

ULSTER UNIVERSITY

NOTES OF MEETING - JOINT UNION CONSULTATIVE AND NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (JUCNC).

Tuesday 10 December 2019, Room H219 (Boardroom), Coleraine Campus.

Present: Damian McAlister – Director of People & Culture (Chair); Niamh Lamond- Chief Operating Officer; Cathy Gormley-Heenan, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and External Affairs); Paul Davidson – Deputy Director People & Culture; Christine Irwin – Employee Relations Partner; Kelly McBride – Section Leader, Employee Relations; Lindesay Dawe - UCU; Paddy Mackel - UCU NI Regional Official; Linda Moore - UCU; Aisling O’Beirn – UCU; Paul Agnew - UNITE; Rhonda Black - UNITE; Ivor McAleese - UNITE; Judith Hough - UNITE; Richard Young – UNITE.

In Attendance:

Daren Crothers - Organisation Design & Change - Section Leader; Damian McIlDuff - Organisation Design Partner.

Apologies:

Paul Bartholomew Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic); Carol Curran – Executive Dean; Liam Maguire – Executive Dean; Marianne Buick – Unison; Gareth Scott – UNITE, Craig Shilliday – UNITE; Willie McLaughlin - UNITE; John Mulholland – UNITE.

NOTE: This meeting commenced with a presentation from the LRA on responsibilities in relation to consultation.

19:33 Welcome and Introductions:

Mr McAlister welcomed all to the meeting. Introductions were made around the room for the benefit of Paddy Mackel as this is his first JUCNC at the University.

19:34 Admin:

The possibility of rotating the Chair of JUCNC between P&C and the unions was discussed.

19:35 Minutes of the meeting held on 11 September 2019

The minutes of the JUCNC held on 11 September 2019, contained minor errors to be corrected before the minutes are published.

UCU raised a general issue with the minutes, in that they feel that the minutes have been written from a management perspective.

19:36 Matters arising from minutes of last meeting 11 September 2019.

(19.07) UCU raised the issue of **Facilities time** for Trade Union Representatives in relation to the Greater Belfast Development (GBD). Mr McAlister requested that both UCU and UNITE submit a proposal for facilities time by mid-January.

Mr Young brought to the attention of the meeting a situation where a member of UNITE had requested time off for training and was advised that the cost would be deducted from UNITE’s facilities time.

Ms McBride apologised, advising that this had been advice provided in error and the cost will not be deducted from facilities time.

(19:20) Dr Moore stated that UCU wish to obtain further information in relation to how any members of the **Senior Leadership Team have been held accountable for their actions in the BRG process**. Dr Moore noted that BRG resulted in substantial costs for both the University and UCU and UCU had not received any information in relation to disciplinary investigations arising from BRG. Mr McAlister advised that the individuals involved had the right to privacy and therefore he could not go into detail other than to say that the matter had been dealt with internally.

Mr Dawe advised that UCU had written to Jenny Pyper, Chair of University Council, raising significant concerns and he sought clarification on the timescale for a response. Mr McAlister advised that it may be the new year before a response is sent.

Mr Dawe stated that UCU wish to see **a more significant role for the unions on Council**. Mr Dawe stated that it was not unusual for universities to have union representation at Council and Senate and that UCU felt strongly that it is in the best interest of democratic process that the Union has seats on Senate and Council. Mr McAlister stated that he would put UCU's request, to the Chair of Council.

(19:22) **2/3 Stage Recruitment**. UNITE referred to the decision taken at the JUCNC of 11 September 2019 (paper 19/09) to discontinue the use of the internal trawl stage of the recruitment process. Mr Young requested that UNITE's continued disagreement with this approach be noted in the minutes. Mr McAlister advised that towards the end of this academic year, data on the outcome of this change of practice will be shared with the unions.

UNITE requested that People and Culture reconsider the decision not to have a People and Culture representative on all interview panels. Mr McAlister advised that the department is not resourced to have a People and Culture representative at all interviews, however the Resourcing team have appropriate quality control arrangements in place.

(19:24) **20% flexibility clause in academic-related contracts**. UCU asked for an update on the issue of the '20% flexibility clause' in academic-related contracts. Discussion took place in relation to the proposal to introduce a flexi-time scheme. Mr Davidson noted that if a flexi-time scheme is introduced the '20% flexibility clause' could become irrelevant. A formal consultation on a flexi-time scheme will commence as soon as possible.

(19:28) **Review of Health Sciences**. Mr McAlister confirmed that a paper will go to SLT on 13 January 2020.

(19:31) **May Bank Holiday** Mr Mackel advised that the UK government have taken the decision to replace the traditional May Day Public Holiday (first Monday in May) with VE day in 2020. Mr Mackel requested that the University give staff both days as leave this year. Mr McAlister advised that consideration would be given to this request.

19:37 DVC (Research and External Affairs) portfolio update

Professor Gormley Heenan thanked UCU colleagues for their input and support in developing the REF Code of Practice and the SRR process. Professor Gormley-Heenan provided an update on progress with the REF, noting that there is only six and a half months to the REF census date.

ITEMS FOR SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION

19:38 Pay Day (Paper JUCNC/19/11)

Mr McAlister introduced the paper on a proposed change to the monthly pay day. He advised that the paper provides three options in relation to the monthly pay day. Should a change to the pay day be decided on, it would be implemented later in the academic year. Mr McAlister requested a response from the unions by 31 January 2020.

19:39 Redundancy – (Paper JUCNC/19/12).

Mr Davidson talked through the options for consideration. After much discussion without reaching agreement on the substantive issues, Mr McAlister decided that the management proposals should be withdrawn.

19:40 Values.

Mr McIllduff gave a presentation on the University values. Action for Damian McIllduff to make the slides available to meeting attendees.

19:41 Great People Managers Programme

Mr McAlister provided an update to the meeting on the '*Engage – Great People Managers*' programme. He advised that the first cohort will commence in the new year and 140 managers will have completed the programme by December 2020.

19:42 Noonan Contracts for Cleaners.

Item raised by UCU on behalf of Unison. UCU advised that Unison feel that managers have a much stricter attitude towards Noonan staff compared to University staff. This issue will be explored further with Unison and the Estates Department.

ITEMS FOR UPDATE AND BRIEF DISCUSSION

19:43 Restructuring Update.

Mr Davidson provided an update on three restructure exercises:

ISD: the matching process is coming to an end.

DVC Offices: discussions are progressing with staff in these offices.

Strategic Planning and Performance: The consultation on the new structure has commenced.

19:44 Policy Consultations.

Ms McBride advised JUCNC that monthly policy consultation meetings commenced several months ago. Discussion took place in relation to the way forward with these meetings. It was agreed that this will be further explored at the policy review meeting scheduled for 18 December 2020.

19:45 Conflict Management Sector Review.

Ms McBride advised that a meeting was held involving the People and Culture Departments at Ulster University and Queens and the LRA on 22 November 2019, to explore options on a shared approach to conflict resolution methods.

19:47 A.O.B

'Pennies from Heaven': Mr McAlister advised the unions of the 'pennies from heaven' initiative which allows staff to donate the 'pennies element' of their salary to charitable causes. Mr McAlister to forward details to the unions.

UNITE called for casualisation and gender pay gap to be included as an item for a future JUCNC. Mr McAlister agreed to send a recently developed infographic on the gender pay gap at Ulster University to the meeting attendees.

Next meeting confirmed as 24 March 2020

Meeting Ended