The University of Manchester

PEOPLE COMMITTEE

3 MAY 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), 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 12 Laura Howard

1 Welcome

The Chair welcomed Nicola Somers, in her role as Executive Officer to the Director of People and Organisational Development, to observe the meeting as part of her induction.

2   Declaration of Interests

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

3   Minutes of the meeting held on 1 February 2023

Noted: the minutes of the meeting on 1 February 2023 were approved.

4   Matters arising

Noted:

i.   The Committee received an update on the industrial action currently taking place at the University, including an update from a meeting with local UCU members. The Committee also discussed the potential impact on students of the marking and assessment boycott.

ii.   The Chair asked for an update on PS vacancy rates, and the Committee were informed that although the numbers were fluid, the current vacancy rates had reduced to 6%. This is due to a number of factors, but in the main, the work of the newly formed Talent Acquisition team. A campaign was being launched in the Manchester Evening News, which aimed to highlight the benefits of working at the University, amongst a variety of other recruitment activities. A link to this was shared with Committee members.

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 on fixed term employees and those on open-ended contracts.

Noted:

i.   The Fixed Term Employees (Prevention of Less Favourable Treatment) Regulations 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 People 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 January 2024 to 30 June 2024.

iii.   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.
   - 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.

iv.   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.

v.   The numbers of staff at risk were provided to the Committee.

vi.   The University has a redeployment policy and procedure in place which is well known and understood by managers. The University will ensure that through a fair and transparent process an individual is correctly identified as at risk of redundancy and will explore opportunities for the avoidance of redundancy including:-

- seek redeployment opportunities within the University
- retrain the individual where this is practical and reasonable
- seek an extension to the existing funding stream or to seek alternative sources of external funding

vii. The University will seek to avoid a dismissal by reason of redundancy until the actions listed above have been pursued.

viii. Many of the University's activities are supported by funds from a variety of funding sources for a finite period of time. Some grants are renewed while others cease. This is a very common practice across the sector and is an invaluable means by which the University pursues its research mission. It also encourages researchers to develop careers via a variety of projects and institutions.

ix. Consultations with School, Unit or Institute Boards are ongoing and generally occur every 3 or 4 months. The Director of People and Organisational Development, on behalf of the President and Vice-Chancellor, has received assurances from the Deans and, where appropriate, the Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer, that the matter of those contracts linked to finite funding or a specific project and at risk has been discussed by the relevant School Boards (or Leadership Teams where School Boards do not exist) since the last report to the People Committee in November 2022.

x. One member queried the differences in data for staff with under or over 4 years service, between the Faculties, and asked if further explanation could be provided.

xi. One member queried why staff in the Cultural Institutions were affected by finite sources of funding. It was noted that a number of fixed terms projects, such as the Manchester Museum Transformation Project were led by the Institutions.

Agreed:

People Committee recommend that the Board of Governors:

i. give full and proper consideration to the issues presented in this paper.
ii. 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 2024 to 30 June 2024.
iii. Agree that the University continues to take all steps outlined in the report to avoid the need for redundancy wherever this is possible.
iv. Further investigation into the differences in data for staff with under or over 4 years service, between the Faculties to be carried out and reported back to the Committee. **Action: Director of People and OD**

7 A report from the Director of People and OD

Received: A Report from the Director of People and OD (to include Contracts Working Group/contracts Policy and Procedure update and other items of continuous process improvement

Noted:

People Committee received a report from the Director of People & OD, updating the Committee on the outcome data for staff with under 4 years' service and over 4 years' service for the period 1 January 2022 to 28 February 2023.

i. There were no specific issues of concern to bring to the attention of the Committee.
ii. 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 CWG 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.
iii. There are no appeals against the ending of a fixed term contract and no Tribunal claims associated with the implementation of the Contracts Policy and Procedure since the last report in November 2022.
iv. The percentage of staff being redeployed or extended with over four years' service has decreased over the last reporting period from **77.3% to 74%.** There has been an increase in the numbers who have been made redundant from **12.5% to 20%.**
v. One member queried a statement in the report regarding legislative changes planned which are likely to impact on the Contracts Policy and Procedure, and asked for clarification as to what timeframe this covered and how could assurances be given that no legislative changes will occur.

Agreed:

i. That the report was commended and noted
ii. Further investigation into legislative changes and assurances given to the Committee to be carried out, and an update provided to members.

Action: Director of People & OD

8   Lay members framework proposal

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

Noted:

i. People Committee received a report detailing a proposed framework for supporting lay members of the Board of Governors to attend formal panels that have been convened to determine action under the Universities formal Employee Relations Procedures (e.g., Disciplinary Procedures). The full document can be found in the Reading Room.
ii. Currently, Lay members are required to chair formal panels as part of their duties. Previously panel members have had sporadic support for this activity and the scheduling and organisation of panels has been inconsistent and complex.
iii. Following a review of People and OD Partner activity, a decision was made to establish a central Employee Relations Team. This team will manage and support most of the formal ER casework across the University and will provide a robust and consistent framework of support, administration, and guidance. It is proposed the ER team develop a new framework for Lay members, as an integral part of central ER processes and systems, that will provide an improved service to Lay members when they are asked to attend formal panels, and ensure they have the correct advice and guidance available in a timely way.
iv. It is proposed to introduce written guidance for lay members as part of an induction programme (and on the introduction of these proposals for current and new lay members):
v. Guidance about the role which will serve as a refresher for long-standing lay members and as an introduction for new members on appointment.

vi. The aim is to have a definitive version of the framework in place by the start of the academic year 23/24.

vii. Members praised the work that had been carried out in putting the constructive guidance notes together, and agreed that this would be very helpful and reassuring for lay members involved in the process.

viii. Discussions were had regarding who had the authority to make the final decision in the appeals process.

ix. Members discussed the guidance note with regards to advice on witnesses, and the importance of informing staff involved in an appeal, that the aim is not to re-hear an investigation, but to ensure that the correct procedures were followed in the initial case.

x. The Director of People and OD reminded members that if, as an appeal Chair, they are contacted directly by a staff member involved, to pass any correspondence to the Employee Relations Team to reply on their behalf

Agreed:

i. That the framework be shared with the Board of Governors via the report from the People Committee **Action: Governance manager**

ii. Confirmation to be provided within the guidance as to who has the authority to make the final decision in the process. **Action: Director of People & OD**

iii. Confirmation to be provided within the guidance as to the different procedures to be followed for different cases, with particular reference and clarification for the involvement of witnesses. **Action: Director of People & OD**

iv. The Employee Relations Team to present to the Board of Governors when the guidance and process is finalised. **Action: Director of People & OD**

9   EDI Update

Received: a report providing a progress update on the EDI Strategy, the delivery plan, including a focus on the recruitment progression of BAME candidates. Additional statutory equality reports to be noted were included as appendices to the report.

Noted:

This paper provided People Committee members with a progress update on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) activity across the University, with a particular focus on the implementation of the year one plan of the EDI Strategy.

Recruitment progression for BAME candidates had been highlighted as an issue. Members were informed that a review of the recruitment process is being conducted. The following data provides a summary of the equality and diversity data for BAME candidates applying for roles at the University:

- 39.1% of applications for PS (both Faculty-based and central) were sent by BAME candidates. The proportion of BAME candidates decreases to 24.1% among shortlisted and again to 21% among successful candidates. 9.4% of BAME candidates were shortlisted compared to 18.8% of White candidates.
- 49.8% of applications for core academic positions were sent by BAME candidates. 34.2% of shortlisted candidates were BAME and 29.2% of successful candidates were BAME.

- 63% of applications for research academic positions were sent by BAME candidates. The proportion of BAME candidates decreased to 46.7% among shortlisted and again to 36.7% among successful candidates.

Source: Annual Equality Report 2022, published March 2023.

Though the equality and diversity data shared, focused on ethnicity, the general analysis of recruitment data indicated that men, disabled people and Ethnic Minority candidates were less likely to be appointed. These differences exist even when other dimensions such as age or type of role applied for, are considered

The University is currently undertaking an Inclusive Recruitment Review which is going to produce recommendations on how to ensure that bias is minimised during the recruitment process at the University

Key findings from the Annual Equality Information report were:

i. Age: Most staff at the University are within the '36 to 45' age range.

ii. Disability: 7.5% of staff at the University have shared their disability information on their staff record. The proportion of disabled staff working at the University has been increasing since 2018, with the most prevalent disability type declared by staff, accounting for 25.9% of all disabilities, is 'long standing illness or health condition such as cancer, HIV, diabetes, chronic heart disease, or epilepsy.

iii. Ethnicity: 19.4% of University's staff are ethnic minorities. This is a 4% increase in BAME staff across the university since 2018, with a 4.5% increase in BAME academics and a 3.4% increase in BAME PS staff. The largest represented ethnic group is Asian accounting for 58.9% of all BAME staff.

iv. Gender: 51.5% of University's staff are female; a 1.1% increase in female staff across the university since 2017, with a 1.6% increase in proportion of female academics 30). There is a difference in representation of females at

v. Sexual Orientation: 73.8% of staff responded to question about sexual orientation. Response rates to questions about sexual orientation has increased between 2018 and 2022.

The University has published its Gender, Ethnicity and Disability Pay Gap report in accordance with statutory requirements to publish the information by 30 March of each year.

Key highlights from the report were:

vi. Gender: The mean and median pay gaps at the University have continued to narrow and are now at the lowest since reporting commenced in 2017 at 14.1% and 10.5% respectively

vii. Ethnicity: Both pay gaps in relation to ethnicity have increased to 15.6% (mean) and 12.4% (median) from 13.3% and 9.9% in 2021.

viii. Disability: The mean and median pay gaps relating to disability have also narrowed since 2021 (the first year we compiled this report) and are now reported at 14.9% and 9.8%.

ix. The Committee welcomed the update report and shared much positive feedback, celebrating the achievements thus far, and looked forward to continued progress.

x. Discussions were held regarding recruitment and the challenges faced to increase diversity, not just at the recruitment stage, but also in career progression. Members also discussed the diversity of recruitment panels, and how this can be monitored and improved.

Agreed:

That the report was commended and noted

10   Staff Survey

Received: a verbal update from the Director of People & OD

Noted:

  i.   The results from the staff survey have been analysed, and were presented at the last meeting of the People Committee. An action plan has now been agreed and finalised.
  ii.   There are 4 over-arching themes Workload; Wellbeing; Leadership and Management; and Change management, and existing Committees within the University are leading on the action plans for each theme.
  iii. The theme discussed at this meeting was Workload.
  iv.   Members noted that this was not to be confused with the workload allocation model, used by academic colleagues. Expectations on colleagues have increased, so the University is looking at different ways of working, and sharing workload with other colleagues. The staff are working closely with UCU on this.
  v.   Professional Services colleagues are experiencing similar issues and PSLT are meeting to discuss the next steps in the action plan.
  vi.   A Communications plan is being finalised, in order that colleagues can be assured that this is a top priority and kept up to date with any action taken.
  vii. Members noted that updates to IT systems will help to improve efficiency and streamline processes. They also noted that Networks or user groups for staff using new systems, would be very helpful
  viii. Members discussed the hybrid working project and the impact of hybrid working on how staff work, and also how our students learn. There is more work to be done on providing guidance, particularly for those with management responsibilities, to enable their teams to work more effectively and provide them with the necessary support.

11   Update on the People &OD Strategy (Transformation) implementation plan and objectives

Received: A report outlining the changes in the governance arrangements that have been agreed with regards to the People & OD Sub Committee and an update on the progress of the People & OD Transformation Programme.

Noted:

  i.   The People & OD Transformation Programme was initially established as five workstreams that directly correlated to the 5 strategic pillars outlined in the People & OD Strategy; this was later extended to 6 workstreams to include Strategic Technology (new P&OD System). After a period of mobilisation, engagement with colleagues and discussion with the Strategic Change Office, it has become apparent that many of the deliverables are better aligned with the People & OD SC from a governance perspective.

The programme has therefore been re-formatted to the following workstreams:

- **Tactical** – short term deliverables that maximise current system capabilities and resources to increase service performance and colleague experience of the People & OD directorate. Projects include Job Train, Employee Change Requests (removal of

PCM and NAF) and Leave Management. To remain aligned to SCSC governance routes.

- **Strategic Infrastructure** – Long term sustainable improvements to deliver operational excellence directly correlated to the Services strategic pillar of the People & OD Strategy. Projects include Target Operating Model, New P&OD System, Resourcelink Foundations, Cloud Based Files, and Establishment Control. To remain aligned to SCSC governance routes.
- **Strategic Capability** – Long term developments to skill base, and practice across the university to support the delivery of the University's Our Future Strategy and directly correlated to the People & OD Strategy strategic pillar of Leadership, Culture, Performance, and Wellbeing. To move under the oversight and direction of the People & OD Sub Committee.

ii. The Committee were informed of a number of updates, including that the Tactical Workstream is due to complete in the summer, with the implementation of Jobtrain recruitment improvements, Employee Change Requests and sickness and annual leave being added to MyView through Leave Management.

iii. Leave Management is split in to two phases of sickness reporting and annual leave. Sickness reporting is due to go live at the end of May and we are in the final planning stages, with communications being deployed across the University shortly. Annual leave will go live in October, meaning that the new processes will be in place for the annual leave year 23/24.

iv. With regards to Job Train, user acceptance testing is currently being delivered with good feedback from users and early adopters engaged at different levels.

Agreed:

That the report was noted

12   Update from the Disabled Staff Network Group

Received: A verbal update on the activities of the Disabled Staff Network Group, from Laura Howard, one of the co-Chairs of the Network.

Noted:

i. The staff network has three co-Chairs - Rachel Heyes, Laura Howard, and Steven Pierce

ii. Matthew Harrison is the Neurodiversity Network Co-ordinator

iii. The Disabled staff network provides a voice within the University for disability equality. The group meets officially three times a year and have a number of other informal get-togethers. The network is open to all members of staff (including PGR students) at the University who consider themselves to have a disability or long-term health/medical condition, and to members of staff who have a specific interest in this area of work.

iv. The Neurodiversity Network is a part of the DSN and is open to anyone who has or considers themselves to be neurodivergent or their allies.

v. The Co-Chairs are going to be conducting a survey of their members, to see what activities and support they would like from the network. Suggestion thus far had been around advocacy, awareness raising and training for managers.

vi. Disability Equity, a new eLearning course provided by Disability Advisory and Support Services, has been launched recently and is available for all staff at The University of Manchester.
The course has been launched as it is vital to ensure we all have a good understanding and awareness of the barriers that disabled people can face so that we can be anticipatory, inclusive, respectful and supportive.

All current staff have been enrolled onto the course and line managers have been advised to ensure all new starters complete the training alongside the other essential courses.

vii. 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.

13   AOB

Received:

A Committee member had asked for information regarding Brexit and any potential impact on staff recruitment from Europe. The Committee were provided with data concerning international employees over the last five years to identify any trends as a result of Brexit.

Noted:

i. The data indicated that there has been a slight dip in international numbers in 2020/21 for which they are many factors, as there was an overall reduction in employee numbers during this time.

ii. Further impacts could include a result of Brexit, which triggered 31 January 2020, or a direct impact of Covid, which prevented or limited international travel during this period. There may also have been an increase of employees taking up settled status, which would in turn have reduced international employee numbers during this time.

iii. Since 2020/21, numbers have increased across the board to a relative consistency to pre-pandemic numbers.

13   Date of next meeting

28 June 2023