

**College of West Anglia
Minutes of
The Employment Policy Committee
22 February 2023
8.30am
Remote Meeting – Microsoft Teams**

Present	Sally Mitton Chris Ashman Kay Driver David Pomfret	Governor (Chair) Governor Governor Governor (Principal)
Attending	Julie Howlett Jules Bridges	Head of Human Resources Head of Governance

No.		Action
1	<p>Apologies There were no apologies for absence.</p>	
2	<p>Declarations of Interests There were no declarations of interest.</p>	
3	<p>Minutes of the previous meeting – 5 October 2022 The minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2022 were reviewed and agreed as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p> <p>Confidential minutes of 5 October 2022 meeting The confidential minutes of the meeting held on 5 October 2022 were reviewed and agreed as being an accurate record of the meeting.</p>	
4	<p>Matters Arising The progress against the outstanding matters from previous meetings was summarised in the report. There were no items to carry forward. The completed items are to be removed from the table.</p>	
5	<p>Policy Update</p> <p>i Menopause and Andropause Policy The committee received the policy. The policy covers both menopause and andropause to be inclusive for all. Given the upper age profile of staff the college was mindful to introduce the policy to support those going through this part of their life.</p> <p>D Pomfret lost remote connection at 8.42am and re-joined at 8.44am</p> <p>The introduction of the policy provides important statistics and puts the condition into context for the reader. It was questioned if the opening statement of the introduction was appropriate and legal in terms of the college committing to ensure the health, safety and wellbeing of its employees, can the college ensure an employee is healthy or safe for example? After debate it was agreed this would be amended to read 'committed to supporting the health, safety and wellbeing.....'.</p> <p>K Driver joined the meeting at 8.45am</p>	

Furthermore, the committee picked out the reference (page 24) to the control of workplace temperature and commented that there is often disparity between people as to what is considered comfortable for one, is not necessarily comfortable for the other and whether the policy sets out how this could be achieved while also taking account of others who may be sharing the same space. The HoHR agreed to review the section to explicitly consider the rights and needs of others sharing the same space.

HoHR

The Principal supported the introduction and approach of this policy. This is a supportive policy with a wider approach that demonstrates the college's supportive employer model. It sets out clear expectations while accommodating and supporting our workforce through a period of change and CWA can help its staff through this. It's not something that an employee has to deal with on their own this is something that the college can help staff get through because we value and care for our workforce.

Governors asked for assurance that confidentiality throughout the policy would be strengthened. Employees would be sharing really personal information and there should be some check and clarity with the line manager that they know and have consent to share this with other colleagues. What is the employee happy to share, not happy to share and what will managers do with that information? The HoHR explained that there is an annexed guidance document attached to the policy that sets this out. It details how managers should conduct the meeting, what to say, what not to say etc and managers of course will receive training.

The committee was pleased to hear that the college has joined the 'workplace pledge' which shows an organisations commitment (pledge) to ensure all staff going through the menopause are properly supported. This is a recognised accreditation and positive reputational statement for the college. It is unknown how the policy will be received by staff but there is nothing to suggest that this would create misogynistic views or wouldn't be taken seriously, quite the contrary.

The committee **agreed** the content of the policy.

6 **Legal Updates**

The report set out several legislative changes since the last meeting of the committee and a few forthcoming changes for the college to prepare to meet. In summary the report set out the colleges responses to changes to flexible working requests, ban on exclusivity clauses in zero-hour and lower earnings contracts, and the new national minimum wage.

The college has adapted its flexible working policy to offer all employees the opportunity to request flexible working from their first day of employment. Previously 26 weeks' service was required and only one request was possible in the year, two requests per year is now permitted. The legislation also requires employers to consult with employees before rejecting a request and replies must be given within two months, as previously it was three. The HoHR explained that the HR department is formalising its approach to flexible working requests with a more stringent and tighter, professional approach so requests will follow a clear process, rather than a looser method. It was noted that the change in legislation has also removed the requirement for requestors to detail the benefit to the college for the role to change to flexible working.

Confidential item under Paragraph 17 (2) (d) of the Instrument of Government

7 **Curriculum Impact Report**

Confidential item under Paragraph 17 (2) (d) of the Instrument of Government

8	<p>HR KPI Report</p> <p>The report was received positively by the committee who commented that the visual graphs and tables had hugely improved the content and understanding of the report. Governors asked for comparable data to be included to identify emerging trends or differentials in data between reporting periods. Additionally, the committee asked for a note under each section to highlight any concerns, good points, or things to change and to answer the question, 'so what?'. The HoHR agreed to include this in future reports.</p> <p><i>Confidential item under Paragraph 17 (2) (d) of the Instrument of Government</i></p>	HoHR
9	<p>Any other business</p> <p>It was noted that K Driver has taken up the EDI governor role.</p>	
10	<p>Chair's items for briefing to Corporation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee has agreed the menopause and andropause policy • Confidential item under Paragraph 17 (2) (d) of the Instrument of Government • The new style KPI report is giving the committee better oversight of the support and management of the workforce • There are ongoing recruitment concerns with LSOs and maths in particular • Confidential item under Paragraph 17 (2) (d) of the Instrument of Government 	Chair
11	<p>Date and time of next meeting</p> <p>Wednesday, 17 May 2023 at 8.30am</p>	

Meeting ended at 10.00am