



TRURO AND PENWITH COLLEGE CORPORATION



Employment and Business Policy Committee

Minutes of the Employment and Business Policy Committee on Monday 25 September 2023 at Truro College.

Present: Mrs K Ashworth, Mrs L Batchelor, Ms D Skinnard (in the Chair), Mr M Tucker and Ms J-A Sunderland

Also Present: Mrs L Briscoe (Director of Student Experience), Ms A Bull (Director of Curriculum Development), Ms J Cashmore (Director of Operations), Mr T James (Head of Human Resources & Employee Services), Mr K Lewis (Staff Development Co-ordinator – for item 23/26), Ms H McKinstry (Director of Partnerships & Apprenticeships), Ms V Pearson (Director of Teaching & Learning), and Mrs A Winter (Clerk to the Corporation)

Apologies: Mr K Conchie, Mr M England, and Mr R Townsend
Also, Ms L Maggs

Item	Discussion/Decision	Action
23/24	<p>Minutes</p> <p>The Minutes of the meeting held on 19 June 2023 were APPROVED as a correct record.</p>	
23/25	<p>Matters Arising</p> <p>25.01 Review of HR Policies (Minute 23/16)</p> <p>In reply to questions, the Head of HRES confirmed the annual costs of the enhanced maternity scheme would be around £32k. The new scheme was aligned to the NHS and more favourable than many colleges. The revised policy was clearer and a toolkit had been introduced, enabling staff to evaluate options. He also indicated that few staff did not to return to work following a period of maternity leave, but some decided to reduce working hours.</p> <p>25.02 Health and Safety Annual Report 2022/23 (Minute 23/17)</p> <p>The Director of Operations explained the two RIDDOR events that occurred in 2022/23, both of which related to injuries caused by accidental trips. Governors were satisfied with the way in which the incidents were addressed and follow up actions taken.</p> <p>25.03 VTCT Excellence Awards 2023 (Minute 23/21)</p> <p>Governors noted the College had been placed third in the College of the Year awards. Staff were congratulated on this outcome.</p>	
23/26	<p>Staff Development Annual Report for 2022/23</p> <p>Governors considered the annual report summarising the range of training and development activities completed during the year.</p>	

	<p>In reply to questions the Staff Development Co-ordinator highlighted new opportunities this year which had expanded the range of CPD opportunities and included the Educational Exchange Programme and SEND Focus Fortnight. Large numbers of staff had participated in these new activities and feedback was very positive.</p> <p>Another new initiative was the TES Develop platform which ensured a systematic approach to mandatory training with live tracking and automated reminders – around 80% of staff had already completed essential modules this term (eg. Safeguarding, Cyber Security, Health & Safety).</p> <p>Industry Immersion Days (new in 2021/22) had also been successful again this year enabling more than 150 staff to return to the workplace to refresh their skills.</p> <p>Other staff development priorities included training to embed Maths and English throughout the curriculum, support for use of technology in the classroom as well as tailored training for HE delivery, new qualifications and assessment processes.</p> <p>Governors asked about induction training and noted that new staff were expected to complete necessary training within the first 2 weeks and this was monitored by the HRES team as well as line managers.</p> <p>The Co-ordinator agreed to check whether TES Develop offered governor training/resources.</p>	KL to check
23/27	<p>HR Update: Staff Recruitment Analysis 2022/23</p> <p>The Head of Human Resources and Employee Services (HRES) presented an analysis of recruitment activities. The Committee noted that overall there had been 353 appointments this year, a 7% decline from 2021/22.</p> <p>Applications data indicated a good response to most posts although some vacancies were harder fill, including the high numbers of Learning Support Assistants (LSAs) needed to support learners with high needs and meet EHCP requirements.</p> <p>Governors asked how the LSA jobs were promoted and the strategies to attract candidates and noted that the College’s positive employment conditions and other benefits (such as Health, Wellbeing and Sport provision) were highlighted in recruitment material. Also, the development of Higher LSA roles to provide a clear progression route was being considered.</p> <p>Recruiting and retaining staff in Construction and Engineering was also challenging and prevented some specific courses, apprenticeship routes and HE qualifications from running. Recruitment was a sector-wide issue in these curriculum areas. The use of LinkedIn and targeted advertising of vacancies was being explored.</p> <p>Governors noted that during 2022/23 there had been five redundancies and more were expected next year due to the end of European funded projects.</p>	
23/28	<p>Review of HR Policies and Procedures</p> <p>The Committee considered and APPROVED updates to the Maternity and Paternity Leave Schemes.</p>	

	<p>In response to questions the Head of HRES explained the improvements to both schemes, including an increase in paternity leave from 2 days to 2 weeks. Overall, the College's maternity and paternity schemes were now better than many colleges.</p>	
23/29	<p>Update on Discussion with Staff and Unions Representatives</p> <p>The Principal confirmed that staff had been notified of the enhanced pay award for 2023/24, as a result of the Government's announcement in September 2023 of an increase in the base funding rate.</p> <p>College staff earning £25k or less would receive a pay award of 7% and those earning over £25k would receive 5% from 1 September 2023 (or pro rata equivalent for part time staff).</p> <p>The AoC had made a recommendation of 6.5% which mirrored the recommendation for school teachers but was not fully funded, did not encompass support staff and was unaffordable for many colleges.</p> <p>The UCU had opened a strike ballot for further industrial action this term due to failure to meet the union claims of 15.4%. The unions were also campaigning on workload.</p> <p>In response to questions about how the College's enhanced pay award compared to other colleges several examples were provided and governors noted that lecturer pay (which now ranged from £33k - £42k) was higher than most providers in the region.</p>	
23/30	<p>Business/Employer Engagement Update</p> <p>The Director of Business Partnerships and Apprenticeships provided a comprehensive update and responded to questions about the ongoing work to meet local skills needs and engage with employers.</p> <p>Governors noted that new partnerships were being developed with a number of businesses across a range of sectors (eg. Wildanet) and employers were co-designing and co-delivering the curriculum.</p> <p>The Committee was pleased to note that apprenticeship recruitment remained strong with more than 350 new starts in September 2023 (~240 in 2022) and a total of 900+ apprentices currently in learning this year. Success in end point assessments was also excellent.</p> <p>Governors discussed the opening of the new STEM and Health Skills Centre (Ottery) at Bodmin and the local businesses that had registered to work alongside the new Centre. Two engineering apprenticeship cohorts had started at Ottery and Nursing trainees would be starting in January 2024. Part time adult courses were also being launched.</p> <p>In response to questions about funding, Governors were advised of recent awards from the Shared Prosperity Fund towards capital (£1.2m) and revenue costs (£400k) to develop construction, retrofit and renewables skills as part of the Construction Skills Hub.</p>	
23/31	<p>Local Skills Improvement Plan (LSIP)</p> <p>The Committee discussed implementation of the LSIP to action priorities in the key sectors identified for Cornwall: Manufacturing, Engineering & Marine (MEM) and Construction & Retrofit.</p> <p>Also the focus on cross-cutting themes: Digital Skills, Net Zero, Local Skills System, Socioeconomic issues, Employability Skills & EDI.</p>	

	<p>The College was working on the actions set out in its Accountability Statement and would update the Committee on progress.</p> <p>Local Skills Improvement Fund (LSIF) bids would be awarded shortly and provide funding used towards infrastructure developments and specialist equipment in Seaton and other College buildings.</p> <p>During discussion governors asked if the government's change to the net zero target date was likely to result in changes to the LSIP but management thought this was unlikely. The review of the LSIP would take account of this and any other policy changes.</p> <p>Governors asked whether employers were fully aware of the range of skills training available in colleges and noted that improved outreach and promotion was helping to increase awareness.</p> <p>The Committee was assured that in addition to skills development, training programmes included 'soft skills', careers support and work placements. Governors suggested that they could potentially play a part by offering interview coaching or other input. Also, some businesses might be willing to allow staff to volunteer their expertise or even contribute to part time lecturing.</p> <p>The Director of Partnerships & Apprentices AGREED to take forward suggestions.</p>	HMCK to explore further
23/32	<p>STEM and Health Skills Centre Update</p> <p>The Principal reported that the new facilities at Ottery were fantastic although some areas were still being completed. Staff were in place and the first cohorts of Engineering apprentices had started. Once the Nursing and Midwifery Council had completed an inspection of facilities, Nursing courses would commence in January 2024.</p> <p>Governors were invited to tour the new Centre prior to the Corporation meeting on 4 October 2023.</p>	Governors to note
23/33	<p>South West Institute of Technology (SWIoT) Update</p> <p>Governors noted that the SWIoT was still going through the re-licencing process and no new developments had been initiated.</p>	
23/34	<p>Committee Terms of Reference</p> <p>The Committee reviewed the terms of reference and were invited to feedback any suggestions to the Clerk.</p>	Governors to suggest changes
23/35	<p>Cycle of Annual Business for 2024</p> <p>The Committee considered and APPROVED the proposed Cycle of Business for 2024.</p>	
23/36	<p>Date of Next Meeting</p> <p>The Committee would meet at 5.00 pm on Monday 5 February 2024.</p>	ALL to note