

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

5 FEBRUARY 2025

Present: Ann Barnes (Chair), Jatin Patel, Robin Phillips.

In attendance: Professor Duncan Ivison (President and Vice-Chancellor), Sarah Fox (Executive Director of EDI), Paul Marks Jones (Lead EDI Officer), Ele Morrissey (Executive Director of People) Andrew Mullen (Deputy Director of People), Sara Sawicki (University Solicitor), Sally Ainsworth (minutes)

In attendance for item 12: Perpetual Idehen and Rachel Cowen

Apologies: Patrick Hackett (Registrar, Secretary and Chief Operating Officer), Professor Danielle George

1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members the Committee.

2 Declaration of Interests

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

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 4 November 2024

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 4 November 2024.

4 Matters arising and action log

Noted: The action log

5 *Forward plan

Received: forward plan for 24/25

6 Future role and Terms of Reference of Committee

Received: a verbal update from the Executive Director of People

Noted:

- i. Members were informed that the possibility of merging People Committee and Remuneration Committee was being considered. The Chair of the Board will raise this at the February meeting of the Board, for further discussion.
- ii. If it was agreed to progress with the plan, then the next step would then be to share draft Terms of Reference and forward plan documents for comment.
- iii. It was noted that the merge would allow the University to maintain its regulatory obligations, and add strategic view of reward and recognition for staff.

- iv. Members agreed that streamlining the number of meetings would be beneficial, but stressed that they would not wish to dilute the work of the People Committee in its current remit, if it were to merge with Remuneration Committee.

7 **An update from the Executive Director of People**

Received: an update to note, from the Executive Director of People

Noted:

- i. With regards to the People Directorate, members were informed that Phase 2 of changes in the People Directorate operational model was being prepared, and a paper providing more detail on this can be found at item 8 on this agenda.
- ii. The annual all-colleague engagement survey is due in March/April 2025 to gain further insight into the key drivers of colleague engagement, aligned to M2035 themes
Benchmarking against Russell Group, wider HEIs and non-HEI sectors will be available. Members were keen that leaders be held to account with regards to survey results in their area, and local ownership would be given to any resulting actions. Toolkits would be provided to managers to enable this.
Communication and response rates were discussed, and it was suggested that incentives be offered to staff to complete, and that the incentives increase, the earlier that responses are received. Members suggested that the survey should be an annual process.
- iii. The wellbeing pulse survey results are directing and informing the work plan of the central colleague wellbeing team. They have shared the data with the central EDI team, who have utilised it to inform progress against Charter mark and their streams of work.
The Head of Colleague Wellbeing has reviewed lessons learned from running the survey with the Head of Colleague Engagement, to inform the approach to the forthcoming 2025 colleague engagement survey. A small number of questions from the 2024 wellbeing survey will be included in the colleague engagement survey in 2025, to provide key indicators to track progress
- iv. The Joint Task and Finish Group on Casualisation proposed to conclude the Group at their meeting in January. A joint paper is being prepared to formally agree to report on and close the Task and Finish Group.
With regards the Contract of Employment Policy, the Trade Union members of TUNG were issued with the final proposed interim updates to the policy on 9 October 2024. These are specifically to reflect the operational decision to amend the timescale from 4 years to 3 years for FFPC/Permanent contracts to be issued. The Trade Unions were asked to respond by 14 October to confirm their agreement to the updates. No response was received and silence taken as acceptance. The Union representatives as part of the Casualisation Task and Finish Group asked that a final noting of the policy change was provided through February TUNG. The policy change will therefore be implemented post TUNG.
- v. The Joint Academic Workload group have convened 6 focus groups to take place in six consecutive weeks from 5 February 2025. Their purpose is to refine ideas and identify priority areas for change. The groups' discussions will be based on the six themes. Members enquired about the membership of the task and finish groups, and if there was a mixed diversity of representation.
- vi. Members were updated on the work that has taken place with regards to Manchester 2035 thus far, including data gathering and discussion groups.
Several key themes have emerged, including leadership capability, performance culture, agility, innovation, commercial, entrepreneurial, core learning, onboarding and employee relations.
- vii. Work is starting on the change leadership programme, plan to be fully operational by Spring/Summer 2025. Members suggested that 1 day a month

was not sufficient for the change leadership programme, and it was agreed that this would be reviewed.

Agreed:

- i. Incentives be offered to staff for early completion of the staff survey
- ii. Diversity of the membership of the Task and finish groups and focus groups for the Academic Workload T&F group to be provided
- iii. Review the time commitment required for the change leadership programme for the change leaders in each area.

8 People Directorate Design Phase 2

Received: a report updating the Committee on the move to phase 2 of the People Directorate operational model.

Noted:

- i. The paper proposed moving to a second phase of changes in the People Directorate operational model. Phase 2 included the Organisational Effectiveness and Culture (OE & Culture) function and the People Partnering Function. The paper outlined the scope, remit, and additional resource needs of the OE & Culture team to support the University's PS Vision and Manchester 2035 priorities and to build new People Directorate and University capability around Organisational Design, People Change, Organisational Performance, People Engagement and Culture.
- ii. The paper outlined the proposed changes in each team as well as the proposed approach. The changes proposed would involve initiating a formal redundancy process, placing 22 people at risk of redundancy and would follow a period of formal collective and individual consultation. The proposal anticipates a reduction of 12 head people in the impacted population (3 of which have been achieved already through vacancy control) and the introduction of 16 new roles. There is a temporary additional cost of 2 years driven by the OE & Culture team and the need to build new capabilities for the future.

Agreed:

To recommend that the Board of Governors:

- i. Approve the move to phase 2 of the People Directorate Operating model
- ii. To be clear with regards to the rationale and agree timings for this process when communicating with staff
- iii. Approve the approach of formal redundancy process to manage the change required and the move to a period of formal consultation. **Action: Exec Director of People**

Secretary's note: to satisfy quoracy requirements for this item, Danielle George confirmed approval of the recommendations via email.

9 Update from Employee Relations Team

Received: a report updating the Committee on responses to actions from the November 2024 meeting.

Noted:

- i. To date the team has supported a total 178 ER cases. About a third of the cases are disciplinarys and two thirds are complaints (grievances or dignity at work complaints). There is an even distribution of cases between FSE and HUMs but higher figures in PSCI and FBMH. The increased number of PSCI cases reflects the

- larger population of staff. Members asked if there was data available on cases by Faculty, and insights on the reasoning behind more cases in BMH.
- ii. The team also manage the Mediation Service and has supported/is supporting 43 referrals over the past year to date
 - iii. Because of the lack of a case management system, detailed analysis on this subject has been challenging. Consequently, the People Directorate in conjunction with the EDI Directorate have commissioned Pearn & Kandola LLP to undertake a quantitative and qualitative analysis. The scope of the project has been extended to consider disability and gender as well as ethnicity. The project is expected to last 2 - 3 months.
 - iv. Of the 26 appeals submitted, 2 were settled before hearings took place. Of the remaining 24, 12 required a member of the Board to Chair. The average number of working days for an appeal hearing to be heard is 51 days from date of submission.
 - v. There are a number of factors that influence the time taken including
 - The number of diaries to co-ordinate
 - Lay member availability which was considered by People Committee in November 2024. (We currently have 5 appeal panels requiring a lay member).
 - 11 occurrences where the respondent requested a change of dates, or refused to attend online, or took leave.
 - 4 occurrences where the representative delayed in confirming attendance, on holiday etc.
 - vi. Since the ER team have been operational, they have developed protocols for the format of hearing papers that seek to minimise the amount of documentation panel members receive.
Witness statements are normally now provided in summary form rather than as verbatim accounts.
Guidance for panels has been developed for each type of case, therefore providing a more consistent and robust framework for determining outcomes.
 - vii. A new Director of Employee Relations and Policy will be in post from March 2025, who brings a wealth of experience in conflict resolution and mediation to the role.

Agreed:

- i. The Pearn & Kandola analysis findings to be reported to People Committee when available
- ii. Breakdown of data within each faculty , and analysis of the greater number of cases in BMH to be provided.
- iii. A meeting of People Committee lay members and Trade Union representatives could be considered, in order to allay fears with regards to the reduction in lay members chairing hearings, and to provide a clear definition of what an independent Chair will be.

10 Workforce demographics

Received: a report detailing key workforce demographics

Noted:

- i. The slides comprise key workforce demographics. This will be a standing item for People Committee and future iterations will be refined to include key insights and emerging trends.
- ii. The report provides a static version of a dynamic dashboard, which can be used to show different variables. It was agreed that it would be useful to provide a demonstration of how the dashboard can be used to Committee members.

Agreed:

- i. Data on sickness absence to be provided in percentage terms and not absolute numbers
- ii. A demonstration of the Power BI dashboard and how it can be used to be provided at a future meeting of People Committee

11 EDI Strategy Update

Received: a report on the delivery plan and updates for EDI strategy

Noted

- i. Work is underway to prepare the 2024 pay gap report which will be published in April 2025. The headline data shows that our gender pay gap has increased from 12.8%-15.2% and ethnicity has increased from 15.6%-18.4%. The disability gap has improved from 16.1%-11.3%. Analysis of this data is currently underway and will be shared with People Committee members.
- ii. The 2024 Equality Information Report will be published in March 2025. On the whole the report shows positive movements in representation of marginalised groups in our staff force and at leadership. The report will be shared for review at the next People Committee
- iii. A terminology review is currently underway with colleagues and students to look at the use of the term B.A.M.E. at the University. This review is in partnership with Nurturing Foundations who are hosting confidential consultation sessions. A report with recommendations will be ready by May 2025 and will be shared with the Committee.
- iv. Active Bystander training now delivered to over 1000 staff members.
- v. Six new academics were recruited for the 2025 100 Black Women Professors Now
- vi. The 2025 Aurora Women's leadership programme has launched.
- vii. Nine colleagues from across the University have been recruited for the 2025 Stellar HE programme
- viii. The first ever Disabled Leadership Programme finished in December 2024 and planning is underway for the next programme.
- ix. On The Level LGBTQ+ leadership programme will launch again in March 2025 with 25 participating from the University of Manchester.
- x. Four colleagues are currently working with the Black United Representation Network (BURN) to gain Board experience with external organisations and have been placed with the Co-op, Greater Sport, The Growth Company and the Blair Project/Verciti. The EDI team are investigating the possibility of establishing a University scheme to provide Board experience to staff. It was suggested that Manchester Chamber of Commerce, and the General Assembly lay members may both be in a position to assist.
- xi. Further roll out of the Inclusive Ambassadors programme is taking place in the Faculty of Biology, Medicine and Health.

Agreed:

- i. Further investigation of a University Board experience scheme to be carried out
- ii. Pay gap reports to be shared at the next meeting of the People Committee
- iii. Terminology review results to be shared with the Committee when available

Action: Executive Director of EDI and Lead EDI Partner

12 An update from the Parents, Carers and Guardians staff network group

Received: an update on the staff network group activity

Noted:

- i. The network supports all staff and students with caring responsibilities across the University, with over 200 members.
- ii. Founded in 2020, initially aimed at post graduate researchers with parenting responsibilities, but has since expanded.
- iii. The network is aligned with Athena Swan agenda and broader EDI commitments
- iv. Members were provided with the aims of the network and its achievements to date.
- v. The network Chair advised that support needed for the future included:
 - Dedicated funding for ongoing events, workshops, and policy advocacy.
 - Continued institutional backing for the network.
 - Continued collaboration with senior leadership to embed inclusive policies.
 - Progressive change through Future Families .
 - A commitment to making the University of Manchester the employer of choice for parents and carers in the UK.
- vii. Members thanked the network Chair for sharing such personal and inspirational experiences and supported the work of the network and its future ambitions.
- viii. Members asked if the support needed could be linked to any philanthropy goals or ambitions.

Agreed:

- i. Outcome of the Future Families Project report to the EDI Committee to be reported back to People Committee
- ii. Consider in principal, risk assessed ways to review the current policy on children on Campus.
- iii. Information on current childcare provisions on campus to be shared with the Committee
- iv. DDAR Team to be approached with regards to the philanthropy query, and an update to be provided to members at the next meeting

13 Any other business

None reported

Date of next meeting – 30 April 2025