Board of Management

Students, Staff & Equalities Committee

Date of Meeting	**Monday 1 February 2021**
Paper No.	**SSEC2-J**
Agenda Item	**5.9**
Subject of Paper	**Update on Organisational Development Activity**
FOISA Status	**Disclosable**
Primary Contact	**John Gribben**
Date of production	**25 January 2021**
Action	**For Discussion and Decision**

1. Recommendations

- Invite the Board to discuss and comment on the relevant developments.

2. Purpose of Paper

This paper provides a general update on Organisational Development and associated activity during the academic year to date with references where appropriate to developments and solutions applied during academic session 19/20.

3. Strategic Context and Key Points

3.1 General

The year 2020 presented numerous challenges to our colleagues, students and wider population caused by the pandemic, economic instability and other world events. Despite this, we have observed some magnificent examples of individual and organisational resilience which has been realised through an inclusive approach to engagement and an openness to learning.

We have endeavoured to connect our 'people' to our 'purpose' during these uncertain times. The Directorate has played a central role in helping colleagues adapt to 'working across distances and differences' by striving to identify, understand and support colleagues with the variety of experiences faced and learn from the multifarious perspectives held.

This report will outline some of the key methods deployed by the OD Team in an attempt to provide the best support possible during this time of change, uncertainty and disruption. It will also outline plans designed to continuously improve our current and future workplace to ensure our people can truly flourish.

For a short animation of the range of needs based support and development provided during this period please click **HERE.**

3.1 Rationalisation of Service

A rationalisation of OD service provision was undertaken between June - August 2020. This has resulted in responsibilities for core learning and teaching support being transferred to the Learning and Teaching Academy (LTA). This ensures LTA can deliver concentrated and specialist support to develop the capacity and capability of our academic community. This also enables OD to concentrate on broader elements of people and organisational development, with a focus on culture, leadership and change.

OD continues to support LTA in co-ordinating Teaching Qualification in Further Education (TQFE). A reduced number (15 colleagues) are participating in the 20/21 programme along with three pre-service students.

3.2 Engaging Virtually

Due to COVID19 restrictions OD had to adapt the traditional 'in the room' small and large group dialogue approaches routinely deployed to fit the 'virtual environment'.

Provided are examples of approaches OD has used to engage with staff and learn as much as possible from the different perspectives and experiences.

3.3 Staff Hub

The [Staff Hub](#) was designed by OD and launched in March 2020, within one week of lockdown. The Hub is a 'micro-site' and is accessible through the main College website. It was created initially as a short term solution and few would have expected a continued need and functionality 10 months later.

Content on the Hub focuses on three key areas Health and Wellbeing, Adjusting to Working Remotely and Events and Engagement.

Naturally, existing content has required to be continually adapted and refreshed and new content created, to reflect the current circumstances.

The OD Team continue to maintain and improve the Hub and, are in dialogue with various colleague cohorts regarding future Hub development and iterations.

3.4 Co-creating Our Flourishing Future

A triangulated approach to involving staff in 'co-creating our flourishing future' was implemented between May-September 2020. Colleagues were invited to contribute in three different ways:

1. Through a live portal in response to appreciative questions focused on things people valued that we should 'amplify' along with any unhelpful practices (Qualitative Inquiry).

2. A Remote Working Survey themed around four areas: Wellbeing, Communication, Leadership and Working Effectively (Quantitative Survey).

3. A Transitions Questionnaire designed to support colleagues transitioning to on campus working and teaching and to support safe home working.

A summary of each approach is provided as follows:

3.4.1 Live Portal

The portal enabled an instantaneous, visible and participatory approach to shaping organisational change and transition. Colleagues were invited to share thoughts and views and rate those shared by others.

Questions were deliberately affirmative allowing learning to be generated from the perspective of 'what was working' that could be extended rather than looking for

problems and 'trying to fix' them. A focus on things considered unhelpful that should be avoided in future, was also included.

175 individual views were shared across the three inquiry questions and 987 votes were cast to rate the individual views.

 "What have you valued most from this period that we should ensure is retained?"

The three highest ranked items indicated:

- A value for increased democratisation, self-management and self-organising.
- Work, life balance.
- Communication and trust messages from College Principal and Senior Management Team focused on health, safety and welfare were appreciated.

"What new ways of working have emerged that do we want to hold onto and implement in any future design?"

The three highest ranked items indicated:

- Flexibility and life work balance featured prominently once again.

- A need for development of 'structure' through policy and procedure.

- Appreciation for LTA support in 'transitioning' to teaching online caveated with a need for a more robust digital infrastructure and digital applications.

"What old ways do we not want to return to because they do not seem to add value?"

The three highest ranked items repeated themes of commuting, aspirations for retaining flexibility along with the protection from the structure of policies. Other strong themes to emerge were:

- Preferences for self-management and self-organisation.
- Reduced bureaucracy.
- Rigidity of timetabling and improving systems and processes.

Contributions from this process were influential in helping shape the **College Home Working Guide**.

For a short animated harvest of responses from the live portal please click **HERE.**

3.4.2 Remote Working

This survey was open 9th-19th June 2020 and asked staff about their remote working experiences during the Covid-19 pandemic and focused on themes of wellbeing, working effectively, communication and leadership.

In total, 407 staff responded from across the college (67% Academic, 33% Support) - a response rate of 34%.

A summary of action in response to the findings include:

Wellbeing

- OD and Health and Wellbeing Officer co-designed and co-hosted a series of Resilience Workshops**.** These were offered on a programmed and on demand basis. 10 workshops have been delivered to date with an average of 9 attendees per workshop.
- OD and Health and Wellbeing Officer co-designed and co-hosted a series of Virtual Space sessions where colleagues could come and engage in conversations that matter to them. 9 sessions were held and whilst participation was fairly low (average 5 per session) participants valued the space to talk and listen to others.
- Increased virtual Mindfulness (3 sessions per week) and Yoga (six sessions per week).
- Increased communications and prominence on Staff Hub for support available through Employee Assistance Programme PAM Assist and Togetherall as well as signposting to relevant external bodies.
- A series of programmed and on demand needs focused virtual workshops were arranged with our partner Charlie Waller Memorial Trust. 15 sessions were delivered to 159 participants.

Working Effectively

- OD co-designed and co-delivered two Risk Assessment for Managers workshops with Health and Safety Manager.
- Increased communication and prominence on Staff Hub for a range of guidance and support for managers and staff.
- OD hosted development sessions for Reception and Concierge staff focused on 'how to engage effectively with customers at a physical distance' and 'appropriate approaches to intervening when COVID guidance is not being followed.' 4 sessions were held with 21 colleagues in attendance across the sessions.

Communication

- A focus on clear and consistent messaging in all communication.
- Regular communication of support and services available to staff in Principals Briefing – increased links and nudges to Staff Hub.
- Making plans and guidance more explicit by prominently displaying on Staff Hub and ensuring a cascade of plans and intentions through team meetings.

Leadership

- Increased visibility and presence through regular engagements and team meetings.
- Principal and Executive Team engaging with Faculties and Directorates, attending team and group meetings.
- OD Team created a design for virtual Leadership Community Gatherings.

These findings from the respective surveys also underpinned the process of transitioning to on campus working. A Transitions Questionnaire was designed to support a safe phased transition to on campus working and teaching, whilst also ensuring support to the considerable number continuing to work and teach remotely.

3.4.3 Transitions Questionnaire

The Transitions Questionnaire was designed during a pronounced period of uncertainty. It involved inter-departmental collaboration and careful planning and co-ordination. It was reliant on internal protocols being aligned to (*as then yet to be published*) Scottish Government Guidance on Risk Assessment and COVID Age.

The questionnaire was open to all staff between 14/08/20 - 11/09/20. When the questionnaire closed, there had been over 900 responses providing the college with valuable data on how we can support our colleagues. The questionnaire covered:

- **Covid Age**

- **Caregiving responsibilities**

- **Living arrangements**

- **Other considerations e.g.** Mental Health, Workplace adjustments, disabilities

- **Able to transition back to onsite working**

- **Interested in remote working in longer term**

- **Physical and Digital Equipment Requests**

To date, barring a few exceptions, all physical and digital equipment requests have been satisfied. A small number of new requests have been received from staff whose circumstances have changed since the January 2021 lockdown announcement.

OD also developed comprehensive Guidance for Managers and co-hosted a series of Manager Briefing Sessions with Health and Safety Team colleagues to ensure a consistent approach to managing the transition process.

76 individual COVID Risk Assessments were conducted and supportive one to one consultations held with College Health and Wellbeing Officer.

3.5 Current, Ongoing and Future Developments

3.5.1 … what? … yet another survey...

Internal surveys conducted during the pandemic have focused on specific topics such as remote working experiences or transitioning back to onsite working.

Informed speculators consider mental health and wellbeing as a 'pandemic within the pandemic'. OD plan to implement a comprehensive survey and are working with a specialist partner in Robertson Cooper, Business Psychologists who specialise in mental health and wellbeing within organisations. The College will utilise Robertson Cooper's Asset Model Survey Tool, to develop strategies and actions from a solid evidence baseline and create aligned measures of success and impact.

The survey launch was originally planned for 26 January 2021, however, following further lockdown from 4 January 2021, which resulted in furlough for 180 colleagues, the survey has been postponed until mid-April 2021, with a view to launching earlier, if possible.

The decision to survey has full support of ELT/SMT and both Unions. The survey provides coverage of resilience, physical and psychological health, work relationships, job conditions, work-life balance and workload. It will allow the College to benchmark against other organisations and will also provide individuals with their own personalised and confidential 'Wellbeing Snapshot' report, immediately upon completion.

Reportage will be available at individual, Department/Faculty and organisational level thus enabling opportunities to identify patterns and trends which has not previously been possible.

3.5.2 Leadership and Management Development

The OD Team is the process of developing a 'next stage' Leadership and Management Development Agenda to align with the College strategic intent.

The starting point in designing the 'Agenda' will be building on the successful Leadership interventions OD facilitated to support the implementation and development phases of the 2018 leadership re-organisation.

The 'Agenda' will include a two stage design which will attend to observed current and future needs and ensure the capacity and capability of the leadership and management cohort, can continuously develop.

Stage one will focus on:

- Enhanced integration to create an experiential 'action project' focused approach.
- Design of a core (working title) 'Flourishing Foundations' programme to ensure consistency in awareness and skills regarding leader and manager 'Must Do's', 'How To's' and 'What If's'.

Stage Two will focus on:

- Creation of a 'City Leader and Manager' Capability Framework and Performance and Development Model.
- Defined City Leader and Manager Pathways of Development, which will be informed by diagnostic tools aligned to the Capability Model and Framework.

All development for managers and leaders will be carefully designed to centrally embed the College Purpose and Way to ensure continuous translation to actual practice. Whether explicit or implicit all developments will be deliberately designed to 'let learning flourish' through inspiration, excellence and innovation.

3.5.3 Future world of work

COVID-19 has reminded us that the future world of work will be very different. We have harvested valuable insights from staff throughout this process and have been able to identify patterns, trends and preferences. We aim to build on this intelligence by identifying 'key capabilities required to flourish in the future' and incorporate these within 'agile' people development plans which should ensure 'fit' and alignment within any future organisation design.

3.5.3 Coaching and Mentoring

A proposal which outlines the potential benefits a coaching centric approach to supporting others is currently being developed by OD. The benefits of Leader and Manager as Coach, Lecturer as Coach and Peer Coaching initiatives will be articulated.

OD is also supporting WorldSkills colleagues with the design and development of a blended peer coaching intervention.

3.5.4 Team Developments

In tandem with the aforementioned Leadership and Management Agenda, OD is currently working on designs for team interventions to help team leaders and managers engage better when people are at a distance and planning for the future of work and teaching is so important.

3.5.5 Student Executive Team Development

OD has supported the Student Executive Team through delivery of a series of workshops on working with teams at a distance, time management and goal setting sessions.

OD also helped facilitate coaching and mentoring support for individual members and sourced mental health training for the same group.

3.5.6 Enhancement of Qualifications

Given the circumstances, no new applications were accepted for the Enhanced Qualification Scheme.

Continued support is being provided to 14 colleagues who are continuing with Enhanced Study Programmes approved previously.

OD is currently reviewing the scheme and will propose some adaptation prior to inviting future applications.

3.5.7 Development Conversations

It was considered imprudent to fully implement Development Conversations during lockdown. Initial 'blueprints' have been designed to ensure Development Conversations can 'blend' with broader talent management considerations.

3.5.8 General Directorate and OD Team Development

Colleagues have been encouraged to create reflective journals to capture reflections on experience.

3 members of the OD Department were able to secure a pro bono arrangement to participate in 6 Team Conditions Training a diagnostic tool for Senior Leadership Teams developed by Harvard Professors.

One HR and one OD colleague were able to attend the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD) Conference and have cascaded learning within the respective areas.

The weekly Directorate meeting has also included regular 'action learning designs' where the teams collaborate on creating shared solutions to common challenges. Initial scoping is also underway to appraise relevant 'diagnostic profiling tools' in support of the wider College talent management and development agenda.

3.6 ONE CITY

To support ELT ambition for 'bringing the curtain down on the academic year' by celebrating our fantastic achievements and preparing for the uncertain future world of work and teaching, OD propose to host ONE CITY in the final week on June 2021.

4. Impact and implications

A balance between 'working on the planned' and 'working in emergent complexity' will be key to OD success in meeting objectives.

5. Hyperlink URLs
Connecting Our 'People to Our 'Purpose' During Uncertain Times

https://watch.wave.video/c568ce5f2bd020f2636ceed7

Staff Resource Hub

https://sites.google.com/view/city-check-in-cogc/home?authuser=0

Home Working Guide

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1xYdp08oPovYlJ2XLBz-RQAABMxNZqvQP/view

Co-creating Our Flourishing Future

https://spark.adobe.com/video/8jsR5hasItcLo