

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

25 JUNE 2025

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

In attendance: Professor Duncan Ivison (President and Vice-Chancellor), Sarah Fox (Executive Director of EDI), Ele Morrissey (Executive Director of People), Sara Sawicki (University Solicitor), Sally Ainsworth (minutes)

In attendance for Item 5 Nina Shabanzedeh, Item 6 Sonal Patel, Item 8 Cilinnie Ngo-Pondi, Item 12 Pooja Furniss, Item 13 Professor Jackie Carter

Apologies: Professor Danielle George, Patrick Hackett

1 Welcome and apologies

The Chair welcomed members the Committee and acknowledged that this was the last meeting of the People Committee, as it would be part of the newly formed Remuneration and People Committee next academic year.

2 Declaration of Interests

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

3 Minutes of the meeting held on 30 April 2025

Agreed: to approve the minutes of the meeting on 30 April 2025.

4 Matters arising and action log

Noted: the need to transfer any outstanding actions to the log for the newly merged Committee.

5 An update from the Executive Director of People

Received: an update to note, from the Executive Director of People on progress and achievements within the Directorate.

Noted:

- i. Phase 2 design changes update – all Directors now in post, and consultation has now closed with the trade unions. No colleagues are expected to be exited through compulsory redundancy.
- ii. Colleague Voice Framework – there will be an annual survey held plus new joiner and leaver surveys had been developed. These will be consolidated into one 'voice' report to be discussed at People Committee annually.
- iii. Future Foundations – Oracle have been appointed a 10-year contract and work has commenced to appoint a transformation partner.

- iv. To ensure the success of the Future Foundations programme, a Business Change and Adoption approach is being created, built from a wide range of learnings, listening and experience to ensure a people centred approach to achieving optimum outcomes. The focus is to support leaders to support change, in all levels of management, and an extensive communications plan is under development.
- v. Priorities for the Directorate include continuing to analyse and improve the people experience across our 'hire to retire' processes; Recruitment collateral – brand; Change playbook creation – Culture and agility shift needed for M2035; Leadership development academies; Careers at UoM; Bullying and harassment – restorative culture, standards of behaviour; Employee relations.

Agreed:

The business change Communication and Engagement plan to be shared with the Committee when available. **Action: Exec Director of People, Head of Change Management and Head of Change Comms**

6 Talent Development – Proposed Changes and L&D Offering

Received: a report asking the Committee make a recommendation to the Board regarding the Talent Development team.

Noted:

- i. The University of Manchester is committed to achieving its Manchester 2035 vision and goals by enhancing the skills and capabilities of its colleagues. The Talent Development function aims to provide comprehensive learning and development solutions for all colleagues at every stage of their careers.
- ii. The existing structure relies heavily on external providers for training delivery, leading to fragmented strategy alignment, poor budgetary controls, and minimal internal expertise in training design and delivery.
- iii. The proposed changes offer several benefits, including financial savings, enhanced learning and development solutions, improved operational efficiency, and better alignment with organisational strategy.
- iv. The paper outlined the proposed changes across the team as well as the proposed approach, the number of employees impacted by the changes and the range of opportunities that would be available for those impacted. [Redacted] (Redacted – restricted information) with a total increase of 1 role across the team and would follow a period of formal collective and individual consultation. The new organisational structure has been [Redacted] (Redacted – restricted information) with the mid-point of each grade used as the benchmark.
- v. The team will provide a dedicated resource for developing leadership capability, and AI upskilling.
- vi. Members discussed how the LinkedIn learner perspective can be off-putting and how the team could help staff to navigate the learning opportunities here.

Agreed:

- i. To recommend that the Board of Governors approve the move to the next phase of the People Directorate Operating model.
- ii. To recommend that the Board approve the approach of formal redundancy process to manage the change required and the move to a period of formal consultation.
- iii. Talent Development team to investigate options to help staff curate and navigate the learning opportunities on LinkedIn learning.

Secretary's note:

- i. to satisfy quoracy requirements for this item, Danielle George confirmed approval of the recommendations via email.
- ii. [REDACTED] (Redacted – restricted information)

7 Restructuring AHEP to Ensure Strategic and Financial Sustainability

Received: Report proposing the use of compulsory redundancy in relation to the AHEP review following closure of the Voluntary Severance (VS) scheme.

Noted:

- i. On 30th April 2025, People Committee received a proposal concerning changes to the structure within the Association of Higher Education Professionals (AHEP).
- ii. Members were advised that a targeted voluntary severance (VS) scheme opened on 11 June and would close on 25 June. [REDACTED] (Redacted – restricted information) and subject to approval by the Board of Governors on 23rd July, it will be necessary to commence formal consultation regarding compulsory redundancy. Efforts to identify suitable alternative employment will continue in accordance with the Security of Employment Policy and the Redeployment Policy. [REDACTED] (Redacted – restricted information) roles until 10 December 2025. If no suitable alternative employment is secured by that date, their employment will be terminated on the grounds of redundancy.
- iii. The People Committee were asked to give full and proper consideration to the update and to recommend to the Board of Governors that, in the event that the VS Scheme does not achieve the required reduction in roles, to approve the use of the redundancy process for the [REDACTED] (Redacted – restricted information) in line with Part III of Ordinance XXIII.

Agreed:

That the Committee recommend to the Board of Governors that Part III of Ordinance XXIII be invoked to implement the proposed redundancy of [REDACTED] (Redacted – restricted information) should suitable alternative employment not be secured.

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

8 Employee relations report

Received: an annual report providing a comprehensive overview of the University's ER eco system

Noted:

- i. The Annual Report provided a comprehensive overview of the University's ER eco system focusing on activities, outcomes, and strategic developments during the last year.

- ii. Members noted the positive successes of the Mediation Team and policy development area.
- iii. A business case is being developed to seek approval for the resources needed to develop the ER team
- iv. Engagement with the Trade Unions is going well, exploring the development of a Restorative Justice Culture, and the upcoming Employment Rights Bill
- v. Key achievements to note include:
 - Case Volume Management - Over 250 ER cases managed, with a formal resolution rate of 60% and increased use of informal mechanisms where suitable.
 - Policy Reform - 10 policies launched or updated, ensuring compliance with new statutory requirements such as the Neonatal Care (Leave and Pay) Act 2023.
 - Mediation Service Growth - 38 mediations completed, with a 40% resolution rate and strong participant feedback highlighting trust and emotional support.
 - Capacity Building - Delivery of 13 formal training sessions, reaching 124 academic and PS colleagues across Investigation Management and Facilitated Conversations.

Agreed:

People Committee approved the recommendations in the report:

- i. Introduce Informal and Restorative Resolution Pathways
 - Targeted Interventions in FBMH
 - Address Structural Instability in Academic Line Management
 - Enhance Triage, Advice, and Early-Stage Support
 - Undertake a Process Review of Appeals and Grievances
 - Embed EDI and Neurodiversity-Informed Case Handling
 - Improve Faculty-Level Insight and Accountability
 - Explore Underlying Causes of 'Not Upheld' Outcomes
- ii. Further ER updates to come to the next meeting of the Remuneration and People Committee **Action: Director of Employee Relations and Policy**
- iii. Discussions to take place regarding the issue of rotating academic line managers and lessons that can be learned from other sectors. **Action: Exec Director of People**

9 Workplace demographics

Received: a report detailing key workforce demographics

Noted

The report was created by the People Data and Analytics team, who design, manage and deliver accurate up to date and targeted People data to empower colleagues to make informed decisions. The comprehensive data in the reports was well received by members, who **noted** the report.

Agreed:

A separate session to be scheduled for interested parties to receive a demonstration of Power BI

10 EDI Strategy Update

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

Noted:

- i. The EDI Strategy update was **noted** by members, who were provided with a progress update on EDI activity across the University.
- ii. Given that Manchester 2035 is launching in October 2025 the current EDI strategy will be extended for 6 months, then the EDI 2035 Plan which will follow, and be informed by, the University strategy. Further updates will be provided at the next meeting.
- iii. Following the Supreme Court Ruling on the meaning of sex in the equality act the University [published a statement](#) to affirm our commitment to EDI. This has been followed by a series of listening sessions which have been run in partnership with staff networks. The goals of these sessions was to hear colleagues' thoughts and concerns about the ruling and to ensure that our response to the ruling is informed by the lived experience of our community. The Students' Union is organising similar sessions for students.
- iv. The amended pay gap report will be shared with the Committee once it has been approved.
- v. Nurturing Foundations have shared the report on the use of race terminology on campus following staff and student consultation. Further details will be provided at the next meeting, following consultation with the staff networks and EDI Committee.
- vi. The ER and EDI teams have worked with Pearn Kandola to conduct a review of ER processes with a lens on gender, race and disability. The first stage of the research has now been concluded, and a draft report has been provided. Early results indicate that whilst particular groups may be more likely to raise a grievance or be the subject of a disciplinary, the ER processes themselves produce equally good outcomes for employees regardless of gender, race or disability.

Agreed:

- i. EDI 2035 plan to come to the Committee for approval next year
- ii. Further updates on terminology review report to be shared when available
- iii. Further updates on response to EHRC guidance to be shared when available
- iv. Target dates for 100% completion of Active Bystander to be clarified
- v. Initial overview of Pearn Kandola findings to be shared with the Committee

11 Colleague Engagement survey update

Received: Members received a summary update on the Colleague Engagement survey

Noted:

Members noted the update, which provided an overview of the key results from the recent colleague engagement survey, 'Your Voice Matters,' The survey was conducted in partnership with People Insight between 25 March- 22 April 2025. It aimed to evaluate colleague engagement and provide baseline data and insight to inform the development of our Manchester 2035 strategy and associated Delivery Plans. The overall survey response rate was 51% (6,376 respondents), with higher response rates within Professional Services teams. This is an increase from the 49% response rate in 2022. The paper included a summary of survey results and an overview of the engagement score and key drivers

12 Inclusive recruitment plus retention and talent management update

Received: An update on Inclusive Recruitment as per an early iteration of the Talent Acquisition Centre of Expertise

Noted

- i. Members noted the update from the Director of Talent Acquisition. As part of the new refreshed People operating model that has been established at UoM, several new key Centres of Expertise (CoE) have been introduced. One of which is the Talent Acquisition CoE.
- ii. The priority is to embed inclusive recruitment practice through the candidate journey starting from talent attraction, through recruitment and selection to on-boarding and induction.
- iii. To ensure there are synergies in the EDI related objectives and actions the CoE will maintain a centric focus on the related EDI action plans and our commitments under various equality charters such as the Race Equality Charter, Athena Swan (appended to the paper) and Disability Leader as critical reference points to ensure that these dovetail and where appropriate inform the operational plan and related objectives and actions. In line with the charter mark the University is developing several sector leading Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategies, and these will rely heavily on recruitment to help address the under-representation of different groups of staff both in absolute terms, but also in positions of seniority and leadership.
- iv. The aims are twofold – firstly to ensure that we attract, appoint, on board and effectively induct world class talent and secondly to enable a more diverse workforce by making our processes more accessible and removing bias ensuring inclusive recruitment is embedded through to business as usual. This will also support the delivery of the diversity and inclusion strategies that have been developed by the Equality Diversity and Inclusion Committee and work in close partnership with the Directorate of EDI.
- v. Work has already commenced on the broad strands related to embedding inclusive recruitment practice that have been identified, and periodic progress updates will be provided to the People committee. In addition, the work of the CoE will also be informed by regular engagement with the Faculty Leadership Teams, the Professional Services Leadership and UE. The CoE will continue to review any objectives in this sphere in line with the external developments and related UoM strategic priorities.
- vi. Further work will take place with the EDI and CMSR team to develop the interdependencies of these teams and establishing a structure that is reflective of the organisational needs to achieve the aims in this space.
- vii. In addition to focussing on inclusive recruitment other key priorities the team are addressing include Labour market challenges and political instability, REF 29, developing a clear employee value proposition (EVP), unconscious bias and ensuring there is a considered and measured adoption of AI and the positive impact it can have on inclusive recruitment practice.

13 Update on Disability Confident Framework

Received: a verbal update on the Disability Confident Framework

Noted

- i. Members **noted** an update from Professor Jackie Carter on the Disability Confident Framework.
- ii. A framework specifically for the Higher Education sector was being developed, called Ride Higher.
- iii. Work was taking place to increase accessibility for staff training at the University
- iv. The Let's Talk Disability podcast was starting a second series and looked to broaden discussion across the sector
- v. Discussions regarding a budget for this portfolio took place and the possibility of involving the philanthropy campaign was to be considered.

Agreed:

Discussions to be held regarding potential use of philanthropy funding

14 Any Other Business

- i. The Chair thanked Robin Phillips and Danielle George for their contributions as members of the Committee, at this, their last meeting before stepping down from the Board.
- ii. The Remuneration and People Committee meeting would meet on Tuesday 4 November 2025.