

UNIVERSITY OF EXETER

JOINT COMMITTEE FOR CONSULTATION AND NEGOTIATION

Minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 26 July 2018

PRESENT Ms Sarah Buck (Chair)

University Representatives

Provost, Professor Janice Kay

Registrar and Secretary, Mr M Shore-Nye

Deputy Registrar and Director of People Services and Global Partnerships, Ms J Marshall

Director of Communications and Corporate Affairs, Ms J Chafer

Trade Union Representatives

Dr M Finn (UCU)

Mr Chris Forest (Unite)

Mr A Holcombe (Unison)

Also in attendance

Assistant Director of People Services, Mr A Johnson

Ms Philippa Davey (Regional Officer, UCU)

Mr Matt Gillett (Regional Officer, Unite)

Apologies

Vice-Chancellor, Professor Sir Steve Smith

Chief Financial Officer, Mr A Connolly

Director of Campus Infrastructure and Operational Support Services, Mr C Nowell

Mr Tim Hortopp (Unison)

18.05 Membership of the Committee

The Chair welcomed Dr Mike Finn and Mr Matt Gillett to their first meeting of the Committee.

18.06 Minutes

The Committee agreed the minutes of the meeting held on Thursday 8 February 2018 (JCCN/18/03).

18.07 OfS and CUC Guidance

The Committee considered the report of the Deputy Registrar and Director of People Services and Global Partnerships (JCCN/18/04). The report outlined the requirements of the Committee of University Chairs Code and the Office for Students, which were intended to ensure that University Remuneration Committees made decisions independently of the University Executive and to increase transparency. The Deputy Registrar and Director of People Services and Global Partnerships advised the Committee that the external review commissioned by the Remuneration Committee (enclosed as an appendix to the report) had indicated that Exeter was already satisfying most of these requirements.

18.08 Trade Union Engagement Report

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of People Services (JCCN/18/05), summarising engagement since the last meeting of the Committee in November 2017.

The Committee's attention was drawn to the revised Capability/Performance Procedure and associated Guidance Notes and noted that there had been a constructive dialogue with trade union representatives during the review.

The Committee formally noted the report as a true and accurate record of trade union engagement during the period March to June 2018.

18.09 Statutory report of facility time for relevant union officials: April 2017 to March 2018

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of People Services (JCCN/18/06). The Committee noted that this was a new statutory duty. The publication by the Government of data from other Universities would provide the opportunity to compare facility time across the sector. The Deputy Registrar and Director of People Services and Global Partnerships advised the Committee that this information and analysis would be shared with trade union representatives in due course.

18.10 Payscale Changes effective from 1 August 2018

The Committee considered the report of the Assistant Director of People Services (JCCN/18/07) outlining changes to the University paycales and the increase to the minimum rate paid to casual workers, up to the Living Wage rate of £8.75, both of which would take effect from 1 August 2018.

The Committee noted that the changes to Grades B and Grade C were necessary to take account of increases in the Living Wage. (Note: these changes will benefit 59 staff in Grade C and (when the 2018 national increase is implemented) and 73 staff in Grade B.)

The Committee also noted that the University's decision to stop using point 39 in Grade G for academic roles will ensure that all staff progressing to Senior Lecturer will start on the same point (point 40) and that this will have a positive impact on gender pay. (Note: 32 staff will benefit from this change. The difference between point 39 and point 40 is £1267.)

In response to a question from the trade union side, the Deputy Registrar and Director of People Services and Global Partnerships advised the Committee of initiatives which the University was taking to increase the numbers of women in more senior academic roles. (Note: for more information and the University's Gender Pay Gap report for 2017 see <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/staff/equality/actionsonthegenderpaygap/>)

18.11 Vice-Chancellor's Update

The Committee noted that the Vice-Chancellor was unable to attend the meeting because he had been asked to accompany the Higher Education Minister as part of a delegation to India. In his absence the Provost and Registrar advised the Committee of the following issues of significance to the University.

Provost

- (a) Graduation: The 20 ceremonies in Exeter and Truro had been very effective. This year, there had been an increased focus on the discipline as well as the University to ensure that the ceremonies were more relevant to the department.
- (b) Provost Commission: the Commission, which had been established following the unacceptable conduct associated with the Bracton Law Society, was conducting a root and branch review of inclusivity for both staff and students. Following the review, an action plan would be agreed and implemented.

(For more information see <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/provostcommission/> and <http://www.exeter.ac.uk/speakout/>)
- (c) Admissions: at this time, before Confirmation and Clearing, the University expected to achieve its undergraduate targets for 2018 entry. The Committee noted the recent increases in applications for international undergraduate and PGT following marketing and for Home PGT following graduation. The Registrar drew the attention of the Committee to the achievements of the Admissions team and noted that they would be supported by volunteers across other Professional Services during Confirmation and Clearing. The Committee also noted that there had been a successful launch of entry for 2019 PTG International which had already resulted in applications.

- (d) **Brexit:** While the recent White Paper had confirmed that freedom of movement was expected to end, it also included references to the importance of mobility for research and innovation and the possibility of future reciprocal agreements. While the future immigration rules for EU citizens would not be known until after the MAC report was published in autumn 2018, further information was available on the Settled Status scheme for EU citizens already in the UK and the University would continue to support its staff through this process. The Government has announced that EU students starting in 2019 will be able to continue to access student funding but there was some uncertainty whether this would continue beyond the end of the transition period. The Government had also confirmed its intention to continue to participate in Horizon 2020 and to continue to invest £2.4 billion in research.
- (e) **Teaching Excellence Framework:** The University had participated in the pilot of subject-level TEF, achieving Gold status for the institution, and some gold, some silver and one bronze at subject level.
- (f) **Universities as Civic Institutions:** the University was committed to playing an active part in the south-west region, including participating in LEPs.
- (g) **National Student Survey:** the Committee noted that the 2018 results would be available the following day. This would allow the University to assess the effectiveness of its action plans following the last NSS.

Registrar

- (h) **University Finances:** The University expected to achieve its financial targets for 2017/18. The 2017/18 accounts would also show the University's share of the USS deficit.

For 2018/19, while the renegotiation of loans would have a positive impact, further savings would be necessary to deliver the EBITDA target. The budget included significant increases in staffing costs – some arising from further investment in new academic staff, others arising from pay inflation - and an increase in (targeted) research income to £110 million. The primary risks were the outcome of the 2018 pay negotiations, increases to USS contributions and missing student recruitment targets.

Planned capital expenditure in 2018/19 included investment in new research and teaching equipment, the Amory Hub, the SERFS building in Cornwall, increased teaching space and social space for students and necessary refurbishment to the Physics Building and Harrison Building. Council was awaiting the outcome of the review of student funding before making decisions on further capital expenditure.

In response to a question from the trade union side, the Registrar advised the Committee that the 2018/19 budget approved by Council did not include the proposed employer increase to USS contributions from April 2019, and that if this was implemented, it would be necessary for the University to consider how this could be accommodated.

18.12 Consultation on proposed changes to USS contribution rates

The Committee agreed to consider the tabled report of the Assistant Director of People Services (JCCN/18/08) on proposed changes to USS contribution rates which had been notified to the University earlier in the week following a meeting of the USS Joint Negotiating Committee on Friday 20 July 2018.

The Committee noted that the USS Trustee had decided that increases to contributions were necessary from 1 August 2019 since it did not expect any changes arising from the Joint Expert Panel to be implemented before autumn 2019 and action was necessary to implement a new funding plan before then. This meant that the University had to commence a consultation in September 2018, following the timetable set by the USS Trustee. The Committee noted that the outcome of the Joint Expert Panel could mean that the proposed increases were not fully implemented.

The trade union side questioned whether the timing of the proposed increase was necessary to comply with the requirements of the Pension Regulator. The proposal to stagger the increase over 12 months was welcomed.

The Committee noted the importance of increasing employees' understanding of the issues so that they could participate fully in the consultation and how this proposal sat alongside the work of the Joint Expert Panel. The Deputy Registrar and Director of People Services and Global Partnerships invited trade union representatives to work with the University on further joint presentations, similar to the event in January 2018.

18.13 Any other business

The Chair ensured there were no other items to raise under Any Other Business before closing the meeting.