UNIVERSITY OF PORTSMOUTH

People, Culture and Engagement Committee

TIME /DATE / VENUE	0900, Tuesday 6 December 2022 in Boardroom 4.18, St Andrew's Court
PRESENT	Claudia Iton (Chair) Professor Graham Galbraith (from Minute 4) David Wilding Christopher Williams David Willan
IN ATTENDANCE	Kim John-Williams, Staff Representative Fiona Hnatow, Chief People Officer Wayne Bowen, Head of HR Strategic Planning Chris Chang, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life) (Minute 7) Yvonne Howard, Director of Race and Equality (Minute 7) Dr David Franklin, Associate Dean (Academic), Faculty of Science and Health (Minute 5) Paul Tilley, Head of Sport & Recreation (Minute 6)
SECRETARIAT	Adrian Parry, Executive Director of Corporate Governance Claire Dunning, University Solicitor Jacqui Bryden, Senior Governance Officer

To facilitate the attendance of staff for specific items, some items were taken out of the order designated in the agenda.

1 Welcome, Quoracy, Conflict of Interest and Apologies

1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting.

1.2 Apologies were received from Professor Richard Thelwell, Academic Staff Governor; Becky Miles, Professional Services Staff Governor; Bernie Topham, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor; and Zoe Irvine, Organisational Development Manager (for Minute 4 only).

1.3 The Executive Director of Corporate Governance confirmed that the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.

1.4 There were no conflicts of interest declared.

2 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2022 were confirmed as an accurate record.

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3 Matters Actioned and Matters Arising

3.1. Action was reported within the agenda papers on one item which would be received later in the agenda.

3.2. There were no other matters arising.

4 Senior Women's Leadership Event Feedback and Review

Fiona Hnatow, Chief People Officer, provided a presentation on the Senior Women's Leadership Event held on 19 October 2022.

4.1 The key points raised in the presentation were:

i. The aim of the inaugural event had been to establish a new forum for senior women leaders to create connections and share their stories specifically about their careers and experiences. Two of the key note speakers were external governors.

ii. It had been identified that a higher proportion of women in leadership roles were leaving the University, than was the case for other roles. There had been a turnover rate of 16.8% between August 2020 and July 2022 of female academic and research employees at grade 8 and above compared to 14.5% for equivalent male colleagues.

iii. In the context of the new People Strategy and the theme of Leadership to create an environment of collaboration, it was important that the University's Women's Network was revitalised. The Senior Women's Leadership Event was set in the context of empowerment and the recognition of achievement.

iv. Key themes identified at the event were: the value of mentorship; the celebration of success; the value of improved and new gender policies to support women's' and men's' issues; and the management and maintenance of workload to ensure a good work/life balance.

v. 'Lift as We Climb' was the name given to methods and means to support and develop, empower and advance women. As the forum becomes established, more women at lower grades would be invited to join the network.

vi. International Women's Day would be held on 8 March 2023 and there would be a number of collaborative events held throughout the University to celebrate women's achievements. The celebrations would link to the achievement of the Athena Swan Award, due to be submitted in July 2023.

4.2 In discussion, Committee noted:

i. The inaugural event was aimed at women graded at level 10 and above and the coverage of the event would expand over time to encompass lower grades. The age profile of women employed at level 10 and above women was diverse.

ii. The aim of the forum was to help women to create an external profile, to provide space for conversations and to share stories. It was important that senior women leaders were accessible to women at lower grades so that mentoring opportunities could be supported.

iii. The University's profile of female professors was 23% and represented a cause for concern. This figure was broadly representative of the higher education sector

as a whole, although the sector itself was poor in promoting women to professor and senior roles. It was important to grow talent and to develop programmes that were accessible and flexible, and to support women with BAME ethnicity.

iv. Support for senior women in leadership provided a good opportunity for the University to address the reduction of the gender pay gap through mentoring, progression and promotion and to ensure that support for research and bids was readily available throughout women's careers. The establishment of the London Campus might also provide an opportunity to promote flexibility and progression for women.

v. It was important that UEB had provided sponsorship for the aims of the forum. The Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) governance structure was a critical factor in ensuring networks were supported centrally.

4.3 The Committee noted the presentation.

5 People, Culture and Engagement: Achieving the Athena Swan Award

Dr David Franklin, Associate Dean (Academic) delivered a presentation that provided an update on the progress of the submission for the Athena Swan Award for 2023. Membership of the Athena Swan Charter demonstrated the University's commitment to the advancement of gender equality for staff and students.

5.1 Key points noted in the presentation were:

i. The Committee could be reassured that the University would submit the necessary information to Advance HE in July 2023 to seek renewal of the Athena Swan bronze award.

ii. There had been a late start to prepare and collate the submission information, so a timeline had now been developed to ensure that a draft submission was prepared by April 2023. Task and finish groups had been established to achieve this deadline, with progress being monitored by the Self-Assessment Team (SAT). Staff had been encouraged to join the task and finish groups to broaden the number of staff involved and to create a sense of ownership.

iii. Four priorities had been identified on which to take specific actions. These were: recruitment selection and offers; sense of wellbeing and belonging; progression and retention; and leadership and accountability.

iv. The SAT Lead was leaving the University in May 2023 but would continue to support the process on a short-term contract until submission in July. It was important to review the governance of the SAT to refresh the team in terms of its gender balance, ethnic diversity, grade range, and student and volunteer membership. Some team members served in an ex-officio capacity and it was necessary to provide a workload allocation for the SAT due to the time and commitment involved.

v. The University had made significant progress since the achievement of the bronze award in 2014, most recently evidenced through the implementation of gender specific policies. The submission would need to provide a mitigation narrative to explain the reasons for the recent closure of the University Nursery.

vi. Easy wins had been identified that could be implemented quickly and would improve the quality of the submission documentation. These included: careers support and advice for the partners of new international staff members; the extension of flexible working arrangements; and the reinvigoration of faculty and department groups to take local actions.

vii. The submission currently in preparation would achieve a bronze award and to achieve a silver award, it was important to consider intersectionality. Information to strength this aspect of the submission would be provided via the Staff Culture Survey and the annual Equality and Diversity Data Reports.

5.2 In discussion, it was noted that:

i. The action plan should be owned by the University community, to ensure that there was collective action to ensure its implementation. Approximately half of the existing action plan was owned and promoted centrally by the University and other half was owned and promoted locally. The UEB-sponsor for the Athena Swan Award was the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life).

ii. The University's potential attainment of the silver award was a work in progress, whilst attainment of the gold award would entail demonstrating the ability of faculties and professional service to influence and improve common practice within the University. It was planned to attain the silver award at the next submission point in four years' time. Few universities had so far achieved the gold award, the achievement of silver awards was growing but the majority of universities held the bronze award. Some departments within the University of Portsmouth were aiming to attain the silver award locally.

iii. The current submission provided information on what the University's existing practices and was bound by a traditional and standardised approach. Communication on the progress of the submission could be made more compelling in other forms, for example, in podcasts and videos.

iv. There was not a specific key performance indicator (KPI) to achieve the Athena Swan Award, but it had been incorporated in the University's strategic ambition for 2030. Data quality would improve to underpin progress as would action to address specific issues, for example, reducing the gender pay gap and improving the promotion of women to senior roles. It was important to make improved progress because some years of potential progress had been lost since the last submission in 2017.

v. The achievement of the silver award would not involve more work but would require the provision of more comprehensive data.

5.3 The Committee noted the update and agreed that the University should seek to apply for the silver award. The data and submission content would be reviewed accordingly.

Action: Chief People Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life)

6 People, Culture and Engagement: Sport and Recreation

Paul Tilley, Head of Sport and Recreation provided a presentation on the contribution that the

Sport and Recreation team make to the delivery of the University Strategy and reflections on the "lived experience" of staff to facilitate the opening of the new Ravelin Sports Centre this year.

6.1 Key points noted were:

i. The Sport and Recreation team had a vision, mission and values to build a sense of belonging and pride through sport, creating a community and life-time culture of affinity towards Portsmouth.

ii. The Ravelin Sports Centre provided a fit for purpose space for life changing sport and activity. The team had transformed the service provision through organisational restructuring, increasing the size of the team and undertaking training to better meet customer needs. There had been very positive feedback from the students.

iii. There were three core teams within Sport and Recreation: Business Development; Operations; and Sports Experience, which totalled 60 staff. There were also 128 casual and hourly paid staff and 464 volunteers, which provided a total of 652 staff. Of the total paid workforce, 50% were graduates or current students.

iv. To recruit a large number of staff, the landing pages on the website had been made more attractive and emphasised the personal qualities of personality, teamworking and resilience required of staff working in Sport and Recreation. A Sports Hub had been created to enable fast induction and onboarding. Clear standards and expectations had been set for all staff and managers, which were addressed and reinforced via individual Performance Development Reviews.

v. A number of local awards for delivery excellence and performance had been established and had been well received by staff. The positive approach to managing performance and excellence was reflected in the outcomes of the last University Culture Survey at the beginning of 2022, which had returned very positive responses, despite the challenges of the pandemic and an organisational restructure.

vi. An enabling culture was important to the team. This allowed everyone to contribute and to be recognised for their contribution. It also acknowledged that there had been challenges for staff to overcome, for example, building capacity to meet demand and with dealing with poor customer behaviour.

vii. There were many positive impacts of sport and activity on health and wellbeing as well as on personal attainment and employability. A range of activities and collaborations across the University had increased the scope for physical activity, including partnerships with Women in Research, Sports Science and Students Union clubs.

viii. Positive impacts on the student experience, recruitment and graduate employment had been identified as well as positive impacts upon research and innovation, rates of academic attainment and continuation rates.

6.2 In discussion, it was noted that:

i. There had been some team retention issues. This had emphasised the importance of good recruitment and onboarding processes, as well as the need for agility and speed to expedite new recruitment to ensure business continuity.

ii. The holistic approach to using sport as a mechanism for improving employability and life skills was very constructive.

iii. Managing the volume of work and addressing capacity within the Sports Centre was a priority and would be reviewed as part of the planning process for 2023/24. There had been a short term reliance on casual and volunteer staff and longer term solutions would be identified to find the right balance of staffing levels, given budgetary constraints and future business plans.

iv. Terms and conditions to membership and a customer charter had been established as a means for challenging and tackling poor customer behaviour, including safeguarding issues.

v. It was important to ensure that the University could cater for volume and demand for use of its sports facilities. The booking system indicated there was more demand than capacity and it was important to effectively manage demand and expectations.

vi. The proportion of staff drawn from ethnic minority backgrounds was 5%, which was lower than the target of 20% that had been set. Employment applications from the BAME community had been low and it was therefore important to upskill internal candidates. The gender split of staff was more even and reflective of the University and community.

vii. The opening of the Ravelin Sports Centre had been very well received in the community and supported the University's civic agenda. Current projections indicated that there would be 300,000 visits in the next year from the local community to the Sports Centre and links had been established with nine local schools to provide 500 children with regular swimming lessons.

6.3 The Committee noted the presentation and congratulated the team on their hard work and very positive contribution to the delivery of a sector-leading facility for the University.

7 Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Update

Chris Chang, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Student Life) and Yvonne Howard, Director of Race and Equality presented two items: the updated Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Policy Statement for approval; and an oral update on the progress of the EDI Framework and agenda.

<u>EDI Policy Statement</u>

7.1 Key points noted were:

i. It was important to reaffirm a University statement that outlined its commitment to ensuring that all colleagues, students, contractors and visitors were treated with dignity and respect.

ii. The policy had been last updated in 2016. The EDI Steering Group had consulted across the University and had referenced the protected characteristics outlined in the statement in terms of a 'no tolerance' approach to transgressions of expected behaviour, including classism, bullying and misogyny.

iii. The Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill was yet to be finalised in Parliament. The Office for Students had set out a statement of expectations to tackle sexual misconduct and harassment which would become a condition of registration. Any changes in legislation or governance would be reflected in future amendments to reflect the provisions.

iv. The updated policy would be supported by guidance and training, and briefings would include a safe space to discuss what the policy statement meant for individuals in the University community and their needs.

7.2 In discussion, it was noted that:

i. The expected behaviour highlighted by the policy statement would be embedded in training events and programmes across the University.

ii. It was important to clarify the expectations of the University about the transexual debate and how conflicting viewpoints should be managed. The principles of EDI were that the University was open, inclusive and diverse and no-one should experience a sense of a loss of dignity and respect.

iii. The Higher Education (Freedom of Speech) Bill might impact the debate on individual identities, which would require further discussion. The concept of self-identity was a complex subject and also affected systems and formal documentation that the University required to register identity. To manage this, University systems used preferences and 'known as' functions. It was important that the University complied with relevant legislation and also upheld its values of equality, diversity and inclusion.

iv. Recruitment processes for professional staff had been changed to mitigate bias by introducing blind or anonymised recruitment. There would be a full review of recruitment processes in 2023 to update and expedite the process to provide for improved flexibility and ease of access.

v. Recruitment and retention rates would be addressed through an action plan to widen opportunities through vacancy advertisements and placement, a review of panels and how decisions were made and the potential application of positive action. A high drop-out rate had been identified in the probationary period particularly for professional services.

7.3 The Committee approved the EDI Policy Statement to recommend it to the Board.

<u>EDI Framework Update</u>

7.4 Key updates noted were:

i. The EDI Steering Group and Consultative Committee were actively involved in the Athena Swan submission.

ii. A campaign about inclusion had been launched to provide advice and clarity on acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.

iii. Yvonne Howard had accepted the role of Director of Race and Equality on an open-ended employment basis.

iv. Guidance on the prevention of harassment and sexual misconduct was being rolled out, particularly to the sports clubs and societies to support a review of their culture.

v. Progress had been made on the EDI agenda across the University and the actions for 2023 were full and comprehensive.

vi. A fuller update would be provided at the Committee meeting in May.

Senior Governance Officer

8 Indicative Committee Business

It was agreed that the following indicative Committee business should be added to the programme for the year:

February meeting

- The progress of the Union Recognition Agreement currently in negotiation.
- An update on the UCEA pay negotiations
- The annual report on the Researcher Development Concordat.

September meeting

- Move the Policy Review rolling calendar to this meeting from the meeting scheduled in May

General

- To allocate the four policy themes (Education, Research, Global and People) to ensure coverage of at least one theme at each meeting

9 Date of Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Committee would take place on Tuesday 28 February 2023.

Confirmed Committee Dates for 2023:

- 24 May 2023
- 27 September 2023
- 30 November 2023