

## Human Resources Committee

TIME /DATE / VENUE	1300, 19 May 2021, via videoconferencing (Google Meet)
PRESENT	Claudia Iton (Chair) Professor Graham Galbraith Jane Hoskins David Wilding Christopher Williams
IN ATTENDANCE	Chris Chang, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Educational Partnerships) (Minute 27 only) Bernie Topham, Chief Operating Officer and Deputy Vice-Chancellor Yvonne Howard, Interim Director of Race and Equality (Minute 26 and 27 only) Helen Dunn, Deputy Director of HR (Organisational Development) Rebecca Hopkins, Deputy Director of HR (People Services) James Ross, Equality and Diversity Information Coordinator (Minute 26 only) Dr Mike Rayner, Staff Representative Professor Bob Nichol, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) (Minute 31 only) Lyuda Wade, Staff Governor Zoe Irvine, Organisational Development Manager (Minute 30 only)
SECRETARIAT	Adrian Parry, Executive Director of Corporate Governance 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.

### 21 Welcome, Quoracy, Conflict of Interest and Apologies

- 21.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was conducted virtually via videoconferencing. Members were reminded of the protocols for virtual governor meetings.
- 21.2 Apologies were received from Professor David Sanders, Staff Governor.
- 21.3 The Executive Director of Corporate Governance confirmed that the meeting was quorate and could proceed to business.
- 21.4 There were no conflicts of interest declared.

### 22 Minutes of the Previous Meeting

- 22.1 The minutes of the meeting held on 13 January 2021 were confirmed as an accurate record.

## 23 Matters Actioned and Matters Arising

- 23.1 Action was reported within the agenda papers on five items: one for note and four that would be covered later in the agenda. There were no other matters arising.

## 24 Summary report from Special meeting – confidential item

## 25 Review of Committee Remit

Adrian Parry, Executive Director of Corporate Governance, introduced a report that proposed a reorientation of the Committee’s work to create a closer alignment between its remit and the central role of people in delivering the imperatives of the University Strategy. The proposals built upon responses to the recent committee effectiveness questionnaire and upon the need to create a stronger strategic focus for the Committee.

- 25.1 The reorientation aimed to expand the coverage of the Committee beyond operational processes and activities by better aligning the people dimension of its activities with the delivery of the University Strategy and its strategic imperatives.
- 25.2 The reorientated Committee remit would facilitate a greater focus upon emergent priority issues such as equality, race and diversity.
- 25.3 Broadening the Committee’s remit would provide closer and regular contact with a greater cross-section of staff, their activities and specialisms.
- 25.4 The reorientated Committee should be renamed the “People, Culture and Engagement Committee”.
- 25.5 Pending agreement of the proposals, new Terms of Reference should be developed. These would be developed via consultation by correspondence prior to the next meeting of the Committee in September.

### **Action: Executive Director of Corporate Governance**

- 25.6 In discussion, it was noted that:
- i. Increased engagement with staff would enable the Committee to gain a greater understanding of the “lived experience” of working at the University. It would be important to invite a broader range of staff to meetings to discuss their work and priorities. This would also help staff to feel more valued and recognised for their achievements.
  - ii. Academic and professional services staff were delivering a number of exciting projects. These required good leadership, talent and enterprise. It would be important to provide opportunities to showcase these achievements to governors.
  - iii. It was important to ensure that staff had sufficient skills and experience to meet the demands of projects and that sufficient time and resources were allocated to support them to deliver projects.



- iv. The reorientated Committee would provide a useful forum and reporting line to governors that did not currently exist for a number of key strategic imperatives, particularly global and civic engagement.
- v. Invitations for staff to present reports to the Committee should be planned and a structure established to enable a coherent programme of work to be developed.
- vi. The reorientated committee should retain a focus upon talent management and succession planning.

25.7 The Committee agreed:

- i. The proposed change in remit and emphasis of the Committee's work
- ii. That formal terms of reference should be determined for the realigned Committee by correspondence and that consultation on the form and scope of these terms of reference to be undertaken.

## 26 Equality and Diversity - Staff and Student Data Reports

The Chair introduced Yvonne Howard, Interim Director of Race and Equality, who had been recently appointed.

Helen Dunn, Deputy Director of Human Resources (Organisational Development), introduced a paper that presented equality data for 2019/2020 for staff and undergraduate students.

- 26.1 The data set was comprehensive and the data was used to inform both local and University-wide actions. The appointment of the Interim Director of Race and Equality would help to support the use of the data in a more meaningful way.
- 26.2 A number of activities to proactively promote and tackle equality and diversity issues were already being taken forward under the University's Access and Participation Plan and the Race Equality Charter and Athena Swan initiatives. It was important to recognise that these initiatives overlapped and were not mutually exclusive. There was a need to secure better data to guide activity where these initiatives interfaced to facilitate joined-up solutions.
- 26.3 There was a pronounced willingness and enthusiasm from students to be involved in collaborating between themselves and with staff to shape and improve the University's approach to diversity and equality. It would be important to ensure that the student contribution was acknowledged and highlighted so that they were more easily able to recognise their influence and so that the momentum of their involvement was maintained.
- 26.4 There was a need to clarify responsibility and accountability for identifying and delivering actions that promoted equality and diversity at a local level. Some areas of the University had developed action plans but these were currently unaligned. There was a need for greater uniformity of approach at a local level; possibly through the creation of local plans for all areas of the University, which could be supported by setting local aspirational targets.

- 26.5 The quantitative data provided an excellent platform for analysis and would now be aligned with qualitative data collected via focus groups. The focus groups had worked positively and had provided a basis for building a culture of inclusivity, where stakeholders felt comfortable in discussions. Dr Jason Arday, who was working for the University as a consultant, was leading this work.
- 26.6 The key points identified from an analysis of the data were:
- i. The number of BAME employees employed in professional services was 8.6% lower compared to academic staff with little change in the period
  - ii. The number of BAME staff employed had increased in the last year. However, there had been a concurrent increase in BAME staff turnover, particularly in academic and research roles. This inferred that a higher proportion of BAME staff were employed on short-term contracts. The list of reasons for leaving cited by staff also showed that 40% of BAME staff left due to the end of their contract compared to 28% of all staff.
  - iii. Male and BAME applicants for academic and research jobs were less successful than other categories of applicants. Of all job offers issued for academic and research roles, 39.2% of male and 12.6% of BAME applicants were successful.
  - iv. Posts in professional services tended to be recruited more locally and the current percentage of BAME staff in professional services was 5%. 10% of applicants for posts in professional services were from BAME backgrounds, although the profile of BAME residents in the local area from the census data was 11.6%. This indicated that the University's BAME staff profile was not fully representative of the population of the local area.
  - v. Student data demonstrated improvement in all areas, particularly with regard to progression, withdrawal rates, and degree classifications for BAME and for male students.
  - vi. There was a 10.4% increase in the proportion of BAME students that had achieved a good degree between 2018/19 and 2019/20, to achieve this improvement remained unclear.
  - vii. In the intersectional data of ethnicity and gender, the total number of BAME females had increased by 10% compared to a smaller increase of 5.6% for BAME males.
- 26.7 The following points were made in discussion:
- i. There was a discussion about the will and commitment and the desire for improvement. The low rate of staff turnover may be seen as a barrier to driving real change although it was more about the ability to change rather than the numbers alongside seeking to improve retention.
  - ii. It was noted that this was a long term plan over at least ten years and the approval to progress the London Campus would provide wider opportunities. In the shorter term, it was useful to consider why staff leave, including dissatisfaction with the University as an employer and the category of 'Unknown'.

The use of exit interviews would facilitate gaining the knowledge and specifics because the current approach was not managed as well as it could.

- iii. It was noted that the data was predicated on continuation, applications, turnout and awards, which have a three year cycle. Improvements in performance may therefore take some time to be demonstrated in the data. This may also be impacted by the no detriment policies implemented during the Covid 19 pandemic. For this reason, there was an element of retrospective analysis as each academic year completed. It was acknowledged that female students tended to have higher attainment rates in a wider range of subjects.
- iv. It was important to ensure that job advertisements and roles descriptions were designed to encourage applications from under-represented groups. This should include the rationale for the use of fixed term contracts as well as opportunities for redeployment. The employer brand was an important factor to consider including the perception that the local community had of the University and their willingness to apply for roles, particularly professional services roles.
- v. It would be useful to have greater understanding of drivers for change to be able to replicate good practice and activities.
- vi. Line managers should be supported to understand their role and responsibilities in encouraging diversity and inclusion when recruiting to vacancies maintained through the provision of prioritised action and tailored specific targets, and a flexibility to allow for a nuanced rather than standard approach. This would encourage the University community to engage in the journey, inspire passion and conversations including moving out of comfort zones and embracing the new culture.

26.8 The Committee noted the:

- i. Equality & Diversity Staff Data Report 2019/20
- ii. Equality & Diversity Undergraduate Student Data Report 2019/20
- iii. The summary of the data will be published on the external Equality website

**Action: Equality and Diversity Information Coordinator**

## 27 Update on Race Equality Activities

Chris Chang, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Global Engagement and Education Partnerships) provided a verbal update on recent activities to enhance and promote race equality.

27.1 Focus groups had been well attended and were gathering rich feedback. Conversations were underway within the University to explore the issues raised in finer detail.

27.2 Conversations had been open and honest and had sometimes led to the discussion of issues that participants found uncomfortable. It was important for staff to have the confidence to discuss and debate uncomfortable issues connected to race.

- 27.3 Conversations within combined student/staff focus groups had created a greater mutual understanding of issues and challenges.
- 27.4 It was important to create a safe and respectful space to have conversations about race, to facilitate the curiosity to explore issues, and to feel comfortable to discuss race.
- 27.5 There should be training for staff and students at all levels across the University to encourage ownership, individual responsibility and ensure that addressing inequality becomes part of the lifeblood in the University.
- 27.6 Feedback and data gathered from the focus groups would be analysed and a series of staged priorities would be identified. Findings would be presented to the Board of Governors in July. It was proposed that regular updates of progress would be provided to both the Committee and to the Board of Governors.
- 27.7 The Committee noted the update and expressed its enthusiasm and support for the work underway.

## **28 People Delivery Plan and Gender Pay Gap Update**

Helen Dunn, Deputy Director of Human Resources (Organisational Development) and Rebecca Hopkins, Deputy Director of HR (People Services) provided a verbal update report on the People Delivery Plan and the Gender Pay Gap.

- 28.1 The areas of focus and priority for the People Delivery Plan were inclusive leadership; staff engagement; leadership and management; pay and reward; roles and structures; and the Human Resources and Finance Transformation Programme (HRF).
- 28.2 Plans were underway to upskill the Human Resources' Operational Services to enable less focus on reactive issues and allow increased focus on organisational development.
- 28.3 A review was underway to explore the future function and staffing requirements of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Team.
- 28.4 Preparatory work was being undertaken to support the establishment of the London Campus and the Medical School. Resources and activities would be targeted to maximise impact on prioritised projects.
- 28.5 A key task for the Interim Chief People Officer would be to advance the development of the People Plan and to ensure that its key activities gained further traction. Preliminary discussions and planning had included an analysis of potential gaps within the Plan, to ensure synergy and alignment with existing and proposed activity, and that work was not duplicated.
- 28.6 There was a need to ensure that progress on the People Plan was regularly communicated to the University community, including synergies with wider University projects.

### Gender Pay Gap Update

- 28.7 The publication of Gender Pay Gap data was a statutory obligation. This had to be presented to a set, common format for publication but further work was undertaken

within the University to interrogate the data and to identify how it could be categorised to facilitate actions to redress imbalance.

28.8 In discussion it was noted that:

- i. It was disappointing that the University's gender pay gap remained largely unchanged since reporting began and that the report did not identify specific actions to close the gap. It would be important for the University to identify and implement specific actions that were within its purview to influence.
- ii. Many organisations outsourced services that typically employed women in lower paid jobs. This had the effect of camouflaging low pay for activities undertaken for those organisations.
- iii. There should be clear accountability within the University for identifying and ensuring the implementation of actions necessary to close the gender pay gap.
- iv. An analysis of the data by structure and grade was ongoing. The data would be reviewed in a similar way to the analysis undertaken to interrogate race equality data. An action plan would be developed on the basis of this analysis, which would include also address accountability for action.

28.9 Committee noted the update and looked forward to receiving progress reports and outcomes.

## **29 Staff Engagement update**

Helen Dunn, Deputy Director of Human Resources (Organisational Development) provided an update on plans for the staff engagement survey and the Performance and Development Review (PDR) cycle for 2020/2021. Key points noted were:

- 29.1 The staff survey was to have been undertaken in May 2021 but had been deferred to 14 June 2021. This delay was attributable to the need to divert capacity and resources to tackle the recent cyber incident. Due to previous postponements, it was important not to engender further delay, particularly as a staff survey focussed upon gender and culture was planned for November 2021.
- 29.2 Information gained from the survey responses would enable senior leaders and managers to create and deliver local action plans. It was envisaged that local action plans would be rolled-out from October 2021 onwards.
- 29.3 The staff survey would consist of 20 questions. Key themes from responses would be identified and follow-up action would be undertaken in early 2022 to explore identified themes in detail, possibly using a further survey to gain more information that is specific and feedback.
- 29.4 The PDR cycle for 2020/21 had commenced on 1 April 2021. This followed updates to the online system and the provision of revised guidance to support completion. The PDR

cycle for 2019/2020 had been extended to 18 December 2020 and as the current cycle had opened in April, some staff had found it challenging to repeat the process within a shorter timeframe than normally required.

- 29.5 The PDR completion rate for the University for 2019/2020 had exceeded 70%.
- 29.6 Engagement with the PDR process would be strengthened by regular communication and by monitoring the progress of completion rates. The cycle was scheduled to close on 31 October 2021, although there was flexibility to extend timescales if required by the University's operating circumstances at that time.
- 29.7 The PDR process provided a framework for aligning the activity of each individual member of staff with the delivery of the University Strategy. The main activity of the PDR process was to facilitate a meaningful and focussed conversation about performance and aspirations. This also provided an opportunity for staff to discuss the contribution of their work to the University Strategy.
- 29.8 Committee noted the report.

### **30 Learning and Development Programme update**

Helen Dunn, Deputy Director of Human Resources (Organisational Development) introduced a presentation that provided an overview of the Inclusive Leadership Programme and was joined by Zoe Irvine, Organisational Development Manager. Key points noted were:

- 30.1 The programme had been developed to identify and provide a robust skills framework that would enhance management capability and underpin the delivery of the ambitious University Strategy.
- 30.2 The University had offered a generic management development programme for a number of years. There was now a need to provide a more cohesive and targeted programme of formal training and development that would also act as an underpinning framework to complement and support further training activity and career development.
- 30.3 The new programme would operate at four levels of the organisational pyramid and would provide a "golden thread" of talent management and succession planning at all levels.
- 30.4 A blended learning approach would be adopted and communities of practice would be created to facilitate an environment for learning, coaching and mentoring.
- 30.5 There had been a delay to implementing the Programme as the training to facilitate the delivery of the new HR policies had needed to take precedence.
- 30.6 The following points were made in discussion:
  - i. Care would be taken to ensure synergy with other training and learning programmes provided by the University. For example, a specific programme for research managers was currently being explored.
  - ii. It was envisaged that level one of the new programme would commence in



November 2021, with all four levels being delivered by summer 2022.

- iii. It was important to recognise that some staff had progressed to leadership positions by virtue of their specialist technical skills rather than their management skills. It was important that the new programme acknowledged and addressed the fact that participants at each level would be at different stages in the development of their management competencies. It should not unduly focus upon a single generic approach.
- iv. There was a tension between mandating attendance and inviting voluntary participation on the programme. It was important that all managers were appropriately encouraged to participate and that the benefits of the programme were sufficiently evident to incentivise participation. Level one of the programme would be mandatory but, due to numbers to be engaged at the next three levels, selection would then be via manager nomination. This approach, however, would be kept under review and might evolve over time.
- v. The success of the programme would be measured via analysis of PDR data; key performance indicators would be set; and scrutiny of other qualitative and quantitative indicators such as grievances.
- vi. The Programme would encourage participants to self-reflect and gain personal insight into their own performance and development needs.
- vii. All managers were expected to demonstrate improvement and development in their role over time. If this was not evidenced then appropriate HR policies and approaches existed to guide and incentivise improved performance.
- viii. The programme was intended to support and facilitate long-term cultural change. Its development had been based upon an evaluation of leadership and management expectations and attributes. Expected behaviour was detailed in the University's Leadership Attributes and the Portsmouth Hallmark, which was linked to the PDR process. A specific workshop within the programme on culture and inclusion was designed to raise awareness of appropriate behaviour.
- ix. The Portsmouth employee hallmark and leadership attributes would be reviewed and refreshed to ensure their alignment with the University Strategy.
- x. The Programme would evolve over time and would be refined and refreshed regularly to maintain and enhance staff aspirations, to challenge them creatively, and constructively to deliver the University Strategy.

30.7 It was recognised that the Programme represented a significant investment at a time of financial strain. Regular evaluation of the programme at all levels would be essential to inform its evolution and to ensure that it would effectively underpin the University's commitment to staff development.

30.8 The Committee noted the report and looked forward to further updates.

### **31 Research and Innovation Services Development Programme**

Professor Bob Nichol, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation) provided a verbal update on the Research and Innovation Services (RIS) Development Programme. The programmes had been launched a year ago, with an aim to upskill research staff and to provide research leadership training.

### **32 Annual Report on Payroll Movements**

Committee received and noted the annual report on payroll movements for 2019/2020 from Emma Woollard, Executive Director of Finance. The report analysed the payroll costs of the University over that period. The Committee thanked the Finance team for the report.

### **33 Committee Business 2020/2021**

Committee noted the 2020/21 indicative programme of work for the Human Resources Committee. It was acknowledged that the reorientation of Committee would lead to changes in the nature of the business discussed, including an increased emphasis upon inviting a wider profile of staff from across the University to speak about their work and contribution to the delivery of the University Strategy.

### **34 Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting of the Committee would take place at 0900 on Tuesday 21 September 2021.