

**HR Sub-Committee Meeting**

**MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 16 MAY 2023 AT 14:45hrs VIA TEAMS**

<b>Present:</b>		
Claire McLean (CM) - Chair	Sue Irving (SI)	Kate Glendye (KG)
Ann Hill (AH)	Susan McLellan (SMc)	
<b>In attendance:</b>		
Joe McGraw (JM)	Lorraine Grierson (LG)	Mary Cheetham (minute taker)
<b>Apologies:</b>		

**1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence | Verbal | C. McLean**

- 1.1.1. The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the meeting was recorded as quorate.
- 1.1.2. There were no apologies.

**1.2. Declaration of Interests/Connections | Verbal | C. McLean**

- 1.2.1. The Chair reminded Members to indicate any declaration of interest or connections as appropriate throughout the course of the meeting.

**FOR APPROVAL**

**2. Minutes of Previous Meeting & Matters Arising 7 March 2024 | Paper 2.2 | C. McLean**

- 2.1.1. The minutes from the meeting held on 7 March 2024 would be verified at the Finance & General Purpose meeting.
- 2.2. **Action Log | Paper 2.2 | C. McLean**
  - 2.2.1. LG presented the action log, confirming the closure of all three actions and highlighted the Staff Survey and sickness update were scheduled for today and the Equality and Diversity Annual Report had been submitted to the Board in March 2024 and approved.
  - 2.2.2. **The Committee noted the Action Log.**

## FOR DISCUSSION

### 3. **People and Transformation | Paper 3.1 | J. McGraw**

#### 3.1. Workforce 2025

3.1.1 JMcG confirmed that there have been no updates to what had been discussed at the Board Strategy Day.

#### 3.2. National pay negotiations

3.2.1 The Unison ballot to accept or decline the pay award, is scheduled to close on May 30th, and it was confirmed the ballot has been issued, with the strike day of May 20<sup>th</sup> and 23<sup>rd</sup> being cancelled.

3.2.2 Industrial action by EIS-FELA is underway, with additional dates planned and they are currently in talks with College Employers Scotland

3.2.3 The Job Evaluation project remains ongoing regarding the direction of travel for implementation. Further updates will be provided once known.

3.2.4 The Committee acknowledged the progress. AH inquired about the offer, to which JMcG confirmed that it remained unchanged except for the addition of a condition that any increased offer to EIS-Fela would be acknowledged for all staff.

#### 3.3 Sickness Absence

3.3.1 A review of the sickness/absence revealed the top reasons indicated low work-related stress but significant levels of anxiety, stress, and depression. Comparative data between AY 22/23 and the current year show a slight reduction of 1.5%, although sickness rates remain high. AH thanked JMcG for providing a comparison of absence rates against other colleges.

3.3.2 ...

3.3.3 CMcL commended the initiative and queried absence targets. JMcG advised the proposed aim is for between 3% and under 4%, which would mark a significant improvement. Sharing this information within the College was suggested, with CMcL proposing a shift towards emphasising wellbeing and attendance, highlighting the cultural aspect. JMcG accentuated the importance of supporting employees' return to work in every possible way.

#### 3.4 Culture and Behaviours Development

3.4.1 The VP People & Transformation presented the Staff Engagement Survey, which can be found on Admin Control and highlighted the following:

- 70% response rate which has exceeded expectations for the first survey in over 5 years.
- There were 28 questions and 2 free text questions. The average score across all questions was 6.9. This is described (by Hive) as a 'strong moderate score'.
- Engagement index (3 key questions on advocacy, loyalty, and pride) gave an average score of 6.8.

- 3.4.2 The Net Promoter Score (NPS), revealed a negative -3, falling within the range of -10 to +20, which is typical. Across Hive's customer base, the current 12-month eNPS benchmark sits at +4, meaning DGC is below this by 7 points. Members acknowledged that the -3 indicator was positive result.
- 3.4.3 Three areas for development, indicate progress within the College. A full discussion was held on emphasising the importance for staff. SI pointed out communication is a collective responsibility, and the Committee can see evidence of reaching out. KG confirmed there are regular staff views of the principal's briefing.
- 3.4.4 The Committee were satisfied with the 70% response rate and the NPS score, emphasising the importance of honesty and culture. The Chair requested regular updates on progress in future Committee meetings.
- 3.5 Equality and Diversity
- 3.5.1 The two remaining actions regarding approval of the EDI Policy by the Board of Management and EDI training for Board members have been closed out following the Board meeting and the policy can be found on the Website.
- 3.5.2 JMcG highlighted Mental Health Awareness Week and confirmed a lot of social media activity. The Chair expressed appreciation for the focus on mental health and commended the efforts made.

#### **4. Committee Self Evaluation and Terms of Reference | Paper 4.1 | L. Grierson**

- 4.1 The Board Secretary discussed the content of the evaluation survey with members. CMcL acknowledged that this is a relatively new committee established to ensure appropriate scrutiny of human resource matters and EDI within the organisation. Although relatively new, members were content that relevant business was being discussed and actions were being followed through.
- 4.2 LG advised that the terms of reference had been reviewed with the VP People to ensure the content was relevant and up to date. She advised that the responsibilities outlined in the terms of reference had been mapped against the business schedule and the committee could take assurance that all their remit was covered throughout the year.
- 4.3 **The Committee noted the survey results and took comfort in the knowledge that all business was being attended to as per the business schedule.**

FOR INFORMATION ONLY

#### **5. AOCB | Verbal | C McLean**

- 5.1. No other business was discussed.

#### **6. Date of the Next Meeting | Verbal | C McLean**




- 6.1 The date of the next meeting is scheduled for 12 September 2024.



**Dumfries and  
Galloway College**

One step ahead

Item 2  
HR0524-2.2

Key	
	Ongoing
	Closed
	Overdue

## HR SUB-COMMITTEE ACTION LOG 16.05.24

No	Meeting Date	Action	Lead	Deadline	Status	Commentary
1	07.03.24	<u>People &amp; Transformation</u> JM to provide the HR Committee with details from the Staff Survey.	JM	May 2024	Closed	To be tabled at meeting on 16/5/24
2	07.03.24	<u>People &amp; Transformation</u> Sickness absence – a rolling graph with comparisons against the previous year and sector comparison was requested to give context.	JM	May 2024	Closed	Internal comparison data will be supplied at meeting on 16/5/24
3	07.03.24	<u>Equality and Diversity Annual Report</u> Provide clarity re table on P17 of the report and re-format the graphs.	JM	May 2024	Closed	An updated report was submitted to the Board on 25 March 2023.

<b>MEETING</b>	<b>HUMAN RESOURCES SUB COMMITTEE</b>
<b>Agenda Item:</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Paper No:</b>	<b>HR0524-3.1</b>

<b>Date</b>	16 May 2024
<b>Location</b>	MS Teams
<b>Title of Paper</b>	HR Sub Committee Update – People and EDI Update
<b>Presented By</b>	Joe McGraw
<b>Recommendation</b>	Discussion
<b>Appendix Attached</b>	YES
<b>Disclosable Under FOISA</b>	YES

Read Time: 19 minutes

**1. Recommendation**

- 1.1 The Committee is invited to note the paper and discuss any of the items presented.

## 2. Executive Summary

2.1 To provide the HR Sub Committee with an update on the people (staff related issues) at the College. The details contained within this report will be used as the basis for the Finance and General purposes Committee meeting. The paper covers: -

- Workforce 2025
- National pay negotiations
- Sickness Absence
- Culture and Behaviours development
- Learning and Development update
- Equality and Diversity update

## 3. Context

### 3.1 Workforce 2025

- 3.1.1 The Discussions have been held with local TU representatives, and we have informed them that we have re-opened the window for VSS applications. The current window is open from 12 April until 31 May 2024.
- 3.1.2 The Committee is aware that we have approval in place from SFC to undertake VSS up until July 2025.
- 3.1.3 At the time of writing this paper, a separate paper on Workforce 2025 is being drafted for presentation at the Strategic Board day on 13 May 2024.

### 3.2 National Pay Negotiations

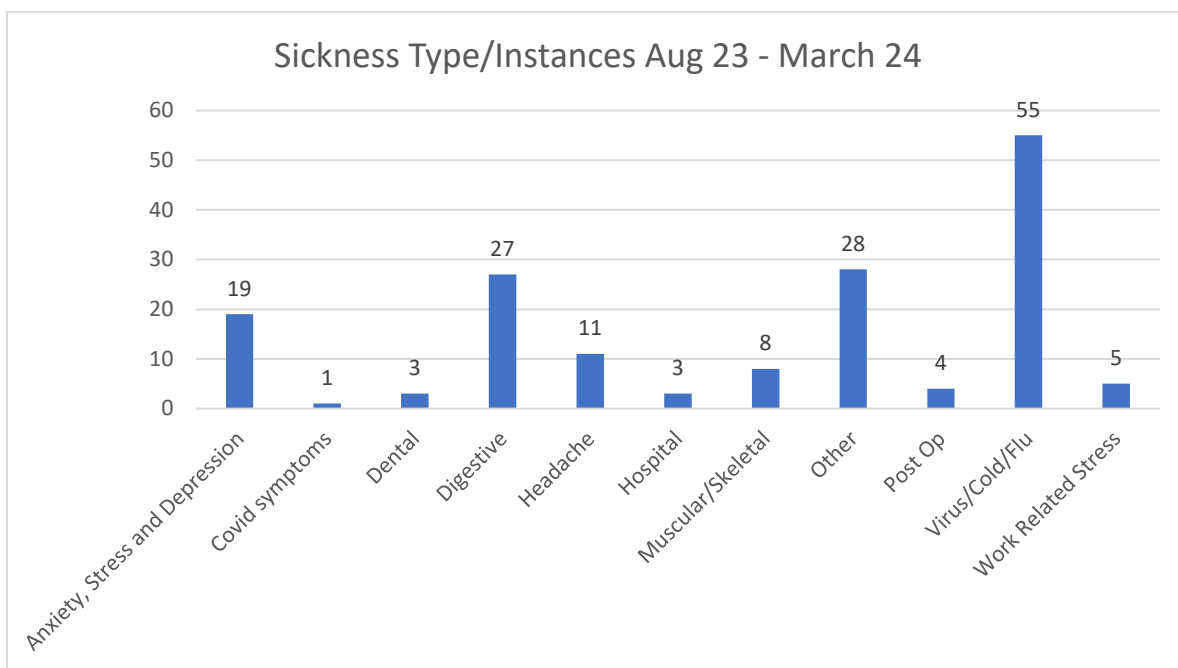
- 3.2.1 Pay negotiations for Lecturing or Support Staff continue to remain unresolved at a national level.
- 3.2.2 Since the previous meeting, we had seen 3 further days of strike action from EIS-FELA, with strikes taking place on 17, 26 and 30 April 2024. These strikes form part of EIS\_FELA rolling action of strikes in differing parts of the country. This is in addition to their current period of Action Short of Strike (ASOS) that commenced on 12 February and is scheduled to run until 15 July 2024. The College remained open during the strike days in April and learning continued either face to face or via direct study.
- 3.2.3 Discussions remain ongoing, and a 3-year deal is currently being explored.
- 3.2.4 Unite held a ballot of their members on the proposed 3-year deal and the majority of votes were cast in favour of accepting the deal. This means that both Unite and GMB members have now voted for acceptance. Discussions remain ongoing with Unison.
- 3.2.5 The National Job Evaluation project remains ongoing across the Scottish college sector. There is still a significant amount of ongoing dialogue between College Employers Scotland and the Strategic HR Network and Unison about the direction of travel for implementation. Further updates will be provided once known.

3.3 Sickness Absence

3.3.1 A review of the types of sickness absence seen so far, this academic year has been conducted. Initially this has focused on the period from August – December 2023. The top 5 reasons for absence are:

- Virus/Cold/flu
- Other (e.g. various reasons)
- Digestive
- Anxiety/Stress/depression
- Headache

3.3.2 Further detail is shown in the graph below.



3.3.3 Comparative sickness absence data is shown below. The information for the period August to March shows an average of 5.9% absence for 2022/23 compared to 4.35% for the same period in 2023/24. A reduction of 1.55%.

<b>AY 22/23</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sept</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Average % across period</b>
LTS as % of absence rate	53.14%	59.08%	65.09%	55.32%	74.07%	69.19%	62.52%	57.78%	61.63%	61.34%	40.43%	95.20%	62.90%
STS as % of absence rate	46.86%	40.92%	34.91%	44.68%	25.93%	30.81%	37.48%	42.22%	38.37%	38.66%	59.57%	4.80%	37.10%
<b>Overall % absence rate</b>	4.80%	5.90%	6.20%	7.80%	5.50%	5.40%	5.40%	6.20%	4.70%	3.50%	5.80%	5.40%	<b>5.55%</b>

<b>AY 23/24</b>	<b>Aug</b>	<b>Sept</b>	<b>Oct</b>	<b>Nov</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Jan</b>	<b>Feb</b>	<b>Mar</b>	<b>Apr</b>	<b>May</b>	<b>Jun</b>	<b>July</b>	<b>Average % across period</b>
LTS as % of absence rate	58.53%	79.97%	65.22%	61.81%	60.99%	58.17%	61.05%	47.86%					61.70%
STS as % of absence rate	41.47%	20.03%	34.78%	38.19%	39.01%	41.83%	38.95%	52.14%					38.30%
<b>Overall % absence rate</b>	4.70%	3.50%	3.80%	3.40%	3.60%	4.80%	5.50%	5.50%					<b>4.35%</b>



3.3.4 A review of comparative absence rates across the sector for 2022/23 are shown in the table below. Details have been taken from annual accounts for the period 2022/23

Reporting period 2022/23	
College	% across period
	4.85%
	4.6%
	5.0%
	4.7%
	7.42%
	3.4%
	3.9%

3.3.5 A review of our absence procedure has been undertaken to look at a more robust method of managing absence, however we are restricted in what we can do as this forms part of NJNC approval at national level and any changes could be problematic. Discussions have been held at LJNC and we propose to take a revised procedure and supporting guidance to the next LJNC meeting.

### 3.4 Culture and Behaviours

3.4.1 Our staff engagement survey 2024 has been completed. Headline information from the survey results:

- 70% response rate – considered by Hive as an ideal response rate.
- Average score across all questions was 6.9. This is described (by Hive) as a 'strong moderate score'.
- Engagement index (3 key questions on advocacy, loyalty, and pride) gave an average score of 6.8.
- A score between 5 and 6.9 is considered as a moderate score. 7 and above is classed as positive.

3.4.2 Our eNPS (Net promotor score is -3 (anything from -10 to +20 is considered a typical score. Across Hive's customer base, the current 12-month eNPS benchmark sits at +4, meaning DGC is below this by 7 points. However, looking at the Education industry benchmark, the College sits above this by 8 points (vs Education's 12 months benchmark, -11).

### 3.4.3 Areas to nurture

- My manager gives me useful feedback on how I am performing in my role
- Working here really allows me to make a positive difference

#### 3.4.4 Areas to develop:

- I am confident the College is heading in the right direction
- I trust our senior leaders to do what is right for the College
- The College is good at celebrating its successes.

3.4.5 A separate presentation on the outcome of the survey will be provided to the Committee at the meeting.

3.4.6 Presentations will be made to staff during listening lunches at both campuses in May 2024.

3.4.7 An 'Action planning' follow up session will be run by Hive for line managers to provide additional insight and handy tips and guidance for further development around engagement activity, that could be used departmentally.

#### 3.5 Learning and Development Update

3.5.1 A facilitating group discussion workshop with LB took place in March at Dumfries Campus. The primary aim of the workshop was to develop and improve group discussion facilitation skills and confidence of the participants. This included providing them with a solid understanding of the principles and techniques involved in effective group discussion facilitation, which will empower them to lead productive and engaging conversations.

3.5.2 FeelRite - Stress Awareness and Workplace Wellbeing via WorkRite was issued as the training spotlight for the month of April. This was in recognition of April being Stress Awareness Month. This online course aims to raise awareness of stress and workplace wellbeing to ensure staff are confident in identifying causes and symptoms of stress and are familiar with some of the effects of stress. It also contains information on some of the ways in which to control pressures at work as well as empowering staff to identify ways in which they can manage stress.

3.5.3 Data Protection for Managers training is now available via LearnNet for the remaining 8 managers that were unable to attend the sessions held in February. Staff will be able to complete this training online in their own time. The deadline of completion will be for the end of May. This online training will be made available as part of a manager's induction for new starters going forward.

3.5.4 During the month of May, we are holding essential SCQF sessions which Nicola Smith will host on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> of May. The SCQF, Scotland's national qualifications framework, can be a valuable tool when it comes to recruitment and retention of staff. As Dumfries and Galloway College are an SCQF inclusive recruiter, these online workshops are aimed at supporting recruiting managers to further develop their understanding of the SCQF and how it can be used to best effect in recruitment, workforce development and planning.

3.5.5 We are holding valuable EmilyTest LISTEN GBV Assessment training, hosted by Kara Stewart, on the 8<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> of May. Attendees will be guided through a 2-hour training programme. Upon completion of the training programme, attendees will be able to: Define Gender Based Violence (GBV), confidently respond to a GBV disclosure, Identify, and apply the steps of L.I.S.T.E.N., Assess the risk and act appropriately and Identify escalation contact and signpost to relevant resources.

3.6 Equality & Diversity

3.6.1 The two remaining actions regarding approval of the EDI Policy by the Board of Management and EDI training for Board members have now both been closed out following the Board meeting held in March 2024.

4. **Strategic Implications**

4.1 This links into Strategic Priority 2 – People and Culture.

5. **Risk**

Risk	Mitigations
7 Failure to achieve effective Industrial Relations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Constructive formal and informal communication channels</li> <li>➤ LJNC (Local Joint Negotiation Committee)</li> <li>➤ Representation at Employers Association</li> <li>➤ Attendance at Strategic HR Network</li> </ul>

6. **Implications**

<b>Financial</b>	Yes	
<b>Legal</b>	Yes	
<b>Learning and Teaching</b>	Yes	
<b>Equalities</b>	Yes	A full Equality and Diversity role is available under a separate agenda item for the Committee. The College Equality and Diversity webpage can be accessed <a href="#">here</a> .

**Joe McGraw**

VP People & transformation

30 April 2024