

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

STAFFING COMMITTEE

8 July 2020

The meeting was conducted remotely via video-conference

Present: Mrs Ann Barnes (Chair), Mr Michael Crick, Professor Danielle George, Dr Reinmar Hager and Ms Bridget Lea.

In attendance: Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell (President and Vice-Chancellor), Patrick Hackett (Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer), Karen Heaton (Director of Human Resources), Sara Sawicki (Employment Solicitor) and John Marsh (Senior Governance Manager) (minutes).

1 Minutes of the previous meeting: 6 May 2020

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the May 2020 meeting.

2 Matters Arising

Noted: that there were no matters arising.

3 Update on the Impact of Coronavirus

Noted: an oral update from the President and Vice-Chancellor on the University's response to the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic, and in particular:

- a) the current position regarding the University's financial planning for 2020-21 and beyond in response to the challenges presented by the Pandemic, and in particular, the pay and non-pay saving measures that the University had introduced or was proposing;
- b) a gradual re-occupation of the University campus had commenced, and planning was underway to deliver an on-campus experience for students from September 2020;
- c) activity to review Professional Services units would be accelerated;
- d) the University had shared a set of proposals for negotiation with the recognised trade unions on 8 June 2020, and weekly meetings had taken place. The following proposals were under discussion:
 - i. pause on incremental progression;
 - ii. options on mandatory reduction in pay;
 - iii. changes to the existing redeployment policy which would remove the right to be on the redeployment register for 45 days plus 12 months at full pay from the date of the first formal collective consultation meeting with the trade unions;
 - iv. a reduction to the period of pay protection moving from 2 years plus 6 months at 50% of the pay difference to 1 year plus 6 months at 50% of the pay difference;
- e) both incremental progression and mandatory pay deductions were contractual and therefore could not be implemented unilaterally without significant risk;
- f) with regard to negotiations with the trade unions, the following:
 - i. engagement to date at branch level by the trade unions had been insubstantial. The level of engagement by UCU had been particularly disappointing;
 - ii. engagement at a regional level with trade unions had been more positive;
 - iii. peer institutions across the Russell Group had reported a similar problem with their respective UCU branches;

- iv. regular communications to staff were being published on StaffNet immediately after negotiation meetings;



Restricted Information

- g) pay measures were an essential element of the University's suite of options to address the financial challenge of the Pandemic. While the precise quantum of financial impact would only become clearer in Autumn 2020, it was crucial that the University made appropriate and timely preparations, including the option of Compulsory Redundancy, for potential implementation during 2020-21. Delaying the development of such preparations risked increasing the University's anticipated financial deficit, and the number of staff positions that would need to be cut;
- h) that the nuanced context of individual circumstances and household incomes needed to be recognised. The University would exempt its lower-paid staff from a mandatory reduction in pay, and had already turned down a number of voluntary salary reduction offers from Grade 4 staff;
- i) it was anticipated that there would be no national pay award in 2020, and it was likely that the financial position of the sector would also be adversely affected by the USS revaluation, and the end of the transition period for the UK's exit from the European Union;
- j) prior to the Pandemic, the University had a significant challenge as its strategic plan had recognised that it needed to have sufficient resources to invest in core activities. University financial planning had already identified the need for significant savings, largely in Professional Services to improve efficiency and effectiveness, and the University would remain committed to these targets to ensure its financial resilience and sustainability;
- k) employment matters were not within the remit of Senate, but its statutory role (subject to the authority of the Board), as the University's principal academic authority gave it an interest in ensuring the academic strength of the University, which in turn, was influenced by the financial resilience of the institution.

Agreed:

- a) to convey to the Board of Governors, Staffing Committee's disappointment in the intransigent level of engagement to date by the University's UCU branch;
- b) to recommend to the Board of Governors that it:
- i. emphasises to the recognised trade unions the importance of constructive engagement with the University;
 - ii. agrees a formal position at its July 2020 meeting regarding the importance of pay measures and revisions to University HR policies in addressing the challenge of the Pandemic;
- c) that the Chair of Staffing Committee would attend the 8 July 2020 Senate as an observer.

4 Report from the Director of Human Resources to the Staffing Committee

Received: an update on the following:

- a) the final numbers of Voluntary Severance (VS) applications accepted (38 applications had been approved) in relation to the Student Experience Programme (SEP) phase 1;
- b) progress against each of the voluntary measures launched on 21 May 2020;
- c) progress on accessing the Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme;
- d) other staff measures.

Noted:

- a) detailed in the report, that as of 29 June 2020, 370 applications had been received for the University-wide Voluntary Severance scheme. At the time of the committee meeting, this had increased to over 450 applications; the majority of which were from Professional Services staff;
- b) uptake of the Voluntary Severance scheme had exceeded expectations.

5 Additional business raised in the meeting

Noted:

- a) that a staff restructure of UMC Limited had commenced;
- b) restructuring proposals which had been informed by a deep dive analysis of the University Library would be presented to a future Staffing Committee meeting;
- c) that it may be helpful to schedule an additional Staffing Committee meeting prior to the next scheduled meeting on 16 September 2020.