



Human Resources Committee

Tuesday 20th January 2009

5 p.m.

Chief Executive's office

A G E N D A

Members are reminded of their obligation to declare openly any conflict of interest arising from a matter before the Committee.

1. Apologies for absence
2. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2008 (attached)
3. Matters arising not covered elsewhere on the Agenda

Health and Safety

[Nigel Jeffery, Director of Finance, in attendance]

4. To receive a report on the British Safety Council Health & Safety Award visit to the college, November 2008 **PAPER 1**
5. To receive the minutes of the Safety Committee meeting held on 3rd December 2008 (attached)

Items for consideration

6. To consider a report on proposed Management Development **PAPER 2**
7. To consider implications of the introduction of the Vetting and Barring Scheme 2009 **PAPER 3**

Items for information

8. To receive a report on the Investors in People assessment, November 2008 **PAPER 4**
9. To receive a report on Career Development opportunities **PAPER 5**

Reserved item

12. Employee Update
13. Any other business
14. Date of next meeting: 5 pm, Tuesday 16th June 2009

BEDFORD COLLEGE

Human Resources Committee

Wednesday 20th January 2009
5.00 p.m.

Present: Mr. M. Whitlock (Chair)
Miss P.I. Barrett
Mr. B. Hundal
Mr. R. Whysall
Mr. I. Pryce

In attendance: Mrs. E. Nash, Director of Organisation Development
Mr. N. Jeffery, Finance Director [HR01-05/09]
Mrs. I. Lennox, Clerk to the Corporation

HR01/09 Apologies for absence were received from Mr. J. Frost.

HR02/09 The minutes of the meeting held on 22nd October 2008 were considered, approved and signed.

HR03/09 Matters Arising

HR34/08: The Director of Organisation Development provided a breakdown of the 177 support staff in post at 31 July 2008 in response to a request at the last meeting.

HR36/08: The Director of Quality would be reporting to the Quality, Standards & Achievement Committee on the key issues arising from the feedback report received from the British Quality Foundation, following the college's submission for the UK Excellence Awards 2008.

HR04/09 Health and Safety Award

Members congratulated the college on the award of Three Stars by the British Safety Council (BSC) after a robust audit process conducted in November 2008. Tribute was paid to the Health & Safety Manager and to all those staff who had made a contribution to this considerable achievement. Members noted the strengths that had been highlighted by the assessor. In its path from Three to Four Star, the college would be working towards an improvement in standards in areas requiring further development, although it was acknowledged that the administrative burden would be considerable.

The Director of Finance reported that the BSC would be featuring the college's performance in a future edition of the Safety Management magazine and it was hoped that the college could be considered as a centre for delivery of accredited health and safety training courses. Paper 1 was received.

HR05/09 Minutes of the Safety Committee

In reviewing the minutes, the Director of Finance felt the Safety Committee had the ability to ensure improvements actually happened but acknowledged that

issues should only be brought to the committee if no progress had been made through direct communication with other areas such as Estates and Facilities.

Members noted the thorough process in relation to accidents, and debated current practice with regard to smoking on site. After thorough consideration, the minutes of the Safety Committee held on 3 December 2008 were received.

HR06/09 Proposed Management Development

The Chief Executive (IP) and Director of Organisation Development (EN) reported jointly on outline plans to increase management qualification for the college Executive team, Directors, Assistant Directors, and Managers in key teaching and support areas. EN spoke of the high level of professional qualification in specialist disciplines, but not in management.

IP reported that Ashridge Management College now had awarding powers and it was hoped that a management programme could be geared to the needs of the college, with development projects to support the college's strategic plan. EN informed members that an initial one-day event was being arranged with Ashridge in March, and other initiatives raised by the management team at their recent Away Days would be introduced during the year, including career development interviews with staff in an attempt to identify aspiring managers, succession planning, possible changes to the appraisal process, and a compulsory tutoring programme.

Members raised a number of questions during the discussion but gave their wholehearted support to all the measures proposed for management development. They had for some time highlighted the need for a programme of this kind and were pleased that specific plans were now underway. They asked to be kept informed, and Paper 2 was received.

HR07/09 Vetting and Barring Scheme

The Director of Organisation Development (EN) explained at length the obligations of the Vetting and Barring Scheme to be introduced under the Independent Safeguarding Authority (ISA) in October 2009 for new employees and from October 2010 for existing employees. Members were reminded of the List 99 process and of the volume and cost to the college of Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) checks on employees and students.

EN reported on the decisions made by the college Executive as to how the college would proceed, namely that she had been designated with lead responsibility for compliance, that the college would pay all fees associated with registration for new employees and a phased cost between 2010 and 2013 for existing employees and that students would continue to pay their fees or be supported through the Student Support Fund.

Information provided by the ISA prompted debate as to whether Board members should be CRB checked. Although there was no statutory obligation, members unanimously decided that they should undertake the checks since it was clearly best practice to do so. EN was thanked for the clarity she had shown in what appeared to be a complex area. Members gave their full support to the decisions made by the college Executive and Paper 3 was received.

HR08/09 **Investors in People Assessment**

Members congratulated the Director of Organisation Development (EN) and her team on their contribution to the college's continued recognition as an Investors in People Organisation and thanked all members of staff who had taken part in the recent assessment.

Inclusion of a Summary of the Assessor's Findings as an Annex to the report was welcomed by members and prompted discussion on a number of the conclusions reached during the Assessment. It was clear that much progress had been made since the last visit, and the specific improvements detailed in the report were noted by members. Concern was raised about the treatment of Associate Lecturers and assurance was given by EN that areas that needed to be addressed so that the working climate at the college could be further improved were already receiving attention. Paper 4 was received by members and the management team commended for the positive outcome of this assessment.

HR09/09 **Career Development Opportunities**

Career development opportunities for support staff at the college were detailed by the Director of Organisation Development who then responded to questions. Measures taken had helped the recruitment and retention of good staff, and there appeared to be a wide range of career graded jobs. Members noted plans to introduce the grading in other areas within the current year and steps being taken to ensure that those staff without a Level 2 qualification be enrolled in a suitable programme. Full support was given to the college's commitment to the employment of apprentices and to the discount offered to staff wishing to enrol on LSC-funded programmes. Members were encouraged by the substantial progress being made in this area, and Paper 5 was received.

HR10/09 **Employee Relations**

The Director of Organisation Development gave a verbal update on employee relations.

HR11/09 **Any Other Business**

The Chief Executive gave an update on discussions currently in progress with regard to the Academy. He also briefed members on a further initiative in which the college had found itself in a competitive bidding process. This received their full support and the outcome was awaited with interest.

HR12/09 **The next meeting** was scheduled for 5 pm on 16th June 2009.