

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 3 MAY 2022 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.

PRESENT:

Mr Scott Alexander, Chair
Mr Brian Doran (CEO)
Miss Laura Milner
Dr Thomas Moore
Mr John Nugent
Mrs Carla Shields
Dr Eileen Stewart

IN ATTENDANCE:

Mr Andrew Saunders, Governing Body Chair
Mr Raymond Sloan, Director of Client Services
Mrs Ann Marie Hughes, Assistant Director Human Resources and Development
Mrs Petra McGuirk, Human Resources and Development
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.32.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

No apologies for absence were received.

Mr Alexander welcomed Mrs McGuirk to the meeting.

A02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

The Chair reminded those present to declare at the start of the meeting any conflicts with regard to matters to be discussed. No interests were declared.

A03. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 1 MARCH 2022

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the meeting of 1 March 2022 for accuracy.

These were approved on proposal from Mr Nugent and seconded by Dr Moore subject to an amendment to the date referenced under A16.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Members were advised that all matters arising from the previous meeting have been addressed.

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

Members discussed the merits of online or in person meetings for the next academic year and concluded that they would defer the decision to the consensus of the full Governing Body.

A06. DRAFT EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT PLAN 2022 - 2023

Mrs Hughes presented the draft Employee Development Plan informing on the strategic context and advised that the plan is aligned to the staff appraisal process and subject to

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change. She informed on the College's digital capability assessment for staff, advising on the tools available and the launch of a staff survey to provide feedback.

Members were informed on the numerous activities centred around project-based learning and developments regarding the World Skills Centre of Excellence, including the appointment of a college champion. Mrs Hughes provided detail on the Investors in People reaccreditation process, the sector learning and development forum, the implementation of a competence framework and a restructure of the HRD department.

Members were informed of the six main areas within the Plan and planned activities including upskilling of lecturing staff, trauma informed practice and autism awareness. Mrs Hughes advised on the management and leadership training programme, mandatory training and health and safety development activities.

Mr Saunders remarked on a good document and enquired if the document is issued to staff. Mrs Hughes advised that she will consult with the team regarding the publishing of the document and informed that staff receive regular correspondence advising on planned activities.

In response to a query from Dr Moore, Mr Doran advised that all new policies are consulted on with staff and Trade Unions, if appropriate.

Mr Doran further informed on seven curriculum HUBs operating throughout the FE sector and advised that lecturing staff can avail of skills development through these means.

Members noted the report.

A07. CAREER BREAK REQUESTS

The Committee noted that there have been no new career break requests.

A08. IIP UPDATE

Mrs Hughes reminded Members that the College was due to go through reaccreditation with Investors in People in May 2021 and relayed that due to the pandemic the decision was taken to postpone to May 2022, and reaccreditation is ongoing at present.

She informed that the staff survey yielded a 53% response return, which is well above the feasibility requirement. Mrs Hughes confirmed that the SMT desktop activity assessment has seen an increase in all markers bar two and remarked that the results are impressive considering the impact of Covid-19. She advised that the assessor will be onsite in the upcoming weeks to review documents, hold observations and meet face-to-face with staff. Members were informed that feedback is expected mid-June.

Members noted the report and remarked on a remarkable achievement considering the constraints placed on staff over the past two years and ongoing industrial action.

A09. KPIs – IN YEAR REPORT

Mrs Hughes informed on staff grievances, staff discipline, formal counselling and harassment cases from September 2021 to March 2022 and advised on the previous year's comparison. Members noted a low number of employee relation concerns and a slight increase on sickness absence against target.

Members noted the report and commented on a comparatively small amount of sickness absence given national reported concerns and impacted by the global health crisis.

A10. GOOD FOR ME GOOD FOR FE

Mrs Hughes provided Members with an update on the Good for Me Good for FE campaign. At the time of the meeting, SRC has collected 1689 food bank donations and delivered 5464 hours of volunteering by SRC students which is equivalent to have created £87k of social value generated for the local economy.

Members confirmed that they are in regular receipt of the SRCzine and remarked favourably on the staff stories relaying a good account of SRC staff supporting the local community.

A11. POLICY APPROVAL

- **Charity**
- **Identification**

Mr Sloan referred Members to minor recommended changes to the Charity policy to reflect volunteering activity and advised that the Identification policy has been amended to recommend a merger with the Student Identification policy.

Mr Sloan provided an update on a recent attempted carjacking at the Armagh campus. He advised that the affected parties have been supported by members of the Safeguarding team.

Both policies were approved on proposal from Dr Stewart and seconded by Dr Moore.

A12. CEF CIRCULARS

- **CEF 22-01 Lecturers Pay Awards 1 September 2019 & 1 September 2020**

Mrs Hughes referred Members to the CEF circular 22-01 detailing the LNC determination of a 2% increase in salary rates for lecturers from 1 September 2019 and 1 September 2020.

In response to a query from Mr Alexander, Mrs Hughes clarified movement between the salary spine points and Mr Doran advised that funding is not fully baselined and a significant element needs to be sourced from existing budgets.

For the benefit of new Members, Mr Doran informed on a protracted negotiating process with Trade Unions over recent years.

Mr Alexander commented on the disparity of teaching pay grades compared to those employed in schools and universities, and relayed concerns connected to difficulties in recruitment and retention.

Miss Milner enquired about other activities that could be adopted to incentivise and motivate staff. Mrs Hughes confirmed that the staff perks booklet is regularly communicated to staff and commented on good annual leave entitlement.

Members noted the report.

A13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None.

A14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Staffing Committee is scheduled for 17.30 on Tuesday 4 October 2022.

The meeting concluded at 18.53.

CHAIR

DATE

Certified as a true copy of minutes approved by means of remote working by the Secretary, Miss Lindsay Armstrong.

signature redacted

SECRETARY

10 Oct 2022

DATE