

# UNIVERSITY OF YORK

## JOINT NEGOTIATION AND CONSULTATION COMMITTEE

### **Minutes of the Meeting held on 16 May 2017**

**Present:** Jeremy Lindley, Director of Finance, JL (**Meeting Chair**)  
Paula Tunbridge, Acting Director of HR, PT  
Stephen Talboys, Director of Estates and Campus Services, ST  
Richard Armitage, Unite Chair, Physics, RA  
Bob Hide, Unite, Physics, BH  
Jenny Underhill, Unison Secretary, Security, JU  
Frances Daly, Unison, Law, FD  
Karen Harper, Unison, Health Sciences, KH  
Joanna de Groot, UCU Vice-President, History, JDG  
Ana Duarte, UCU, Centre for Health Economics, AD  
Geoff Wall, UCU President, English and Related Literature, GW  
David Huyssen, UCU, History, DH

**In Attendance:** Janet Haffegge, HR Partner, JH  
Kate Slade, HR Adviser (Secretariat), KS  
Maria Ayaz, Head of Equality and Diversity, MA  
Iona Rodger, Reward Manager, IR  
Helen Selvidge, Assistant HR Director, HS

**Apologies:** James Cussens, UCU, Computer Science

#### **1. Agenda Item 1 – Appointment of Chair**

Jeremy Lindley, was appointed as Chair for the meeting.

#### **2. Agenda Item 2 - Apologies**

Apologies were recorded as noted above.

#### **3. Agenda Item 3 - Approval of Minutes of the Last Meeting**

The minutes of the meeting held on 14 May 2017 were approved.

JDG raised a concern that all items bar one on the agenda for today's meeting were for communication only. JH confirmed that this was an oversight and items 6 and 7 were for consultation.

#### **4. Agenda Item 4 - Matters Arising**

##### IPC students under 18

Regarding provisions for meeting the pastoral needs of students under 18 in IPC, GW requested information on the additional support Kaplan provide and whether Kaplan staff are employed on university terms and conditions.

PT confirmed that all University of York staff working for the IPC were employed on standard University terms and conditions. JL explained that all University student services are available to IPC students and additional services not provided by the University such as airport arrivals are provided by Kaplan. They could also provide assistance to students who do not meet the criteria to progress to an academic programme at York to find alternative institutions.

**Action** – to invite Matthew Perry, Director of the International Pathways College to the next JNCC meeting.

#### TU contact details to appear on HR web pages

PT advised that the HR webpages had an employee relations tab where trade union details were held. The HR website was currently being updated and more prominence would be given to the unions. Colleagues were invited to put forward useful information for inclusion, including named contacts.

JU requested a line in the on-boarding information and the initial letter to new starters with regards to the unions.

**Action:** HS to look at on boarding pages and information.

## **5. Agenda Item 5 - Strategic Update**

### Senior appointments

JL updated on the following senior appointments:

- New Registrar & Secretary, Jo Horsburgh, starts on Monday 12 June 2017.
- Professor Jon Timmis, currently HoD for Electronic Engineering will take up his new role as PVC for Partnerships and Knowledge Transfer in the summer.
- David Muckersie, Director of Planning leaves the university on 19 May after 26 years. Alistair Knock will be acting as Director of Planning pending recruitment.,
- Interviews for the Director of HR will be taking place at the end of May. Contact has already been made with union colleagues with regards to meeting candidates.

**Action:** Trade Union colleagues requested an early meeting with the Registrar and Secretary.

### League tables

JL confirmed that the University of York came 17<sup>th</sup> in the Guardian University Guide and 127 in the QS World rankings. Work would be undertaken about how to achieve a higher place, with the University aspiring to be top 10 in the UK and top 100 in the world. It was recognised that league table position should not be the only performance target and 30-40 other objectives had been identified but league table positions are important and have implications for the perception of the University by potential staff and students.

JDG stated that there should be a reflective risk analysis, as a focus on league tables could put core activities at risk and we needed to ensure it did not distort the University's purpose. JL agreed noting the University was adopting a balanced approach with non league table metrics also being used extensively.

### Higher Education Bill

JL confirmed that the Higher Education Bill was passed without any further updates, meaning that international students remained within net migration targets. The full implementation of the TEF was to be delayed for a year to 2021.

The Higher Education Funding Council would cease to exist from 01 April 2018 and a new regulator for higher education, the Office for Students would be introduced. A separate body, UK Research and Innovation would focus on research.

### Finance update

JL said that the Q2 forecast anticipated a 2% surplus on budget and the expectation was for a better position towards year end.

Current budget issues included the generation of more cash to be able to refurbish the Heslington West campus and ensuring that the University is adequately resourced for the upcoming REF. JL noted that the UK is now on a 2 year timeline for Brexit which, as a consequence, raised issues around students from the EU (currently 6%) and access to EU funding. Whilst not necessarily a budgeting issue, it could also have implications for staff. The University was very keen to provide a welcoming environment for EU staff.

## **6. Agenda Item 6 – Equal Pay Report and Action Plan**

HS confirmed that the report and action plan were circulated with the agenda and that a written response from UCU had been received on 15 May 2017.

HS stated that UEB had signalled that it was committed to implementing a robust action plan following consultation. The report had also been considered by the Equality and Diversity committee.

In response to UCU's paper, HS would welcome the opportunity to talk further about the proposed actions and would appreciate input into the action plan to respond to the issues identified.

JDG expressed concern about the unions being fully involved and suggested setting up a specialist working group to take this forward together, rather than it being a communication to the unions. JDG was also concerned about discussions taking place at national level about job descriptions and HERA. HS said she wasn't sure how that linked back to equal pay and PT welcomed more detail on this issue.

In response to a question, it was clarified that the report related to both academic and support staff. MA explained that whilst professional departments couldn't apply for Athena SWAN awards, they would be covered by an institutional wide submission and therefore Athena SWAN applied to all university staff, not just those in academic departments.

It was agreed that union colleagues would be fully involved in the development of the action plan and a meeting would be set up to discuss this once nominations were received.

**Action:** Unions to supply nominations to Helen Selvidge to sit on a specialist working group.

## **7. Agenda Item 7 – Equality Strategy**

As background, MA stated that consultation on the equality strategy started around June 2016 and that when she joined the university in September, consultation was well underway. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee (EDIC) met in November 2016 and agreed to

the strategy. The document provided to the JNCC is a draft high level mission statement providing a vision of an inclusive campus approach.

MA asked whether the unions felt it set a clear vision and whether the values and principles captured the right tone.

During discussion MA confirmed that there would be consultation with the unions with regards to setting benchmarks; that the strategy would involve cultural change and that following agreement of the vision, the EDIC would look at next steps. The aim was to develop an action plan over summer to present to the committee at the start of the academic year.

In summary the unions said that the document set good intentions which they supported and were keen to be involved with, but were very interested in how this would be mobilised, including a timeline and some form of measurement and evaluation.

**Action:** invite MA to the next JNCC meeting to update the on progress.

## **8. Agenda Item 8 – UCU, Unison and Unite Agenda Items**

### Performance Review

A paper was circulated by AD prior to the meeting. AD said that UCU wanted to highlight some members' concerns that still remain relating to confidentiality, that the process wasn't being conducted to improve productivity and that it wasn't as supportive as it could be. AD was keen that the unions should have the opportunity to collaborate on the review process.

PT advised that she had written to the unions prior to the review starting to advise on the review process. She would share UCU's findings with colleagues in HR and offered AD the opportunity to meet with Alex Brierley and Jenny Stonier who were leading the review. She confirmed that high level results for the staff survey would not be received until July so these results wouldn't be taken into consideration as the review cycle couldn't be delayed.

Concerns raised by UCU related to confidentiality, the fact that a significant number of people perceived their PR as stressful/bordering on bullying rather than supportive and the HoDs reporting on performance reviews to faculty level, which should not be specific to individuals.

PT advised that an early reminder of the training available to support performance reviews would be fed in to reviewers. In relation to confidentiality, no detail was provided regarding the nature of conversations with individuals.

**Actions** – To ask Alex Brierley and Jenny Stonier to contact AD to discuss feedback.

HR to issue early reminder of training available to support PDR process.

### Voluntary Severance Scheme

UCU submitted a document prior to the meeting on behalf of all the unions expressing concern at a document for HoDs relating to a Local Voluntary Severance scheme. JDG expressed concern that the Unions had not been invited to have any input into the scheme. This suggested a change of approach as similar schemes in the past had been time limited and unions had had the opportunity to shape the scheme and process. They were concerned that the new scheme had not been equality proofed and that it appeared to be initiated solely by HoDs. JDG suggested that it should not be called a VS scheme, or if it was to be, that management returned to previous VSS practices.

PT clarified that this was not a VS scheme, but provided guidance/boundaries for managers when having discussions with staff. As such it reflected a practice that had been around for some time.

PT confirmed that it was a management policy and understood why the title could be confusing. She would ask the SIG to look at this. It was noted that since the introduction of the policy 2 colleagues had benefited from it. When dealing with specific cases of this nature union involvement was helpful.

It was agreed that the nomenclature of the policy would be taken up in the SIG so it was more reflective of the policy.

**Action:** Helen Selvidge to pick up in the SIG.

#### Promotions criteria review board report

##### PT explained

The report from the review board had been discussed at Senate and there was to be wider consultation in relation to:-

- The role of reader
- The nomenclature for academic staff
- Clarification in relation to academic citizenship

JDG raised a number of concerns about the document, relating to:

- HoDs serving on advisory panels - she felt that this sets up a conflict of interest for HoDs and also takes the University back to the patronage system it was trying to avoid
- The constitution of the Academic Promotions Committee – it was recommended that staff below the level of chair would no longer be able to serve on the Committee. The rationale for the change in titles to the American system – she was not sure why the University would favour that and was interested to hear why.
- The process for urgent retention cases – the union had always had concerns about retention promotions and was concerned about how robust the system would be.
- Changes to the administration of academic promotion. There needed to be consultation and engagement between academic and administrative colleagues.

JL confirmed his understanding that there would be a consultation process where they could feed in their comments.

#### IPC contracts

GW said that assurances had been given in previous JNCC meetings that IPC staff would be employees of the University and on equivalent terms and conditions. He believed this principle was being ignored by one particular area relating to the requirement to work on site unless permission was given to work from home.

Whilst recognising that it was unlikely that teaching staff would need to be on site 37 hours per week, JL said it is reasonable for a line manager to discuss and agree with staff whether work could be done at home or on site.

PT confirmed that she was happy to pick up with colleagues that support IPC and ask the director of IPC to the next meeting.

**Action:** Invite Matthew Perry, Director of the International Pathway College to the next JNCC meeting.

## 9. Agenda Item 9 – Trade Union Facility Time Recording

JH talked to a paper circulated prior to the meeting. JH confirmed regulations were now in place regarding the need to publish details of facilities time. The University proposed to use the existing arrangements for allocating facilities time as a basis for reporting and members were asked to notify JH of any changes.

In relation to additional time for restructures, this would be identified at the outset of any restructure and reliance would be placed on union colleagues to inform HR of the number of members affected. A form would be developed for unions to notify JH of any in year changes. JH advised that any requests for additional time should come through her.

## 10. Agenda Item 10 – HR Updates

### Pay Award

PT confirmed that the final employers offer on the table is a variable award ranging from 2.4% at lower grades, through to 1.7% for the majority of grades. Unions are now going out to consult their membership and nothing further would be heard until June/July at the earliest. PT confirmed that the new hourly rates of pay would wipe out some of our lower grade points and that this would need to be looked at. It was agreed that these discussions could start now, which will predominantly affect Unison members.

**Action:** PT to ask IR to pick up with Unison colleagues.

### Staff survey

PT confirmed that as at 15 May the response rate was 42%, which was up on the same time last time at 34%. It was requested that union colleagues encourage colleagues to engage with the survey.

**Action:** to add action plans and outcomes to the next JNCC agenda.

### Senior academic appointments

The initiative to appoint a number of senior academic staff had previously been mentioned at the VC's presentations to staff. PT confirmed that advertising for these roles was about to start.

### Compliance update

PT reported that there is still a lot of work ongoing with regards to UKVI right to work checks, in particular looking at managing the risk of those on the casual payroll. We currently have about 360 Tier 4 students who are restricted to 20 hours work per week during term time and if this is breached they could be sent home and the University could be fined. The Compliance team are putting in place an interim temp pool arrangement for Tier 4 visa holders, with a view to purchasing an IT system to record and monitor this activity in future.

### Pensions

PT reported that the triennial review of the University of York pension scheme was taking place. Consultation on the USS scheme which was due to take place in June had been postponed

KH asked if there was still a long delay for people asking for pension statements.

**Action:** KS to contact Staff in Pensions for an update.

### Closure days

It was confirmed that for 2017 there would be 3 closure days 27, 28, 29 December 2017

Unison colleagues had raised the issue of the description of closure days as a concern at JNCC before, given that a number of their members work during this period.

PT explained that the vast majority of University departments were not open between Christmas and New Year and it would cost a lot to open up buildings for a few people to work in, however it was recognised that staff that were working generally had to field a lot of requests from students and visitors that were not always in a position to be able to help.

PT advised that they should talk to Kate Dodd and Joan Concannon about communications to those who are required to work to better equip them to field questions from students.

#### **11. Agenda Item 11 – Special Interest Group**

No items to discuss

#### **12. Agenda Item 12 – Date of Next JNCC Meeting**

31<sup>st</sup> October 2017 at 2.00pm in H/G17

#### **13. Agenda Item 13 – Dates of future JNCC meetings**

6<sup>th</sup> February 2018 at 2.00pm in H/G17

15<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 2.00pm in H/G17