

**APPROVED**

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE HR COMMITTEE HELD ON WEDNESDAY 23 JUNE 2020 VIA MICROSOFT TEAMS**

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PRESENT:	V James (Interim Chair) H Owen	The Venerable Canon D Stanton
IN ATTENDANCE:	Professor D Anand (Minute 19.13) D Barratt B Berakhy (Minute 19.13) K Bojczuk (Minute 19.13) Dr P Bonfield J Cappock (Company Secretary)	Professor P Catterall (Minute 19.13) Dr D Husbands (Minute 19.13) E McMillan (Clerk) A Norris (Minutes 19.12 and 19.13) Dr R Schiano-Phan (Minute 19.13) Dr FR White (Minute 19.13)
ABSENT:	E Evans (EDI Working Group)	Professor J Stockdale

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**19.11 ANNOUNCEMENTS**

- 19.11.1 Professor Jonathan Stockdale was absent from the meeting due to a prior appointment overrunning.
- 19.11.2 The Interim Chair welcomed Katherine Bojczuk, Environmental and Sustainability Manager, to the meeting.
- 19.11.3 No interests were declared.
- 19.11.4 The Interim Chair confirmed that there were no requests from members to raise items under 'Any other business'.

**19.12 TIMES HIGHER EDUCATION IMPACT RANKING RESULTS**

- 19.12.1 The Environmental and Sustainability Manager presented an overview of the University's position in the Times Higher Education (THE) ranking, which assesses universities' performance against the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in three areas – research, outreach and stewardship.
- 19.12.2 Members noted that for this, the University's first submission, we provided evidence to the THE for seven out of the 17 SDGs and achieved 75.8 out of 100, which is in the top third of the 768 universities across 85 countries who applied.
- 19.12.3 The Environmental and Sustainability Manager briefed members on the action plan arising from the submission, which will be overseen by the newly established SDG Steering Group. Members noted that the next submission will be made in December 2020.

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19.12.4 In response to a member's query, the Environmental and Sustainability Manager confirmed that targets will be reviewed annually by the Steering Group in preparation for the annual submission.

### 19.13 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION ACTION PLAN UPDATE

19.13.1 The Interim Chair welcomed members of the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Working Group to the meeting:

- Dibyesh Anand – Co-Chair BME colleague network
- Berekhet Berakhy – Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Officer
- Pippa Catterall – Co-Chair LGBTIQ colleague network
- Deborah Husbands – Co-Chair BME colleague network
- Andy Norris, Head of Corporate Social Responsibility
- Rosa Schiano-Phan – Co-Chair Women of Westminster colleague network
- Francis Ray White – Co-Chair LGBTIQ colleague network

19.13.2 A member of the Working Group briefed Committee members on the work, successes and challenges for the Working Group and colleague networks. Committee members heard that:

- partnership working with the other colleague networks, the Vice-Chancellor and the Human Resources department has focused on changing culture, processes and structures;
- the appointment of an Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Officer is a key success; however, the work of the colleague network Co-Chairs is voluntary, and it can be challenging to gain recognition and workload allocation from managers for network activities and responsibilities;
- colleagues want to work towards an anti-racist – not just a non-racist – university and have worked collaboratively on a set of demands to achieve that;
- the Working Group has drafted a vision and terms of reference for an Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee;
- challenges to be addressed include who/what body is responsible for EDI, who does the work, where does EDI sit in the University's organisational structure, who/what body(ies) is (are) accountable to the EDI Committee and what body(ies) does the EDI Committee report to.

19.13.3 In response to a Committee member's query, the Inclusion, Diversity and Equality Officer proposed that to remove barriers all the senior team and every manager must be committed to a shared aim to make the University a better place for everyone, EDI work must be resourced and there needs to be verifiable and reliable data to support understanding of the small issues that combine to make a situation unbearable.

19.13.4 In response to a query from a Committee member, a member of the Working Group explained their priorities are for systemic change, which included listening to colleagues, identifying systemic problems and how they can be solved, a move away from the focus on voluntarism, clear processes, recognition that the University has not got it right and there is work to do.

19.13.5 A member of the Working Group highlighted evidence of structural inequalities in hiring policies (and may be applied also to student recruitment) and challenged Committee members to ensure processes are not unconsciously privileging certain assumptions about individuals and their backgrounds.

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- 19.13.6 The Vice-Chancellor assured the Committee that he and other colleagues are working on a response to the network's demands and on the commitments the University will make to ensure improvements.
- 19.13.7 A member of the Working Group asked the HR Committee to support this area of work through recognition, working with the EDI Committee; asking everyone about what they are doing about equality, diversity and inclusion; thinking about how we ensure people know about the protected characteristics; and making sure there are channels to raise issues and mechanisms to deal with those issues.
- 19.13.8 On behalf of the Committee, the Interim Chair confirmed that the Committee will work to understand the issues raised, will consider the University's response to the network's demands and will monitor progress against the commitments.

## 19.14 PEOPLE STRATEGY – MONITORING

- 19.14.1 The Director of Human Resources and Safety, Health and Wellbeing (HR Director) presented a series of quantitative and qualitative measures under the thematic headings of the People Strategy 2019-23: Being Me, Being Westminster – Being Well, Being Inclusive, Being Valued, Being Innovative and Being Open (Document HR 200623A).
- 19.14.2 Members noted that the HR Department does not currently have systems or resources to produce some of the proposed measures. Members considered that the available data reports coupled with the narrative/qualitative reports (e.g. the Juice operational report – Document HR 200623C - and the Corporate Social Responsibility periodic reports - available to members in the Committee's online Reading Room) will provide enough information for the Committee to monitor performance against the Strategy.
- 19.14.3 Members did not support additional investment in systems to produce monitoring data.

## 19.15 SAFETY, HEALTH AND WELLBEING AND THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

- 19.15.1 The University Secretary and Chief Operating Officer (USCOO) gave an update on the Being Safe, Feeling Safe approach to safety, health and wellbeing (Document HR 200623B).
- 19.15.2 Members heard that the Being Safe, Feeling Safe Team, which is Chaired by the USCOO and is informed by sector and government guidance, includes a broad membership from across the University. The Team is managing the return onsite through six workstreams:
- Preparing our buildings
  - Preparing our colleagues and students
  - Controlling access
  - Creating a Social Distancing Plan
  - Reducing touch points and increasing cleaning
  - Communicating for Confidence
- 19.15.3 The USCOO gave a summary briefing on the activities and aims of each workstream.
- 19.15.4 In response to a member's queries, the USCOO confirmed that the University is working in partnership with the cleaning contractor to ensure appropriate staffing is in place and that capacity modelling is focused on use of buildings not outdoor space.
- 19.15.5 On behalf of the Committee, the Interim Chair thanked the USCOO and colleagues for the work that is being done to ensure a safe return onsite.

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### 19.16 UNIVERSITY HR ACTIVITY UPDATE, EMPLOYEE RELATIONS AND STATUTORY COMPLIANCE

- 19.16.1 The HR Director provided an oral update on progress in implementing the Professional Development Planning policy and procedure, which was launched for all colleagues on 1 June 2020.
- 19.16.2 The HR Director provided an oral update on employee relations activity since the last meeting.
- 19.16.3 Members noted that there are six live grievance cases and one pending employment tribunal claim.
- 19.16.4 Members noted an operational report on 'Juice', a key element of Being Me, Being Westminster.
- 19.16.5 Members heard that the academic union (UCU) dispute relating to the 2019-20 calendar is ongoing.

### 19.17 REVISED POLICIES

#### Diversity and dignity at work policy

- 19.17.1 Members noted the revised policy (Document HR 200623E), which was previously titled Diversity and dignity at work and study policy.
- 19.17.2 Members noted that the policy has been approved by the University Executive Board for implementation from January 2021 pending production of a policy applicable to students and to allow time to reflect on the potential impact of the University's response to the Black Lives Matters movement.

#### Disciplinary policy and procedure

- 19.17.3 **AGREED** Members recommend the updated policy and procedure (Document HR 200623E) to the Court of Governors for approval.

### 19.18 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING AND MATTERS ARISING

- 19.18.1 **AGREED** The minutes of the HR Committee meeting held on 15 January 2020 (Document HR 200623F) are an accurate record.
- 19.18.2 Members noted an update on actions from the previous meeting (Document HR 200623G).
- 19.18.3 The Clerk to the Court informed members that the Nominations Committee are interviewing five candidates for the vacancy for an independent (non-governor) member for the Committee. In response to a member's query about the current review of the Court's sub-committee structure, the Clerk to the Court confirmed that the appointee would join the committee to which the Court allocates responsibility for human resources matters whether this is a standalone HR Committee or not.

### 19.19 DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 20 October 2020 at 4.30pm  
Tuesday 9 February 2021 at 4.30pm  
Tuesday 22 June 2021 at 4.30pm

### 19.20 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

- 19.20.1 Members did not raise any other matters for discussion.