Mixed views on career satisfaction

Although just over two-thirds of members describe their job satisfaction as either good (61%) or excellent (9%), the remainder say it is unsatisfactory or poor. Added to this, some 37% of members say that career opportunities in college management have worsened.

These figures come from a survey of members conducted in February. They show that in the last year a third of members have sought new jobs in college management, and almost one in five have applied for posts outside it.

The figures give a very mixed view of how members perceive their careers. On the one hand, there is a seemingly high satisfaction level with current careers; but a fairly large number of members are also saying that career opportunities have worsened. So much so in fact that 19% have applied for posts and 13% expect to be working outside of college management within the next three years.

A clue as to where the problem lies can be seen from the reasons cited as to why a member would consider changing job. The main reason was not for a higher salary (the second most popular reason) or career progression, but for a better work–life balance. Commenting on the findings, ACM Head of Employment Relations, David Green, said: ‘There is clearly an undercurrent of dissatisfaction and it isn’t just down to pay. Our members already work excessive hours and suffer high levels of stress. These problems are clearly impacting on members’ own views about their jobs.’

Branch networking success

The 2005 branch networking event held in London was described as excellent by those who attended. Branch officers from across the country met for two days of discussion, activities and information sharing on topics such as restructuring, work–life balance and negotiating skills.

Branches wishing to receive a copy of the handouts should contact David Green on 0116 285 4055.

ACM gains recognition at Hull College

During her first month as regional officer for the north and north Wales, Pauline Rodmell has helped the ACM branch at Hull College to achieve recognition by the college corporation. This will enable ACM to:

- participate in the college’s consultation and negotiation procedures
- be party to collective agreements reached on behalf of employees
- attend joint negotiating committee (JNC) meetings comprising members of senior management and the lay officers from the other trade unions.

By attending and participating in JNC or similar meetings, ACM can help to influence the way pay, conditions and employment relations procedures are applied at the college.

If you would like to know more about gaining recognition at your college, visit the branches section of the ACM website: www.acm.uk.com or contact your regional officer.

Do you have a branch?

Members are usually better informed and have more influence at colleges where ACM has a branch. If you would like help in setting up a branch at your workplace, please contact your regional officer.

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ACM news May 2005
Photographs by Roy Peters Photography (cover, pages 2, 3, 4) and Photographic Solutions (page 13).
Edited and designed by thingswedo.
Printed by Blackmore Ltd.
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The ACM annual conference, sponsored by TES, was held on Thursday 10 March 2005 at the International Convention Centre in Birmingham. More than 200 delegates attended this one-day event branded ‘The successful college manager’.

Andrew Thomson, Chief Executive of the Learning and Skills Development Agency (LSDA), opened the conference with an excellent and thought-provoking speech on the future priorities of the new Quality Improvement Agency for lifelong learning.

Interactive management workshops were the highlight of the day, delivering practical advice on managing underperformance, how to lead staff well and how to transform a negative culture. Pensions surgeries and career development workshops provided delegates with information and guidance on a personal level.

During the afternoon a panel of speakers that included David Hunter, Chief Executive, Lifelong Learning UK; Sue Dutton, Deputy Chief Executive, Association of Colleges (AoC); John Rockett, Principal of Rotherham College of Arts and Technology; Daniel Khan (pictured above), Principal of Grimsby Institute; Geoff Daniels, Director of Funding and Strategy at the Learning and Skills Council (LSC); and Dan Taubman, NATFHE’s National Official for Education, took questions from delegates. Issues discussed and debated included funding, the Foster Review, agenda for change, pay, Lifelong Learning UK and the recent White Papers.
Continued from page 1.

A drinks reception followed the conference and Dorothy Jones, Principal of Southwark College and outgoing President of ACM, made the presidential handover to John Lowe, Academic Registrar of New College Durham. Two awards were made to Richard Atkins, former ACM President and Principal of Exeter College, and Chris Hughes, former Chief Executive of LSDA, to recognise outstanding contributions to ACM and the FE sector, respectively. The awards were designed and made by students and staff at the engineering department of Bradford College.

Sue Dutton, Deputy Chief Executive of the Association of Colleges, and John Rockett, Principal of Rotherham College of Arts and Technology, during the panel debate and discussion session.

Andrew Thomson addresses delegates in the keynote speech.
Dorothy Jones presents awards for outstanding contributions to the FE sector and ACM, respectively, to (above) Chris Hughes and Richard Atkins (left).

Caroline Harpur-Jantuah, leading the career development workshop for women managers sponsored by CEL.

Jim Fogarty facilitates a workshop on how to lead staff well.
ACM welcomes its new president, John Lowe. John, who is the academic registrar at New College Durham, commenced his year as president at the ACM annual conference 2005. For the benefit of members, we asked John to chronicle his involvement with ACM and to set out his agenda for the year ahead.

I joined ACM in 1993, when incorporation introduced new elements of uncertainty into the college sector. It didn’t take me long to discover that ACM was not then recognised to negotiate on behalf of business support managers, and I was not best pleased to be paying subscriptions for little apparent benefit. I took up the matter with John Mowbray, ACM’s General Secretary at the time, and he encouraged me to stand for Council and become involved in fighting for recognition.

I joined Council in 1995 and have continued to enjoy active involvement, chairing the Employment and Services Committee and participating in national negotiations with the AoC, through which ACM is now recognised on behalf of all its members in the college sector. I have no need to think up a radical agenda for my year as president: ACM is constantly evolving and the political context in which we work is subject to continuing flux. Throughout it will be my intention to improve services to our members and to ensure that our voice is respected by those making political decisions.

ACM is already in the midst of at least three very significant developments: we have just established a network of regional officers to improve recruitment and to support branches as well as continue our professional casework service; we have created a Wales Committee to encourage the already healthy activity of ACM in Wales; and we are seeking new premises in Leicester to house our excellent central team of staff. My intention is simply to support all those involved in these developments as fully as possible, so that ACM reaps the benefits we confidently expect from these initiatives.

As far as the political climate is concerned, the general election on 5 May might not bring about dramatic shifts of power but it is bound to shuffle the pack. It seems unlikely that the LSC, locally and nationally, will be allowed to carry on regardless. The value of national negotiations is questioned by some but, in my view, they are a prize worth fighting for, despite the trend towards local differences in implementation. The Foster Review of the future role of FE colleges could herald significant changes for the sector. I shall do my best to ensure that ACM is in a position to influence any such changes rather than simply respond to them.

In short, I look forward to a challenging year. I feel confident that with the backing and guidance of Council, staff and officers of the Association we shall rise to the challenges.
You should by now have received the member-get-member campaign literature and are hopefully in the throes of outlining the benefits of ACM membership to your colleagues. If you need more forms please contact us on 0116 275 5076 or download copies from the website www.acm.uk.com (there is a link in the What’s new? section on the home page).

Remember the campaign ends on 31 May 2005, so make sure you get your forms in as soon as possible to claim your vouchers. Don’t forget to put your name and voucher choice in the box provided on the application form.

New-improved Success for All website

Visit www.successforall.gov.uk to find out more about the change programme designed to transform the quality and responsiveness of the learning and skills sector.
Whether you are approaching retirement, moving to a new post, being made redundant, or simply leaving the college to do something else, you need to be aware of how this might impact on your Teachers’ Pension. This is because the Teachers’ Pension Scheme (TPS) has some rules that can catch out the unaware.

For example, salary changes in the last three years of pensionable employment will affect your final salary calculation. This is because your final average salary is calculated from the best 365 consecutive days (ignoring gaps) within the last three years.

The 10% rule

However, the salary used to calculate your retirement benefits may be restricted if your salary is increased by more than 10% plus the standard pay increase at any time during your last three years of pensionable employment before retirement (the 10% rule). Your employer can agree to pay the additional contribution required over and above the normal contributions, enabling you to receive retirement benefits calculated on the unrestricted salary, although this is often refused by colleges on the grounds of cost.

Unfortunately, this 10% rule is not widely known and can catch people out, particularly following a promotion.

There are some important points to note if you move to another post in the college or education sector. If this occurs within the last three years of your employment, then the rules affecting your final salary calculation will apply (see above).

If you move to a post with less responsibility at a lower salary you can protect your accrued pension rights. This is known as “stepping down” and must be done quickly as your employer will need to supply the necessary certification to Teachers’ Pensions within three months. It is also possible to continue to pay contributions based on your former, higher salary. Full details of both these options can be obtained from Teachers’ Pensions.

If you move to a part-time post, you must opt in to continued membership of the TPS. If you do not do so, membership will automatically be terminated.

There are also some special rules for anyone who is already drawing a Teachers’ Pension and is re-employed within teaching. Details can be found on the TPS website.

Increasing your pension

Of course, if you are in a position to do so, you can increase your pension through buying past added years or paying additional voluntary contributions (AVCs).

There are two ways to buy past added years, either by deduction from salary, or by payment of a lump sum. To qualify, you must still be in employment and have joined the scheme before you were age 55. You can buy extra years for any past period when you were not in service between the ages of 20 and 60, but you can’t buy future years.

If you wish to buy added years as a lump sum, for example from a redundancy payment, this must be done before your employment ends. It is also acceptable for your employer to pay part or all of the lump sum, and this would be a matter for negotiation.

AVCs are an alternative way to increase your benefits and are arranged through Prudential. Prudential invests your AVCs in company shares or government stocks and property. There is no guarantee of investment returns, but Prudential will send you a benefits statement, so that you can see how your investments are doing.
There are also a number of other insurance companies that offer free-standing AVC schemes. You can choose to pay your AVCs into a personal policy with any company of your choice. You can get more details direct from companies offering this kind of arrangement, or from an independent financial adviser.

From April 2006, there will also be the option for anyone to pay contributions to a personal or stakeholder pension, whether or not they belong to the TPS. (Currently, there are a number of restrictions.) This change is coming as part of a major alteration in the tax rules surrounding pensions, which sweep away many of the current limits.

Taking early retirement

If you are aged between 55 and 60, you may wish to take early retirement. However, your pension will be actuarially reduced (actuarially reduced benefits or ARBs). If you are still in pensionable employment when you apply for ARBs, you must obtain the consent of your employer. However, employers cannot withhold their consent for longer than six months from the date on which you submit your request. Subject to your employer’s consent, actuarially reduced pension benefits are paid from the day after the last day of pensionable employment. For those not in pensionable employment, they are paid not earlier than six weeks after the date of the application.

There is an ARB calculator available on the Teachers’ Pension website to give you a guide of what level of pension you might receive. However, please note that if you have had a large pay rise within the last three years, the 10% rule may apply (see above), and your pension may be lower than you expect.

Advice from ACM

Not surprisingly, ACM receives a number of enquiries from members about pensions. We have a new employment relations leaflet for members of the TPS that can be obtained from your regional officer or the ACM helpline. However, it is always advisable to obtain detailed advice direct from Teachers’ Pensions. Please refer to their website www.teacherspensions.co.uk or call them on 0845 606 6166.

ACM can also refer members to our pensions specialist, but please note that this service does not include financial advice. For the latter you are advised to contact an independent financial adviser.

Finally, please note that the Department for Education and Skills (DfES) is proposing a number of changes to the TPS that will take effect from September 2006. Please look out for further details.

STOP PRESS – Pensions news

The government has backed down on its attempt to force through changes to pension scheme regulations without consulting the trade unions. Changes being implemented to the Local Government Superannuation Scheme (LGSS) in April will be withdrawn. Changes to the Teachers’ Superannuation Scheme and LGSS will be subject to further discussion between unions and government ministers. ACM General Secretary, Peter Pendle, joined the general secretaries of other public sector unions to meet with Pensions Minister, Alan Johnson, David Milliband and Ian McCartney on 31 March in order to discuss the way forward.
Pay claim in England

The trade unions in England submitted a joint bid for the 2005/06 pay claim to the AoC in April. ACM’s Employment and Services Committee agreed that the approach for the 2005 pay claim should be based upon the following principles:

- Existing differentials for managers should at least be maintained.
- No manager should be paid less than the staff that they manage.
- Pay scales and spines for managers should be designed to support recruitment and retention and to close the pay gap with managers in other parts of the public sector.

The key components of the claim:

- a pay increase greater than the level of inflation (and greater than the School Teachers’ Pay Review Body recommendations) in order to narrow the pay gap between managers in colleges and those in sixth form colleges, schools and other parts of the public sector.
- the bottom of the management spine should be at least equal to the bottom of the management spine for sixth form colleges (£31,501 at September 2004) and the bottom of the leadership spine for schools (£32,205 at April 2004 and £33,249 recommended for September 2005).
- the job family pay bands for management to be used by all colleges, with colleges to have discretion as to where managers should be placed on the spine following job evaluation (see next bullet point).
- colleges should be encouraged to introduce job evaluation schemes for managers and all posts should be evaluated during the following 12 months.
- an entitlement to leadership and management training for all managers on an annual basis.
- a commitment by colleges to implement the working time directive.

ACM will also be suggesting that consideration should be given to moving back the pay date from 1 August to 1 April in the following year. This would allow colleges to have a much clearer picture of whether targets have been achieved before committing to pay awards. In the year of introduction it would also reduce the cost of the increase to the college budget by 66%. To compensate staff, the cost of living award would be increased accordingly and consolidated in future years, increasing salary levels and pension benefits in the longer term.

Reports on the progress of discussions on pay in England will be available on the ACM website.

Slow progress on harmonised pay spine

Although four out of five English colleges have implemented or improved upon last year’s 3% pay award, progress towards implementing a harmonised pay spine in England is painfully slow. A recent branch survey on the modernising pay arrangements found that only 13% of colleges had introduced a harmonised spine. In contrast, 54% of colleges were making slow progress and, in a further 12%, there was no prospect of a settlement at all. The remaining 17% said real progress was being made.

The most common hurdle cited by branches was the cost of harmonisation, followed by the failure to resolve issues relating to job evaluation. In some cases, branches said there was a genuine commitment to move to the harmonised spine, but uncertainties around future funding and/or problems with LSC clawback of current funding were holding matters up. However, some branches said colleges were using the implementation of job evaluation to slow the process down.

Although many branches reported negotiations as being stalled, some were taking the problem issues to a special working party, and others were working hard with colleagues from other unions to keep the negotiations on track.

Branches that are experiencing particular problems are urged to contact their regional officer.
Poor performance for PRP

According to a recent branch survey, only one in five colleges has introduced performance-related pay (PRP) for managers and, of these, none of our branches rate their schemes as good. Indeed, nearly half of the branches from colleges with PRP schemes said they were working poorly.

This is a sad indictment of PRP in practice, and perhaps the large majority of colleges that have no such scheme would be advised to keep it that way.

To be effective and avoid the common problems, a PRP system should be fair and understandable. In practice, this means schemes must be:

- transparent, based upon a formal system of measurable performance appraisal
- designed to encourage consistency and objectivity
- easily understood
- monitored and evaluated regularly
- fully negotiated with the trade unions.

They should also include an appeals procedure. Although the above are all achievable in principle, the practice can be very different. Acas warns that if not suitably designed and introduced sensibly, PRP can adversely affect employee relations by causing distrust and division.

Commenting on the survey, ACM Head of Employment Relations, David Green, said: ‘PRP is supposed to motivate staff and improve performance. But our survey suggests this isn’t happening. Since our members are already highly motivated, perhaps the value of some PRP schemes needs to be questioned.’

Nor should PRP schemes be seen as a way of implementing performance management under the last national pay settlement in England. The joint guidelines, issued as part of the modernising pay process, expressly state that performance management should not be used to determine pay or bonuses.

ACM has an employment relations leaflet on PRP that can be obtained from your regional officer or the ACM helpline.
A group representing ACM has met with the FE review team to put forward the views of the Association and written evidence has also been submitted. The ACM response will be available on the website and a summary will be included in the next issue of ACM news. The rest of this article describes how the review is being conducted.

**FE Review Advisory Group**
The group includes representatives from colleges, employers, unions, Regional Development Agencies (RDAs), schools, higher education and the voluntary and community sector. The Group’s role is to advise Sir Andrew Foster on the key issues that the review should be addressing and on the emerging themes and conclusions. It will meet four times during the life of the review. The first meeting took place in February and the second meeting was held on 11 April. A list of members is available on the review’s website (see below).

**Think pieces and research**
Think pieces will be commissioned on a number of high-level key themes to inform the review. They are being developed by experts and researchers in the learning and skills sector – each supported by a small group of FE principals. Each think piece will be between five and 10 pages in length. Twelve think pieces have been commissioned so far and are due to be delivered by the end of April. They will be published on the website at the end of the review.

**Stakeholder workshops**
Sixteen half-day meetings are being set up with small groups of stakeholders from right across the sector to ‘brainstorm’ and discuss the perceptions of the issues and opportunities. The primary objective of each workshop will be to gather evidence on the key issues affecting the FE sector now and going forward. Some workshops have taken place and the rest are scheduled throughout May.

**Meetings with national stakeholders**
Sir Andrew Foster has now personally completed 20 one-to-one meetings including meetings with the Adult Learning Inspectorate, Ofsted, the Advanced Leadership Programme, AoC, the Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA), NIACE and HM Treasury regarding the Leitch Review. In total, the review team plans to meet around 100 representative organisations.

**College visits**
The FE review team will visit different types of colleges in different geographical areas across the country. Sir Andrew Foster will attend a number of these in person. He has undertaken his first – a visit to Waltham Forest College. The team now has a further nine college visits scheduled, of which Sir Andrew will be attending four including Newcastle College, Wirral College and Dearne Valley College.

**Written evidence**
Written evidence from colleges and key stakeholders has been invited against the key strategic questions. Respondents are able to reply in writing or by using an online response facility available on the FE review website.

**Opinion polls**
Polls are to be commissioned as part of the evidence-gathering process.

**Next steps**
Sir Andrew has been asked to report to the secretary of state and chair of the LSC by the autumn. He plans to set out his early thoughts at the LSDA summer conference on 21 June.

Visit the FE review website at [www.dfes.gov.uk/furthereducation/ferview](http://www.dfes.gov.uk/furthereducation/ferview)
Government rejects a unified qualifications system

The publication of the White Paper 14–19 education and skills was a disappointment for the sector and the education profession more widely. Hopes were high following the work of the Tomlinson group that we might finally get a qualifications and curriculum framework based on the needs of learners and the wisdom and experience of the profession. The Association lost no time in expressing its concern about:

- the rejection of a unified curriculum and qualifications framework and the implications for vocational education. We are not confident that the proposals in the White Paper for a separate vocational route will lead to the excellent, highly regarded, vocational education that everyone agrees the UK needs.
- the failure to increase the proportion and status of in-course assessment and the failure to introduce chartered assessors.
- the continued emphasis on the academic/vocational divide with GCSE and A-level ‘as the cornerstones of the new system’ at the expense of vocational education.
- the absence of a ladder of progression at Entry level and Level 1.

The Association will be working with other organisations, including teachers’ associations and the Institute of Education, to explore with ministers and DfES officials what the educational arguments against Tomlinson were and why many of the proposals around a unified system and changes to assessment were not adopted. We are also working with QCA and other teachers’ associations to develop models of excellent vocational education and to identify what support is needed in terms of resources, staff expertise, facilities and relationships with employers and the labour market. We will keep members posted on developments.

Redundancy rulings should prompt restructuring rethink

Two recent rulings on collective redundancy consultation with trade unions could have a major impact on the way restructuring is handled in future.

A recent European Court of Justice (ECJ) ruling (Junk v. Kuhnel) has made it clear that consultation with trade unions must be completed before any dismissal notices for redundancy are issued. This is a change from the previously accepted practice and, in effect, means that colleges can no longer start the process of dismissing staff while consultations are still underway.

In ruling on this matter, the ECJ also stated that Article 2 of the EU Directive on Collective Redundancies ‘imposed an obligation to negotiate’ on employers. This reinforces the Court of Appeal’s judgement that the law ‘imposes an absolute obligation on the employer to consult meaningfully over proposed redundancies’ (Susie Radin Ltd v. GMB & ors (2004) ICR 893).

Perhaps of even more significance is the outcome of Hardy v. Tourism South East. Here, the Employment Appeals Tribunal (EAT) issued a decision which serves as a reminder that substantial contract changes and offers to re-engage on different terms should also be taken into account when considering whether the obligation to consult arises.

The EAT confirmed that the collective consultation provisions in section 188 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations Act apply even when fewer than 20 employees are likely to be dismissed as redundant because the employer intends to offer alternative employment to the majority of employees. The rationale is that the employer is still ‘proposing to dismiss’, even if alternative employment is offered to some or all employees which the employer is confident will be acceptable. In Hardy v. Tourism South East, the proposed alternative employment involved a substantial change to terms and conditions and, therefore, a termination of the existing contract.

Taken together with the current act, these rulings mean that colleges will be obliged to consult meaningfully with trade unions, with a view to reaching agreement, over any restructure that could result in 20 or more redundancies, or in any circumstances where at least 20 staff might be offered new contracts; and that the process of dismissing or re-employing can only start once the consultations are complete.

Clearly, as a matter of good practice, a college should consult with all the appropriate trade unions over a restructuring, even when the numbers affected are below the legal threshold. But experience shows that in, many cases, colleges try to present unions with a fait accompli. Now, however, ACM and other unions will find it easier to challenge sham consultations.
Electoral Reform Services, independent scrutineers, have submitted the following report of voting in the election dated 21 February 2005, for which nominations closed at 5pm on Friday 26 November 2004. A ballot was required for the manager category and the closing date for the return of ballot papers was 5pm on Friday 18 February 2005.

Dear Mr Pendle

ACM council elections 2005–2008

Our report of voting in the above election, which closed at 5pm on Friday 18 February 2005, is as follows:

Manager category

| Number of ballot papers despatched | 3,280 |
| Number of ballot papers returned | 612  |
| Number of invalid (blank/spoil) papers | 6  |
| Therefore, number of valid votes counted | 606  |

Result: 6 to elect

- Reg Chapman 328 ELECTED
- Roger Culpin 274 ELECTED
- Robert Emery 246 ELECTED
- Mel Eveleigh 343 ELECTED
- Mike James 338 ELECTED
- Robin Landman 160
- Rajinder Mann 232
- Eric Morgan 306 ELECTED

President Elect 2005 and President 2006: 1 to elect

- Daniel Khan ELECTED UNOPPOSED

Principal category (3 vacancies):

- Stella Mbubaegbu ELECTED UNOPPOSED
- John Dishman ELECTED UNOPPOSED

1 vacancy remaining

National representatives (3 vacancies):

- David Hughes ELECTED UNOPPOSED

2 vacancies remaining

The ballot papers will be stored in accordance with the requirements of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 as amended by the Trade Union Reform and Employment Rights Act 1993.

As scrutineers appointed in accordance with Section 49 of the Trade Union and Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992 (as amended), we are satisfied as to each of the relevant matters specified in subsection 52(2) with regard to the election. The following points should also be noted:

1) The person appointed under section 51A to carry out the storage and counting of voting papers was Electoral Reform Services Limited.

2) The person appointed under Section 51A to carry out the distribution of voting papers was Electoral Reform Services Limited.

3) A copy of the register of voters (as at the relevant date) was examined in accordance with Section 49(3). The examination took place at our own instance and did not reveal any matter that should be brought to the attention of the trade union.

We would draw your attention to Sections 52(4), 52(5) and 52(6). 52(4) requires that a copy of this report be published and made available to all members of ACM within a three-month period from today. This does not mean that everyone has to be notified individually.

Yours sincerely

Melanie Adams
Ballot Adviser
Pay negotiations in Wales

Negotiations on the pay increase from April 2005 continue. ACM has submitted a claim together with the other trade unions in Wales.

The key components of the claim in respect of managers:

- a pay increase greater than the level of inflation (and greater than the School Teachers’ Pay Review Body recommendations) in order to narrow the pay gap between managers in colleges and those in sixth form colleges, schools and other parts of the public sector

- the bottom of the management spine should be at least equal to the bottom of the management spine for sixth form colleges (£31,501 at September 2004) and the bottom of the leadership spine for schools (£32,205 at April 2004 and £33,249 recommended September 2005)

- a unified pay spine for managers to be used by all colleges, with colleges to have discretion as to where managers should be placed on the spine following job evaluation (see next bullet point)

- colleges should be encouraged to introduce job evaluation schemes for managers and all posts should be evaluated during the following 12 months

- an entitlement to leadership and management training for all managers on an annual basis

- a commitment by colleges to implement the working time directive.

In order to take the claim forward, joint working groups have been established and General Secretary, Peter Pendle, is leading negotiations for the staff side in the group discussing management pay. Good progress is being made and further reports will be posted on the ACM website.

ACM Wales spring conference

The ACM Wales spring conference ‘Managing FE in Wales: what next?’ was a major success. Over 50 delegates attended the conference and a further event is being planned for the autumn. The morning session focused on practical leadership and management skills. Dr Paul Thomas from the University of Glamorgan opened proceedings with a session entitled ‘Strategy in practice: gardening may be the best option!’, in which he questioned the benefits of longer-term strategic planning. Strangely, most of the principals in attendance doubted his approach, while the managers felt it had some merits! ACM National Council member and former principal, Reg Chapman, followed Paul and outlined how to change college culture.

The afternoon session focused on post-16 education policy in Wales. Dr John Graystone, Chief Executive of fforwm, outlined the concerns held by his members, especially in relation to funding. Sheila Drury, Chair of ELWa, described the changes that will take place over the next 12 months, as ELWa becomes part of the Assembly Government. The final speaker was Jane Davidson, Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning. Besides welcoming the establishment of ACM’s Wales Committee, Jane outlined Assembly policy for post-16 education as well as indicating that funding would be available for the final year of the three-year programme to bring college salaries into line with those paid in schools.

New committee for Wales

ACM’s newly established Wales Committee had its first meeting on 11 February in Cardiff. Welsh Assembly Minister, Jane Davidson, launched the Committee at ACM’s spring conference. Fiona Rawlings from Coleg Gwent was appointed as the inaugural chair and David Hughes from Yale College was appointed as vice chair. At its first meeting the Committee approved its terms of reference, received reports on pay negotiations in Wales and the caseworker reorganisation, appointed delegates to the Wales TUC conference and agreed a programme of work for the next 12 months.

There are still a few vacancies on the Committee. Meetings will be held three times a year in south, mid and north Wales on a rotating basis. Travel expenses are paid and members should be able to access paid facility time to attend the meetings. If you are interested in becoming a member of the Committee please e-mail Peter Pendle at peterpendle@acm.uk.com

Fiona Rawlings, Deputy Director, Coleg Gwent and Chair, ACM Wales Committee