

**Notes of meeting no 20 of the combined JNC held on Friday 17 July 2020**

**Present (virtually)**: Stephen Shute, Pro Vice Chancellor, (Planning and Resources) (SS) (chair); Siobhan O’Reilly, Director of HR (SOR); John Hallam, Interim Assistant Director of HR (ER) (JH); UCU: Jo Pawlik (JPk); Andrew Chitty (AC); Joanne Paul (JP); UNITE: Paula Burr (PB); Daniel Hyndman (DH); UNISON: Caroline Fife (CF);); Holly Foster (HF); Claire Colburn (ClCol).

**Apologies**: Bridget Edminson (BE); Mike Moran (MM); Elaine Stephen (ES); Tim Westlake (TW).

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| 1/20 | **Notes of Previous Meetings**  Notes of the meeting (no 19) of 3 July 2020 were agreed as a correct record. John Hallam was thanked for his contributions to the servicing of the Committee. |  |
| 2/20 | **Return to Campus Planning**  SOR said that she was developing principles, which would inform a revision to the University’s Flexible Working Policy for the autumn. Between now and the end of the year, flexible working / working from home would continue to be the default approach where staff did not need to return to campus to support the student experience, although staff could return with permission if they wished. From January 2021, it was intended to bring in the new flexible working arrangements / policy, based on the guiding principles. SOR said she was proposing three categories:   1. Required to work on campus for students / unable to work from home; 2. Designated home workers 3. working from campus / working from home (default 50/50) – no need for a formal flexible working request but may be flexed by agreement   SOR said the changes would be supported by clear messaging. An individualised, case-by-case approach would be necessary, particularly to consider specific role requirements and, as appropriate, any specific medical needs. SS said that academics would largely fall under category i) on the basis of delivering face-to-face delivery of teaching related activities.  UCU colleagues said they found the statement about face-to-face delivery very surprising and said that many recent communications and planning tools were focused on virtual and on-line content, not face-to-face delivery. UCU colleagues stated that clarity of communication was urgently needed on this and further consultation. SS said it had always been clear that a bi-modal / blended approach was planned so that as much face to face teaching as was possible could be delivered. A number of concerns were discussed; whether an EIA had been completed; risk assessments and stress risk assessments for staff; the impact on carers and BAME staff; workloads; recording of seminars; expenses for home working; availability of equipment and technology for home working; release of the new academic timetable; consistency of approach by line managers and the possibility of bullying. SOR confirmed an EIA had not been completed at this point. Inevitably, there was a wide range of issues to consider but there was a clear need for key staff to return to campus to undertake teaching. Concerns could be raised, discussed and resolved as required on an individual basis. Heads of School and Heads of Professional Services were working on detailed plans but the likelihood was that a blended / flexible approach to working on campus would be required up until January 2021. The University’s approach to mental health support / well-being would also be reviewed.  SOR said she would consult further with the CJNC on the principles for revisions to the University’s Flexible Working Policy. This approach was welcomed, as was the review of well-being. SOR agreed to write outside of the meeting to confirm the outline of the principles. It was noted that a further informal meeting with Kelly Coate had been mooted but this was not yet confirmed. SOR was asked to confirm the status of this meeting. | SOR  SOR |
| 3/20 | **VS Update**  SOR confirmed that letters would be sent out on 17/7 confirming decisions on VS applications. Individuals would need to reach decision on offers by 31/7. In response to a question from ClCol about numbers of applications, SS said this would be confirmed in due course once final numbers were clear. Confidentiality had to be maintained and this also needed to be factored in to the timing of discussions about workload(s) post-VS. |  |
| 4/20 | **Furlough Update**  SOR noted that the number of staff furloughed had reduced from 303 to 232 in June. 94 staff now remained on furlough. The employer contributions would increase in July. |  |
| 5/20 | **DT Contracts**  SS confirmed that DTs would be paid for the training that Schools would put in place for the delivery of remote teaching in the Autumn term of the next academic year. The proposal put forward on ‘proportionality’ had been discussed with the Provost but could not be supported at this time. |  |
| 6/20 | **Race Equality Charter / EDI Committee**  SOR said the REC SAT group had met three times to date. A single nominee from the joint trade unions to join the SAT group was awaited. AC confirmed a nominee would be notified shortly. The focus of the work was around three work streams: student experience; staff; culture. SOR confirmed that the EDI Committee would be re-convene in the autumn.  PB and AC welcomed this and AC said there should be a standing agenda item on the CJNC agenda of institutional racism. |  |
| 7/20 | **PGRs – Matching Extensions**  SS said an e-mail communication and a web notice had been published to PGRs setting out arrangements. |  |
| 8/20 | **Risk Assessments**  Risk assessments were a statutory responsibility and were on-going as required. |  |
| 9/20 | **EIAs**  This had been covered earlier in the agenda**.** |  |
| 10/20 | **Government HE Restructuring Plan**  It was noted the Government had published an HE restructuring plan the previous day. AC asked what the University’s response would be. SS said that as the document had only been published the day prior, more time was needed to assess its implications. SS said Sussex was not amongst the 13 ‘high risk’ institutions, which the document was more aimed at. |  |
| 11/20 | **NSS**  JPk said the NSS scores indicated more investment was needed in staff rather than IT. SS said that the NSS results were disappointing – the scores compared poorly to the sector - and marked a longer-term trend that needed to be addressed. |  |
| 12/20 | **Next Meeting**  It was noted the next meeting was a single-issue meeting – the 20/21 budget and a presentation by AS, Director of Finance. AC asked if the draft budget document could be made available. SS said he would check on this with AS. | SS |
| 13/20 | **Date of Next Meeting**  Friday 24 July 2020 @ 2.00 p.m. |  |

**Human Resources**

**22/07.20**