

APPROVED minutes

DRAFT – prepared by the committee secretary
UNAPPROVED – signed off by the Senior Officer/Chair of the committee
APPROVED – formally approved by the committee



The University of Manchester

STAFFING COMMITTEE

21 April 2021

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

In attendance for all items: 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)

In attendance in support of the 2021 Governance Effectiveness Review: Ms Selena Bolingbroke, Halpin Partnership.

1 Welcome and Thanks

Noted: on behalf of Staffing Committee, the Chair:

- a) welcomed Robin Phillips to his first meeting, and Selena Bolingbroke who was observing the meeting in support of the 2021 Governance Effectiveness Review;
- b) thanked Bridget Lea for her service on Staffing Committee, from which she had now stood down.

2 Declaration of Interests

Noted: that there were no declarations of interest in relation to the agenda.

3 Minutes of the Previous Meeting: 5 February 2021

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the 5 February 2021 meeting.

4 Matters Arising

Noted: that there were no matters arising.

5 Report from the President and Vice-Chancellor on fixed term employees and those on open-ended contracts with finite funding

Received: a report requesting Staffing Committee to fulfil its responsibilities as set out in Statute XIII, Part II and Ordinance XXIII to consider those contracts at risk of termination due to redundancy for the period 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022.

Noted:

- a) the following reasons for the proposed redundancies:
 - i. the end of an individual's open-ended contract where this was supported by finite funding which was likely to cease or where the specific project on which they were working was coming to an end;
 - ii. the end of an individual's open-ended contract where this was supported by finite funding which was coming to an end and exceeded four years in duration and where there was no objective justification to refuse converting the contract to open-ended.
- b) while it was likely that the employment of many of the staff affected would not, in fact, be terminated as there were a number of potential alternatives to this course of action, it was however anticipated that that the adverse impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on funding sources would reduce the proportion of staff re-employed or extended in post;
- c) the numbers of staff at risk were as follows

Month	Open-ended Contract Supported by Finite Funding
January 2022	33
February 2022	45
March 2022	173
April 2022	30
May 2022	21
June 2022	33
Total	335

- d) that the University had a redeployment policy and procedure in place which was well known and understood by managers. The University would ensure that through a fair and transparent process an individual was correctly identified as at risk of redundancy and would explore opportunities for the avoidance of redundancy including:
 - i. seeking redeployment opportunities within the University;
 - ii. retraining the individual where practical and reasonable;
 - iii. seeking an extension to the existing funding stream or alternative sources of external funding.

Agreed: having given full and proper consideration to the issues presented, to recommend to the Board of Governors:

- a) that the Board of Governors approves proceeding with the process outlined in the Contracts Procedure to deal with those staff considered to be at risk on open-ended contracts linked to finite funding for the period from 1 January 2022 to 30 June 2022;
- b) that the University continues to take all steps outlined in the report to avoid the need for redundancy wherever this is possible.

6 Report from the Director of Human Resources

Received: the Director's Report which updated Staffing Committee on the following themes:

- a) the Contracts Working Group and ongoing collective consultation with the Trade Unions;
- b) the implementation of the Contracts Policy and Procedure (CPP);
- c) the number and nature of formal grievances, appeals and tribunal claims as a consequence of the implementation of the CPP;
- d) an overview of the analysis of the outcome data;
- e) legislative changes which impact on collective consultation, individual consultation or the implementation of the CPP.

Noted:

- a) that qualitative and quantitative trend data regarding all grievances and appeals and particularly statistical data regarding tribunal claims across the University would be welcomed by Staffing Committee;
- b) the higher number of staff at risk with over 4 years' service for 2020-21 and 2021-22 had been influenced by the reduction in research grants being awarded or extended in the past 12 months.

7 Update on The Library Reshaping Project

Received: an oral update from the Director of Human Resources.


Noted:

- a) an overview of queries raised during consultation by affected individuals and trade unions;
- b) details of the current extent of applications for voluntary severance;
- c) that a small number of staff based in the John Rylands Library were challenging the project's restructuring proposals for their roles with support from UCU;
- d) engagement by Unite and Unison had been constructive;
- e) the importance of retaining institutional knowledge would be recognised as the project progressed;
- f) Staffing Committee was content that processes and procedures for the project were being followed appropriately.

8 Report from the President and Vice-Chancellor on the restructure of Technicians within FSE and the closure of the Protein Expression Facility

Received: a report from the President and Vice-Chancellor on the restructure of Technicians within FSE and the closure of the Protein Expression Facility.

Noted:

- a) the next phase (Cohort 2) of a restructure of the Technical and Experimental Services within the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) encompassed 69 posts “in scope” and 30 posts “in scope and at risk” with a proposed reduction of six posts; the creation of 18 new posts resulting in a net increase of 12 posts. It was anticipated that many of the individuals in roles that would be lost would take up the new posts;
- b) the proposed closure of the MIB Protein Expression Faculty (PEF) with three posts “in scope and at risk”;
- c) the following reasons for redundancy:
 - i. the Faculty of Science & Engineering aimed to deliver a sector-leading Technical and Experimental Service for the benefit of the University through improved skills and capabilities and a new delivery model which would optimise efficiencies, technologies and facilities;
 - ii. the PEF was not a financially viable service and was not supporting the major strategic research activities of FSE or FBMH;
- d) the University would ensure that a rigorous, fair and transparent process was followed for each member of staff identified “at risk” of redundancy and would explore opportunities for the avoidance of redundancy as set out in the Security of Employment Policy as agreed with the trade unions. This would include:
 - i. seeking redeployment opportunities within the University;
 - ii. retraining the individual where this is practical and reasonable;
 - iii. restricting or reducing external advertising where this is practical and reasonable;
- e) where appropriate and required, support and training could be provided to individuals moving upwards into higher grade roles, but it remained necessary to recognise that some members of staff may not secure roles at a higher grade;
- f) 

Redacted – Restricted Information

Agreed: having given full and proper consideration to the issues presented, to recommend to the Board of Governors:

- a) that the University should enter into consultation with the campus trade unions about the proposals relating to the Technical and Experimental Services outlined in the report to reduce posts by six from an “at risk” pool of 30 posts, create 18 new posts resulting in a net increase of 12 posts and, subject to consultation, should progress with its proposals for voluntary severance;
- b) that that the University, entering into consultation with the campus trade unions on the proposal to close the MIB Protein Expression Facility with a reduction of three posts and subject to consultation, should progress with its proposals for voluntary severance;

- c) that the University continues to take all steps outlined in the report to avoid the need for redundancy wherever this is possible and, in particular, to support the use of the University's Voluntary Severance Scheme in the affected areas;
- d) that the Staffing Committee should continue to oversee these proposals in accordance with Part II of Ordinance XXIII.

9 Next meeting

Noted: that the next meeting of Staffing Committee would be 11 May 2021, and members would receive an update regarding the dates of all remaining meetings for academic year 2020-21. **Action: Director of Human Resources**