

Resources and General Purposes Committee – 24 May 2021

Item 8.1 NCL Organisational Development Update

This paper provides a summary of current and planned activity in the areas above to provide an update for the Resources and General Purposes Committee. Where the approval/ratification of the Committee is required, this is highlighted at the appropriate points.

1 National Bargaining Update

As confirmed at the last meeting of the R&GP Committee, the NJNC Side Table – Support Staff was due to meet on 17 March 2021, in order for the staff side to provide a response on a formal pay offer that had been provided to them. This offer was agreed and ratified. Due to the timing of the issue of the formal implementation note, all increases and back pay to 1 September 2020 will be paid with the May salary run. The agreement was a consolidated increase on all salary points of the greater of £750 or 2%, plus one day's additional annual leave for the current leave year only. The agreement also confirmed that Professional Services staff would also receive paid morning and afternoon breaks at all colleges, and addressed an anomaly across the sector to standardise all First Aid allowances at £500, the latter backdated to 1 November 2020.

As members will be aware, the programme of strike action by the EIS has now been suspended, following ratification of an amended proposal to end the national dispute.

In April 2021, we also applied the pay award ratified by the Board on the recommendation of the Remuneration Committee for members of the Executive Board. This mirrored Scottish Public Sector Pay Policy and comprised of 2% increase, subject to a maximum cap of £2000. As the settlement date for this pay award was 1st April 2020, a year's backpay was due to each postholder. A number of members of the Executive Board have chosen not to accept the backpay amount, on the basis that this should be earmarked for the proposed NCL Foundation, or to support the Breakfast on Us initiative.

Our local JNCs are due to meet on 20th and 21st May, where the focus of the agenda will be a new draft Recognition and Procedure Agreement. A verbal update on these meetings can be provided at the Committee.

2 Furlough Update

We continue to make appropriate use of the furlough scheme, which has now been formally extended until September, in respect of both Professional Services and Academic roles where the pattern of demand has reduced. For Academic Staff, this has been a temporary measure and as we have been able to bring priority areas back onto campus for in-person delivery, the level of furlough for Academic Staff has reduced. For Professional Services staff, we are still using flexible furlough across the College, where staff are furloughed for part of their working week. A small number of staff remain on full furlough and this is being reviewed at appropriate intervals, and we have also been able to use the furlough scheme to support a number of staff with short- or long-term caring responsibilities, as permitted in the updated furlough guidance.

3 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Statutory Reporting

As a public body, we are required to publish an EDI Mainstreaming Report every two years, and to publish a set of Equality Outcomes every four years. The main purpose of the mainstreaming report is to report on progress in meeting our equality outcomes, as well as to publish information on our staff profile and our approach to equal pay. We are also required to report annually on our Gender Pay Gap, which we have also extended to include pay gap reporting in relation to Disability and Race.

The report must be published by 30 April and the NCL report is available here:

<https://www.nclanarkshire.ac.uk/media/6247/mainstreaming-report-2021.pdf>

Inevitably, the pandemic has affected some activity, but we have continued to demonstrate our commitment to EDI through a number of initiatives and activities highlighted in the report and I would commend the report to members.

4 Whistleblowing and Role of Senior Independent Board Member

Following discussion at recent meetings of the Resources and General Purposes Committee in relation to the interface between the NCL Whistleblowing Policy and the role of the Senior Independent Board Member, a briefing note has been prepared that, if approved by the Committee, can be shared with Board Members to provide clarity and guidance on these important topics.

A copy of the draft briefing note accompanies this paper.

5 Facilities Management Contract Review

Members will be aware that cleaning, janitorial and security provision at our Motherwell campus is undertaken on an outsourced basis, which has been the case for many years, with limited provision also provided at Hamilton and Kirkintilloch under the same contract. The current contract was awarded in 2016 after a retendering process and we are in the final extension year permitted under our procurement arrangements.

In recognition of the current contractual status, a small working group was established at the request of the Executive Board to review current arrangements and to consider models for future delivery, which could include bringing the services in-house. The group has been led by the Assistant Principal: Organisational Development, supported by the Head of Estates, Health and Safety Manager, HR Manager and one of the College's Senior Accountants. To ensure that the staff voice was taken into account, UNISON were also invited to nominate a representative to the group and one of our experienced UNISON Stewards participated in the group and also led discussions with members working in the contracted services, and within the wider NCL Estates Team.

The group has considered the high level report provided by our internal auditors from December 2020, which looked at costings of the service and the likely cost of bring the service in-house, if that was the decision made, and the group also worked with ISS to gather an accurate snapshot of current staffing levels and costs, in order for an assessment to be made of costs and the viability of considering an in-house approach as an option.

Having undertaken its analysis, the working group considered that although there would be a cost of bringing the service in-house, there was merit in developing a more detailed proposal for final consideration by the Executive Board and the Board of Management. This recommendation was presented to the Executive Board, who agreed that such a proposal should be developed. This is currently being developed and would include any proposed amendments to rotas or roles, to bring the responsibilities and terms and conditions of contracted staff in line with NCL arrangements.

For information, a copy of the internal audit report and the report prepared by the Assistant Principal: Organisational Development will be provided to Committee members as background, in advance of submission of the formal proposal on the recommended way forward.

Assistant Principal: Organisational Development

May 2021