MINUTES OF MEETING HELD HELD ON 12 SEPTEMBER 2018

Present: Professor P Hannaford (Convenor), Mrs C Inglis, Mrs E Argo, Ms C Cook (Clerk), Mrs D Dyker, Professor P McGeorge, Professor R Wells, Mr D Dawson, Mrs T White, Mr O Cox, Dr H Martin, Mr B Paterson,

Apologies: Professor M Campbell, Mr K Sadler

1. MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 16 MAY 2018

1.1 The Minutes of the meeting held on 16 May 2018 were approved subject to a revision of the following:

5.2 Confirmation of which committee Policy Review Group reported to – see minute 2.2.1 below.

1.2 Mrs Inglis outlined the process for agreeing minutes and commented that ideally when the minutes were presented to PNCC for approval, that any queries and comments had already been resolved.

2. MATTERS ARISING

2.1 Minute 2.2.1 JCCRA Policy

2.1.1 The committee noted that the JCCRA Policy Review group had met twice and would take the time required to review the policy.

2.1.2 The committee noted the agreement that there would be no implementation of the "or shorter" wording until the ongoing JCCRA policy review had concluded.

2.2 Clarify role of the Policy Review Group

2.2.1 The committee noted that the Policy Review Group reported to PNCC and that the policies reviewed by the PRG were presented to PNCC for approval.

2.3 Lecture Capture Policy

2.3.1 Minute 8.4.1. The committee noted that UCU had registered a Failure to Agree regarding the Lecture Capture Policy. UCU respectfully disagreed with the management position that this was not a matter for negotiation at PNCC and had recently written a letter to the VP Education on the subject of Lecture Capture.

2.4 Minute 8.5.1. The unions requested that HR ensure that Heads of School/Section were made aware of the facilities time available for each representative, to facilitate reasonable workload
adjustment.

**ACTION:** HR to ensure Heads of School/Section aware of allocated facilities time - Completed

2.5 Minute 8.7 Mr Dawson commented that UCU, and Mr Dawson would anticipate all the Trade unions, welcomed that a day’s pay would now be calculated at 1/365th within the Purchase of Annual Leave Policy and trusted that other issues with that policy would be addressed without the need for policy change.

2.6 Minute 8.1.3 Car Parking. The committee noted that the University had spent £10K more than the income from parking charges and it was suggested that an alternative supplier should be sourced. It was noted that the Library car park needed repairing and Mrs Inglis agreed to raise this through the Capital Committee. There was also discussion about whether it was appropriate to charge for the 9U bus.

Action: Mrs Inglis to take Library car park resurfacing as separate issue - Completed

2.7 Minute 8.2.3 Court Briefing. The unions thanked the University Secretary for the solution found to the court briefing issue.

3. REMIT AND COMPOSITION

3.1 The committee noted discrepancies with the remit presented in the paper and the wording within the Partnership Working and Recognition Agreement (PWRA). It was agreed the remit within in the PWRA took precedence but that as there was no longer a Prospect union representative, that the PNCC would reduce from 7 to 6 management reps and 7 to 6 trade union reps. The composition had changed and would be updated to reflect this. The committee noted the 1st November 2018 renewal date of the PWRA but also noted that it had not been agreed until May 2018. It was agreed by the campus trade unions that Mr Dawson UCU, would take the role of Vice Convenor for the PNCC meetings to May 2019. PNCC noted that the Convenor and Vice Convenor should approve in advance, requests for any advisors attending a meeting of the committee.

**ACTION:** HR to update PNCC remit - Completed

4. PENSION UPDATE

4.1 UASLAS

4.1.1 The committee noted a paper providing an update on the UASLAS consultation on proposed changes to the scheme. Mr Sherritt said that UASLAS had a £9M deficit which was a significant cost to the University. There had been consultation with staff during June and July on options for amending the scheme and 18 sessions with Mercer had been made available to staff. 1600 packs had been issued and 300 had been returned. Three options were put forward for consultation Defined Benefit, Defined Contribution and a Hybrid scheme. The vote was clear with 90% of those who voted, voting to retain a Defined Benefits scheme. A proposal had been put to Operating Board which had been accepted and the proposal would now got to Court for approval. The only change from the consultation was a slight amendment to propose to increase the indexation cap for CPI cap to 3% instead of 2.5%. If approved the changes to the scheme would be implemented from 1 Jan 2019.

4.1.2 Mr Paterson noted that Mr Beattie and Mr Sherritt had been willing to take the unions views and counter proposals positively and wanted to thank them for this. This was seconded by Mr Cox. Once the recommendations from the consultation have been formally approved, the
unions and management wanted to look at how UASLAS would operate moving forward.

4.1.3 Mrs Inglis said she wished to replicate the thanks to the unions and that it had been an excellent example of partnership working.

4.2 USS

4.2.1 The committee noted the paper on an update on the 31 March 2017 valuation and the position following the establishment of the Joint Expert Panel (JEP). Mrs Dyker commented that if the Joint Expert Panel did not deliver an acceptable proposal, then USS, as they were required to do, had already put arrangements in place for changes to employer and employee contributions over the next 18 months, which if implemented, would result in a very significant increase in employer costs. Those present were aware of the University's financial situation and the additional £5.1M cost would impact on staffing costs. The changes would also result in an increase in staff contribution rates. Unite and Unison noted that despite both having members who contribute to the USS, the formal consultation process did not require them to be involved and therefore thanked the University for the opportunity to be consulted locally. The unions would encourage staff to participate in the consultation.

5. REWARD STRATEGY WORKING GROUP (RSWG)

5.1 The committee received an update on the work of the Reward Strategy Working Group (Financial and Non-Financial Benefits sub group). The subgroup had reviewed the Employee Benefits and Counselling Service. The uptake of the current Employee Advantages scheme was small. It was a clunky process requiring the purchase of prepaid cards in order to obtain discount. Proposals had been put forward for procuring an alternative employee benefit provider and the introduction of a salary sacrifice car lease scheme. This had been progressed in tandem with Operating Board (OB) because of the timing of the meetings and OB had agreed to take the proposals forward. It was good to see this progress resulting from the RSWG.

5.2 Mr Dawson commented that the main concern that UCU had regarding this was the Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) and the quality of the service provided. Mr Dawson noted that whilst PAM Assist was listed as a member of the UK EAP Association, ‘Perkbox’ (used as an example provider) was not. The committee noted UCU's suggestion that the "Buyer's Guide" produced by UK EAP Association should be instrumental in any procurement exercise.

5.3 There was discussion around the process of communication with subgroups and Dr Martin requested that sub group members see any report before it was presented to PNCC. Mrs Dyker noted that whilst the subgroup or working group may not have seen the paper presented to PNCC, they should have been aware of the contents of the paper i.e. the outcomes from the subgroup, what had been agreed and what was proposed for going forward.

5.4 Mrs Dyker commented that there would be an appropriate procurement process for any new employee benefit scheme including all the benefits, not just the EAP.

5.5 There was discussion around the Framework Agreement and that it was a large topic, which was why there were sub groups and why specific areas had been chosen as the priority focus.

5.6 Mr Paterson said he was pleased to see the output from the subgroup, it was a positive way forward and he was happy to see the University progress this, taking into account UCU
feedback and that any problems would be addressed.

5.7 Mr Hannaford summarised that in principle there was agreement to the proposals and Mrs Inglis commented that now there was agreement this would progress through the University procurement process.

6. STAFF SURVEY

6.1 The committee noted a paper on the response patterns to the 2018 staff survey and associated stress questionnaire. Mrs Dyker said the paper was just high level information at this stage. Work was ongoing on the outcomes of the survey and developing an action plan. There would be opportunity for the Trade Union’s to meet and see in more detail the outcomes of the survey. Mrs Dyker said that it was planned that all the feedback from the survey would feed into the Reward Strategy Working Group and that the information on reward would be available quickly to feed into the RSWG.

7. SECURITY STAFF

7.1 Mr Paterson said he would like it noted that this paper had been submitted, but in the interests of keeping the agenda to time and as there was to be discussion specifically with the managers of the area the paper could be taken offline. There would be further discussion and the issue progressed. Mr Paterson said some of his comments on general malaise were related to this.

8. SCHOOL OF ENGINEERING

8.1 Mr Paterson said he would like it noted that this paper had been submitted, but as there was to be discussion specifically with the managers of the area it could be taken offline.

9. TRADE UNION FACILITIES TIME REPORTING

9.1 The committee noted the paper on the Trade union facilities time reporting and the action the University had taken to meet the reporting requirements. Mrs Dyker said it was an update on the information collated for the year 1 April 2017 to 31 March 2018, and the information that had been reported on the government website and University website. This would also be published in the Annual report.

9.2 There was discussion around how much detail on facilities time the unions would report, and all the unions stated that what they reported during work time would be regarded as duties not activities.

9.3 Mr Dawson commented that he felt that collectively the Trade Unions were great value for money for the University.

10. BRITISH SIGN LANGUAGE POLICY/ACTION PLAN

10.1 The committee noted the policy and the action plan and the unions commented that they were content with it.

11. POLICIES

11.1 Eye Protection Policy

11.1.1 The committee approved the revisions to the policy. There was some discussion about the
discretion for local Safety Advisers to apply the policy in a pragmatic manner.

11.2 Policy on Employment (Immigration)

11.2.1 The committee approved the revisions to the policy and noted the change in name from Employment of Overseas Nationals to Policy on Employment (Immigration).

11.2.2 There was discussion around the payment of Indefinite Leave to Remain (ILR) fees which UCU felt were a big burden on staff who were sometimes unaware they would need to pay them.

11.2.3 Mrs Dyker said that there was an agreed institutional policy position that the University did not pay ILR costs because they were personal to the individual, however the University did offer an interest free loan for staff applying for this. The University did pay Tier 2 Visa costs as these were specific to the individual’s role in the University. European Union individuals were treated in similar manner. Mrs Inglis commented that ILR did not form part of staff terms and conditions as applying for UK citizenship was personal choice.

ACTION: Make staff aware of the availability of a loan for ILR. – HR - Completed

11.3 Recruitment and Selection Policy

11.3.1 The committee approved the revisions to the policy.

11.4 Safeguarding Policy

11.4.1 The committee approved the policy

11.4.2 The Unite and Unison unions thanked Mr McConnell and Ms McGurk, Regional Support Official, UCU, for the work they had done on reviewing the policy.

11.5 Professor Hannaford in turn thanked all the unions for their work on reviewing the policies and the timescale in which it was done.

12. A.O.B.

12.1 General Malaise

12.1.1 Mr Paterson said policy decisions were not preventing people being treated differently. Some line managers were not enacting policies equitably e.g., carry over of annual leave. It was agreed that if there were individual issues that these should be raised so that they could be addressed. It was noted that a review of annual leave would be progressed, given that the current policy and advice published on StaffNet conflicts with other documentation available to staff and managers.

12.1.2 Professor Hannaford confirmed that the University supported fairness, being open and being explicit, but we might sometimes say things you don’t want to hear.

12.2 Protected Conversations

12.2.1 PNCC noted UCU had recently written a letter to the SVP on the subject of Protected Conversations

12.3 Stress Policy
12.3.1 Mr Dawson enquired as to the status of the Management of Work Related Stress Policy. Ms Cook said that she would confirm with Mr Qamar if the policy would be on the agenda for the November PNCC.

12.4 Christmas Leave

12.4.1 Mr Dawson asked if staff would be getting the 24 December off as it was a Monday.

12.4.2 It was noted that this had already been communicated to staff.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

13.1 The date of the next meeting of the PNCC is 17 December 2018.