**BOARD OF MANAGEMENT**

**Report to Human Resources Committee**

# 11 November 2020

The purpose of this report is to update the Human Resources Committee on relevant staffing matters and on ongoing key areas of importance during the COVID 19 pandemic.

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# 2. Covid 19

The impact of the pandemic continues to impose challenges for staff and students. We have robust systems in place to review and monitor activity to ensure that the safety and wellbeing of our students and staff remains our highest priority. We are working in partnership with our trade union representatives so that we can proactively take action to deal with any concerns. The role of our H & S Committee remains of high importance to our approach to campus safety. Our Health and Safety Report provides further information.

Teaching staff continue to provide blended learning to students with physical teaching when required. Support staff returned to the College on a phased, rotational basis in July 2020 and the majority work on a rotational basis due to social distancing requirements in the office. Staff receive regular all staff communications to keep them informed as guidance is updated by the Scottish/UK Government.

A protocol with NHS Lanarkshire to facilitate a rapid response in the event of a positive Covid result, or suspected Covid case in respect of either students or staff, has been agreed. A copy is this is attached in **Appendix 1.** This has been a joint working initiative with New Lanarkshire College and the University of the West of Scotland and robust processes are now in place. From the 15th October 2020 we have been required to report our weekly Covid 19 statistics to the Scottish Government.

## 2.1 Seasonal Flu Vaccinations

Free seasonal flu vaccinations were provided on site to staff on Wednesday 30th of September and Thursday 1st of October. There were 140 staff members who received the vaccinations which was an increase of 32 from 2019.

# 3. Mental Health and Wellbeing

The College continues to retain its focus on Health and Wellbeing and provides a range of support and guidance for staff and students. Recent activities include:

## 3.1 World Mental Health Day

World Mental Health Day took place on 10 October. We used this opportunity to emphasis the importance of looking after our own wellbeing, reminding staff and students of the support available.

We also launched our new partnership with Remploy who deliver the Access to Work Mental Health Support Service which is fully funded by the Department for Work and Pensions. It provides practical advice to support employees with their mental health including:

* Tailored work-focused mental health support for nine months
* Suitable coping strategies
* A support plan to keep them in, or return to work
* Ideas for workplace adjustments to help them fulfill their role • Practical advice to support those with a mental health condition.

This new service compliments our existing Occupational Health and the Employee Assistance Programme. We will be monitoring the take up of this service.

## 3.2 Mental Health Working Group Meeting

The Mental Health Working Group continues to meet in order to maintain a strong focus on mental health throughout the 2020/2021 academic session.

## 3.3 Health and Wellbeing Event

It is planned that a Health and Wellbeing event will take place in November 2020.

## 3.4 Health Vulnerability Questionnaire

During the summer a questionnaire was issued to all staff to ask them to complete a short survey about any current health vulnerabilities. Staff were asked to complete this information onto the HR database, ‘My HR’. The survey remains open for staff to complete/update and the responses are regularly reviewed by HR to ensure that any appropriate action is taken.

## 3.5 Mental Health Awareness Training

The Mental Health Awareness Course continues to be delivered to staff virtually with additional self-study resources.

## 3.6 TogetherAll (previously The Big White Wall)

The service is free to all of our students and staff and provides a safe online community to support mental health, 24/7. We continue to raise awareness of it across the College.

**3.7 HSE Organizational Stress Risk Assessment**

It has been agreed to progress, subject to discussion with the JNC.

# 4. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion

The 2nd meeting this year of the Equality Group took place on 26 October 2020. A key focus of that meeting is to review our progress against the Equality Outcomes and to prepare our Equalities Mainstreaming Report which is required to be published by May 2021. A timetable is in place and the collection of data is being gathered for analysis. This Report will be presented to the HR Committee for their consideration at the March 2021 meeting.

The Principal recently completed an article to be published in The Herald before the end of October. This article highlights the positive work that the College has delivered in respect of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion to the benefit of all staff and students.

## 4.1 Equality Project Assistant

In October we were delighted to welcome our new Equality Project Assistant to the HR team. Billianna is sponsored by Inclusive Scotland for a 3 month period in order to support the College on its equalities agenda. She has a number of projects including designing a survey for staff to gain insight into how we recruit and attract disabled staff and researching on how we can encourage staff to increase disclosures against the protected characteristics. To support this we are about to launch a short equality monitoring animation for both staff and students explaining why the College collects equality monitoring information and what we do with it.

# 5. Learning and Development

## 5.1 Staff Development Days

A total of 28 staff development sessions were delivered in August. The majority of sessions were delivered virtually and focused on effective blended learning, enhancing digital skills and supporting wellbeing. Feedback was generally positive, however, the number of evaluation responses was lower than usual which limited a greater interpretation of the data and charts shown. See table below:

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| **Overall Data**  100% 90%  80%   |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  |  | | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | | 60%  50%  40%  30%  20%  10% 0% |  |  | |  | | | |  | | |  | | |  |  |  |  | | | |  | | |  | | |  |  |  |  | | | |  | | |  | | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  | | |  | | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  | | |  | | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  | | |  |  |  |  | |  |  |  | |  |  |  | | 4 | | |  | 3 | | |  | 2 | | 1 | | | Relevance to Your Needs | 57% | | |  | 37% | | |  | 3% | | 3% | | | Relevance to College Needs | 68.3% | | |  | 25.0% | | |  | 5.0% | | 1.7% | | | Knowledge/Skills Gained | 33% | | |  | 40% | | |  | 17% | | 10% | | | Organisation | 58% | | |  | 32% | | |  | 8% | | 2% | | | Virtual Experience | 45% | | |  | 43% | | |  | 5% | | 7% | |   70% |

Common themes from comments included the positive value of wellbeing sessions,

the benefits of interactive virtual courses and praise of experienced and knowledgeable trainers. We delivered our first live broadcasts including a live address from the Chair of the Board and the Principal as well as Questions to the Panel including members of our College Leadership Team.

Comments highlighted that some staff are still finding virtual staff development difficult to engage with which highlights the need to continually offer an array of sessions delivered in different ways.

The next staff development day is scheduled for Monday 21st of December. There will be a continued focus on training for a blended learning delivery model, enhancing digital capabilities and supporting wellbeing and resilience.

## 5.2 Lecturer Continuous Professional Development for Blended Learning

As part of August staff development and our return to the blended learning model, the Open University Scotland delivered two ‘Taking Your Teaching Online’ webinars to SLC lecturers. The webinars covered the pedagogy of teaching in online and blended learning contexts, using digital tools to link synchronous and asynchronous phrases, the role of the online teacher and assistive technologies to support fair access. There was high engagement with 70% of teaching staff taking part in the live webinars. The recorded webinars and supporting materials have been made available to those unable to attend.

It has also been made mandatory for teaching staff to complete the complimentary

Taking Your Teaching Online 24-hour CPD module available on OpenLearn by Friday 6th of November. The expected outcome is the increased capabilities of teaching staff that enables the effective delivery of online learning and teaching. A full evaluation of the CPD programme will be completed following the final deadline date.

## 5.3 Management Development Programme

The OM/CM group have received continued virtual support from ‘My Consultants’ including webinars for assessment guidance. The final deadline for assessment submissions is 30th of October. On completion, members of the Curriculum and

Operational Management group will successfully achieve a level 5 CMI Management and Leadership Qualification. An evaluation of the impact of this programme will commence in the New Year.

## 5.4 External Training

Most organisations have restarted face-to-face training. As a result, we are now able to resume essential training delivered by external providers.

# 6. Contracts of Employment and Job Descriptions

Contracts of Employment and job descriptions for College Management and Lecturers are currently being reviewed. The JNC is involved in these discussion as follows:

* **Assistant Principals:** revised Contracts are under discussion with the APs with changes primarily being to extend the notice period to three months either side. Their job descriptions are also being updated to bring them in line with College requirements.

* **Curriculum Managers:** as a result of national bargaining, CMs are now deemed ‘promoted lecturer level 3’ and have had a salary increase to reflect this. APs are currently reviewing the CM job descriptions in line with the NJNC national agreement. The revised contracts of employment for this cohort are being prepared for issue by the end of the calendar year.

* **Lecturers:** Revised Contracts are being prepared following national bargaining agreements.

* **Deputy Head of Faculty:** (3 staff) - job descriptions and Contracts being reviewed by the APs.

* **Heads of Department:** job roles were previously evaluated and further work is required to review salaries and to update Contracts to reflect three months notice period.

# 7. Absence Management

Absence statistics recording the levels of absence over the third quarter period 1st July 2020 – 30 September were noted.

We continue to review and monitor sickness absence and access professional occupational health and counselling services where appropriate to support staff attendance.

# 8. Redesign Activities

Work is ongoing to review team/department structures across the College to ensure that we have the correct roles in place to deliver our services. HR are supporting managers with these discussions and ensuring that the appropriate consultation is taking place with staff.

# 9. Staffing Changes

Details of leavers, new staff and current vacancies are attached in **Appendix 3.** The recruitment process for the Head of HR role has completed and the candidate is going through the offer process.

The new Depute Principal joins the College on 14 December 2020.

# 10. Update on National Bargaining

A consolidated pay award of 2% for all unpromoted and promoted lecturing staff has been agreed and will be implemented with effect from 1 September 2020.

The support staff settlement has not yet been agreed.

# Recommendations

It is recommended that the Human Resources Committee note and discuss the HR Report.