

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 MAY 2024

Present: Ann Barnes (Chair), Gary Buxton, Professor Danielle George Jatin Patel

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

In attendance Konstantinos Karavangelis (all items); Helen Ashley (item 8), Sharon Newton (item 12), Helen Brewis (item 13), Professor Jackie Carter (item 14).

Apologies: Robin Philips

2 Declaration of Interests

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

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 February 2024

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the meeting on **7 February 2024**.

4 Matters arising and action log

Noted:

the action log

Matters arising: The Committee were informed that some Board members had been contacted by staff, with concerns regarding the implementation of grievance appeal panel recommendations in one case. As a result, the Audit and Risk Committee have requested that Uniac undertake an audit and report back to them, to provide assurances regarding the governance of the panels and their recommendations. This report will be shared with People Committee members.

5 *Forward plan

Noted: the forward plan. Members were advised that the forward plan for 2024/25 would be presented for discussion at the next meeting.

6 A report from the Director of People & OD

Received: an update to note, from the Interim Director of People & OD.

Noted:

- i. People and OD Programme: Four clearly defined value-add workstreams have been identified and aligned with exploratory work ongoing into a possible central Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) offering. Final-phase programme activity on Jobtrain, Employee Change Requests, Resourcelink Foundations and Leave Management will be completed; Contingency planning for extending Resourcelink end-of-life is in progress, and service improvement projects will take place to deliver further service improvement and to embed a continuous improvement (CI) approach across People & OD.
- ii. Our Colleague [Well-Being survey](#) went “live” on 17 April and runs until 8 May 2024. This is an important means of benchmarking and baselining our performance in this area and forms an important strand of our People and OD Strategy. The results will inform areas of particular focus. Members requested information on the completion rates of the survey, and were informed that to date, 18.5% staff had completed the survey. Discussions were held regarding possible ways to increase this rate, including providing time at the start of large group meetings for staff to take part in the survey, before normal business was discussed.
- iii. An update was provided from the co-chairs of the People and Structures Evaluation Committee that outlined the approach to the planning for evaluating this aspect of SEP, including a comprehensive communications and engagement process. A preliminary report will be published in June 2024 with a final report, including findings and recommendations, following in September 2024.
- iv. People & OD Sub-Committee endorsed recommendations on the updated P&DR procedure at their 22 April meeting, and requested some minor amendments before the materials are presented to PRC for sign off. Recommendations focus on the role of P&DR as a performance improvement mechanism, affirming that participants in P&DR are primarily interested in discussing ways that they can do their job consistently to the best of their abilities.
- v. Monitoring training compliance – a PowerBI dashboard bringing together dataflows from ResourceLink and Training Catalogue is in place to provide data on training participation. Monthly participation reports are also available by course and by organisational unit. Where all staff members are required to complete the training, compliance percentages and non-completion lists are also available. For role-specific training courses (e.g. for reasons of regulatory compliance), the next step is to engage with subject matter experts to identify participation requirements by role.
- vi. Consultation on changes to the USS Statement of Investment Principles: The Chair of People Committee had approved the University’s response to USS’s proposed changes to investment principles on 17 April 2024.

Agreed: the report was noted

7 Contracts Expiry Update

Received: a report updating the Committee on the Contracts Working Group, Grievances/Appeals/Tribunal and Contract Outcomes.

Noted:

- i. The Contracts Working Group has been re-established and met on 5 April 2024. The Joint Task and Finish Group on Casualisation with the three local Unions has met five times. Terms of Reference have been agreed. Extensive analysis has been completed on the numbers of employees on fixed term contracts (FTCs) and finite funded permanent contracts (FFPCs) contracts. A review is underway to check that

the reasons for use of these contracts continue to align to the reasons set out in the Contracts of Employment Policy. The University has approved the transfer of employees from FTC to FFPC after 3 years tenure, rather than 4 years. Next steps include examining additional measures to reduce incidence of FTCs including related proposals to modify the Contracts of Employment Policy.

- ii. Since the last report in November 2023, there have been no appeals against the ending of a fixed term contract. There has been one Employment Tribunal associated with the implementation of the Contracts Policy and Procedure in the School of Social Sciences within the Faculty of Humanities, which is ongoing.
- iii. The percentage of employees being redeployed or extended with over four years' service has increased over the last reporting period from 63% to 70%. The numbers who have been made redundant has decreased from 20% to 18%.

Agreed: the report was noted

8 People & OD Metrics

Received: a report requesting that the Committee recommend the approval of the metrics to the Board of Governors

Noted:

- i. The People Committee received a report proposing recommendations for the implementation of workforce performance metrics, covering both organisational workforce performance and P&OD operational performance, in line with feedback from People Committee and P&ODSC. The development of these recommendations was informed by research informed good practice from both within the sector and across the HR profession and by careful evaluation of what is currently possible within current technical capabilities.
- ii. Information Governance colleagues have been consulted in the development of the metrics, regarding the longevity and safe disposal of data.
- iii. The recommended metrics are grouped in the following 4 categories: People Services; Leadership and Culture; Workforce Performance and Wellbeing.
- iv. The Wellbeing dashboard is still under development, and feedback from the Wellbeing survey will be used to populate this data.
- v. Members noted that there was a great deal of quantitative data, such as how quickly contracts were issued etc, and asked if any qualitative data, such as what the experience was like for staff, would be included. Members were informed that later this month, a series of surveys were to be issued to new staff, to investigate their early experiences of being part of the organisation, firstly during their first 6 months, and then again after 12 months in post. Focus groups would look at the survey responses which would inform the creation of action plans. This data could then be included in future metrics.
- vi. Members asked if people's relationship with change could be tracked as a metric and were informed that this would form part of next year's staff survey, and would be built into future capability of the system.
- vii. Discussion were held regarding the appointment of apprentices and their experiences, and if this could be added as a metric. An Apprenticeship Strategy is currently under development, and once agreed, appropriate metrics from this could be included for future years.

Agreed:

- i. To recommend that the Board of Governors approve the workforce performance metrics.
- ii. To add information regarding the use of apprentices, once the strategy for this area of work has been agreed.

- iii. An update on the Apprenticeship Strategy to be added to the forward plan for 24/25 for this Committee

9 Report from the President and Vice-Chancellor proposing changes to the Professional Development team within AHEP

Received: a report requesting that the Committee make a recommendation to the Board of Governors regarding the proposed changes in AHEP.

Noted:

- i. The proposal concerns changes to the Professional Development team within the Association of Higher Education Professionals (AHEP [formerly the Association of University Administrators, AUA]). AHEP is an affiliate organisation of the University and provides Professional Development services nationally for the HE sector. Historically AHEP has been hosted by the University of Manchester and its staff are employed on University of Manchester contracts but work directly for AHEP which fully funds the posts.
- ii. Since September 2022 a wholesale review of AHEP has taken place, leading to the delivery of a new strategy, name and identity, and a renewed set of products. In the Professional Development space, a review revealed that the current delivery arrangements for the AHEP PgCert in Higher Education Administration, Management & Leadership no longer fulfil AHEP's long-term commitment to flexible and inclusive learning and development opportunities for HE professionals. The course is delivered by AHEP and validated by Nottingham Trent University (NTU).
- iii. As a result, AHEP have agreed to a renewed partnership with NTU to offer an alternative Management and Leadership qualification for members which will be an MSc award in Higher Education Management and Leadership from October 2024. Unlike the joint course management arrangements for the PgCert, NTU will have overall responsibility for the delivery and academic quality of the MSc course.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

restricted information

- vii. The University and AHEP will ensure that a rigorous, fair and transparent process is followed for the member of staff identified "at risk" of redundancy and will explore opportunities for the avoidance of redundancy as set out in the Security of Employment Policy as agreed with the trade unions.

Agreed:

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

- i. recommend to the Board of Governors that 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 area;

- ii. Recommend to the Board of Governors that the People Committee should continue to oversee these proposals in accordance with Part II of Ordinance XXIII.
- iii. Query if TUPE can apply to this case
- iv. to update on progress at the next meeting

Action: Director of People & OD

Secretary's note: The University has since sought legal advice and this has confirmed that TUPE does not apply to this case.

10 P&OD Strategy Update

Received: a report updating the Committee on progress in relation to implementation of the People and Organisational Development Strategy.

Noted:

- i. The Committee received a copy of the report which had been presented to the Board at their March meeting. There was recognition of major challenges and difficulties in the provision of operational services, but also acknowledgement of significant improvements in recent months in speed of operational services with key activities now falling, on average, within published service level standards. Ability to track and report had also improved, leading to additional efficiency gains from improved accuracy and agility.
- ii. Wherever possible, a continuous improvement approach was being utilised, and short-term improvements to systems and processes were being pursued alongside exploration of a longer-term Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform solution. There was recognition of the importance of ensuring necessary preparatory work to lay the foundation for a strategic systems solution while ensuring the risks associated with existing technologies reaching end of life were mitigated.
- iii. Leadership development, role modelling values and culture, and supporting high performance were all integral parts of embedding and implementing the strategy.
- iv. Members discussed workforce planning, and the need to include this in the strategy for future progression. They were informed that improvements were being made in some areas, but further work needed to take place for this to be implemented on a University-wide scale. It was noted that often the lack of planning was due to tactical demands taking priority for managers, and also the volatility of student numbers impacting recruitment to certain areas.
- v. Areas of the University had traditionally been prone to working in silos, but new organisational models, such as SEP, focussed on the creation of job families and a more sustainable way of working and recruiting.

Agreed:

An update on workforce planning to be added to the forward plan for People Committee for 24/25

Further details on workforce planning to be included in the P&OD Strategy

Action: Director of P&OD

11 Report from PVC on fixed term employees and those on open-ended contracts

Received: a report requesting that the Committee make a recommendation to the Board of Governors regarding fixed term employees and those on open-ended contracts.

Noted:

- i. The People Committee received a report to consider detailing those contracts at risk of termination due to redundancy for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025. 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.
- ii. 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.
- iii. There is one role at risk within the Association of Higher Education Professionals (AHEP) which was brought to the attention of the People Committee. A report on this matter was presented and discussed separately (see item b above)
- iv. Members were informed that the total number of staff at risk for the period 1 January 2025 to 30 June 2025 is 231. 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.
- v. 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. In addition to making recommendations to the Board, the People Committee were asked to acknowledge the work of the Joint 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 January 2025 to 30 June 2025.
- ii. to recommend to the Board of Governors that the University continues to take all steps outlined in the report to avoid the need for redundancy wherever this is possible.
- iii. to acknowledge the work of the Joint Task and Finish Group on Casualisation.

12 EDI Strategy Update

Received: an update to note on the EDI Strategy

Noted:

- i. The Chair informed members that this was the last meeting of the People Committee that Banji Adewumi, Director of EDI would be attending, before she left for a new role. Members expressed their gratitude for her work and the huge improvements which had been made at the University during her time in the role.
- ii. Members received updates on a range of activities being undertaken as part of the strategy.

- iii. With joint sponsorship provided by Director of IT, a work programme has commenced with the aim to ensure the University is compliant with Digital Inclusion and Accessibility regulations. Sharon Newton attended the meeting to provide an update on the project. Work is underway to increase engagement with the disabled community at the University, map what is already in place; assess which roles have what responsibilities for accessibility compliance, and then ensure that the staff in these roles are fully supporting with training and guidance. A benchmarking exercise will also take place and a review of best practice.
- iv. The revision to the Dignity at Work and Study Policy continues with consultation and further development in response to feedback received through April/May. The revised policy is scheduled to come to the June meeting of this Committee.
- v. The [Pay Gap Reports](#) were also shared with the Committee for information. The report contains the outcomes of the University's Gender Pay Gap (GPG) and Ethnicity Pay Gap (EPG) and, for the third time, the Disability Pay Gap (DPG) analysis. For the first time, we introduce a Sexual Orientation pay gap (SOPG) analysis and Religion Pay Gap (RPG) analysis.
- vi. The University's gender mean and median pay gaps have continued to narrow to 12.8% and 8.2% respectively, the lowest since reporting commenced in 2017. Both pay gaps in relation to disability and ethnicity have, however, increased. For DPG, to 16.1% (mean) and 10.3% (median) from 14.9% (mean) and 9.8% (median) in 2022. For EPG, relative to 2022 figures, the mean pay gap remained the same (15.6%) while the median increased to 13.0% from 12.4%. The representation of Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) staff at the University slightly decreased to 23.1% of the University's 2023 overall population from 23.5% in 2022 (a decrease of 224 BAME staff), their entry into the lower-paid grades has produced a widening of the pay gaps.
- vii. Members discussed long term health conditions and queried if migraines were included in the reported data by staff and how staff were supported. They were informed that it was to be considered, and included in work on the review of sickness absence. The EDI team were working closely with Occupational Health and DASS on this matter.

Agreed:

A further update on Digital Inclusivity to come back to People Committee in 24/25 in 12 months' time

13 Employee Wellbeing Commitment

Received: A report to note from the Head of Colleague Wellbeing on the launch of the Employee Wellbeing Commitment.

Noted:

- i. Members were updated on the newly developed [Our wellbeing commitment](#). This outlines the University's vision for colleague wellness and the strategies that will be employed to achieve it, alongside how the importance of individuals looking after their own wellbeing will be promoted.
- ii. The commitment is informed by conversations with colleagues during focus groups and workshops, participation in various meetings, and one-on-one sessions, as well as a thorough analysis of the Staff Survey 2022 results. Best practices, research findings, and external benchmarking have also been utilised to shape this approach.
- iii. In addition, a Wellbeing survey is currently underway, which is open to all staff. The results of this will enable assessment against the Wellbeing Commitment and the development of plans for improvement in response. The survey results will be reported to a future meeting of the People

- Committee.
- iv. Practical resources and guides to support leaders, teams, and colleagues in implementing the Commitment are also under development. The survey results will help to prioritize the order in which the resources are developed. The survey results will be reported to a future meeting of the People Committee.
 - v. [Members](#) discussed the possibility of including the results of the wellbeing survey in future workforce planning, for example, in areas with more negative results from the survey, could they be assisted with actions plans etc, to resolve some of these issues, before further recruitment took place.

Agreed:

The emerging themes from the survey to be shared at the next meeting of People Committee

14 Disability Confident Framework

Received: a verbal update to note from Profesor Jackie Carter, **Academic Lead for Disability** on the Disability Confident Framework.

Noted:

- i. An update on the Disability Confident Framework was provided by Professor Jackie Carter.
- ii. The Disability Confident scheme, accredited by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP), helps employers recruit, retain and train great people. Disability Confident organisations play a leading role in changing attitudes about, and increasing understanding of, disability. There is a separate framework for students, which is overseen by Advance HE.
- iii. Through the scheme, the University is assessed on how we:
 - draw from the widest possible pool of talent
 - secure high-quality staff who are skilled, loyal and hard working
 - improve employee morale and commitment by demonstrating fair treatment
- iv. The scheme has three levels designed to support employers on their Disability Confident journey:
 - Disability Confident Committed (Level 1)
 - Disability Confident Employer (Level 2)
 - Disability Confident Leader (Level 3)
- v. The University currently holds a Disability Confident Leader (Level 3) award.
- vi. Through membership with the [Business Disability Forum](#), the University will undertake a [Disability Smart benchmarking self-assessment](#). The Disability Smart Self-Assessment tool gives Members and Partners the opportunity to assess how the organisation is progressing against each of the ten areas in the framework; Leadership, Learning and development, Workplace adjustments, Recruitment, Retention, Customers and service users, Procurement, Communication, Built environment and Technology.
- vii. The University now needs to create an action plan, to be implemented over the next three years. Update on progress will be provided to the Committee at a later meeting.
- viii. Members praised the positive progress made in this vital area.

Agreed: An update on progress to be reported at a future meeting of the People Committee

15 AOB none reported.

16 Date of next meeting - 26 June 2024