

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



PEOPLE COMMITTEE

2 NOVEMBER 2022

Present: Ann Barnes (Chair), Jatin Patel, Robin Philips and Professor Jim Warwicker

In attendance for all items: Professor Dame Nancy Rothwell (President and Vice-Chancellor), Patrick Hackett (Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer), Banji Adewumi (Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion), Adèle Mackinlay (Director of People and Organisational Development), Sara Sawicki (Employment Solicitor), and Sally Ainsworth (Governance Manager) (minutes).

In attendance for item 7 Rachel Cowen

1 Welcome and Apologies: Gary Buxton, Professor Danielle George

The Chair welcomed Candy Saunders, in her role as Executive Officer to the Director of People and Organisational Development, to observe the meeting as part of her induction. She also welcomed Professor Rachel Cowen, University Academic Lead for Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (Gender and Sexual Orientation) who was in attendance for item 7, in her role as Co-Chair of the Women@Manchester network.

2 Declaration of Interests

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

3 *Terms of Reference and current membership

Noted: the current Terms of Reference and membership of the Committee

4 Minutes of the meetings held on 6 April and 15 July 2022

Agreed: to approve both sets of minutes.

One member asked for clarification as to who the 'both parties' referred to in the Contracts Working Group paper and corresponding minute. Colleagues in People & OD have confirmed that:

'Both parties' are the TUs (Unison/Unite and UCU) and a P&OD Partner from each Faculty and PS.

Updates on outstanding actions from both sets of minutes are detailed below:

April minutes

Agenda item 5: Report from the Director of People and Organisational Development

Action: That the Director of People and Organisational Development would investigate the contracts outcomes FSE figures and report back to the Committee.

Update: Some large grants came to an end therefore some terminations did happen. It is not considered an issue for concern; the level of research income flowing into the Faculty is still strong.

Agenda item 9 AOB:

[Redacted]

[Redacted]

Redacted – restricted information

The People & OD Policy Manager will now ensure that the amendments and updates are communicated to the relevant stakeholders (specifically Employment Services and P&OD Partners) prior to publishing the changes on Staff Net.

Separately, and as part of the review, it has been agreed that the University will automatically issue letters confirming permanency to employees who are deemed permanent by operation of law (namely employees on fixed term contracts who have continuous employment of four years or more and whose contract has been renewed at least once).

July minutes:

Agenda item 4: The proposed restructure of Research Institutes Professional Services Leadership

Action: One Member asked for further information on how long the staff member had been in post, and how new the job description for the post was. Action: Director of People & Organisational Development

Update: [Redacted]

[Redacted] **Redacted – restricted information**

5 Matters arising

The Director of People & OD gave a verbal update to the Committee. At the April 2022 meeting, (Cohort 3) restructure of Technical and Experimental Services within the Faculty of Science and Engineering (FSE) was discussed. [Redacted]

[Redacted] **Redacted – restricted information** As soon as the report has been through the relevant internal processes, it will be shared with members of People Committee, to make a recommendation to the Board of Governors.

6 Forward Plan

Received: a copy of the forward plan for the Committee

The Chair asked for this item to be unstarred, to enable discussion to take place

Noted:

Discussions were held regarding staff survey results. Members were assured that the staff survey results would be presented to the Committee at a later date. Once the themes from the survey had been identified, a deep dive will be carried out at the remaining scheduled meetings, to further investigate the outcomes.

It was noted, with regards to staff recruitment in Professional Services (PS), that there is currently a (circa) 8-10% vacancy rate which is higher than the average in recent years. The recruitment challenge is across HE and indeed the economy.

Members were informed that workload, wellbeing, morale and cost of living increases are key concerns amongst staff at the moment.

The issue of staff attrition was also discussed.

Agreed: that the following items would be added to the forward plan:

- i. A further update on the EDI Strategy at the May 2023 meeting.
- ii. An update on the pay gap on the May 2023 meeting.
- iii. In the grievances and appeals item scheduled for the February meeting, the Committee to be provided with statistics on trends that have been identified over previous years. The item will also include a review of the appeals process.
- iv. Add a report covering the issues from exit interviews and what actions can be taken to combat them.
- v. Staff survey themes – at the February meeting, an overview of the main themes and a deep dive into one of them. Then further deep dives at the remaining 2 meetings of the year.

Action: Director of People and Organisational Development, Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion and Governance Manager

7 Report from the Co-Chairs of the Women @ Manchester Staff Network Group

Received: A report from the Co-Chairs of the Women @ Manchester Staff Network Group

Noted:

The mission of the network is: Engagement from a diverse range of women who seek to learn from, work with, and support each other, in addition to advocating for gender equity.

The network was launched in March 2021 to coincide with International Women's Day. Since then, it has developed to have over 150 members, both PS and academic and research staff and students.

The next steps are to expand the membership, work in a culture of inclusion, to support gender equality action plans across the University, and make Manchester sector leading in this space.

Network members wish to meet with external networks, such as Helen Pankhurst from GM for Women and establish wider international links with networks, as examples, in India and Brazil.

It was noted that there was an SLT sponsor for each of the 4 staff network groups.

During further discussion and challenge from People Committee members, the following points were raised:

- i. Members were interested in the issue of academic promotions for women. It was noted that there is currently a difference in figures across the faculties and that a detailed breakdown of the data has been sent to each faculty, and staff have been asked to analyse the data (as part of the wider EDI data review).
- ii. It was noted that there is a need to approach staff to recommend that they apply for promotions, rather than waiting for staff to come forward independently, and that It was also important to consider staff who work part time, or returning to work after a career break, and how best they can be supported.
- iii. The question was asked if the Women@Manchester worked with alumni groups. Although contact had been made through mentoring schemes, more work could be carried out with this resource.
- iv. The Chair asked for the Network to let People Committee know what events will be happening for International Women's Month next March, and to perhaps consider the University's Bicentenary celebrations as an opportunity to celebrate Women at The University over the last 200 years. **Action: Co-Chairs of the Women@Manchester Network**

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

Received: a report requesting People Committee to consider a report from the President and Vice-Chancellor on fixed term employees and those on open ended contracts with finite funding.

Noted:

- a) The following reasons for the proposed redundancies were reported:

- i. The Fixed Term Employees Regulations (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) came into force in October 2002. One of the main provisions under these Regulations is the limitation on the use of successive fixed-term contracts and the right to open ended contractual status where the employee has been employed continuously for a prescribed period. The University introduced its Policy and Procedure on Contracts of Employment in January 2011, with the agreement of the Campus Trade Unions, to manage the level of fixed term contracts in use and to ensure that the number of transfers to open ended contracts does not create problems by their cost falling to baseline.
 - ii. It is therefore considered appropriate for the Staffing Committee as set out in Statute XIII, Part II and Ordinance XXIII to meet to consider those contracts at risk of termination due to redundancy for the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023.
 - iii. The joint University/Trade Union Contracts Group meets every 4 months to consult collectively on the likely number of fixed term contracts and open-ended contracts linked to finite funding that are due to come to an end within a defined period.
 - iv. The reasons for the proposed redundancies are the end of an individual's open ended contract where this is supported by finite funding which is likely to cease or where the specific project on which they are working is coming to an end; or the end of an individual's open ended contract where this is supported by finite funding which is coming to an end and exceeds four years in duration and where there is no objective justification to refuse converting the contract to open ended. It is important to note that it is likely that the employment of many of the staff affected will not, in fact, be terminated because there are a number of potential alternatives to this course of action. The total number of staff at risk in the period 1 July 2023 to 31 December 2023 is 312.
 - v. The University will explore opportunities for the avoidance of redundancy including:-
 - seeking redeployment opportunities within the University
 - retraining the individual where this is practical and reasonable
 - seeking an extension to the existing funding stream or to seek alternative sources of external funding

The University will seek to avoid a dismissal by reason of redundancy until the actions listed above have been pursued.
 - vi. Consultations with School, Unit or Institute Boards are ongoing and generally occur every 3 or 4 months, and the Committee were informed as to when these consultations had taken place.
 - vii. There is no impact envisaged on the workloads of the remaining staff because where funding ceases there is no requirement for the role/tasks to continue and in some cases a specific project will have come to an end.
 - viii. In line with the Contracts Policy and Procedure discussions are ongoing with individual members of staff and this will continue to occur at the appropriate trigger point ahead of the possible termination date of the individual's contract. The process of collective consultation with the trade unions is ongoing.
- b) During further discussion and challenge from People Committee members, the following points were raised:
- i. The figures were normal to see at the end of an academic year.
 - ii. A large proportion of these staff get other contracts.
 - iii. The University could look at academic researchers and Post Doctoral Research Assistants to see if any of them would be interested in some of the Professional Services (PS) roles currently available.
 - iv. Members asked if data has been looked back on to see how many staff have been redeployed, how many made redundant, and what the overall costs have been.

Members also queried if this level of data would come to People Committee or to Audit and Risk Committee. It was noted that both Finance and People and OD systems are currently under review, and this could be revisited when both had systems in place which could better handle data queries such as these. Anecdotally it was noted that most staff in the past have been redeployed.

- v. It was suggested that The University looks at Teaching, Research and PS separately to understand what is working well and what is not, for example external funding for researchers is always fixed term. In PS there has been an increase in fixed term contracts linked to the Strategic Change Programme, which has created some uncertainty.


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

- i. it 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 July 2023 to 31 December 2023;
- ii. the University continues to take all steps outlined in the report to avoid the need for redundancy wherever this is possible
- iii. that the Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer and the Director of People and OD would look into further analysing the data from Teaching, Research and PS for consideration at future meetings of the Committee. **Action: Director of People and OD and RSCOO**

9 Report from the Director of People and Organisational Development

Received: a report updating People Committee on the Contracts Working Group and ongoing collective consultation with the Trade Unions; the implementation of the Contracts Policy and Procedure (CPP), and the number and nature of formal grievances, appeals and tribunal claims as a consequence of the implementation of the CPP; and other items to note.

Noted:

- a) the following items from the report were noted:
 - i. The Contracts Working Group (CWG) continues to meet two to three times per year and both parties continue to agree that this is an effective way of handling fairly the significant number of staff at risk. The trade unions have raised various requests regarding the Contracts Policy and we are in the process of considering these. This is the formal mechanism for the University to consult on compulsory redundancies under the Contracts of Employment Policy and Procedure.
 - ii. 
Redacted – restricted information
 - iii. The percentage of staff being redeployed or extended with over four years' service has increased over the last reporting period from 73.3% to 77.3%. There has been an increase in the numbers who have been made redundant from 12.2% to 12.5%.
 - iv. There are no further legislative changes planned which are likely to impact on the Contracts Policy and Procedure.
- b) a further verbal update was provided by the Director of People and OD, with regards to recruitment and retention, and following further discussion and challenge from People Committee members, the following points were raised:

- i. Filling current vacancies is a priority. A People & OD Task and Finish group is meeting weekly to keep a high level of focus on this area. A Talent Acquisition Team has been established internally and work is taking place with external agencies, as appropriate.
- ii. Vacancies in large priority areas (such as Research Finance or IT) will be considered together, as are areas such as the high numbers of low grade Professional Services jobs. People & OD will look at recruitment campaigns to focus on these particular areas and diversify where jobs are advertised.
- iii. Members asked how the cost-of-living assistance payment had been received by staff and were informed that it had been well received with some positive emails from staff.
- iv. Members asked what effect Brexit had on recruitment and to what extent visa regulations were affected. They were informed that attracting academics is not an issue, but there was an impact on recruiting Post Doctoral Research Assistants and that visa delay were proving problematic. The President and Vice-Chancellor will be talking to senior politicians regarding the issue and the possibility of creating a fast-track visa for subject areas such as IT, where there is a lack of talent in the UK. Data to be presented at the next meeting regarding numbers of staff from Europe currently employed at the University.
Action: Director of People and Organisational Development
- v. Members asked if final year UG and PG students could be recruited to areas where the University has many vacancies. The Director of P&OD continues to meet with staff at the Students' Union to discuss how this can be taken forwards. There is also a need to focus and expand the apprenticeship schemes at the University. Future Leaders Graduate Programme is starting in September 2023
- vi. Issues with 'talent drain' are not just being experienced at Manchester, and are not limited to the HE sector either. Members agreed and noted that they were experiencing similar problems within their industries.
- vii. One member noted that attrition in recruitment teams was also becoming an issue within their industry. Director of P&OD noted that it was an issue within Higher Education too.
- viii. Member suggestions as to how they were approaching recruitment issues within their own organisations included:
 - Using recruitment campaigns to focus on particular areas
 - Over-investing in graduate recruitment
 - Focus on digital
 - Opportunities for staff development, in particular web-based training, to broaden aspirations and development

10 Analysis of Equality and Diversity data plus update on the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy, delivery plan and objectives

Received: a report containing analysis of Equality and Diversity data plus update on the EDI strategy, delivery plan and objectives

During further discussion and challenge from People Committee members, the following points were raised:

- i. Faculties have also been provided with the data shared with the Committee, and will undertake analysis of it. The University Annual Performance Review process has also begun, and EDI data play a large part in this.
- ii. The breadth of data and useful presentation was praised. The in-house reports are useful for lay members to see, but more detailed narrative would be welcomed to explain this and where it fits, explain the terminology used, to give members greater assurance, in a covering paper, for future reports.
- iii. Recruitment progression for BAME candidates was noted as an issue. Members were informed that staff are reviewing recruitment processes, that an Inclusive Recruitment Working Group has been established, which is looking at all stages of recruitment and the dropout rates between them, and will report to later meeting of the Committee. **Action: Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**
- iv. As the issues are being to be understood, Faculty and Central PS colleagues are engaging with the process, and SLT are involved in discussions, members requested that the next report to the Committee in May, maps out proposals on how each issues identified will be dealt with **Action: Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion**

11 Update on the P&OD Strategy delivery plan and objectives

Received: An update on the P&OD Strategy delivery plan and objectives

Noted:

- i. The People & OD Delivery Plan sets out the known delivery requirements of the P&OD Directorate for the 2022/23 Academic year. This also demonstrates the wealth and range of activity planned under each of the strategic themes aimed at driving the organisational performance and cultural shift in support of Our Future and Our People Our Values and which, ultimately, position us as a great place to work by the successful implementation of the strategy.
The Committee were informed that the People &OD and Equality Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) Strategies had held a very successful launch event at the Whitworth Art Gallery, attended by 150 colleagues, and Professor Michael West was the guest speaker. A rolling communications plan was in place for the coming year, visiting all directorates at the University. Members asked if the address from Professor West could be made available for those to view who were not able to attend the strategy launch. **Action: Director of People and Organisational Development**

12 AOB

None to report

13 Date of next meeting

1 February 2023