

THE UNIVERSITY OF MANCHESTER

STAFFING COMMITTEE

5 February 2021

The meeting was conducted remotely via video-conference

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

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).

Apologies: Ms Bridget Lea.

1 Quorum

Noted: that the meeting was quorate in line with the Committee's terms of reference which required that: *at least 2 lay member[s] must always be present, subject to a minimum total number of 4 members being present.*

2 Minutes of the previous meeting: 4 November 2020

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the 4 November 2020 meeting.

3 Matters Arising

Noted: that the Committee's meeting dates for the remainder of the academic year would be re-circulated to members.

4 Report from the President and Vice-Chancellor: Library Reshaping Project

Received: the President and Vice-Chancellor's report regarding the staffing proposals for the third and final phase of the Library Reshaping Project (LRP).

Noted:

- a) under the proposals, 70.87 (FTE) posts would be lost, but 61.5 new roles created resulting in a net reduction in posts of 9.37 (FTE) from an "at risk" pool of 103.45 (FTE) posts;
- b) it was expected that many of the individuals in roles that would be lost would take up the newly created posts, and that the remainder would accept voluntary severance. However, subject to consultation, and should it become necessary, the Board of Governors would be requested to approve the implementation of the procedure for dismissal of members of staff by reason of redundancy pursuant to Statute XIII Part II and Ordinance XXIII;
- c) that the rationale for the proposed redundancies was that the University Library, through the LRP, aimed to deliver significant strategic benefit for the University whilst balancing its Imagine2030 vision for the future against the need to optimise efficiency through a new operating model. The achievement of this objective required a more effective and efficient delivery structure at all levels. The proposals for the revised structure had been developed in order to increase efficiency and service effectiveness;

- d) the following regarding the numbers of staff at risk:
- i. that at the start of the LRP, the total number of posts “in scope” had been 297 with an anticipated total reduction of 41.7 (FTE) posts across all three phases. On completion of Phases 1 & 2 and following the recruitment freeze in 2020, the total number of posts in scope at the start of Phase 3 was now 255.77 (FTE) with 103.45 (FTE) being in scope and at risk, with a proposed net decrease of 9.37 (FTE). If the reduction in posts was not achieved through voluntary severance (or redeployment), the University would move to compulsory redundancy;
 - ii. the proposed numbers of posts which were potentially ‘in scope’ and ‘in scope and at risk of redundancy’ were:
Phase 3 (January 2021)

Grade	Posts (incl out of scope + vacancies)	Posts in scope Phase 3	Posts in scope and at risk	Post reductions	New Posts	Net Change
TOTAL	283.97	255.77	103.45	(70.87)	61.5	(9.37)

Some data redacted - restricted information

- iii. that at the start of the process in August 2019, the proposed net reduction in overall staffing across all three phases of the LRP was anticipated to be 41.7 (FTE) in total. By the start of Phase 3 in January 2021, 29.82 (FTE) had left following the reductions associated with Phases 1 and 2 and the recruitment freeze during 2020. The proposed net reduction in Phase 3 was a further 9.37 (FTE) from 103.45 (FTE) posts “at risk”. This brought the total reduction in posts from the LRP to 39.19(FTE);
- e) should compulsory redundancy be required, 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:
- seeking redeployment opportunities within the University;
 - retraining the individual where this is practical and reasonable;
 - restricting or reducing external advertising where this is practical and reasonable.
- f) in discussion, the following in response to questions raised by members:
- i. the likelihood of trade union campaigning in response to the LRP proposals was currently unclear, but should not be discounted in view of current sector-wide industrial relations;

- ii. the LRP was not only a vehicle for the vision and strategy of the University Library, but would also make an important contribution to improving the financial sustainability of the University. Including stages 1 and 2 of the LRP, the net financial benefit would be approximately £1 million per year, and establish a net reduction in operating costs for the Library. Financial savings from the project were University-wide;
 - iii. the LRP would address gaps in terms of management and career development within the Library at both lower and higher grades;
 - iv. it was anticipated that many of the affected staff at grade 2 would be able to secure new roles at grade 3 level, which required changes in working pattern and the introduction of shift work. Where appropriate and required, support and training could be provided to individuals moving upwards between these two grades. It was also anticipated that there would be alternative opportunities across the University for any staff who did not wish to pursue, or were unsuccessful in securing the newly created posts;
- g) the voluntary severance scheme (agreed in December 2020 with trade unions):
- i. would not fund pension charges associated with early retirement;
 - ii. established greater equity across the University by no longer covering the charge levied by USS for the transfer of benefits into the USS scheme;
- h) £0.5 million would be required for the relocation of the Joule Library as part of wider plans for the rationalisation of book storage. This funding request would be subject to a separate business case.

Agreed:

- a) having given full and proper consideration to the issues presented in the paper, to recommend to the Board of Governors that:
- i. the University should enter into consultation with the campus trade unions about the proposals outlined in the report to reduce posts by a net of 9.37 (FTE) from an “at risk” pool of 103.45 (FTE) posts and, subject to consultation, should progress with its proposals for voluntary severance;
 - ii. 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;
 - iii. Staffing Committee should continue to oversee these proposals in accordance with Part II of Ordinance XXIII;
- b) to receive for information, a further report following the implementation of proposals, which would update Staffing Committee on the outcome for all affected staff.

5 Additional Business Raised in the Meeting

Noted:

- a) an update on the status of the USS pension scheme. The findings of an assessment of the scheme under its rule 76.1 were expected to be released imminently. Dialogue between the scheme’s trustees and the Pensions Regulator was ongoing, and it was anticipated that it would be proposed that contribution costs for employees and employers should increase significantly to address the scheme’s deficit. Current levels of staff opt-out from the scheme were already concerning, and any move to higher contributions would have an adverse effect on the scheme’s sustainability. A

paper on the USS scheme would be presented to a future Board of Governors meeting;

- b) that the next scheduled meeting of Staffing Committee was 21 April 2021, but it was possible that additional meetings would be required, depending on the progress of key strategic projects.