

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 28 FEBRUARY 2023 AT 17.30 VIA TELECONFERENCE.**

**PRESENT:**

Mr Scott Alexander, Chair  
Dr Laura Milner  
Dr Thomas Moore  
Mrs Carla Shields  
Dr Eileen Stewart

**IN ATTENDANCE:**

Mr Raymond Sloan, Director of Client Services  
Mrs Ann Marie Hughes, Assistant Director Human Resources and Development  
Mrs Petra McGuirk, Deputy Head of Human Resources  
Miss Clodagh Palmer, Boardroom Apprentice  
Miss Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 17.34.

**A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Mr Brian Doran.

Miss Palmer arrived at the meeting at 17.34.

**A02. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

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

**A03. MINUTES OF THE MEETING 4 OCTOBER 2022**

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the meeting of 4 October 2022 for accuracy.

These were approved as an accurate record on proposal from Dr Stewart and seconded by Dr Milner subject to a minor spelling mistake under A15.

**A04. MATTERS ARISING**

Mrs Hughes informed that the hybrid working framework for support staff has been piloted with effect from 27 February. She advised that the scheme is predicated around key business activity and learners' needs. Mrs Hughes advised that management will undertake a review of the pilot and will consider the continuation/extension of the framework in June 2023. She advised that the programme has been rolled out to the wider management team.

In response to a query from Mr Alexander, Mrs Hughes advised that the College is still awaiting comparator information by district council bands to benchmark against the College's Article 55 return, that the information is expected shortly and can be reported to the Governing Body at the June meeting.

**ACTION  
by whom**

**A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS**

Members noted that the May meeting will take place in Banbridge at the later time of 18.30.

**A06. CAREER BREAK REQUESTS**

Mrs Hughes provided detail on the 5 members of staff currently on career break and additional requests. She advised on application and eligibility criteria, informed that the required approval is sought from line managers and assessment of cover arrangements.

Mrs Hughes advised that one of the requests has been approved by the individual's line manager subject to successful appointment to the post.

The requests were approved on proposal from Dr Moore and seconded by Dr Stewart.

**A07. POLICY APPROVAL**

**• Providing References**

Mr Sloan advised on minor recommended amendments to the Providing References policy. Dr Moore spoke to a helpful document, formalising processes.

**• Parental Leave**

Members were advised on minor grammar and format changes in the Parental Leave policy.

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

Mrs Hughes clarified that the Parental Leave policy is covered by statute and advised on clear parameters on entitlement. She committed to enquiring about the legal position regarding fostering.

Mrs Hughes

**• Time Off in Lieu – Support Staff**

Members noted minor amendments to the policy. In response to a query from Mr Alexander, Mrs Hughes advised that most staff appear to utilise TOIL over the summer months and informed on parameters around carry over.

The policy was approved on proposal from Dr Stewart and seconded by Dr Moore.

**• Menopause policy**

Mrs Hughes advised that the consultation process has concluded and informed on resources developed to provide practical advice for staff impacted by menopausal symptoms.

The policy was approved on proposal from Dr Milner and seconded Mrs Shields subject to a recommendation relating to symptoms and suggested adjustments.

Mrs Hughes

**A08. KPI IN YEAR REPORT**

Mrs Hughes referred Members to the KPI in year report and comparator table advising on grievance, discipline, harassment, career breaks and sickness absence.

She informed that sickness absence is at 5.88%, above the target of 3.5% and advised on the impact of long-term sickness absence.

Dr Stewart countered that it is important to recognise that the target has been agreed with Staffing Committee Members and absences are still well below other organisations and in particular, other public sector bodies.

In response to a query from Dr Moore, Mrs Hughes advised that sickness absence is benchmarked against the sector and NICS in the year-end report along with detail regarding the rank cause of absenteeism.

Members noted the report. Mr Alexander recommended conducting a study of five-year trend of sickness absence to see if any particular issues have arisen.

#### **A09. STAFF LEVELS AND RECRUITMENT REPORT**

Mrs Hughes presented the staff levels and recruitment report with prior year comparator. She advised on some movement relating to support staff and attributed to restructuring exercises.

In response to a query from Mr Alexander, Mrs Hughes advised that recruitment exercises have been carried out multiple times in certain hard to fill posts and the figures do not correlate to staff turnover. She advised that recruitment costing figures and staff turnover will be provided in the year-end report.

Mrs Hughes

The Committee noted the report.

Mrs Hughes left the meeting at 18.25 and returned at 18.26.

#### **A10. ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

- **Organisational Development Plan**

Mr Sloan referred Members to the infographic detailing the professional development of staff.

Mrs Hughes informed on costs related to the upskilling of staff and advised on management training, pedagogy and health and safety activities.

Dr Moore recommended conducting a study to quantify the correlation between staff development and student outcomes.

In response to a query from Dr Milner regarding the retention of staff, Mrs Hughes advised that management are considering adding a statement to the ED request form to link to policy.

Dr Stewart spoke to statutory obligations within health and safety requirements to comply with regulations.

Mr Sloan stated that investment in staff development is often difficult to quantify however reminded Members of the success of the SRC students at the WorldSkills competition. He advised on discussions with curriculum managers to map organisational development and informed on growth in Fintech provision.

Members noted the report and commented on budget constraints impacting on obligations in developing curriculum.

**A11. IIP AND HEALTH AND WELLBEING**

• **IIP report**

Mr Sloan referred Members to the Investors In People report and advised on successful reaccreditation of the Silver award. He advised on advancement in a number of areas and informed on priority areas to develop with the wider management team.

Mrs Hughes advised on key activities and commented that the annual staff survey will provide further information to assist in progressing with objectives.

• **Good For Me, Good For FE**

Mrs Hughes informed on the three primary strands of the Good For Me, Good For FE campaign, advising on promotional activities and the success of the Education Eats initiative providing free student breakfasts.

Dr Moore remarked on the success of the corporate and charitable partnerships, commenting that good to see advancement in community responsibility and better citizenship.

In response to a query from Dr Milner, Mrs Hughes confirmed that the College has captured 397 volunteering hours which is equivalent to £6,730 social value generated.

The Committee noted the reports.

**A12. CEF CIRCULARS**

• **2023/03 April 2022 Non Teaching Staff pay scale and rates**

Mrs Hughes referred Members to CEF circular and confirmed that payment was actioned in December 2022.

**A13. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

None to report.

**A14. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Staffing Committee is scheduled for 18.30 on Tuesday 2 May in the Banbridge campus.

The meeting concluded at 18.52.

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**CHAIR**

\_\_\_\_\_  
**DATE**

Certified as a true copy of minutes approved by Members of the Staffing Committee at their meeting of 2 May 2023 by the Secretary, Miss Lindsay Armstrong.

signature redacted = \_\_\_\_\_

4 May 2023  
**DATE**