

EMPLOYMENT AND WELFARE COMMITTEE MEETING
Tuesday 14 May 2019 at 5.00pm
MINUTES

Chaired by: Hilary Ascott

Members Present: Ros Jones Kim Metcalfe Phil Rumsey

Also Present: Heather Campbell Clerk to the Corporation

1 **Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Trish Hawkyard. The meeting was quorate with 4 members being present.

2 **Declaration of personal conflicts of interest** - None.

3 **Minutes of the previous meeting.**

a **Minutes of the meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 19 February were approved at the 9 April 2019 Corporation meeting and signed by the Chair.

b **Updates from Clerk or College Management** – None.

c **Action previously agreed.**

Members noted that all actions had been completed.

d **Matters arising not covered in agenda below** – None.

4 **Register of Interest – Staff**

Members noted the current status of the register with no matters raised.

5 **Receive Legal Update – SFCA Termly Updates**

The Clerk advised that no Legal Updates have come through from the SFCA to share with the committee.

6 **Receive Updated Governor Links Policy**

Members had received the Updated Governor Links Policy prior to the meeting.

Phil observed that he had updated the methodology of the policy in line with discussion on Governor Links at previous EWC and Corporation meetings. He advised that he has finalised the Values and Mission of the College with staff. He observed that with the new cohort of governors his plan is to bring the Values and College Mission to the first Corporation in the autumn term for governors input.

Ros observed that she felt the 'Immersion Day' was a good idea and Hilary agreed that tracking of a student could be a way of testing out the department briefings from a student's perspective.

Phil highlighted that the purpose now was not to link governors to particular departments but to enable them to look at cross-college areas.

Members noted the changes and agreed to recommend the updated policy to the Corporation for approval.

RECOMMENDATION TO THE CORPORATION

That the Corporation approved the updated Governor Links Policy.

7 **Receive Health & Safety Report (Accident Statistics)**

Hilary noted that members were only being asked to consider the Accident Statistics.

The Clerk confirmed and advised that members had received the Annual Health and Safety Report at the last meeting. She gave them a verbal update from Linda that to date the College has had 7 near misses, 3 of which were traffic related and this information will be included in the Accident Statistics update for future meetings.

Kim enquired whether the traffic related incidents were off site and if it was the College's responsibility to monitor and deal with them.

The Clerk advised she suspected that these were on site incidents of students leaving the student car park at high speed.

Phil noted that it was not an expectation that the College deal with or record traffic related incidents / first aid directly outside the College site but in the context of community spirit we would attend or help if requested.

Members noted the statistics and that they still remained low and no further matters were raised.

8 **Receive HR Annual Report (inc. Recruitment & Vetting Update)**

Phil referred members to the Report and observed that Kelly Tate HR Manager is relatively new to the role and is still getting an understanding of the processes she has inherited and what she needs to prioritise.

Hilary observed that the report was informative and referred to a question on page 3, section '4: Looking ahead, bullet point 3, Developing an understanding of the Principal's approach in terms of priorities for the College and ethos and how these may impact on HR processes such as performance management, staff engagement and contractual terms and conditions'. She asked Phil if his priorities were different from the previous Principal and are these going to have a major impact for staff.

Phil observed that he and management were bringing in changes to the College and its ethos but they were not vastly different but are a new way helping to take the College forward.

Members noted the report and no further matters were raised.

9 **Receive updated GDPR Action Plan**

Hilary referred members to the updated GDPR Action Plan and noted it was informative and that a lot of progress was being made.

Phil advised that Kelly our designated Data Protection Officer has been working closely with the Venn Group through sharing of common processes and good practices.

Hilary raised the issue of no/or late responses from 3rd parties regarding data they hold for the College and how the College was planning to address this.

Phil observed that no or late responses are notoriously difficult to deal with and this problem is being addressed across the Venn College for a common solution.

Members noted the report and there were no further questions raised.

10 **Review Freedom of Information Scheme / Policy**

Members had received the report prior to the meeting and the Clerk advised that there have been no amendments made to the policy since the last review.

Hilary asked Phil if he felt the Freedom of Information Scheme / Policy was fit for purpose as it was and he confirmed that it was.

Members agreed the Freedom of Information Scheme / Policy was fit for purpose.

11 **Review Admissions and Exclusions Policy**

Members had received the report prior to the meeting and Phil advised that there had been no amendments made to the current policy but management will be reviewing it in the near future. In particular looking at making the Exclusions process more flexible. Once management have updated it will come back to the next EWC meeting in the autumn term to consider and recommend it to the Corporation for approval.

Kim raised as a member of staff that some of the language used by students and their behaviour is inappropriate and staff should not be expected to work in an environment with this going on, nor should visitors be subjected to this as it could poorly impact the College's reputation.

Phil advised that management expect all staff to challenge inappropriate language and behaviour with students and this is reiterated regularly with staff. It will also be a main part of the beginning of term briefing where the Colleges expectations of students will be clearly set out such as visibly wearing lanyard IDs, language, attendance and punctuality.

Members noted that the updated policy will come to the committee in the autumn term to consider and for them to recommend its approval by the Corporation

12 **Receive Parental Survey 2018/19 Report**

Phil advised that the Parental Survey was carried out in March 2019 with approximately 120 responses. The data is obtained from the parents who attend the Parents' Evening for both lower and upper sixth students. It is a sample of parent opinions but is inevitably skewed – in this case to parents who attend parents' evenings. The parents can also fill in the comments section and management use this to address any issues / concerns raised and positive comments are shared with the staff. Overall the survey response was positive.

Members considered the Report and agreed that it was a worthwhile exercise as shows that the College is giving the opportunity to parents to feedback on their child's educational experience at the College.

No further matters were raised.

13. **Information on arrangements for Staff Survey 2019**

Phil advised that previously the Staff Surveys were carried out every two years and the last one was 2017 but he is looking to do one every year. He observed that he is aware that it is notoriously difficult to get staff to take part in staff surveys and not just in colleges but he will be encouraging staff to play their part in the running of the College.

Hilary enquired if the survey was confidential.

Phil advised that it is confidential and is an in-house electronic system which our MIS team set up but they do have access to see who has completed the survey.

Hilary raised her concern that technically it would not be confidential and would put staff off taking part.

Ros highlighted that she has worked with companies previously who have used an “Employer Engagement Survey” and made it compulsory that their employees took part.

Phil suggested it might be worth adding as the first question which will allow staff to opt out of doing the survey. Members agreed and the following was suggested: ‘I feel that I can answer the questions in this survey honestly’ with a Yes / No tick box followed by ‘If you ticked ‘No’ you need not continue’. Phil actioned to include this initial question into the survey.

ACTION AGREED

Phil to incorporate the following as the first question in the Staff Survey:

- I feel that I can answer the questions in this survey honestly Yes / No
If you ticked ‘No’ you need not continue

Phil highlighted that the survey is normally carried out in the summer term but he will discuss with management about giving staff the opportunity to take part in the survey on the PDR day scheduled in for October which is a day when students are not in College.

14 **Identify any discussion items classified as “Confidential & Restricted”**

Members considered the content of their discussions above and the Chair observed if the Parent Survey comments is likely to be shared publicly then it should be anonymised.

15 **Any Other Business**

Hilary referred members to the tabled Data Protection documents and Phil advised that at this stage they were for the committee to note. Management had discussed them at their meeting this morning and picked up various concerns over the years stated that data should be kept for and he will be asking Kelly to go back to the Venn group for clarification on the years stated as some of it does not meet with other agencies i.e. Pension, Employment Records etc. Kelly will also be tasked with exploring if any of the Venn colleges have implemented their data cull.

Phil asked the members if they could have a look through the documents and if they have any feedback to email this to the Clerk and she will pass it to management to aid their review of the documents and the processes.

Phil noted down suggested minor amendments highlighted at the meeting to the Privacy Notice for Parents/Carers and Privacy Notice for Governors and will pass these to Kelly to update the documents.

Phil advised once all of the Data Protection documents had been reviewed by management and they were satisfied with the guidelines the documents and process they will come to the EWC autumn meeting for consideration and for their recommendation of approval by the Corporation.

16 **Date of Next Meeting Autumn 2019 – date to be confirmed**

There being no further business the meeting closed at 6.00pm.