UNIVERSITY OF ABERDEEN

PARTNERSHIP NEGOTIATING AND CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE

MINUTE OF MEETING HELD ON 6 FEBRUARY 2019

Present: Professor P Hannaford (Convenor), Mrs E Argo, Ms C Cook (Clerk), Mrs D Dyker, Professor R Wells, Mrs T White, Mr B Paterson, Mr K Sadler, Professor D Anderson, Mrs L Robertson (observer), Professor Alan Speight, Dr F Pedersen

Apologies: Mrs C Inglis, Professor P McGeorge, Professor Marion Campbell, Mr O Cox, Mrs D Dyker, Dr H Martin

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2018
   1.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 17 December 2018 were approved.

2. MATTERS ARISING
   2.1 Workload Review Group
      2.1.1 The committee noted that the Workload Review Group was being set up.
   2.2 Promotion Committee
      2.2.1 The request by the unions to have union representatives at Promotion committees would be followed up by Professor Hannaford.
   2.3 Professional Services Nomenclature
      2.3.1 No alternative names for ‘Professional Services’ had been proposed.
      2.3.2 Mr Paterson suggested that perhaps nomenclature could be linked with funding units.
   2.4 Lecture Capture
      2.4.1 Mrs White said that the Lecture Capture FAQ’s were nearly finalised and would be issued in due course.
      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: Mrs Dyker to follow up.

2.5 EU Settlement Costs
   2.5.1 The government had announced that it would refund the £65 Settlement fee. The University had, prior to this, agreed to cover this cost and would therefore now recoup any fees already paid to staff. If this £65 was not recouped, it would be regarded as a ‘benefit in kind’ and there would be tax implications for staff and the University.
3. **STAFF EXCELLENCE AWARD SCHEME**

3.1 The committee noted the paper and the intention to launch the scheme in February for an award ceremony in May.

3.2 Mr Paterson commented that the Unite union welcomed the scheme and it was interesting to see the Professional Awards coming forward. There was discussion around how potentially unattainable some of the awards were. A query was raised about where the money to fund the scheme was coming from and how sustainable it would be in the longer term. Professor Hannaford said it would be a challenge to find the money but it was important to do so.

3.3 Dr Pedersen referred to an article on best practice and it was suggested this should be fed into the Reward Working group.

4. **CHANGEMANAGEMENT TOOLKIT**

4.1 Mrs White updated the committee on the development of a Change Management Toolkit which would be reviewed through Policy Review Group (PRG), Partnership Negotiating Consultative Committee (PNCC), etc. This toolkit would pull together all the current relevant policies. It would be useful to have a Restructuring Policy and create guidance for managers and staff around expectations when managing change, to ensure more transparency. The Severance policy would also be part of that toolkit.

4.2 It was confirmed that the toolkit would confirm to ACAS best practice.

4.3 Concern was expressed about how the toolkit would address procedures not being followed and it was confirmed that there was an appeals process. There was comment about the use of settlement agreements.

4.4 It was noted that the Toolkit would be available for review by unions.

4.5 There was discussion around how teaching in one school had ripple effects in other schools, and reassurance was given that the Head of School would be expected to think through the implications of any change. The toolkit was about the principles of change management.

5. **HEAD OF SCHOOL PROTOCOL**

5.1 The committee noted the new Head of School protocol. The University was currently seeking new Heads of school for the Business School, the School of Language, Literature, Music and Visual Culture, and the School of Biological Sciences and the protocol was being followed for these appointments.

5.2 Dr Pedersen asked if the unions would be consulted. It was noted that the unions would not be consulted but every member of staff in the school would be consulted. Professor Hannaford commented that the unions were free to feed in concerns at any time.

5.3 Professor Hannaford would email staff in the school to inform them of the process and Mrs White had regular catch ups with the union reps and could inform then.

5.4 There was discussion around why Heads of School were appointed for 5 years and it was noted that this was at the request of the Principal. It took time to embed in the role and it was felt that 3 years was too short to be fully effective.

5.5 Professor Anderson asked for his concern that 5 years in a Head of School post was too long, to be noted. Professor Speight said that 5 years was not out of line with sector and had also had a bearing in relation to the planning horizon used in schools.
5.6 The question was also raised as to why Heads of Sections were not also rotated every 3 to 5 years, as there was potential inequality of opportunity when the grading of the role was identical.

6. POLICIES
6.1 The committee noted the Data Protection, Record Management and Information Security policies. All policies had been reviewed by the Policy Review Group.
All three policies were approved by the committee.

7. ANY OTHER BUSINESS
7.1 Surprise was expressed at the number apologies from management and the question raised as to whether the meeting should have been postponed. Professor Hannaford commented that judgement had to be made as he was trying to keep everything moving and another member of management had been expected to attend.
7.2 There was discussion around the value management placed on the meeting and concern that lack of management attendance was perhaps related to the dilution of the union’s role in institutions. Professor Hannaford explained that was exactly the reason that the meeting proceeded.

8. Professor Hannaford, on behalf of the committee, wished Mrs Argo very Good wishes for her retirement and thanked her for her long service to the University.

9. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING
The date of the next meeting is the 8 May 2019.