

## **Preston's College**

### **Minutes of the Human Resources and Remuneration Committee Meeting held at 5.30pm on 5 July 2016 in the Board Room at Preston's College.**

#### **Present:**

Mr J Taylor (Chair)

Mrs L Butler

Dr A Jones

#### **In attendance**

Mr S Fell (Clerk to the Corporation)

Mr P McMellon (Assistant to the Clerk)

Dr E H Smith (Principal and Chief Executive)

Mr S Nixon (Executive Director of Resources)

Ms G Thornton (Head of Human Resources)

Ms H Fulton (Senior HR Officer – Org. Development) Item 28 only

#### **PART ONE**

#### **23. Welcome and Apologies**

Apologies were received from Cllr R Boswell.

#### **24. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received from Committee members.

Dr E H Smith and Mr S Nixon declared their interest in Items 33 and 34. The Committee agreed that Dr Smith and Mr Nixon leave the meeting during discussion of those items.

#### **25. Minutes of the Meeting held on 25 February 2016**

**Resolved: That the Minutes be agreed as a true record and be signed by the Chair.**

#### **26. Matters Arising**

**Ms Thornton confirmed that all of the resolutions from the last meeting had now been actioned.**

**(i) Minute 15 – Workforce Equality & Diversity Strategy**

Vacancy Filler had been utilised to achieve greater diversity in staff recruitment.

**(ii) Minute 17 – People Strategy Action Plan**

The Action Plan table had now been revised so as to list projects in priority order.

**(iii) Minute 19 – Revised Family Friendly Employment Policies**

Paragraph 4.2 of the Probationary Policy had been reworded so as to make clear that final 'signing off' was done at CMT level.

## **27. People Strategy 2015-20 - Refresh**

Ms Thornton presented the updated HR Strategic Projects Action Plan for 2015/16. She drew attention to the ranking of activities in priority order.

The Committee was pleased to note completion of all 'High' priority activities, noting that these were achieved at a time when the HR team was undergoing a significant restructure.

Ms Thornton then commented on the incomplete activities, indicating when they were likely to be finalised.

The Chair congratulated Ms Thornton and her team on their completion of the High priority actions.

The Committee concurred with the Principal/Chief Executive's recommendation that, for greater clarity, the title of the Strategy/Action Plan should be reduced to 'People Strategy.....' (ie., the 'H.R. Strategy' references in the titles to be discontinued). The Committee noted that this would require the Committee's Terms of Reference to also be amended.

**Resolved: That i) the contents of the People Strategy report and the progress against the HR Strategic Projects Action Plan 2015-16 (HR Strategy 2015/16) be noted; and**  
**ii) Reference in relevant future strategies and the Company's constitution be amended to read "People Strategy".**

## **28. Shaping Our Future – Staff Development and Engagement Programme**

Ms Thornton reminded the Committee about the staff involvement in the Values and Behaviours initiative (reported to the Board in May). She explained that further initiatives to encourage staff engagement were planned. Ms H Fulton provided a brief Powerpoint presentation – "Shaping Our Future" – to be used at the forthcoming Staff Development events.

The Committee agreed the pursuit of staff engagement in planning the College's future was of utmost importance. The Chair thanked Ms Fulton for the presentation.

**Resolved:** That the report and presentation be noted.

## **29. People Strategy 2015-2020 : H.R. Strategy 2016/17**

Ms Thornton presented the recommended Action Plan for 2016/17. She confirmed that any incomplete activities from the current year would routinely be considered for insertion into the 2016/17 Plan.

The Committee agreed that the 2016/17 Action Plan covered all appropriate activities but reflected on the potential impact of anticipated future events, including Area Reviews and Brexit. They concluded that the consequences of such events could only be considered for inclusion in the Action Plan when greater clarity of any implications was attained.

**Resolved:**

- (i) That the contents of the People Strategy 2015-2020: HR Strategy 2016/17 report be noted;**
- (ii) That the HR Strategy Action Plan 2016/17 be adopted**

## **30. Workforce Profile Report**

Ms Thornton presented the updated Workforce Profile Report. She explained that, in the absence of timely sector benchmarking data (from the Association of Colleges), the updated report was not

as comprehensive as previous reports. She advised on the reasons for the delay in the production of the usual sector data by AoC.

Despite the absence of comparative data, the Committee nonetheless agreed that the Report provided a timely commentary of the previous year.

The Committee considered the proposals for action outlined in Ms Thornton's commentary on the Report and it was agreed that these were most appropriate.

Ms Thornton agreed to look into the scope for incorporating the College's Key Performance Indicators into relevant sections of the Report.

**Resolved: That the Workforce Profile Report for 2014/15 be noted and the proposed actions therein be endorsed.**

### **31. Policies for Review**

Ms Thornton presented the five HR policies/procedures due for review. She drew attention to the key considerations as outlined in her covering report.

#### **(i) Disciplinary Policy**

Inclusion of a definition for 'unacceptable behaviour' in the Policy and incorporation of a three stage formal process (as per ACAS advice) in the Procedure. Also, removal of dismissal due to sickness absence (now covered in Management of Attendance Policy).

#### **(ii) Management of Attendance Policy**

Inclusion of sickness absence dismissal and a three stage formal process (in line with Disciplinary Procedure).

#### **(iii) Management Performance Improvement Policy**

The Policy title to be changed to 'Performance Improvement Policy' (deletion of the word 'Managing').

#### **(iv) Trade Union and Time Off Agreement**

More flexibility for the recognized trade unions with regard to the taking of time off (including scope to carry forward entitlement).

#### **(v) Trade Union Recognition Agreement**

Clarification of 'consultation' and 'negotiation' and appropriate updating in line with legislation.

Ms Thornton advised that the final outcomes of discussions with the recognised unions now allowed simultaneous implementation of all five revised policies on 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016

**Resolved: That the:**

**Disciplinary Policy and Procedures,  
Management of Attendance,  
Managing Performance Improvement Policy,  
TU & Time Off Agreement; and  
The TU Recognition Agreement**

**be approved as revised and adopted with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016.**

### **32. Equality & Diversity – Revised Policy**

Ms Thornton reminded the Committee that the Equality & Diversity (E&D) Policy covered duties and obligations relating to all aspects of the College.

The Committee examined the revised Policy, noting the key amendments now recommended for introduction. The recently appointed Senior HR Officer (Health & Well-being) would lead on E&D in the HR context. It was agreed that the revisions were all appropriate and that the resultant document met the College's obligations.

It was noted that attention would next be given to the development of revised Corporate Equality & Diversity objectives.

**Resolved: That the Equality & Diversity Policy be approved as revised and adopted with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2016.**

*(Dr E H Smith and Mr S Nixon left the meeting at this point)*

### PART TWO

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### **35. Date of Next Meeting**

The Committee noted that its next meeting was provisionally set for 5:30pm on 10<sup>th</sup> November 2016.