and highlighted the following:

- The People Strategy had been approved by the Board in July 2024 and a large amount of progress relating to each of the strategic themes had been made across 2023/2024.
- The Committee would receive an update on the Committee agreed KPIs at their February 2025 meeting.

The Committee discussed and queried the following:

- Succession planning – it was noted that there was a Senior Management Team (SMT) structure in place and development work had been undertaken with these colleagues throughout the previous year with a focus of moving the emphasis in approach from management to leadership. The SMT structure was moving from an Executive Team information sharing session to peer to peer led sessions. Positive feedback had been received from SMT based on the recent developments. VC noted that succession planning of Senior Post

Holders was captured within the horizon scanning section of the College Strategic Risk Register, alongside the HR related risk.

- Staff feedback following the work with SMT – positive feedback had been received, including from those in attendance at the Committee meeting, noting the usefulness of the interdependency work and how this had improved working practices and collaboration amongst SMT members. This work helped reinforce that the knowledge and expertise of others could provide different ways of thinking and working.
- The increasing trends relating to sickness absence – it was noted that priorities around absence were being developed as part of a longer-term plan and the Committee **asked** for this to be actioned quickly as the impact of this would take time to be seen.

The Committee **noted** the level of progress made to date.

The Committee agreed to continue with the KPIs already in place at Committee and Board level.

The Committee **noted** the progress made to date and **agreed** the proposed strategic priorities for 2024/2025.

The report was noted.

P/046 5. Modern Slavery & Human Trafficking Statement

VC presented the report setting out that there had been no changes to the proposed statement as part of the annual review. This had been considered by the HR and the Procurement Teams.

The Committee discussed and queried the following:

- Awareness of modern slavery with learners – it was confirmed this would likely be covered within themes as part of Personal Social Development but the level / detail of this would be checked with the Head of Student Services and Customer Experience.

Action: NT to check inclusion of awareness of modern slavery within the Personal Social Development Programme.

- Any intelligence or learning from modern slavery within the College's supply chain – it was noted that assurance was sought through the policies and procedures of suppliers and that the College was also actively developing clauses in its tenders and contracts relating to community and social requirements. Awareness of this had been provided to the Finance & General Purposes Committee. The Committee **noted** that policies and procedures could only provide so much assurance and **requested** for any further / supporting information from the Procurement Officer.

Action: NT to liaise with the Senior Procurement Officer to gain an understanding of any intelligence / learning from modern slavery within the supply chain and any additional mitigations to prevent this.

The Committee **queried** their role in reviewing the Modern Slavery Statement and it was noted that it must be signed off at Board level and so the Committee were being asked to recommend this for Board approval.

The Committee **recommended** the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement 2024/2025 for Board approval at the November 2024 meeting.

Action: NT to include the Modern Slavery and Human Trafficking Statement for Board approval at the November 2023 meeting.

The report was noted.

P/047 6. Director of People and Organisational Development Update

VC presented the report and provided greater detail of the legislative updates being progressed by the UK Government following the submission of the report, including action the College would take to ensure compliance.

VC provided the Committee with an update of initial College pay award discussions and modelling. Discussion with trade unions in relation to this were expected to take place from October with subsequent dialogue then taking place with colleagues across all campuses. The Committee would be kept updated on these discussions.

Action: VC to update the People Committee of the outcome of the pay award for 2024/2025.

The Committee **noted** the preparatory work being undertaken in relation to the UK Government legislative updates and **discussed** what assurances would be developed to report back to the Committee.

The report was noted.

P/048 7. Annual HR Report

LC presented the report, supported by additional presentation slides. The presentation slides covered the data relating to the following areas: staffing profile, turnover, length of service, sickness absence, employee relations and EDI, including planned actions.

The Committee discussed and queried the following:

- The ethnic diversity of staff comparable to the North East – it was noted that available benchmarking data for the North East showed that those stating they their ethnicity in the College as white was 90%, whereas in the broader north east it is 93%.
- The inclusion of some elements of EDI data in the report, but not all – it was confirmed a full EDI annual report would be provided to the Committee in February 2025. The Committee **asked** for the College to consider if inclusion of key EDI data within the HR annual report was necessary if this was going to be reported in more detail as part of the EDI annual report.

Action: VC / LC to consider inclusion of EDI data within the HR annual report going forward.

- The gender breakdown of staff, noting that it would be useful to see the breakdown at different scale points which relate to the gender pay gap reporting.

Action: VC / LC to consider reporting of gender data within the HR annual report, specific to different scale points.

- The turnover rate of staff within the first couple of years of employment and if any age analysis had been undertaken, specifically considering different behaviours and values of differing generations. The Committee **noted** **caution** relating to the turnover findings and any potential impact this could

have on the recent recruitment campaign where a larger number of staff had been appointed.

The report was noted.

P/049 8. Annual Health & Safety Report and Policy

SK presented the report, supported by additional presentation slides. The presentation slides covered the data relating to the following areas: key health and safety activities, business continuity planning, survey results from learners and staff, workplace vetting, trips and visits, audits, monitoring indicators, mandatory training compliance and operational plan priorities, including planned actions.

SK noted the recording of data had been improved and this would build year on year to create trend data.

SK highlighted the importance of linking with operational planning of the curriculum teams to plan resources and interdependencies with the Health and Safety team.

The Committee **noted** the progress made, improved level of assurance provided and the positive staff and learner feedback relating to health and safety.

The Committee **noted** the report and **recommended** the Health and Safety Policy for Board approval in November 2024.

The Committee **requested** for future reporting to include the Board / Committee's compliance with their areas of responsibility within the Health and Safety Policy.

Action: SK to include Board / Committee compliance of the Health and Safety Policy within future reporting.

The report was noted.

SH left the meeting.

P/050 9. HR Case Work Update

Covered under a confidential minute.

The update was noted.

P/051 10. Strategic Risk Register

JC presented the report and highlighted the following:

- A specific Health and Safety risk had been added to the Risk Register, not due to concern but to reiterate that Health and Safety permeates through all the College does. A Health and Safety internal audit had recently concluded, and the outcome report would be shared with the Committee at the February 2025 meeting, following presentation to the Audit Committee.
- The impact of significant 16-18 growth on College operations, financial performance and capacity to provide financial support for learners had been added to the horizon scanning section following growth of approximately 15%. This had a consequential impact on staffing and the College were supporting and responding do this. There were a number of new vacant posts in place to support this, which had been in addition to the College recruitment campaign over the summer period. Student growth was being discussed at each committee, specific to each committee remit. The Committee **asked** for VC

and LC to consider any recruitment challenges and notify the Committee of any impact.

Action: VC and LR to consider any recruitment challenges following growth in learner numbers and notify the Committee of any impact.

The Committee noted the report and sought assurance that the increased student numbers would be covered at Board level, and it was confirmed it would be.

The report was noted.

P/052 11. People Committee Terms of Reference and Work Plan 2024/25

NT presented the report noting that this would be a standing item as a reminder to the Committee of their remit and proposed work plan for the year.

The report was noted.

P/053 12. Any Other Business

N/A

P/054 13. Date of Next Meeting:

The next meeting was confirmed as Thursday 20 February 2025 at 4.00pm