

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 NOVEMBER 2023

Present: Ann Barnes (Chair), Professor Daniela Caselli, Jatin Patel and Robin Philips.

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), Helen Ashley, Director of Organisational Development, Sara Sawicki (Employment Solicitor), and Sally Ainsworth (Governance Manager) (minutes).

In attendance for item 13 – Professor Dawn Edge and Fran Guratsky

Apologies: Gary Buxton, Professor Danielle George

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 20 September 2023

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 20 September 2023.

4 Matters arising and action log

Noted: the action log

5 *Forward plan

Noted: the forward plan

6 A report from the Director of People & OD

Received: a verbal update from the Director of People & OD covering matters not on the agenda

Noted:

- i. Industrial action: the last mandate for strike action ended on 30 September 2023 and the current UCU ballot results will be announced shortly after the ballot closes on 3

November 2023. The University's Leadership and the local Unions are working in partnership on the non-pay related elements of the 'Four Fights', namely, casualisation, workload, and equity.

- ii. Change Programmes: a review of the Student Experience Programme (SEP) will commence in the New Year once the ToR have been approved by SCSC and PRC. Academic and Professional Services staff, along with representatives from the Students' Union will be involved in this work. The evaluation report will firstly go to the Strategic Change Sub-Committee for a recommendation, then on to PRC, then Finance Committee, and then the Board will be asked to make a final decision. There has been a clear acknowledgement from SLT that SEP has been difficult and they wish the evaluation to be independent and will not be directly involved with the review work. Members noted the importance of how the review outcomes were communicated to staff and were informed that approximately only 30% of staff access news items of Staffnet. It was agreed that more effective communications methods needed to be considered, not only for the outcomes of this review, but also for any information on further change programmes at the University.

Secretaries note: Outcome of UCU ballot on industrial action (announced after this meeting of People Committee

In the national ballot of the Universities and Colleges Union (UCU) about pay, working conditions and staff contracts, 42.6% of members voted, which did not meet the 50% threshold needed to give the union a mandate for further industrial action

Agreed:

- i. Regular updates will be provided to People Committee on the SEP review, with a focus on the wellbeing impact. **Action: Director of People & OD**
- ii. Different ways of communication to be considered for future change programmes **Action: Matthew Moth, Interim Director of CMSR**

7 People & OD Strategy Implementation Proposed Metrics

Received: a report on

Noted:

- i. The People & OD Strategy was approved by the Board in July 2022, and is beginning the second year of deliverables against the five strategic priorities, namely, service, leadership and culture, performance, and wellbeing.
- ii. The paper proposed a series of metrics that could be used to measure success -for example- for service (namely colleagues recommending UoM as a great place to work); a reduction in vacancy rates and time to hire; Leadership and Culture – for example - coaching and mentorship engagement rates; Performance – for example - an increase in % of academic and PS staff engaging in the P&DR process; and Wellbeing – for example - Increased awareness of available support and services.
- iii. Members were informed that this was the first part of the work to be carried out, and that the second part would include benchmarking data to assist in measuring success.
- iv. Discussion over the different range of data used in such an exercise, such as measuring success against the Researcher Concordat, and how the Workforce Dashboard is being used to extract the data.

- v. A finished paper will be submitted to the February meeting of the Committee, at which, they will be asked to make a recommendation to the Board of Governors.

Agreed:


- i. To sense check the data with Faculties and Schools before presenting the finished item.
- ii. To present updates to the People Committee before Christmas, collate feedback, and bring a finished version of the metrics paper to the February meeting of the People Committee.
- iii. A rationale to be provided for each metric, as to why it was being used, and what would indicate success

Action for all: Director of P&OD and Director of Organisational Development

8 Report from the Director of People & OD

Received: a report from the Director of People & OD, which included an update on the Contracts Working Group, Grievances and appeals and other related matters.

Noted:

- i. The Contracts Working Group has temporarily been superseded by a Task and Finish Group with the three local Unions. Terms of Reference have been agreed, and the first meeting took place on 26 October 2023. In parallel, much work has happened within P&OD on cleaning the data as it relates to FTCs and ensuring that we minimise the numbers (as appropriate). The work of the Employee Relations Team will also have a huge impact on future data in this area.
- ii. 
. Redacted – restricted information
- iii. The Committee also received outcome data from staff, in terms of those who resigned, were redeployed, or who had their contracts terminated. The figures were from staff who had over 4 years service at the University, and also the staff who had under 4 years service.
- iv. The percentage of employees being redeployed or extended with over four years' service has decreased over the last reporting period from 74% to 63%. The numbers who have been made redundant has remained the same at 20%.
- v. Work is underway to highlight the trends focusing on increasing the job security where practicable. These are reported quarterly indicating updates and equality data to enable improved insights and include actions relating to further improving proactive management and reduction (including conversion to permanent as possible) of fixed term contracts.
- vi. During further discussion and challenge from People Committee members, the following points were raised:
 - Members asked if the data could be disaggregated to reflect the consequences of different types of contract buy-outs, for short term contracts, for example.

- The University is investigating further cross-Faculty overlap between staff and developing a culture of change and agility

Agreed:

- Further disaggregated data to be presented at the May meeting of the People Committee

Action: Director of People & OD

9 Report from the President and Vice-Chancellor

Received: a report detailing those contracts at risk of termination due to redundancy for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024.

Noted:

- 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.
- The obligation to assure the financial sustainability of the University means that, for staff on an open-ended contract whose role is supported by finite funding or linked to a specific project which is likely to cease, or where the specific project to which their role relates is coming to an end, redundancy may be unavoidable. However, the University is committed to handling all such cases in an exemplary manner and, to this end, to exploring all the alternatives to redundancy.
- The Senior Leadership Team (SLT) has established a Task & Finish Group (T&F Group) with the University's Trade Unions on (UMUCU's term) 'casualisation'. The objectives of this group are twofold; 1. To increase the understanding of when fixed term contracts are appropriate; 2. To ensure that colleagues are on open-ended contracts where appropriate. The T&F Group will also consult collectively on the likely number of fixed term contracts and finite funded permanent contracts that are due to end within a defined period to meet any requirements under Section 188 of the Trade Union Labour Relations (Consolidation) Act 1992. The T&F Group will report to the People Committee on its progress. Once the work of the T&F Group is done, the Contracts Working Group will continue overseeing fixed term contracts.
- Members were informed that the total number of staff at risk for the period 1 July 2024 to 31 December 2024 is 323. The reasons for the contracts being at risk 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 alternatively, 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

- vi. Members asked for some context for the PS staff referred to in the report, and were informed that this was due to staff being involved in projects with finite funding, or covering for other staff, in roles such as clinical trial managers.
- vii. Discussions were held regarding the terminology used for a number of different contracts, such as Fixed Term Contracts (FTCs), open ended contracts, and zero hours contracts. It was noted that the only individuals at the University on zero hours contracts were students assisting with events such as open days, or who work as student ambassadors. It is hoped that these numbers will increase.
- viii. In addition to making recommendations to the Board, the People Committee were asked to acknowledge the work of the Task and Finish Group on Casualisation.

Agreed:

- i. To recommend to the Board of Governors that 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 2024 to 31 December 2024.
- ii. that the University continues to take all steps outlined in the report to avoid the need for redundancy wherever this is possible.
- iii. The work of the Task and Finish Group on Casualisation was acknowledged, and updates will be provided to the People Committee on the outcomes of the work of this group. **Action: Director of P&OD**

10 Staff Survey Update

Received: a report highlighting activities associated with implementation of the 2022 staff survey action plan, including summary actions agreed by the staff survey advisory group

Noted:

- i. Activity continues to focus on the five key themes and members noted that there had been minor delays in implementation resulting from the recent cyber incident.
- ii. The key themes are all embedded in the strategic plans for People & OD and EDI.
- iii. Significant wellbeing resource has been focussed on supporting colleagues who have been impacted by the cyber incident and MAB. Consequently, a wellbeing pulse survey has been rescheduled for January 2024.
- iv. Professional development policy is under review to align more closely with our strategic ambitions for supporting and appraising staff performance. The review includes enhanced support for the researcher development concordat, the new academics and researchers programme and professional and academic leadership.
- v. Discussions were held as to the frequency of the next survey, and the need to demonstrate action and a cultural shift before this is held, in 2025. The key is also to find the most appropriate time in the academic year to invite staff to complete the next survey. In the meantime a pulse survey focussing on the theme of wellbeing will be circulated to staff in February 2024, the results of which will be shared with this Committee.

Agreed:

- i. More 'you said, we did' communications to be shared with staff, based on the outcome and resulting action plans from the last staff survey;
- ii. The Wellbeing pulse survey results to be shared at the next meeting of the people Committee (7 February)

Action for both: Director of Organisational Development

11 Update on the P&OD Strategy (Transformation) implementation plan

Received: a paper providing an overview of the People & OD Programme, containing information on the Tactical, Strategic Infrastructure, and Strategic Capabilities Workstreams and the current status of each

Noted:

- i. All programme workstreams are within the current allocated budget draw down and are being delivered to schedule.
- ii. The Tactical Workstream is the delivery of solutions for immediate operational issues. One project within this is the development of an Employee Contract Request (ECR) software application, digitising the current paper process (PCM Form). The tactical workstream is RAG rated as amber due to a pause of the ECR project because of the cyber event. This project is now being re-mobilised and a new plan will be developed to complete implementation.
- iii. Strategic Infrastructure Workstream is the design and development of the operating model in the People & OD Directorate. This includes structures, capability, capacity, processes and systems within the directorate. The workstream is progressing well and is receiving positive feedback from People & OD colleagues and is currently RAG rated as green.
- iv. The Strategic Capabilities Workstream is the development of capability across the University focusing predominantly on behaviours and values to support the delivery of the People & OD Strategy. This is within budget and is making great progress, and is RAG rated green.

Agreed: The report was noted

12 EDI Strategy Update

Received: a progress update on the EDI Strategy, the delivery plan and wider engagement activity aligned to facilitating the achievement of the University of Manchester vision to be recognised by staff, students and partners as an inclusive organisation.

Noted:

- i. Members were provided with a summary update of some key activities against the priority areas of the EDI Strategy: Fostering an Inclusive Environment and Culture; Diversity and Equity Across Our Community; and Inclusive Practice.
- ii. Discussions took place about Digital Inclusion & Web Accessibility and the work being carried out in this area. Members were informed that in recognition of the University's legal accessibility responsibility to our digital audience, both within and outside of the University, information and resources on how to make online content inclusive and accessible has been developed and is available on [staffnet](#). Further work is required in this area in order to be fully compliant in meeting UK Accessibility Regulations and an update will be provided at a future meeting of the Committee.
- iii. Members also received information regarding the work taking place regarding tackling discrimination, bullying and harassment, and that there has been an increase in Report and Support cases. This is being attributed to the increase in channels of raising awareness about the platform and increase in confidence in the process and increase in number of trained Harassment Support Officers (12 additional officers

have been trained in the last quarter). This has enabled a quicker response to cases logged.

- iv. Members discussed the EDI issues facing academic staff and their career progression

Agreed:

- i. Update on Digital Inclusion & Web Accessibility compliance with UK Regulations to be provided at the next meeting of the People Committee
- ii. Further work to be carried out analysing EDI data regarding academic promotions and career progression and presented back to this Committee

13 Update on the REC Charter Mark submission

Received: an update on the recent submission for the Charter Mark.

Noted:

- i. In July, the University submitted its [Race Equality Charter](#) (REC) application to Advance HE.
- ii. REC is a national scheme aimed at improving the representation, progression and success of minority ethnic staff and students within Higher Education. There are currently ~100 member institutions and 45 award holders.
- iii. REC provides a framework for engagement, critical self-assessment and action planning on race inequalities. Adopting this framework allows us to identify our own good practice and areas for further positive action. Formal accreditation enables us to make clear our commitment to race equality internally and externally.
- iv. The University has been part of REC since its inception in 2015. The previous submissions in 2015 and 2018 received Bronze awards in recognition of our foundation for eliminating racial inequalities, developing inclusive cultures and moving from commitment to sustainable and integrated bold and ambitious action.
- v. This application focused on developing inclusive cultures and a commitment to becoming an anti-racist, anti-discriminatory organisation through bold, ambitious, sustainable and integrated actions.
- vi. The focus now shifts to delivering the ambitious Action Plan, which has been renamed an 'Achievement Plan', over the award period (five years). This will be a shared undertaking as the action plan has been developed with key stakeholders and action owners across the University.
- vii. Thanks were extended to all members of SLT for their support with the submission.

Secretaries note: *On Monday 6 November, an announcement was made that the University had been awarded the Silver REC Award. Please see the link below for the announcement news, and access to the REC application from the University, and associated action plan, amongst other details:*

<https://www.staffnet.manchester.ac.uk/news/display/?id=30524>

14 AOB

None to report

15 Date of next meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for 7 February 2024