**Minute: NCL Resources and General Purposes Committee (RGP)**

**15.00 on 27 February 2023 at Cumbernauld Campus and via Zoom**

Present: Keith Fulton (Chair), Kenny Anderson, Christopher Moore

Apologies: none

In attendance: Ann Baxter, Iain Clark, Morag Ferguson, William McCallum, Matthew Smith, Ronnie Smith, Elaine Turkington, Diane McGill, Penny Neish

1. **Chair’s welcome**

Keith Fulton (KF) opened the meeting and thanked everyone for attending. He noted and welcomed William McCallum to his first R & GP meeting.

**2. Apologies**

There were no apologies.

**3. Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

**4. Minutes**

**Draft Minutes of the RGP meeting of 14 November 2022**

The minutes were agreed.

**5. Matters arising**

**5.1 Update on BTO**

KF referred RGP members to para 5.3 of the notes of the previous meeting and gave a brief recap of the events to date. He covered 2 particular aspects: prescription and the previous May 2018 settlement agreement.

***NB – Reaction the rest of this paragraph and the next two paragraphs have been redacted for reasons of commercial confidentiality.***

KF outlined the options now available to the College and, after lengthy and detailed discussion of these and the necessary related actions, the RGP agreed to proceed along the lines recommended by BTO and KF.

**5.2 Nursery Review - Update**

AB advised that the nursery review, commenced on 15 September 2022, had been completed with a draft report going to the RSB Chair’s Committee for consideration next week before being presented to the RSB Board at its meeting in March. The RGP will be kept informed of developments.

On the issue of whether the nursery situation was on the NCL Risk Register, AB reported that they were not yet included.

**6. AMCOL Nursery Update**

**6.1 AMCOL accounts:** Iain Clark (IC) spoke to his report on the accounts of each nursery and reported that the figures are good this year and that AMCOL has a healthy cash balance.

* There are 4 nurseries within AMCOL: Bellwood, Firtrees, Fullwood, and Meiklewood;
* AMCOL is a wholly owned subsidiary of NCL. The Service Level Agreement is currently being sought;
* The AMCOL Articles of Association and the AMCOL Memorandum of Association had been circulated to the RGP;
* There are 3 NCL employees on the AMCOL Board;
* AMCOL accounts are included in the Region’s consolidated accounts.

KF expressed a degree of concern about the wording of the Articles of Association and the Memorandum of Association presented to the RGP without the related SLA being available also. He commented further that the outcome of the nursery review will possibly influence next steps in relation to the SLA and that a new one may have to be drawn up, irrespective if the original was found or not.

RS said that it was important to find the SLA and to refresh how the relationship between NCL and AMCOL works in particular around issues such as the rental agreement and whether it is reviewed regularly, and the re-charge arrangements. IC confirmed that the rental agreement is reviewed annually and that recharge arrangements include the salary of the AMCOL Managing Director.



RS said that as Chair of NCL and the Regional Board, he would welcome stronger links with the Chair of AMCOL (John Fairlie) to ensure that issues such as the review of rent and salaries do not get overlooked.

***Action: PN to arrange a meeting for RS with John Fairlie***

**7. College Registrar’s update**

Elaine Turkington spoke to her paper and advised that her report did not require any decisions but was for the Committee to note.

**Professional Services review**: Engagement with Professional Services staff to discuss proposals for the reorganisation of Professional Services functions and obtain feedback had taken place, with the proposals and staff feedback formally tabled at the JNC Professional Services meeting on 31 January 2023. In response to the feedback some revisions have been made to the directorate groupings especially the creation of a Student Services directorate to enable students to have easy access to services that can support them during their time at college. Inclusion of Admissions within the directorate is an important starting point of the student journey.

**College Employers Scotland:** A series of meetings and discussions has taken place over the last few months regarding the **EIS-FELA National Pay Claim for session 2022/23** for a consolidated flat-rated pay rise of £5,000 on all national salary scale points for unpromoted and promoted lecturers, effective from 1st September 2022. Key meetings took place over the period 24 November 2022 to 15 February 2023. A verbal offer of a 2% pay increase had been made. The management side explained that this offer was made based on the current sector funding position and was subject to a joint approach to the Scottish Government to reach an acceptable offer. Further meetings are likely to be scheduled from the end of March 2023 once SFC has announced the sector’s funding allocation. In addition to discussions on the pay claim for 22/23. Facilities Time is currently under consideration. A draft Facilities Time Agreement, developed by representatives from the HR Strategic Group was put to EIS-FELA on 9 February 2023. After a short adjournment, the EIS-FELA advised it will respond to the draft agreement within the next week and acknowledged that this may lead to a resolution of the dispute.

**NJNC Side Table (Support Staff) Pay Claim 2022/23:** Further to full discussion at the CES meetings on 9th and 16th November 2022, a verbal offer was made to the support staff of a 2% pay increase on 30 November 2022. The management side explained that this offer was made based on the current sector funding position and was subject to a joint approach to the Scottish Government to reach an acceptable offer. Following an adjournment, the Support Staff Side rejected the offer.

At a subsequent meeting on 25 January 2023, the management side confirmed that, following further consideration of the sector’s current finances, there could be no improvement to the current pay offer.

**Terms and Conditions**

On 7th December 2021, the NJNC – Side Table (Support) met and discussed the following issues:

* Job evaluation
* Circular 02/21 Dispute – Lecturing Staff National Dispute Resolution
* Facilities Time
* Scope
* Terms and Conditions Working Group

Other issues currently under discussion with the NJNC Side Table (Support Staff) include Home and Hybrid Working and a Sectoral Approach to Consultation and Fair Work for Support Staff

**Joint Negotiating Committee Update**

**JNC Academic:** The JNC Academic met on 16th February 2023 at which the Recognition and Procedure Agreement was finalised.

**JNC Professional Services:** The JNC Professional Services met on 31st January 2023. The trade union advised they would send an RPA template for further discussion and to enable this matter to progress.

**Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes (Interim) Report 2023**

NCL is required by law\* to publish the above report by 30th April 2023. Board members will receive the most up to date draft of the Mainstreaming and Equality Outcomes (interim) Report for the meeting being held on 17th March 2023.

[\*Public Sector Equality Duty (or general equality duty) and Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties) (Scotland) Regulations 2016]

**8. NCL Estates Update:**

William McCallum, (WMcC) recently appointed Estates Manager at NCL, introduced his paper and summarised recent Estates activity campus by campus. WMcC highlighted the following:

* **Motherwell Campus**:
  + All scaffolding has been removed from the teaching and workshop area;
  + Estates is working with supported learning to relocate from upper floors and reduce risk of PEEP Level 6 student numbers.
  + Sustainability:
    - A short life working group established to address energy management (Bi/Weekly Meetings) Savings made in BMS controls and optimisation.
    - Discussions with Engenera on direct electric feed from Solar Farm in Wishaw
    - Carbon Management Plan produced for discussion, support and further development
    - Sustainability will be a prioritised within Estates operations and decision making.
* **Coatbridge Campus**:
* Letting of office space to VANL
* Dementia Hub refurbishment delivered successfully on time
* Pipework Replacement Project 2023
* **Hamilton Towers:**
  + Cleaning and Reactive Maintenance activities in date
  + Carpark signage updates (Requested from Landlord)
  + Access control reconfiguration
* **Cumbernauld Campus**:
  + Letting office space to VANL
  + High uptake of warn space during colder days
  + Concerns and conflicting advice from separate structural engineers. Estates sought opinion from an independent chartered structural engineer. Roof report carried out in November determined pull out test results were good and that roofing sheets were in reasonable condition.
  + Main Roof Structure: Annual routine roof survey scheduled during summer break as per findings of the Structural Roof Survey
* **Kirkintilloch Campus**: Discussions on the car park exchange with East Dumbarton Council are on-going.
* **Broadwood Campus**:
  + The building needs significant updates of student classroom and rest areas.
  + The condition of the building has a back log of maintenance issues
  + Estates are currently costing upgrading areas as part of our VHPM program.

Estates will review the terms and conditions of the lease agreement and provide further updates on feasibility for development for growth of the area.

RS commented that NCL has a large estate making it important to ensure that facilities and needs are appropriately matched. CM said that the Exec Board are currently looking into the College’s footprint and whether and where it is affordable and relevant. He commented that Broadwood is not fit for teaching purposes; there is no study space, library or refreshment area for the students and staff, however students travel to Broadwood because of the programmes offered there.

IC asked what had happened about the scaffolding which had been purchased by the college. WMcC advised that the cost of removing the scaffolding matched the value. WMcC noted also that the company which removed the scaffolding had made a donation to the Lanarkshire Education Fund.

**Hamilton Towers (HT)**: the RGP were advised that South Lanarkshire Council are relinquishing this building to a private landlord and consequently NCL anticipates that the rent will increase considerably. The College was not in a position to accept any increased financial demands. Notice to terminate the lease has to be advised to SL Council by 13 April 2023 to avoid going into the lease extension period.

RS offered to provide MS with the name of a surveyor who specialises in dilapidation issues.

The RGP discussed possible alternative venues for the programmes run in the Hamilton facility. At their invitation, RS, CM and the NCL senior management team and relevant programme managers had recently viewed the Blantyre premises of UWS. This is a new facility which would meet the requirements of the NCL programmes. The UWS Vice Principal is putting a proposal together which will be submitted to the University Court for approval in the next 2 weeks. Once approved, NCL can then start negotiations regarding taking up space.

The RGP was keen to pursue to Blantyre option and to terminate the lease at HT.

Kenny Anderson (KA) expressed caution on the process so that staff were not concerned or uncertain about where they were going.

CM assured KA that the staff liked the look of the facilities at Blantyre. CM said he was keen to wind down the operation at Hamilton Towers where parking was difficult and costly and there was no food provision. CM did not want to extend use of HT beyond November 2023.

***Action: RS to provide contact details of a surveyor who specialises in dilapidation issues to MS.***

***MS to notify SL Council of the termination of NCL’s lease at HT.***

**9. ICT Update:**

Matthew Smith (MS) spoke to the paper and drew the RGP’s attention to the following:

**Cyber Security:**

The rollout of **multi-factor authentication (MFA)** to staff was successfully completed in October of last year. MFA will be extended to all Board members with NCL accounts in the coming weeks.

NCL is on course to complete Cyber Essentials certification by 28 February. Cyber Essentials Plus certification will follow in March. The original target date of September 2022 was missed as changes to the certification criteria (e.g. the requirement for Multi-factor Authentication & the extension of staff home working devices to include personal PC’s and laptops) required additional work to meet the specification.

The college re-tendered the contract for **mobile phones** in 2022 and this was awarded to Vodaphone under the Scottish Government Public Sector Framework. A review of mobile phone use within NCL allowed the College to reduce the number of contracts in use from 135 to 90. The migration of the numbers from O2 to Vodaphone was completed in January.

***NB Redaction: the rest of the previous sentence and the following sentence have been redacted for reasons of commercial sensitivity.***

**A Virtual Reality Room** has been created on the Coatbridge Campus. This was developed in collaboration withthe departments of Dental, Health & Social Care and the Lanarkshire Institute of Science & Technology. The IT hardware for the suite is in place now. The software is due to be ready for use in April.

**ICT Support Services Department:** The first cohort of ICT staff successfully completed training in Microsoft Azure and Office 365 in December. The next cohort of six staff commenced the training program with the Computing & Digital Technologies department in January and are scheduled to complete in April.

**WiFi Network project**: potential suppliers have advised they have no lead time issues. NCL is anticipating starting this programme in Coatbridge during the Easter break, extending to Motherwell and Cumbernauld in June/July.

KA asked if NCL was confident that it can spend the Digital Inclusion Funds by the end of July. MS confirmed that the funds would be spent as directed by SFC and advised that purchase of Lapsafe digital storage cabinets are in process (one for each campus) to improve the efficiency of the distribution and tracking process for the Laptop Library.

KF said that at the last meeting the cost of the WiFi was estimated between £150k and £260k and asked that as all this type of equipment is priced in US Dollars the effect changes in the exchange rate had on the funding involved. MS said that SFC had agreed a spend of up to £268k by 31 July 2023.

**10.** **Health and Safety update**

MS spoke to Fiona Curran’s paper and commented on the following:

On the 25 November, NCL was highly commended on the Health and Wellbeing at the CDN awards ceremony;

The new Occupational Health & Health Surveillance provider, MCL Medics, joined NCL on the 9January;

Air quality complaints have continued to slow down since the last update;

There are now 12 staff members trained as Mental Health First Responders. Work is underway to embed them into the campuses to ensure this invaluable resource is known and utilised by staff and learners.

KF asked if the Health, Safety & Wellbeing team were coping without one full-time member of staff who has been off work since late October. ET confirmed that others were stepping up to help and that the team has reviewed its priorities and adjusted accordingly. Provisions have been put into place to ensure all campuses still have an H&S presence each week. KF thanked all of the staff enabling this to happen.

**11. Brand update**

KF commented on how well this paper was set out illustrating the range of activity undertaken at NCL.

**12. NCL College update**

* CM said that the College distributes 3k breakfasts each month. To support this very worthwhile but costly exercise, the Lanarkshire Education Foundation was to be launched on 31 March with an event at Coatbridge Campus hosted by Elaine C Smith, supported by NCL Musical Theatre students. He encouraged Board members to attend this important event. BTO had offered a £500 cash prize for the raffle.
* NCL was currently facing a major shortfall in credits, and was engaging in short course provision to everyone. A booklet has been produced which will be circulated to 90k households across Lanarkshire. 600 places have been taken up already in the test area.

**13. RSB and Assigned College update**

RS reported that the 2 colleges had agreed last year that the way forward for both was the de-assignation of SLC from the Region. This process had stalled over the period of COVID but at a recent meeting with the Scottish Government, RS had requested the reinstatement of the Lanarkshire Transition Group. These discussions would include NCL, SLC, SFC and the Scottish Government at senior level. The group’s remit would be to discuss the reshaping of the administration of the Region and the partnership arrangements between the colleges post SLC de-assignation. A crucial element of this would be to ensure that both colleges continued to work together and with others for the benefit of the people of Lanarkshire.

KA commented that both colleges have managed to navigate a difficult process over the last couple of years. This should be looked at positively.

**14. Chair’s update**

KF said in addition to his work with BTO and others on the Motherwell cladding issue, he had attended the NCL Graduation in November 2022 and participated in several College Employers Scotland and NCL H & S Committee meetings.

**General Committee Business**

**15. Approval of publication of papers from this committee:**

* Agenda for RGP 27 February 2023
* Minutes of the meetings 14 November 2022
* College Registrar’s Update
* Brand Dashboard
* Memorandum and Articles of Association of AMCOL

**16. AOB:** no matters were raised

**17.** Date of next meeting: the next meeting of the RGP Committee will be on **Monday 22 May 2023** at 15.00 and via Zoom. Venue to be advised.

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