

APPROVED

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HR COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 15 JANUARY 2020 IN ROOM RS109, UNIVERSITY OF WESTMINSTER, 309 REGENT STREET

PRESENT:	Mr P Murphy (Chair) Ms V James	Mrs H Owen
IN ATTENDANCE:	Mr D Barratt Dr P Bonfield	Mrs E McMillan (Clerk) Mr Andy Norris (Minute 19.5)
APOLOGIES:	Ms C Bernard Mr J Cappock (attendee)	The Venerable Canon D Stanton Professor J Stockdale

19.1 ANNOUNCEMENTS

- 19.1.1 Apologies were received as noted above.
- 19.1.2 No interests were declared.
- 19.1.3 The Chair confirmed that there were no requests from members to raise items under 'Any other business'.

19.2 TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

- 19.2.1 The Members reviewed proposed changes to the Committee terms of reference and membership for 2019-20 and the draft schedule of business 2019-20 (Document HR 200115A).
- 19.2.2 Members noted that the Clerk has reformatted the terms of reference for all committees of the Court to ensure a consistent presentation format.
- 19.2.3 **AGREED** Members recommend to the Court that the terms of reference are amended as presented including clarification that the business of the Committee may be conducted via email and by Chair's action (within parameters to be set out in Standing Order 4 - Committee structure and procedures).
- 19.2.4 The Chair noted that he would expect to see more substantive business items for discussion at the next meeting.
- 19.2.5 **AGREED** Schedule of business 2019-20 to be implemented, noting that ad hoc items may be added during the year and reports may be identified later in the meeting, for example when members discuss monitoring of the People Strategy.

19.3 COLLEAGUE WELLBEING SURVEY – OUTCOMES, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

- 19.3.1 On behalf of the Pro Vice-Chancellor (People and Culture) who was absent due to sickness, the Vice-Chancellor presented the survey findings and a draft action plan linked to three thematic wellbeing drivers and drainers identified through the survey: Leadership and Management; Colleagues and Culture; and Spaces and Places (Document HR 200115F).

- 19.3.2 Members noted that the survey was designed by University academics in consultation with colleague networks and the unions and analysed by three qualitative researchers (including one external for scrutiny).
- 19.3.3 The Vice-Chancellor confirmed that the outcomes would be presented to colleagues through a roadshow at the end of January 2020 and that a report on the outcomes and next steps will be submitted to the Court of Governors in March 2020.
- 19.3.4 Members noted that the action plan will be implemented from March 2020 with a progress review after one year.

19.4 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PLANNING POLICY

- 19.4.1 The Director of Human Resources and Safety, Health and Wellbeing (HR Director), Duncan Barratt, updated members on implementation of a professional development planning procedure.
- 19.4.2 The Vice-Chancellor informed members the procedure will be implemented by June 2020.
- 19.4.3 In response to a member's question, the HR Director identified clarity of line management responsibilities and consistency in line management training and skills across the University as key factors to implement the procedure successfully.
- 19.4.3.1 ACTION Clerk** to add an update on implementation of the procedure to the agenda for the June Committee meeting.

19.5 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ANNUAL REPORT 2018-19

- 19.5.1 The Head of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), Andy Norris, presented the annual EDI report for 2018-19 (Document HR 200115B).
- 19.5.2 Members discussed the lack of sector benchmarks and suggested that other London higher education institutions would be the most meaningful benchmark group. Members also discussed internal benchmarks querying what is the norm for the University of Westminster and what our target data outcomes might be.
- 19.5.3 Members discussed inclusion and noted that whilst the University has a statutory requirement to report on certain characteristics there is a tension with the University's inclusive approach where asking questions (for example about sexual orientation) may be offensive to some colleagues (e.g. those who identify outside the gender binary). The Vice-Chancellor informed members that the University is exploring a broader set of measures that allow the University to report and identify actions to improve inclusion as well as diversity.
- 19.5.4 Members discussed trends relating to the age profile of our colleagues and (lack of) diversity in senior positions. A member stressed the need for the working group leading on this area of work to explore whether positive action or other proactive measures are the appropriate approach for the University to achieve culture change and accelerate progress to a more diverse workforce, particularly at senior levels. The member also suggested considering the lessons from other organisations that have used such measures.
- 19.5.5 Members discussed trends in formal and informal casework, which is reported later in the meeting.
- 19.5.6 Members noted that the action plan, which has been driven by colleague networks, will be delivered in 2020 and the Committee will receive a report on completion of the action plan at the first meeting of 2021.

19.5.6.1 **ACTION Clerk** to include a report on the action plan in the HR Committee schedule of business for 2020-21.

19.5.6.2 **ACTION Clerk** and Head of CSR to align the monitoring and lead responsibilities in the action plan with terms of reference for committees and other bodies.

19.5.7 Members supported a suggestion to invite members of the working group to speak with the Committee about their plans.

19.5.7.1 **ACTION Clerk** to invite members of the working group to the next meeting.

19.6 PEOPLE STRATEGY – MONITORING

19.6.1 Members commented on proposed key performance indicators for the People Strategy 2019-23: Being Me, Being Westminster (Document HR 200115C).

19.6.2 Members identified potential additional measures for objectives relating to Being Open and Being Innovative and welcomed a suggestion to consult with the University Executive Board, unions and colleague networks to identify appropriate measures.

19.6.2.1 **ACTION HR Director** to revise the paper, circulate for wider comment and resubmit the proposals to the next meeting for agreement.

19.7 UNIVERSITY HR ACTIVITY UPDATE, EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

19.7.1 The HR Director provided an oral update on employee relations activity since the last meeting.

19.7.2 Members noted that there has been one formal disciplinary case, eight grievance cases, two probation capability cases and two employment tribunal claims since the last meeting.

19.7.3 Members heard that the academic union (UCU) dispute relating to the 2019-20 calendar is ongoing.

19.8 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

19.8.1 **AGREED** The minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 3 July 2019 (Document HR 200115D) are an accurate record subject to a correction to the Committee's responsibilities in relation to the Personal Development Planning policy and procedure.

19.8.2 Members noted an update on actions from the previous meeting (Document HR 200115E).

19.9 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS¹

Tuesday 23 June 2020 4.30pm in RS109

19.10 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

¹ Meetings scheduled for November 2019 and February 2020 were combined into a single meeting in January 2020.

- 19.10.1 On behalf of the Committee, the Vice-Chancellor thanked Philip Murphy, the outgoing Committee Chair, for his contribution to the University in this role and his other governor responsibilities¹.
- 19.10.2 A member queried whether action is being taken to recruit to the vacant role of independent (nongovernor) member for the Committee. The Clerk explained that recruitment is on hold pending the outcome of the planned review of the committee structure.

¹ [Post-meeting note](#): After the meeting concluded the retiring Chair asked the Clerk to add a note of thanks in the minutes for the HR Director's management of the staff restructuring implemented through the Transformation Plan and overseen by the Committee