

**College of West Anglia
Minutes of
The Employment Policy Committee
18 May 2022
8.30 am
Remote Meeting - Microsoft Teams**

Present:	Sally Mitton	Governor (Chair)
	Chris Ashman	Governor
	David Pomfret	Governor (Principal)
Attending:	Nicky Rowland	Head of Human Resources
	Stephen Halls	Clerk to the Corporation

The Chair welcomed everybody to the meeting, noting this was her first meeting as Committee Chair, following the recent retirement of Sharon Cambridge, Committee Chair and Chair of the Corporation.

The Chair noted that this meeting would be the last meeting attended by Nicky Rowland, Head of HR, who would be retiring from the college in August 2022. Nicky had joined the college in 2000 and had supported the college through many years and many challenges, particularly noting more recently the Coronavirus pandemic. The Chair thanked Nicky for her support of the college and of this committee. The Principal echoed the good wishes for Nicky spoken by the Chair.

1 Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Kay Driver.

2 Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

3 Minutes of the previous meetings

The Minutes of the meeting held on 6 October 2021 were agreed as being an accurate record of the meeting.

4 Matters Arising

The progress against the outstanding matters from previous meetings was summarised in the report for item 4.

The Clerk referred to Item 6, 6/10/21, Policy Review, and reported that work had already progressed with regard to modern slavery and human trafficking and would be included in the next review of the Governance & Financial Management Regulations, due to take place over the summer period.

The Chair referred to Item 15, 6/10/21, HR Strategy Review, noting that although this report had been updated with the required amendment the latest policy had still to be

published on the Governors' SharePoint portal. The Head of HR would pass the finalised document to the Clerk for publication. **ACTION-HoHR**

5 Policy Review

- i. Job Evaluation – The Head of HR advised that the current policy required a Unison representative to be in attendance for each evaluation panel meeting. However, due to the regular non-attendance by Unison there had been a series of delays in progressing evaluations. The revised policy would allow those absent from the meetings 5 days to respond to any proposed outcomes, otherwise the proposed gradings would proceed, thus reducing the number of delays. The Chair noted her concern that there was no mechanism for those absent from the meeting to confirm they had received the details of any proposals and therefore any failure to respond with comments or concerns may be incorrectly taken as their approval that the grading could progress.

The Head of HR reported that initially the college had received good support from Unison during the job evaluation process, but due to the recent re-organisation of the regional team it was proving to be difficult to meet with representatives as quickly as the process requires. The Principal explained that the delays in the grading of positions were impacting on staffing operations.

Governors noted the 5 days response period suggested in the amendments; the Head of HR explained that this tight timescale was set to avoid delays in the recruitment process of staff.

The Chair asked about the possibility of additional resources being made available by Unison and governors suggested the use of college employee representatives. The Head of HR explained that it had proven difficult to recruit staff union representatives for Unison.

- ii. Data Protection - The Head of HR advised that this policy was due for renewal and asked for committee feedback on the current policy in advance of the review. The Chair noted that the policy did not contain information on data retention, including timescales. The Principal confirmed that the college was following the guidance relating to data retention and the Head of HR advised that this would be added into the policy during its review. **ACTION-HoHR**

Governors commented on the requirement that students were required to authorise the sharing of information with their parents/guardians, unless there were safeguarding concerns. The Head of HR noted that this was included in the current policy under the section 'Data Subject Access Requests.'

The Chair noted that there was currently no mechanism or procedure for reporting data breaches to governors. The Principal confirmed that this was currently the position, however, he assured the committee that should there ever be a serious incident then governors would be quickly informed. The Clerk would review this matter and consider an appropriate method of monitoring and reporting. **ACTION-CLERK**

The updates on the policies were noted.

6 Curriculum Impact Report

This item was deemed "Confidential."

7 Staff DBS Compliance/Safeguarding & Prevent Training Update

Governors were pleased to note from the report noted that as at 26 April 2022 all those employed by the college had had a DBS check carried out. There were 3 agency staff members who were working under risk assessment arrangements whilst their checks were being processed. The Principal advised that he reviewed all references prior to authorising a risk assessment, adding that DBS checks had usually been fully completed within a week.

Governors were concerned that there were some casual staff who were currently working who had still to complete their initial safeguarding training. The Principal reported that this non-compliance was reviewed by SMT, and that Paul O'Shea, Assistant Principal and Designated Safeguarding Lead was actively following up this matter.

The Chair was concerned with the number of staff still to complete Prevent training, particularly those who were full time and had been employed for over a year. Again, the Principal agreed that this was a concern and that it was being followed up by Paul O'Shea, Assistant Principal.

Governors asked if there was a need to review the content of the Prevent training, particularly as there had been an increase in right-wing activity. The Head of HR advised that the training agenda for Prevent was quite broad and did not focus on particular areas. The Principal advised that the college tended to have a good dialogue with the respective local authorities with regard to safeguarding issues and county lines (drugs trafficking).

The report was noted.

8 Annual Pay Settlement

This item was deemed "Confidential."

9 Review of Committee Performance, Terms of Reference, and Future Business Agenda Plan

The Committee reviewed the proforma as prepared by the Clerk and concluded that it provided a fair and accurate summary of the Committee's performance during the past year. Governors commented that it was positive for the college and reflective of the college's strong financial position that the committee had not had to consider a staffing restructure during the year.

On the proforma it was noted that under item 1e, the first item relating to the conduct of staff had been ticked as a 'No' whereas it should be 'Yes' as one staff related policy had been reviewed during the year. The Clerk would make the amendment on the finalised form. **ACTION-CLERK**

The Committee reviewed the current terms of reference, with no changes requested.

No changes to the proposed future business agenda plan were required.

The report was noted.

10 Any Other Business

The Principal thanked the Chair for leading the committee during the meeting and also expressed his appreciation to the Chair for taking on this new responsibility following the retirement of Sharon Cambridge.

The Principal expressed his thanks to Nicky Rowland, noting the positive impact she has had on the organisation during her time in post as the Head of HR.

11 Chair's items for briefing to the Corporation

- The retirement of Nicky Rowland, Head of HR.
- Pay award report and recommendation to the Board.

12 Date and time of next meeting

Wednesday, 5 October 2022 at 8.30 am.

The meeting closed at 9.40 am