

NORTHERN REGIONAL COLLEGE

STAFFING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 4 February 2013 at the Farm Lodge Ballymena Campus, Northern Regional College.

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

In Attendance Mrs C Moore and Mr J Hunter.

UNRESERVED BUSINESS

27.1 Apologies

Apologies were received from Mrs I Allison and Mrs B Laverty

27.2 Declarations of Interests

There were no declarations of interest.

27.3 Minutes of the Last Meeting

The unreserved minutes of the meeting of the Staffing Committee held on 19 November 2012 were approved.

27.4 Matters Arising

27.4.1 General Teaching Council Northern Ireland (minute 26.7)

The Principal advised the Committee that Colleges Northern Ireland had forwarded a response on behalf of the Sector to the Department regarding the consultation on the proposed extension of the powers of the General Teaching Council Northern Ireland to cover Further Education. A copy of the response was to be presented to the next Staffing Committee.

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

27.5 Chairperson's Communications

27.5.1 Staffing Committee Action Plan

The Chairman requested and **the Committee agreed that the Secretary should circulate the Staffing Committee Action Plan to Members to provide them with details of topics to be discussed at forthcoming meetings.**

27.6 Correspondence

There was no correspondence to report.

27.7 Equality Staff Survey 2012

The Committee received a copy the Equality Staff Survey 2012. It was noted that the College had undertaken, in its 5-Year Equality Improvement Plan, to survey staff on equality issues bi-annually. A Whole College Staff Survey was completed in May 2012 and a further survey

focusing on equality and respect issues was conducted in September 2012. It was noted that the findings had been made available to all members of staff.

A good response rate, 31%, was achieved. The response rate reflected the campus locations, staff profile, community background and gender breakdown of the College.

The Committee noted a number of issues arising from the Survey including:

- a) 16% of staff claimed to have experienced harassment or bullying in the College within the last 12 months. It was noted that the format of the question may have influenced the result and that more care would need to be given to framing this question in future surveys;
- b) 10% of staff claimed to have experienced discrimination in the College within the last 12 months. It was noted that there were no instances of religious discrimination;
- c) 71% know what to do if faced with harassment or bullying; and
- d) 47% of respondents believed that there were not high levels of respect between College staff at all levels. Concern was expressed regarding the finding in respect of lack of respect. The Principal advised that it was possible that all staff may not have come to terms with 'remote line management' demanded by the larger College and there may still an expectation that senior staff should be seen and be available more often.

Members of staff were also asked to comment on the steps they think the College should take to improve Equality of Opportunity, Diversity and Good Relations. The main suggestions did not focus on these areas but were : more integration with management; development of team building events; better communication; awareness of work of other departments; and further Equality, Diversity and Good Relations training. The Director of Finance and Corporate Development advised that an Action Plan had been proposed to reflect the findings of the survey. It was noted that an effort had been made to develop team building by the setting up of social groups on each campus to organise social events. There has been limited participation in the joining the social groups to date.

A Member suggested that Trade Unions and the Labour Relations Agency should be approached for assistance /advice regarding a number of these issues.

27.8 Any Other Notified Business

There was no other notified business.

27.9 Next Meeting

The Chairman reminded Members that the next meeting of the Committee would be held on **Monday 15 April 2013** at the Ballymena Campus commencing at 5.30 pm. The Principal stated that it may be necessary to hold an additional meeting prior to the April meeting.