

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE STAFFING COMMITTEE OF THE GOVERNING BODY OF SOUTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE HELD ON TUESDAY 2 MAY 2023 AT 18.30 IN THE BOARDROOM, BANBRIDGE CAMPUS.

PRESENT:

Mr Scott Alexander, Chair
Mr Brian Doran, CEO
Dr Laura Milner
Dr Thomas Moore
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 Lindsay Armstrong, Secretary to the Governing Body

The meeting convened at 18.40.

Mr Alexander welcomed all parties and commented that it is his last scheduled meeting chairing SRC's Staffing Committee as his tenure is coming to an end.

A01. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Mrs Carla Shields.

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 28 FEBRUARY 2023

The Chair referred Members to the minutes of the meeting of 28 February 2023 for accuracy.

These were approved as an accurate record on proposal from Dr Stewart and seconded by Dr Milner.

A04. MATTERS ARISING

Mrs Hughes informed that the trend analysis of sickness analysis, recruitment costing figures and staff turnover will be provided for in the KPI end year report.

In response to a query from Mr Alexander, Mrs Hughes advised that retirees are encouraged to register on the part time lecturer list in order to retain skillsets.

Discussion took place regarding incentivising the recruitment marketing and placing an emphasis on flexible working, the pension package and potential values upon retirement, annual leave entitlement and other non-financial benefits. Members recommended using straplines to market testimonials and that the HR team might like to explore how they might put a monetary value on some non-financial benefits.

Dr Moore arrived at the meeting at 18.54.

**ACTION
by whom**

A05. CHAIRMAN'S BUSINESS

The Chair thanked staff and Governors for all their support and efforts over the number of years he had been Chair and a Committee Member before that. He remarked that the positive figures and commitment of staff in the face of difficult financial circumstances were in large part a testament to the hard work of Mrs Hughes and the rest of the HR team.

A06. CAREER BREAK REQUESTS

None to report.

A07. POLICY APPROVAL

- **Disciplinary – Support Staff**

Mrs Hughes referred to minor recommended amendments to the Disciplinary Support Staff policy and proposal to remove the inclusion of a Member of the Governing Body on dismissal appeal panel. She advised that the appeal panel is an operational matter and there is no contractual obligation for Governors to be involved in the discipline of support staff.

Mrs Hughes advised that the list of examples of minor or serious misconduct is not exhaustive.

- **Recruitment and Selection**

Members were advised on recommended amendments to the Recruitment and Selection policy to reference the competency framework and changes to the composition panel for Tier 1 and Tier 2 posts.

Mrs Hughes referred to the removal of the term 'emergency appointments' and the additional reference to retiring staff being retained on the casual register.

Members agreed that where the post is that of Chief Executive, the panel will consist of a minimum of three (maximum four) members of the Governing Body to include Chairman or Chairman's nominee.

Mr Doran arrived at the meeting at 19.07.

- **Time Off for Dependants**

Members noted minor amendments to the policy and recommended reference to the Menopause policy under 'related documents'.

- **Identification policy**

Mrs Hughes advised on minor amendments to include the cost of a replacement ID card and lanyard. Members suggested strengthening the wording to reinforce the safeguarding purpose.

The four policies were approved on proposal from Dr Stewart and seconded by Dr Milner subject to the recommendations provided.

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 4.78%, above the agreed target of 3.5% and advised that a high number of staff are on long-term sickness absence.

Mrs Hughes advised on the introduction of an interactive system to track sickness absences by reasoning.

Members noted the report.

A09. DRAFT ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Mrs Hughes presented the draft Organisational Development Plan for 2023-24 and advised that the appraisal process has just started and will feed into the Plan. She informed on carry over activity, mandatory training and new programmes.

Mrs Hughes advised that management continue to support staff developments through the Level 5 Leadership and Management ILM course.

Mr Sloan informed that the Plan will be further developed following the appraisal process and will be tabled at the next Staffing Committee meeting.

Mr Alexander spoke to a good report advising on 100% appraisal completion and enquired about the correlation of training on success of student outcomes and retention of staff.

Mr Sloan advised that SRC scores well in benchmarking against the sector and the strong industrial relations indicators reflects the good health of the organisation.

Mrs Hughes informed that the competency framework encourages the development of staff and in response to a query from Dr Milner advised on the process to identify training opportunities.

The Committee noted the report.

A10. HEALTH & WELLBEING

- **Good For Me, Good for FE update**

Mrs Hughes advised on the three primary strands of the Good for Me, Good for FE initiative and informed on the success of the Easter Egg campaign, the Winter Warmer programme and distribution of hygiene packs.

Members were informed of the funding strands for the initiatives.

Mrs Hughes confirmed that the College has completed 882 volunteering hours which is equivalent to £14,949 social value generated and to date SRC has raised £5000 for NI Children's Hospice.

Mr Sloan advised that the College engagement team seeks to bring together students from differing disciplines.

Members noted the report.

A11. ANNUAL FAIR EMPLOYMENT MONITORING RETURN

Mrs Hughes referred Members to the submitted return informing on gender and community background for part time and full-time staff, applicants and appointees. Mr Alexander again expressed concern at the apparent imbalance in the number of Protestant staff and applicants. Mrs Hughes advised that further information is required to conduct analysis and address geographical areas and that this matter was ongoing awaiting further detailed analysis on the economically active travel to work comparator tables.

Members were informed that the item will remain on the action sheet and a report on any correlation or otherwise between the figures based on council areas, and if available, this will be presented at the first Staffing Committee meeting of the new academic year, in October 2023.

The Committee noted the report.

A12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

None to report.

A13. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting of the Staffing Committee is scheduled for 18.30 on Tuesday 3 October 2023 in the Banbridge campus.

The meeting concluded at 19.57.

signature redacted

03/10/2023
DATE

