

**GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE**  
University of London

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

**Minutes of the meeting held on 24 January 2008**

- Present:** Mr Kenneth May (Chair), Ms Vicky Annand, Mr Andrew Brett, Dr Basem El Haddadeh, Mr Hugh Jones, Professor Celia Lury, Mr Chris Pearson, Professor Jane Powell
- In attendance:** Ms Johanna May (Secretary), Mr Steve Collins (for item 3), Mr Kevin Browne (for item 6)
- Apologies:** Professor Marj Mayo, Mr Brendan Prendeville, Mr Terry Rosenberg

**1 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 23 October 2007 were approved

**2 HR REVIEW – RESULTS AND IMPLEMENTATION**

Received:

a presentation from the Director of Human Resources (HR) (copy filed (08-084) detailing the proposals now submitted to the Senior Management Team for the implementation of the HR review recommendations

The Director of HR explained that his proposals – which had now been approved by SMT - involved a growth in the number of HR staff from the previous baseline of 11.5 staff. He indicated that the planned structure, which involved providing the support of HR Business Partners to departments, would assist the capacity of the organisation to deliver big projects. The structure proposed for Phase 2 of the review would entail the HR Manager in Central Services ensuring the College was receiving value for money on all its HR related contracts. It was also in Phase 2 that the Occupational Health service would be integrated into a wider Health, Safety and Wellbeing section to be located within the HR department. It was stressed that HR Business Partners would be working closely with Heads of Department and Departmental Administrators, solving or stopping problems arising, rather than dealing with them reactively. The Director of HR would now prepare a project plan and he wished to involve members of the Committee in the planning process. He was also aware that academics in specific disciplines – such as occupational psychology – could provide a useful resource. He indicated he hoped to complete Phase one by the end of the current academic session which would see the introduction of e.recruitment, work on ensuring data processes were adequate and recruitment of staff to the new structure. He indicated a shortened version of the full HR review and this presentation would be posted on the website with a presentation to take place with the trade unions in due course.

The Chair congratulated the Registrar and Secretary and Director of HR on their achievement on progressing the review this far and on being granted approval for the additional resources involved. He asked that appropriate words of support should be conveyed from the HR Committee to staff in the department, recognising that change on this scale can be daunting for those involved in it.

### **3 STAFF DEVELOPMENT UPDATE**

Received

a paper from the Head of Staff Development on the current work agenda in his section, (08-33) which detailed the ten highest priority projects

It was noted that the streamlined PDR forms had been well received and that the Head of Staff Development was working with persuasion and influence to increase the return rate. It was also noted that the Leadership in Action Programme was now to be accredited to the Chartered Institute of Management rather than the ILM, (Institute of Learning and Management) as had previously been reported. The cohort was expected to be people in a formal leadership and management role for the first time or people who were already in such a role but who had not received formal training to date. In relation to the item "Development of a Customer Service Culture" it was noted that the Librarian had attended a session on the Front Line Academy initiative developed by Lewisham Council to further its customer care culture and produced a useful report on this.

It was noted that the initiative on mediation was an extension of the existing coaching contract and that – particularly in the light of the imminent abolition of the statutory dispute procedures which had effectively failed to meet their objective – mediation could usefully reduce the number of formal disputes. It was also acknowledged that the skills involved in mediation and dispute resolution could usefully be developed in all employees who managed other staff.

It was also noted that the staff volunteering project could not be progressed without additional clerical assistance within the Staff Development section but that the Students Union had been sponsored in obtaining some software to help them improve their volunteering scheme.

The Chair then invited members of the Committee to comment on the impact of the initiatives introduced in the area of staff development. All those present indicated that the current Head of Staff Development had made a huge difference to their work, providing support that was not otherwise available to them. There was agreement that there had been a real step change in the staff development process including such matters as to how colleagues on administrative grades could have some career progression.

One member of the Committee stressed that it would be very important for Heads of Departments to see the benefits of the changes in HR staffing since the additional costs would be reflected in their overhead figures and put them under additional pressure.

Resolved: that the report of the Librarian on the Lewisham Front Line Academy should be circulated to members of this committee.

### **4 EQUALITIES UPDATE**

Received:

a report from the Equal Opportunities Adviser on current activities (08-19)

It was noted that the work on the impact assessment for the Research Assessment Exercise (RAE) had been time consuming and had been somewhat hampered by problems in obtaining the correct data

## **5 PAY AND GRADING RESTRUCTURING UPDATE**

The Registrar and Secretary reported that negotiations on the implementation of the Framework Agreement were continuing and it was hoped to have a package for ballot agreed at the forthcoming Pay Forum on 12 February 2008. A substantial sample of evaluated roles had now been drawn up on which to base the proposed salary structure. There needed to be agreement on about three policy elements of harmonised conditions of service and to agree a precise pay/points structure. There had already been agreement on around 12 policy matters and on the outline structure. It was known that the cost of implementing the new pay and grading structure would be more than budget; some costs were inevitable given the move to the new payscale, others had arisen due to the need to address longstanding anomalies.

It was confirmed that potential equality issues in the restructuring would be addressed – figures were being analysed by gender

## **6 ANALYSIS OF EXIT QUESTIONNAIRES**

Received:

a report on the analysis of exit questionnaires for the year 2006-07 (08-34) presented by the HR Manager, Management Information Systems

It was noted that this survey had been done for the first time and that the data provided to the Committee could usefully be developed, for example by indicating overall turnover rates, average length of service grade and gender etc. of leavers with information on the number of staff in each department. This would enable trends to be identified. It was noted too that the return rate of 14% (36 questionnaires returned out of 176 leavers) could be increased, possibly by asking Departmental Administrators to follow up non-respondents and/or allowing the questionnaire to be completed on-line. It was noted that although eight of the 36 leavers had cited working relationships with colleagues as the reason for leaving, 27 of those surveyed had said they had good working relationships with colleagues. While three staff had indicated their reason for leaving was their relationship with their line manager, half of all leavers had reported their relationship with their line manager as being "less than good". The Chair suggested that a question such as "what could we have done to retain you?" might also yield some useful information.

## **7 CURRENT CASEWORK**

Received:

a report on the current activity in relation to casework (08-35)

It was noted that the level and type of casework was broadly comparable to the same period last year. The Director of HR noted that part of the agreement to harmonise sickness entitlements involved reviewing the processes around sickness reporting, recording and monitoring and the type of information going to management. The Chair indicated that data on sickness absence would be one of a useful suite of performance indicators and the Director of HR indicated that he hoped to have some effective data on this subject to report to the next meeting of this committee.

## **8 DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was proposed by the Chair and agreed by those present that the scheduled date of the next meeting of this Committee i.e. Tuesday 13 May 2008 2.00 p.m. be changed to **Thursday 22 May 2008 at 2.30 p.m.**