

## HNC FURTHER EDUCATION CORPORATION

### Remuneration & Personnel Committee meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> November 2022 from 5pm via Teams



#### Confirmed Open Minutes.

Present: Ms R Drury (Chair), Ms L Summers, Mr K Webb, Mr J Dawson  
(attendance: 100%)

In attendance: Mr M Smith-Connor, Mr J Flynn (for agenda item 4 only)

Clerk: Mrs C Coupland

#### 1. Apologies for Absence/ Declaration of Interest

There were no apologies for absence.

There were no declarations of interest from Committee Members.

#### 2. Minutes from Meeting on 6<sup>th</sup> October 2022

Resolved:

- That these be accepted as a true record of the meeting.

#### 3. Matters Arising

**Staffing Matters : College staff in attendance.**

#### 4. Staff Framework and Pay Awards: Update

The Committee was reminded by the Chair that it is tasked with considering and advising the Corporation on any pay award recommendations from the National Joint Council. Historically national recommendations on pay awards have always been agreed and implemented; however as the committee noted at its last meeting; as an independent sixth form college HNC is not bound to implement any nationally agreed pay settlements. The Corporation determines the staff pay award and affordability will continue to be one of the key considerations taken into account to inform any decisions made by Governors.

#### NJC Operations (Support) Staff Pay Offer 2022/23:

Mr Smith-Connor advised the committee that UNISON have accepted the Employer Side pay offer, to take effect from 1 September 2022

- An increase of between 5% and 7.7% on the NJC support staff pay spine - this provides at least a 5% across the board pay increase for all operations staff (approximately 5.48% across the board)
- A 5% increase on the Support Staff Standards Payment (SSSP)
- A 5% increase on all relevant allowances
- The headline increase for all operations staff is a 5% pay increase with additional increases on the lowest pay points to take account of the Low Pay Commission's projected increase to 11 £10.32 to the statutory minimum wage from April 2023, noting that all our employees are already remunerated above this minimum hourly rate
- Employers have also committed to further discussions with UNISON on the future of SSSP, NJC rates of annual leave, and to review the operation of, and pay differentials / bunching within, the pay spine in advance of September 2023.

The revised operations staff pay scales that are to take effect from September 2022, should the Corporation agree to the recommended pay award, were presented to the Committee for information only.

The Committee was reminded that the budget allocation was for 5% pay award – the operational staff pay award is approximately 5.48% across the board. Mr Flynn advised the Committee that this recommended pay award is affordable and sustainable (within the current funding context) as demonstrated by the Pay Award Modelling which he had shared within the executive summary.

#### NJC Employer Side Teacher Pay Offer 2022/23

Mr Smith-Connor advised the committee that the NJC colleges offered a 5% across the board increase with higher increases for the lowest paid teachers, up to 8.9% on the bottom pay point. This pay offer is in line with the school teachers' pay award for 2022/23; reflects pay increases offered elsewhere in the public sector and is higher than pay awards recommended in the wider further education sector and for university staff.

The NJC made it clear that the employers' pay offer was at the edge of affordability for colleges and some may need to make savings elsewhere in the budget to meet the cost of this offer. The teacher unions however immediately rejected this pay offer and have successfully balloted their members to take strike action. The first day of strike action will take place on 30th November 2022. In HNC we have 74 teaching staff and 14 operations staff who are members of the NEU. Only the teaching staff have the lawful right to strike on the 30th, if all of these colleagues join the day of strike action it will severely affect our ability to deliver our daily business.

Mr Flynn advised the committee that the pay award modelling presented to the committee demonstrated that the operation and teachers pay awards were affordable to August 2023 and beyond, if awarded on the basis outlined in the two separate pay deals above. The committee noted the level of pay award which (all things being equal) were deemed to be unaffordable by the college.

#### Conclusions regarding pay offers 2022/23

Post deliberations, the committee agreed it sensible to recommend to the Corporation that it implements the NJC pay deal agreed by the employer side and UNISON in full and to await an outcome from the ongoing NJC teacher negotiations.

The Principal and Chief Finance officer's recommendation to the Committee was to immediately implement the teachers' pay award, once agreed, should the current deal being offered be finally

accepted. The committee were mindful however that on previous occasions when pay awards have been agreed and implemented at different times of the year for operational and teaching staff – the corporation has viewed it necessary to carefully consider any further pay negotiations and if necessary revisit any implemented pay awards for at HNC the Corporation have previously agreed to aim to keep Teachers and Operational Staff pay awards equal.

Time was also spent exploring the possible consequences of only ever implementing nationally agreed pay settlements (assuming that these have been costed and are sustainably affordable), as recommended by Mr Smith-Conor and the Mr Flynn even if it means that there is a differential uplift for operations and teaching staff. The Committee recognised that the SFCA strongly recommends that colleges do not deviate in any way from the nationally agreed pay settlements to avoid the challenges of negotiating local pay awards. However members remained cognisant that national pay award recommendations constitutes only one part of what the Corporation considers when determining pay awards – other criteria's taken into account includes the affordability of the recommended pay award as well as the desirability from Governors to commit to offering equal pay awards to all staff. For this reason it was agreed necessary for the Committee to reconvene again once the national teachers' pay award recommendation had been agreed.

**Resolved:**

- To recommend to the Corporation that the NJC pay deal agreed by the employer side and UNISON is immediately implemented in full.
- To await an outcome from the ongoing NJC teacher negotiations and for the Committee to reconvene again to consider the national recommendation once agreed and advise the Corporation accordingly.

*Mr Smith-Connor, Mr J Flynn and the Clerk left the meeting at this point. The committee chair was assigned as note taker in Clerk's absence.*

**Confidential Remuneration Matters: Committee members only**

**5. Remuneration Benchmarking Data : Principals Pay. (confidential)**

**14. Learner Impact Reflection**

The impact of discussions and scrutiny of the College's work in improving the outcomes and experience for all learners was considered and the following agreed:

- Assurance that the Remuneration & Personnel Committee is able to fulfil its delegated responsibilities.
- Assessing a pay award needs to balance rewarding achievement and retaining good staff with awareness of local and national sensitivities and constraints
- The corporation is committed to demonstrating its leadership and stewardship in relation to remuneration and in doing so helps to protect the college's reputation and provide greater assurances to key stakeholders and partners, including the student community and wider society

**15. Determination of confidentiality**

It was determined that the supporting papers regarding agenda item 5 should remain confidential given the nature of their contents.

**16. Date of next meeting: Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> March 2023 from 5pm via Teams.**