

**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**

**1 FEBRUARY 2023**

**Present:** Ann Barnes (Chair), Gary Buxton, Professor Danielle George, 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), Adèle MacKinlay (Director of People and Organisational Development), Sara Sawicki (Employment Solicitor), and Sally Ainsworth (Governance Manager) (minutes).

**In attendance for item 11 Megan Johnstone**

**Apologies:** Banji Adewumi (Director of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion)

### **1 Welcome and Apologies**

### **2 Declaration of Interests**

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

### **3 Minutes of the meeting held on 2 November 2022**

**Noted:** the minutes of the meeting on 2 November 2022 were approved.

### **4 Matters arising**

**Noted:**

- i. The Chair asked for an update on the Industrial Action taking place and the Committee were given the following information:
  - a) As yet, the University cannot be sure of the scale of the impact, but there are concerns about the impact that the strike may have on certain areas meeting their intended learning outcomes (ILOs).
  - b) A new pay offer is currently being discussed, which might be an 8% increase for those staff on lower grades, and a 5% increase for the higher grades, in addition to the incremental increases within salary scales (which impact circa 50% of

staff). Most staff had also recently been given an additional £1000, split over 2 months to assist with the cost-of-living increase.

- c) There are also discussions about the USS Pension Scheme taking place. Some wish to see a restoration of benefits, but also looking at options for staff to change the amount they pay in, making the Scheme more flexible.
- d) The Committee were informed that UCU planned to ballot their members again as it relates to extending strike action into the exam period.

- ii. The Chair also asked for an update on the Professional Services vacancy rates, which were discussed at the last meeting of the Committee. At the last meeting, the vacancy rates were between 8 and 10%, but are now on average 7.5%. Some areas, such as IT were struggling more than others, but colleagues in People & OD were building talent acquisition resources to work across the Faculties and Professional Services.
- iii. The Chair also informed the Committee that the paper on the FSE Technical Services Review, circulated to members of the People Committee via email, making a recommendation to the Board of Governors that The University moves to Compulsory Redundancy, had been approved at the Board of Governors meeting on 23 November 2022.

## 5 \*Forward plan

**Received:** the People Committee forward agenda for 2022-23, noting that items for inclusion could be suggested to the Secretary

## 6 Report from the President and Vice-Chancellor

**Received:** A report from the President and Vice-Chancellor proposing the use of compulsory redundancies to reduce the number of existing posts within the Research Institutes PS Leadership, Faculty of Science and Engineering following the closure of the Voluntary Severance (VS) Scheme

### Noted:

- On 15<sup>th</sup> July 2022, the People Committee received a proposal to restructure the Research Institutes PS Leadership within the Faculty of Science and Engineering, resulting in a proposed reduction of ■
- ii. The proposal was that the oversight and co-ordination of this activity can be managed with fewer ■ roles across the RBE team and Institutes structure in order to provide greater alignment, efficiency of service and a sufficiently broad span of control for ■ roles. Integrating the above Institute operations staff alongside ■ peers in RBE with a direct reporting line into the Head of RBE will improve opportunities for knowledge sharing, process improvement and development of major research and business engagement opportunities within and across Institutes and the wider University
- iii. A targeted voluntary severance scheme was opened on 13 October and closed on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2022 ■

■ Given this, there is a need to make provision to move to compulsory redundancy

**Redacted – Restricted information**

### Agreed:

People Committee recommend that the Board of Governors:

- i. Give full and proper consideration to the progress made as presented in this paper and the proposals following closure of the Voluntary Severance Scheme and the progress of the VS Agreement;
- ii. That Part III of Ordinance XXIII to effect the proposed compulsory redundancy at ██████████ in the Faculty of Science & Engineering, if required, should be instituted.
- iii. The Director of People & OD to provide the Committee with information on which ██████████ roles the individual had been offered. **Action: Director of People & OD**
- iv. People Committee to be updated if there are any further development with this case.  
**Redacted – Restricted information**

## 7 Staff survey results

**Received:** A report from the Director of People & OD, updating the Committee on the staff survey results and emerging themes. The report contained a copy of the announcement regarding the results which was shared with staff, and a copy of a report which was shared with the People and OD Sub-Committee, on this matter.

### **Noted:**

- i. The Staff Survey 2022 was run between September and October 2022 by *People Insight*, our sub-contracted research agency. The survey was circulated to all staff (13,297)<sup>1</sup>. It took an estimated 15-20 minutes to complete. The overall response rate was 50%, which is lower than our target and the response rate achieved in the previous staff surveys in 2019 and 2017.
- ii. This survey took place in a turbulent period – both for the University and wider society – which is likely to have influenced some of the results. The recovery from the Covid pandemic collided with a deteriorating economic situation and political turbulence in 2022. Many staff are still dealing with the society-wide negative effects of covid on health and well-being compounded by falling living standards due to inflation and are operating with high vacancy rates in skill shortages areas such as in IT services, Finance and Estates.
- iii. The overall response rate for all staff is 50%. This is respectable for an organisational staff survey but below our target of 75%+ to capture the opinions of a larger and more representative proportion of staff.
- iv. The response rate varied across the University and was higher for professional services than for academic and research staff. The response rate was below 50% in two Faculties – FBMH and FSE, and in seven of nine schools, the Directorate of Estates and several specialist units, notably Cancer Research UK MI and the GEIC.
- v. Members were provided with a high-level overview of the answers from staff to each section of the survey.
- vi. These results, along with the more detailed analysis of staff open-text comments which is underway, will inform the implementation of the recently launched EDI and People and Organisational Development action plans, the implementation of the sector Concordat for research staff and the development of additional follow-on actions to address the results for other parts of the survey. Staff will be consulted and engaged through a range of forums
- vii. The Director of People & OD advised the Committee that the three main themes which had emerged from the survey – Workload and Wellbeing; Leadership and Management; and Change management, would be fed into existing working groups,

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<sup>1</sup> This includes all staff on open ended and fixed-term contracts, GTA and UMC.

to agree a way forward, and take actions as a result of the survey results. Staff will be kept updated on progress in these workstreams.

- viii. Members asked how the results in each area compared to the last time and were informed that scores in most areas were lower, but the overall positive score for 'equality, diversity and inclusion' had increased.
- ix. It was noted that many of the negative comments were regarding staff workload and a diminution of resources.
- x. Discussions were held about the mixed results regarding change and leadership and management. This is possibly a communications issue. It was noted that with communications relating to change programmes, it was important to be transparent. It is also important to cascade the information down through appropriate channels, and some areas were more effective at this than others.
- xi. Members noted the importance of input from School and Directorate management levels feeding information back up to senior management colleagues.
- xii. The staff survey will be carried out every three years, and pulse surveys will be carried out in between.

**Agreed:**

- i. The Director of Planning has completed an analysis of the free text comments from the staff survey, and these will be shared with the Committee
- ii. A deep dive into the emerging themes to be provided at the next meeting on 3 May.

**Action: Director of People & OD**

**8 Observations from Lay chairs of appeal panels and Grievance/Appeals review**

**Received:** a report detailing the review of actions resulting from formal appeals processes

**Noted:**

- i. The Director of People & OD informed members that there were 4 main areas for improvement:
  - a. Relationships with Union colleagues – the process of improving this through a series of workshops has already started
  - b. Incorporating more informal mediation in the process
  - c. Setting up a dedicated Employee Relations team, which will help improve the speed and focus of dealing with grievances
  - d. Understanding the risk appetite of the institution
- ii. Members noted that the quality of Union representation at appeal hearings was very varied, and could be improved to aid the process
- iii. Members also noted that a disproportionate number of the cases involved BAME staff, and further work needed to be carried out to understand why this was.
- iv. Members also requested statistics on the outcomes of appeals in terms of the number of results in favour of the individual and the number in favour of the University. This data would only be presented in percentage format, and for People Committee members only.
- v. Student appeal data is provided in a similar format for Senate members, and it would be a positive step to align staff and student processes, as set out in one of the recommendations of this paper. (Agreed iii)

## **Agreed:**

- i. The Employee Relations team to be launched in early summer (resource dependant).
- ii. Feedback process to be further developed by P&OD colleagues.
- iii. Interaction between student and staff processes to be explored and streamlined in conjunction with colleagues from the Directorate of Student Experience.
- iv. A dashboard on ongoing formal processes to be developed, with monitoring of time taken and in formal cases and proactive and remedial action (where necessary).
- v. Training to be developed to support colleagues involved in formal casework
- vi. Proposed support for Lay Governors involved in these processes to be further developed.
- vii. Training will be developed looking at the balance between protecting/looking after the individual, and protecting the organisation to address perceived concerns regarding appetite for risk.
- viii. A more resolution focused approach to conflict to be explored and a system of triage/appropriate resolution developed to manage conflict.
- ix. Feedback to be given to Union members regarding their work as representatives during appeals, from lay members of the Board.
- x. More detailed analysis of the number of cases involving BAME staff members to be carried out
- xi. Statistics on the outcomes of appeals in terms of the number of results in favour of the individual and the number in favour of the University, to be provided to members

### **Action for all: Director of People & OD**

## **9 Update from Director of People & OD on Trade Union relationships**

This item was reported under matters arising.

## **10 Update on the P&OD Strategy delivery plan and objectives**

**Received:** a report outlining the current delivery status of activities derived through the implementation of the People & OD Strategy

## **Noted:**

- i. The People & Organisational Development strategy was launched in early October 2022, the report provided an update on the activities that were currently taking place to implement the strategy. Activities are separated into three categories: engagement, continuous improvement, and strategic transformation programme.
- ii. The Committee were informed that the implementation of the People & OD Strategy was on track with activities being undertaken throughout the directorate. An event for People & OD colleagues is taking place on the 7<sup>th</sup> February 2023 entitled 'Be the Change', to inspire and encourage all colleagues to get involved and make change happen in their roles.
- iii. The Chair informed the Committee that ARC lay members had observed Faculty Management team meetings, at which, some staff had mentioned some issues with recruitment and had asked for assurances that there were improvements in this area, in particular for short term researcher contracts.
- iv. The Committee were reminded that it was important to understand that some of the recruitment issues are outside of the control of People & OD, such as visa issues.

- v. Members commended the format of the RAG reporting for the Continuous Improvement Overview.

**Agreed:**

- i. Missing Talent and succession planning strategy report section to be circulated to members
- ii. Strategic Transformation Programme Plan original timelines to be shared with members
- iii. People & OD dashboard report on service users – confirm which staff members receive it and how they cascade the information within their teams.

**Action for all: Director of People & OD**

**11 Update from the ALLOUT Staff Network Group**

**Received:** A verbal update on the activities of the ALLOUT Staff Network Group, from Megan Johnston, one of the co-Chairs of the Network.

**Noted:**

- i. This staff network has three co-Chairs - Dominic Bilton, James Lea and Megan Johnston.
- ii. They are supported by the Lead EDI Partner, Paul Marks-Jones.
- iii. The University's Stonewall submission was sent ahead of deadline. Results will be with us early this year.
- iv. The co—Chairs have previously had a meeting with the RSCOO, who is keen to attend future meetings of the network.
- v. The next major set of activities under the auspices of the Group will be in February for LGBT+ History Month, when the following events will take place on campus:

Thursday, 9<sup>th</sup> February, 5:30pm: film screening, Whitworth Art Gallery

Monday, 13<sup>th</sup> February: Lunch and Learn 'OUR LGBT+ History'

Wednesday, 15<sup>th</sup> February: curator lead tour of new exhibition 'Undefining Queer' –

<https://www.whitworth.manchester.ac.uk/whats-on/exhibitions/upcomingexhibitions/undefiningqueer/>

Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> February, 5-6pm (via Zoom): presentation by Professor Jackie Stacey (title to be confirmed)

Tuesday, 21<sup>st</sup> February, 3-4pm (via Zoom): presentation by **Dr Kit Heyam** about trans history

Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> March: social celebration and quiz – further details to be confirmed

- vi. Further information can be found on the following Staffnet page: <https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/equality-and-diversity/staff-network/lgbt-staff-network-group/>
- vii. A member suggested linking the Manchester ALLOUT Staff network group with similar groups in other organisations
- viii. Members asked if career progression could be monitored, in the same way that the University was doing with BAME colleagues, identifying issues and barriers, and reviewing recruitment processes. It was noted that this data under-reported by staff and therefore not readily available. Work needs to be carried out in order to create a culture of trust amongst staff.
- ix. Another member of the People Committee signposted the Network group to the following organisation for further support: <https://prideinleadership.co.uk/>

- x. Members of the Committee were keen to reinforce the flow of communication between all staff network groups and the Board, and advised the co-Chairs that the People Committee could operate as a conduit for any messages that they wished to share with the Board of Governors, and requested that the Network group come back to a future meeting of the People Committee with further updates.

## **12 AOB**

### **Noted:**

A Committee member asked for an update on one of the outstanding actions from the last meeting: *Data to be presented at the next meeting regarding numbers of staff from Europe currently employed at the University.*

### **Agreed:**

This information and that for any other actions from the last meeting to be circulated to members via email

**Action: Director of People & OD**

## **13 Date of next meeting**

3 May 2023