MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 8 MAY 2019

Present: Karl Leydecker (Chair), Debbie Dyker, Richard Wells, Tracey White, Brian Paterson, Kenneth Sadler, Laura Benvie, (observer), Frederik Pedersen, Marion Campbell, Owen Cox, Helen Martin, Catherine Cook (Clerk),

Apologies: Caroline Inglis, Peter McGeorge, Linda Robertson, Alan Speight

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 6 February 2019

1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 6 February 2019 were approved subject to the following amendment: ‘2.4.2 Professor Anderson noted that UCU had repeatedly requested a decision about the University policy on whether members of staff have the right to use the lecture materials of another member of staff without permission, and without giving due credit to the source of the materials. He requested confirmation of the procedure for filing a grievance about plagiarism in teaching materials.

ACTION: Debbie Dyker to follow up.’

2. MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Lecture Capture

2.1.1 The committee noted that there was a meeting scheduled with Peter McGeorge to discuss this further.

3. STRATEGIC INVESTMENT RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN

3.1 The committee noted the paper which provided a brief update on the progress made towards recruiting to the Strategic Investment posts. The posts were currently being advertised, the majority with a closing date of 12 May and a small number closing on 26 May. The paper also referenced other posts and outlined examples of support requested to bolster the strategic appointments. Where additional support had not been requested, Heads of School had indicated that they could make any necessary provision from within their existing resource.

3.2 Brian Paterson commented that in some areas available resource may have already been placed in other groups and expressed concern that some managers and academics did not fully understand the lack of resource in Professional Services.

3.3 Brian Paterson also noted, in relation to resource, that some papers for this PNCC had been circulated late at night which was not acceptable, and this was acknowledged.

3.4 It was noted that the University did not want to recruit 60 additional staff that could not be supported and was working to provide appropriate support. All agreed that it was very positive that the University was recruiting again.

4. REWARD STRATEGY WORKING GROUP UPDATE

4.1 The committee noted the paper which provided an update on the work of the Reward Strategy Working Group and sub groups.
4.2 Tracey White said that the report summarised what had been achieved so far, for example, the launch of the new employee benefits provider, Sodexo. This included an Employee Assistance Programme which would replace PamAssist, however there would be a period of overlap for this service. The Principal’s Excellence Awards had been launched with 30 awards being presented in June. The Car leasing scheme would not be taken forward because of a potential impact on the borrowing ability of the University and lowering of the benefit associated with such schemes.

4.3 Work was ongoing on pay scales and a paper was being presented to SMT, however the proposals would need to take in account the national pay offer. Modelling work had been done around the cost of moving to a 35 hour working week and a paper would be presented to SMT in the first instance. Some members of staff, including union representatives, were visiting Edinburgh University to learn more about different working patterns and would share feedback after the visit.

4.4 Frederik Pedersen said that he felt the modelling needed to be expanded and it was agreed he would provide more detail outwith the meeting.

ACTION: Frederik Pedersen to provide more detail on modelling required for 35 hour week to Kenny Bruce.

4.5 There would be further consideration on how to take a review of Promotions forward.

4.6 Owen Cox noted that there had been very positive discussions with the Staff Development Team, Clare Trembleau and Max Hope-Stone Bell, about development and career progression for grades 1-4 staff and he wished to extend his thanks to them. This was seconded by Brian Paterson.

4.7 There was discussion around when the next meeting of the Reward Strategy Working Group would be, and it was agreed that one would be arranged.

ACTION: Tracey White to arrange for meeting of Reward Strategy Working Group

4.8 There was discussion around the proposed uplift in the national pay offer and that this would address the impact of the Voluntary Living Wage on the University pay scales in the short term. There was also comment that the national negotiations were based on a 35 hour week and not 37.5 hours.

5. WORKLOAD WORKING GROUP

5.1 The committee noted that this paper had been delayed due to staff absence and would be circulated after the meeting.

ACTION: PNCC Clerk to circulate paper to committee - COMPLETED

6. HR CASEWORK

6.1 The committee noted the paper which provided a summary of the statistics on formal casework which HR had supported in the year to April 2019.

6.2 This paper had been written as a result of the unions flagging concern regarding bullying and harassment casework and the outcomes of these complaints.

6.3 Helen Martin noted thanks for the paper. There was then discussion around the percentage of disciplinary cases that were upheld compared to allegations of bullying and harassment. Helen Martin also commented on the length of time that some cases took, given the stresses on both parties.

6.4 It was agreed that management and the unions would look at the process together, not the detail of individual cases which was obviously confidential, but timelines. Debbie Dyker and
Tracey White were also concerned about the length of time some cases took to conclude, but cases were never straightforward.

6.5 Karl Leydecker noted that he had been involved in cases in a previous role and he felt it was very important to look at lessons learned.

6.6. Brian Paterson also noted the grievance cases and the importance of supporting staff afterwards.

7. DATA TRANSFER TO HONORARY/EMERITUS STAFF

7.1 The committee noted the paper which made recommendations for policy and procedural changes that sought to balance legitimate data access with legal requirements and resource constraints. The committee noted the recommendations made to reduce risk to an acceptable level and to provide a clear and consistent approach across the University.

7.2 Frederik Pedersen noted the proposal for a short life working group asked that this group should include a member of Academic staff who understood the importance of this access.

ACTION: Debbie Dyker to raise composition of working group with Iain Gray and Brian Henderson - COMPLETED

8. CODE OF PRACTICE ON RESEARCH EXCELLENCE (REF) PREPARATIONS

8.1 The committee noted the paper which presented the final draft of the Institutional Code of Practice on REF preparations. Marion Campbell noted that all institutions were required to submit a Code of Practice. Work had started on this in autumn 2018, with consultation through Senate, Research Policy Committee, open meetings with staff and other formal consultation. The draft integrated all the suggested changes and the revised document would be presented to Senate for approval and submission to the Funding Council by 7 June.

8.2 Helen Martin noted and thanked Marion Campbell for the paper. There was then discussion around the process for staff whose work sat across more than one unit of assessment and the linking of the 13 point scale to criteria. Marion Campbell explained the process and the committee agreed that Marion Campbell could add some clarification to the draft prior to submission to Senate.

ACTION: Marion Campbell - COMPLETED

9. CARRY OVER OF ANNUAL LEAVE

9.1 The committee noted the paper which requested clarification of the Annual Leave Regulations with particular reference to the clause concerning carryover of unused leave to the following year. Brian Paterson expressed concern at the perceived difference of application, with some areas sticking rigidly to 5 days carry over, while others were more flexible

9.2 Debbie Dyker noted that the issue was the practice of leave carry over, rather than the principle, and the advice was to be flexible. It was important to focus on the inconsistencies and address those directly rather than seek to amend the regulations.

9.3 It was agreed that HR would produce a guidance note and encourage managers to monitor leave throughout the year to ensure people were taking leave.

ACTION: HR to produce guidance note on annual leave - COMPLETED

9.4 Brian Paterson also noted that the regulations still stated that annual leave should not be granted during term time and some areas still stuck to that rigidly. This would be addressed in the guidance which would be followed up with a session for managers and HR partners.

9.5 There was discussion that the 5 days carry over had been implemented in the change to terms and conditions agreed in 2015.
9.6 Debbie Dyker noted that this would be covered by the harmonisation discussions.

10. CASH ADVANCES POLICY
10.1 The committee noted the changes to the Cash Advances Policy.
10.2 Clarification was requested to ensure that any deduction from salary would not be subject to tax and National Insurance deductions
ACTION: Check with finance – HR - COMPLETED
After the meeting finance confirmed that tax and national insurance would not be deducted.

11. POLICIES
11.1 The committee noted the revised Consultation on Avoidance of Redundancy (JCCRA) Policy.
11.2 The policy had been reviewed by the JCCRA Policy Review group and the version presented included the changes proposed.
11.3 It was highlighted that the review group had met and agreed these changes prior to the circulation of the new Change Management Toolkit. The unions therefore requested time to look at the toolkit and the new policies and their interaction with the JCCRA Policy.
ACTION: Further time allowed to enable consideration of the JCCRA policy in relation to the Change Management Toolkit
11.4 Everyone agreed that the review had been a very good process and a lot of progress had been made with very positive and useful discussion and agreement.
11.5 Brian Paterson thanked Marion Campbell for her positive comments.

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
12.1 NEW OCCUPATION HEALTH PROVIDER TRANSITION PROCESS
12.1.2 Concerns were expressed around the request for the transfer of data to the new Occupational Health (OH) provider and that explicit consent had not been sought for the transfer of records.
12.1.3 Debbie Dyker noted that appropriate advice had been sought on the process for this transfer to the new provider, however HR would now double check this.
ACTION: HR to check again with Data Protection Officer re transfer of OH records - COMPLETED
12.2 Owen Cox welcomed Laura Benvie, the new Unison Environmental Officer, who was attending the committee as an observer.
12.3 DIGNITY AT WORK
12.3.1 Owen Cox noted that he had had feedback from staff regarding dignity in the community, and that many staff did not feel valued e.g. cleaners
12.3.2 Debbie Dyker acknowledged that the points that Owen Cox made regarding dignity at work were very important.
12.4 UASLAS
Owen Cox said he and Brian Paterson had had a very positive meeting with David Beattie and Craig Sherrit regarding the UASLAS pension scheme and wanted to note thanks to them both, and for the work they and their teams had done on this.
12.5 Brian Paterson added that there were some UASLAS items that had not been followed up and it was now appropriate to reopen discussion regarding these.
12.6 PNCC CONVENOR

12.6.1 It was noted that this was the final meeting of PNCC for the 2018-19 academic year and that the Convenorship for the next academic year would fall to UCU, who would then be able to co-opt an additional member to take the place of whoever was Convenor.

12.7 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

12.7.1 The next meeting would be in September.