



MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HR COMMITTEE

Thursday 20 October 2022 at 6.00 pm

Venue: Canteen, Farnbridge Road

Present:

- Ms M Foster (MF) Trustee, Vice-Chair of HR Committee
- Mr E Judge (EJ) Trustee, Safeguarding Trustee Link
- Mr P Nagle (PN) Chair of Trustees
- Ms L Smart (LS) Trustee, Chair of HR Committee
- Mr C Wakefield (CW) Executive Principal

In attendance

- Mrs S Freeman (SFR) Director of HR
- Mrs K Redmond (KRE) Clerk to Trustees

Apologies:

- Mr T Baster (TBA) Joint Head of Academy
- Mrs R Clark (RCL) Joint Head of Academy
- Ms J Kaur (JK) Trustee

This group was quorate for the purpose of resolutions

Item	Topic	Minute
1.	Welcome and apologies for absence	NOTED.
2.	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair	Trustees AGREED to appoint LS as Chair and MF as Vice-Chair of the HR Committee. PN proposed LS, seconded by MF and AGREED unanimously. LS proposed MF, seconded by EJ and AGREED unanimously.
3.	Declaration of Business Interests	There were no new declarations of business interests and no trustee recorded any conflict of interest with the items on the agenda or the receipt or giving of any gifts or hospitality since the last meeting.
4.	Minutes of the previous meeting	Minutes of the previous HR Committee meeting held on 23 June 2022 were APPROVED unanimously.
5.	Matters Arising	There were no Matters Arising.
6.	Watching briefs/action points from the summer term	1. Safeguarding Report EJ advised that he and Ms Kaur (JK), Trustee, had met with Mr Stoneman, Designated Safeguarding Lead (DSL) and Mrs Darcy-Smith, Assistant DSL to: a) review the external safeguarding audit recommendations which had taken place last year.

		<p>EJ confirmed that all recommendations had been implemented and had checked them with physical evidence during their visit today.</p> <p>EJ advised that there had not been any responses to the letter sent to parents and carers on the topic of sexual safety and consent, and staff were considering other options on how to approach this topic in future.</p> <p>EJ advised that it had been interesting to receive JK's input from her professional background and Mr Stoneman had been set actions to follow up for discussion at their next meeting.</p> <p>b) review three case studies from MyConcern. These were very impressive and during their next visit they will randomly pick case studies for further scrutiny.</p> <p>EJ stated that since Mr Stoneman's appointment as DSL the management of safeguarding had become much more systematic and professional. There were new systems and databases in place which were constantly reviewed. Both EJ and JK had confidence that staff knew where every student was e.g. either in school or on placement with weekly meetings to drill down on any concerns and to rationalise how they were being managed.</p> <p>2. General HR Update:</p> <p>Trustees NOTED the circulated report detailing:</p> <p>a. Recruitment – feedback from new starters was very pleasing. The government website for teaching staff had not been visited by any of the academy's applicants which was disappointing as it was a free website.</p> <p>The TES platform had been retained with a £13k reduction in costs and this included access to their training and performance management platforms. SFR stated that it had been agreed that this was value for money especially with the huge cost saving.</p> <p>MF queried whether the 'LinkedIn' platform was used to advertise vacancies.</p> <p>SFR advised that it was not used heavily by teachers and wanted to avoid using direct marketing via social media to avoid cheapening the experience offered by the academy. The 'word of mouth' was so vast that adverts had been referred to by that route. SFR stated that there was a robust vetting system in place before interviews were offered.</p>
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		<p>the small cover team and the surplus staffing in faculties to help reduce the impact of absence but Professional Association Representatives (PARs) and staff would be concerned if being asked to continually cover for their own wellbeing.</p> <p>f. Wellbeing</p> <p>The LifeWorks programme had been accessed by a number of staff and will continually promote the benefits of it. Many wellbeing events were taking place.</p> <p>MF queried whether SFR had information regarding resilience training as that was being introduced into her own industry.</p> <p>SFR confirmed that she would welcome any information MF could share with her.</p> <p>g. New Initiatives and Future Projects</p> <p>SFR demonstrated the Microsoft Teams HR platform that had been developed to improve communication and which will be rolled out to staff with training after half-term.</p> <p>SFR advised that email traffic between 7.00 pm and 7.00 am and at weekends had massively reduced.</p> <p>Trustees thanked SFR for all her efforts.</p>
7.	Policies	<p>Trustees REVIEWED the following policies:</p> <p>1. Probation Procedure for Teaching and Support Staff</p> <p>SFR advised that this had been revamped because of whole academy values and core principles which had been applied for all staff within the induction programme. The probationary review now included a section to highlight low level concerns for line managers to capture any data for either performance or safeguarding concerns.</p> <p>PN queried whether there was a process in place to ensure that the probationary reviews had been completed.</p> <p>SFR advised that the HR team ensured that the process was followed for new members of staff as it was essential to understand how a new member of staff was performing and to provide support if necessary.</p> <p>LS advised that she had reviewed the induction process with SFR and found it to be very comprehensive; it ensured consistency across all staff.</p> <p>SFR advised that probationary periods were not commonly used for teaching staff and CWA would be speaking with the PARs in</p>

		<p>December when data will be available to demonstrate that the new system worked.</p> <p>2. Redundancy and Restructuring Policy</p> <p>SFR advised that had been no changes to this policy.</p> <p>PN asked whether there was specific salary protection and redundancy pay for teaching and support staff roles.</p> <p>SFR advised that the main difference between teaching and support staff was that the Burgundy Book outlined teachers roles had three years' salary protection whilst the Green Book for support staff did not provide any salary protection at all.</p> <p>PN queried the reference to salary protection for school teachers pay being 18 months in point 4.4.2 of the policy and asked if that should state three years.</p> <p>SFR confirmed that it should state three years as this change was effective last year and would ensure the policy was updated before being submitted to the Board of Trustees.</p> <p>Trustees APPROVED the above policies for ratification by the Board of Trustees.</p>
8.	Key Indicator of Performance (KIP) Report	Trustees NOTED the report.
9.	Terms of Reference/ Governance Key Objectives	<p>1. Trustees NOTED the Terms of Reference approved by the Board of Trustees within the Trustees' Handbook and AGREED that the minimum number of attendees should reduce from five to four.</p> <p>2. Trustees APPROVED the Governance Key Objectives for 2022/23 and AGREED that reference to the Pay Committee should be added.</p>
10.	Any Other Business	<p>1. Potential teachers' strike action</p> <p>CWA advised that an unfunded 5% pay rise had been agreed by government in late July which had impacted the academy's budget by £177k.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that teachers were balloting for a rolling strike action across the country from January 2023 for a funded 12% pay rise. Teachers would lose 1/65th of pay for each strike action.</p> <p>MF queried how far the academy would be impacted by strike action and whether there was contingency planning in place for such events.</p> <p>CWA advised that the academy did not have to close during the last strike action in 2016 but would have to monitor which unions</p>

		<p>agreed to strike and then assess the likely impact of that on staffing.</p> <p>2. Safer Recruitment Training</p> <p>PN and LS AGREED to undertake the Safer Recruitment training.</p> <p>3. Strategic Developments</p> <p>PN provided an update from the formal consultation event held on 17 October by Essex Housing. PN and Mr Howell, Trustee, had attended to provide an explanation of why the disposal of Primrose Meadow was necessary for the academy's expansion to meet the needs of the local community.</p> <p>PN explained that the event was run as an exhibition. It was very busy with the majority of those in attendance being part of the 'save the meadow' action group which had very worthy concerns. There was also a second session via an online webinar on 19 October to repeat the process with Mr Scott, Director of Finance & Premises, representing the academy. Essex Housing will now produce a report to advise that the initial consultation had been completed and would continue with the application to Maldon District Council.</p> <p>Trustees NOTED that the Save the Meadow action group had been invited for an interview by BBC Radio Essex on 21 October. CWA advised that he was disappointed that the academy had not been invited to be part of that discussion to provide a balanced report.</p>
11.	Confirmation of confidential items for the minutes	Agenda item 6.3
12.	Date of next meetings	Date of next meeting: 22 February 2023 10 May 2023

Meeting closed at 7.20 pm

Actions

Date of Meeting/ Item number	Topic	Minute
20.10.22 – item 9.2	Governance Strategic Plan - HR	To be updated to include a reference to the Pay Committee. Pay Committee minutes to be presented annually to the spring term HR Committee.
20.10.22 – item 10.2	Safer Recruitment Training	PN and LS to undertake the Safer Recruitment training.