

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

STAFFING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 15 April 2013 at the Farm Lodge Ballymena Campus, Northern Regional College.

Present Mr S Davidson (Chairperson), Mrs I Allison, Mr I Goldsworthy, Mr R Jay and Mr T Neilands (Principal).

In Attendance Mrs B Laverty, Mrs C Moore and Mr J Hunter.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

28.1 Apologies

There were no apologies.

28.2 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

28.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 4 February 2013 were approved.

28.4 Matters Arising

28.4.1 General Teaching Council Northern Ireland (minute 27.4.1)

The Committee received a copy of the Consultation Response from the Northern Regional College regarding proposals to widen the powers of the General Teaching Council for Northern Ireland and extend its remit to include the Further Education Sector. Whilst supportive of the proposals in principle, the College has drawn attention to the significant differences between FE Lecturers and school teachers.

28.4.2 Staffing Committee Action Plan (minute 27.5.1)

The Committee received a further copy of the Staffing Committee Action Plan 2012/2013, which was circulated to members following the last meeting to provide them with details of topics to be discussed at forthcoming meetings. Mrs Moore stated that the Staffing Committee Action Plan should also take into consideration the Governing Body Committee Calendar, and highlight topics to be discussed at meetings throughout the academic year.

There were no further matters arising from the minutes of the last meeting.

28.5 Chairperson's Communications

There were no Chairperson's communications.

28.6 Correspondence

The Committee noted the following correspondence received since the last meeting.

a) Northern Ireland Public Service Pensions Reform dated 21 January 2013, seeking views on the policy underpinning the proposal for the introduction of a Public Service Pensions Bill

in the Northern Ireland Assembly. It was noted that the Sector had agreed not to respond to the consultation document sectorally.

b) Consultation on Amendments to the NI Teachers' Pension (NITPS) to reflect Workplace pension reform and miscellaneous amendments. The purpose of this consultation is to seek views regarding the proposed changes to: extend the coverage of NITPS to meet the requirements of Workplace Reform; reduce the qualification requirement for phased retirement; and to correct the Regulation governing the revaluation of additional pension.

c) Correspondence from DEL dated 12 March 2013 concerning the Pilot Module for hourly paid, part-time lecturers and baseline research. The Learning and Skills Improvement Service (LSIS) has developed a questionnaire, which is to be completed by hourly paid, part-time lecturers to capture as full a picture as possible of their current qualifications, and the areas in which they teach. The Principal stated that the proposal to implement a minimum teaching qualification for part-time lecturers had already engendered debate. It was contended that not all part-time lecturers may wish to undertake studies for teaching qualifications and this may have a detrimental effect on the recruitment of part-time lecturers, particularly in professional studies. Mr Jay said that it might not be critical for all part-time lecturers, particularly 'casual' part-time lecturers, to have minimum teaching qualifications.

28.7 Report on Industrial Relations in the North West Regional College

The Committee noted that Mr McConnell (Equality and Human Resources Consultant) had been asked to conduct a review of industrial relations in the North West Regional College in the Autumn of 2012 following a difficult period involving a redundancy programme during which relationships between management and in particular one union became particularly strained. Mr McConnell has identified 27 recommendations in his Report.

The Committee received a paper indicating the NRC's current position in light of the recommendations made by Mr McConnell for NWRC and identifying some actions for consideration by NRC to ensure that the good industrial relations environment in the College is maintained. The Principal emphasised that the paper was a voluntary activity and had been undertaken as a stocktaking exercise.

28.8 Strategic Aims Staffing

The Governing Body (6 March 2013) gave consideration to the College's Strategic Aims 2012/2015. During discussion a view was expressed that the 'Staffing' aim needed to be more explicit. The Governing Body agreed that the Strategic Aims be approved, subject to the Staffing Committee, giving further consideration to the 'Staffing' aim.

The Committee agreed that Members should give consideration to the wording of the 'Staffing' aim and forward comments to Ms Brannigan, PA to the Principal, by 22 April 2013.

28.9 Real-Time Information (RTI) And Auto-Enrolment (AE)

Mrs Moore and Mrs Lavery referred to two challenges facing the College:

a) Real-Time Information. Colleges are expected, from April 2013, to submit electronic files containing payroll data to HMRC on or before each payday monthly;

b) Auto-Enrolment. There is a requirement for colleges to automatically enrol all employees into a suitable pension scheme to meet pension legislation.

28.10 Any Other Notified Business

There was no other notified business.

28.11 Next Meeting

The Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on **Monday 3 June 2013** at the Ballymena Campus commencing at 5.30 pm.