

SOUTH WEST COLLEGE GOVERNING BODY

Minutes of a meeting of the **Staffing Committee**
held on Wednesday 29 January 2020 at 9.05 am
in the Boardroom, Omagh Campus, Mountjoy Road, Omagh

PRESENT: Mr Michael McAlister (Chief Executive)
Mrs Patricia McCaffrey
Mrs Gillian McDowell (Committee Chair)
Mrs Monica McGeary
Mr Michael Skuce

IN ATTENDANCE: Dr Jill Cush, Deputy Chief Executive
Mr Pdraig McNamee, Head of Automotive, Computing and
Engineering Faculty (*Item 9.2 only*)
Ms Claire O'Donnell, Secretary to the Governing Body
Dr Nicholas O'Shiel, Governing Body Chair
Mrs Eimear Rushe, Head of HR
Mrs Carol Viney, Head of Professional and Social Sciences
Faculty (*item 9.1 only*)

1.0 APOLOGIES

No apologies were recorded.

2.0 CONFLICT OF INTEREST DECLARATIONS

Mrs McCaffrey declared that her nephew's name appeared on the list on contract renewals (Paper 08.05).

3.0 SAFEGUARDING

Dr Cush advised that there were no new safeguarding issues.

4.0 MATTERS ARISING FROM MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 03 Minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on Wednesday 4 December 2019.

NOTED.

5.0 KEY STRATEGIC ISSUES

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 05 Management Update on Key Strategic Issues

5.1 Centre for People & Workforce Development

The Chief Executive advised that Mrs Rushe would update on this item through her Management Report (Paper 08.00).

5.2 Review of College Management Structure

In addition to his report, the Chief Executive advised that follow up meetings were programmed with the Heads of Faculty and Heads of School. It was noted that Heads of School were keen to progress their outward facing role, while ensuring that they still delivered operationally, and that management would be supporting them to do this.

5.3 Collaborations

In relation to the payroll service, the Chief Executive apprised members that staff were now meeting weekly with Belfast Met to ensure that the 1 April 2020 deadline could be achieved. Following discussion on shared services, members suggested that the College should identify and work to enhance and sell its strengths moving forward.

5.4 Impact and Resourcing of New Initiatives

The Chief Executive explained that there was some potential for additional enrolments with the introduction of traineeships in September 2020 and this would have staffing implications.

Mr Skuce then queried the impact Brexit would have on ERASMUS funding for research and development. Dr Cush explained that the College had applied for the next programme, starting in 2021 and running to 2 August 2023. She added that the College were still submitting applications for the remainder of the current year. She explained however that as apprenticeships received 40% ESF funding, this funding element would need to be replaced potentially as soon as next year. The Chief Executive suggested that this may mean a cap on apprenticeships, and pointed out that as the largest provider the College couldn't currently meet the demand for apprenticeships. He also noted the emergence of industry led groups such as Work+.

5.5 Student Experience

The Chief Executive noted that the ETI Inspection would commence on Monday 3 February 2020 and that a safeguarding questionnaire had been issued to around 600 Level 3 students in advance.

5.6 Staff Retention and Recruitment

In relation to the terms and conditions for lecturing staff, the Chief Executive noted that negotiations were at a critical stage with the College Employers Forum due to put an agreed proposal to the Unions.

The meeting went into confidential session at this juncture.

8.0 MANAGEMENT REPORT

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 08 Management Report
- Paper 08.01 Health, Safety & Wellbeing Report
- Paper 08.02 Equality Update
- Paper 08.03 SWC Data Analysis 18/19 (FT FE and WBL)
- Paper 08.04 Staff Resource Report
- Paper 08.05 Fixed-term Contract Report
- Paper 08.06 Sickness Absence Management Report Dec 19
- Paper 08.07 Leadership and Learning Programme (LLP5)
- Paper 08.08 Workforce Development 18/19 Annual Report
- Paper 08.09 Early Conciliation Briefing power point Presentation
- Paper 08.10 FTE Figure Letter to SWC Chair 19 December 2019
- Paper 08.11 Student Intern Proposed Budget 20-21

Reporting by exception, Mrs Rushe, Head of Human Resources, took the Committee through the key elements of the Management Report focusing on the following papers and issues in particular.

8.1 Human Resources

8.1.1 Resourcing

Ref: Management Report Section 3.1 and Paper 08.04

In addition to her report, Mrs Rushe advised that the Marketing Manager, Clair McKenna would be leaving the College after 17 years. Also, Victoria Bailey, an evening Duty Manager in the Enniskillen Campus had resigned.

Mrs Rushe then apprised members that the manager who had requested a redeployment was being supported by the Chief Executive and other senior officers. The Chief Executive advised that this manager would like to stay in his current post. It was agreed that this manager would be asked to make a decision the following week, after which the vacant post could be filled or not.

Members then commented on the high levels of sickness absence in the newly established Centres for Excellence. The Chief Executive and Dr Cush both highlighted the huge audit requirement in the Work Based Learning Centre for Excellence in particular which, the Chief Executive advised, had been brought to the Department's attention. The Chief Executive further advised that managers were supported through the change process by meetings and that the Workforce Development Team was working on a package of wraparound support for staff.

In relation to the resignation of the Marketing Manager, Dr O'Shiel commented that this was a key post and one where an exit interview should be applied. Mr Skuce supported this proposal. Mrs Rushe advised that the job description for this post would be reviewed before advertising externally.

AGREED: that the staff resource report proposals detailed in Paper 08.04, and including the issues itemized above, be ratified by the Chair of the Governing Body on behalf of the Governing Body. (ii) that the fixed term contracts proposals detailed in Paper 08.05 be ratified by the Chair of the Governing Body on behalf of the Governing Body.

8.3 Workforce Development

8.3.1 Leadership and Learning Programme (LLP5)

Ref: Management Report Section 3.3.1 and Paper 08.07

Mrs Rushe outlined details of the Leadership and Learning Programme, LLP5, which had been endorsed by the Management Team on 14 January 2020. In response to queries from members, she agreed that a mid-point evaluation would be carried out on this 18 month programme. She further advised that the programme would cost around £5,000 and that the UCU Union representative had supported previous programmes. The Chief Executive further pointed out that the College had invested £1.1m on staff development over 7 years.

AGREED: that a mid-point evaluation would be carried out on LLP5 and presented to the Staffing Committee.

9.1 PRESENTATION ON RESOURCE PLANNING AND WORKFORCE DEVELOPMENT IN THE PROFESSIONAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES FACULTY

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 09.01 Resource Planning and Workforce Development in the Professional and Social Sciences Faculty

Mrs Carol Viney, Head of Faculty, joined the meeting for this item

The Chair welcomed Mrs Viney to the meeting.

Through her presentation Mrs Viney apprised the Committee of the main issues in terms of resource planning and workforce development in the Professional and Social Sciences Faculty including the difficulty of attracting and retaining staff, particularly in the health and social care area. Mrs Viney spoke of the benefit of employing practicing professionals and in this respect argued that part time staff were a requirement for the Faculty. She noted that sickness absence figures for the Faculty were poor but improving and assured members that this issue was being addressed. She also pointed out that three staff in the Faculty were working towards ILM Level 7.

In commenting on the presentation members encouraged Mrs Viney to make linkages with Microsoft who had recently announced the creation of 80 cyber security jobs in Belfast. They also suggested trialing post graduate recruits to address the pay problem, adding that the College could then work with the graduates to help them achieve PGCE.

NOTED.

Mrs Viney was thanked for her presentation and left the meeting at this juncture.

9.2 Automotive, Computing and Engineering Faculty Update

PREVIOUSLY ISSUED to all members:

- Paper 09.02 ACE Faculty Update

Mr Pdraig McNamee, Head of Faculty, joined the meeting for this item.

Through his presentation Mr McNamee updated the Committee on resource planning and workforce development in his Faculty since his presentation to the Committee on 2 October 2019. He explained that he had focused on a 'bred, fed and led' approach in October 2019. At this meeting he would be looking at the good, the bad and the ugly in terms of each of these three elements.

In terms of bred firstly, he explained that the Faculty still faced problems recruiting in specific curriculum areas. The bad was that another lecturer had left the Faculty to a job in the post-primary sector. The good was that there had been seven applications for the new Engineering Lecturer post. This represents a significant improvement vis-a-vis previous recruitment exercises. The ugly was that more attention was needed in terms of exit reasons which Mr McNamee noted were primarily financial, adding that he recognized that negotiations were ongoing at a sectoral level currently with respect to lecturers salaries.

In terms of fed, Mr McNamee explained that the idea was to motivate and encourage staff. A number of initiatives had been introduced including virtual townhalls with topics which, he reported, was going well. Enrichment was still on the agenda but due to shortages, staff were required to teach at the moment. In response to a query from Dr O'Shiel, Mr McNamee advised that any enrichment activities should be carried out in teaching hours. He explained that he would like more time to recognize effort and suggested introducing Teacher at a Glance alongside the appraisal process as a way of capturing more meaningful information.

Finally, in relation to the led approach outlined at the October 2019 meeting, Mr McNamee advised that the doors and floors campaign was still running across all campuses. He reported positive feedback from staff on this initiative, adding that a few things had come out of it; (i) students appreciated having someone to say hello to in the mornings; (ii) habitual latecomers had been identified and; (iii) classrooms with students regularly outside the doors after 9.00am had been identified. Mr McNamee added that timetables had now been placed on classroom doors and this was a very good means of visual monitoring.

In concluding his update, Mr McNamee advised that the rest of the ideas outlined at the October 2019 meeting were in development. Management coaching was ongoing he explained but there was a need to build on this. He advised that he was also still working on data. Finally, he pointed out that policies were staff's interpretation of legislation and, as such, teams needed to get a lot better at managing and challenging these policies.

Discussion then followed on IT jobs. Mr McNamee confirmed that the College had a Cyber Security Strategy but that this was being held back by a lack of people. It was suggested that through the Chief Executive's Group, South West College should offer to supply some of the graduates for the 80 Cyber Security jobs recently announced by Microsoft in Belfast. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with Invest NI to emphasize the need for a regional balanced economy. It was further suggested that the local Council should also be involved.

AGREED: to arrange a meeting with Invest NI and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to emphasize the importance of a more balanced regional economy, particularly in the IT/Cyber Security sector.

Mr McNamee was thanked for his presentation and left the meeting at this juncture.

Dr O'Shiel then advised that, following the last Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting, Mr O'Hanlon had requested a detailed breakdown of part-time lecturing hours and that the Chief Executive had produced a great summary document.

AGREED: that the part-time timetabling analysis document be circulated for information.

10.0 ANY OTHER RELEVANT BUSINESS

None.

11.0 REVIEW OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

It was noted that all outstanding actions had been actioned where possible.

All outstanding actions, including those arising out of this meeting are detailed in the Summary of Outstanding Actions table attached at Appendix A.

12.0 EVALUATION OF MEETING

Members conveyed their satisfaction with the proceedings of the meeting.

The meeting concluded at 11.36 am.

CONFIRMED AND ADOPTED BY THE GOVERNING BODY AT A MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 11 MARCH 2020.

CHAIR _____

DATE _____

SUMMARY OF OUTSTANDING ACTIONS

| Meeting Date | Minute Ref | Action |
|---------------------|-------------------|---|
| 27/03/2019 | 13.2 | Review of campus management arrangements to be undertaken twelve months after implementation – September 2020. |
| 29/01/2020 | 8.3.1 | Mid-point evaluation to be carried out on LLP and presented to the Staffing Committee |
| 29/01/2020 | 7.2.2 | Quarterly leavers report including exit interviews to be presented to the Staffing committee |
| 29/01/2020 | 9.2 | Meeting to be arranged with Invest NI and Fermanagh and Omagh District Council to emphasize the importance of a more balanced regional economy, particularly in the IT/Cyber Security sector. |
| 29/01/2020 | 9.2 | Part-time timetabling analysis document to be circulated to Staffing Committee members for information |