**JNC(UCU)/18/1/M**

**UCU Joint Negotiating Committee**

**Minutes of the meeting held at 2.30 pm on 10 October 2018**

**in the Sussex House Committee room**

**Present:**

**University Management:** Stephen Shute (SS), Pro-Vice-Chancellor; Philip Harris (PH), Head of School; Sheila Gupta (SG), Director of HR; Bridget Edminson, General Counsel (BE); John Hallam, Assistant Director of HR – Employee Relations (JH).

**UCU representatives:** Filippo Osella (FO)- Chair; Gerhard Wolf (GW); Roger Philips (RP); Robert Fidler (RF).

**In attendance:** Sarah Cox (SC) - Management Joint Secretary, Mike Moran, UCU National Officer

**1. Welcome, introductions & apologies for absence**

Chris Chatwin gave apologies.

SS introduced BE as the new Professional Services Director on the JNC, and JH who had recently joined as Assistant Director of HR with an employee relations remit.

**2. Minutes of the meetings held on 27 June 2018 (JNC(UCU)17/3/M)**

RP suggested some amendments to the minutes of the previous meeting. It was agreed that these would be appended to the minutes.

**3. Matters arising**

FO proposed that in future minutes for the JNCs would be issued within 2 weeks and that indicative timescales should be given for each action. This was agreed.

1. **Request for increase in UCU remission time (para 4)**

SC said that this request had been made to senior management but before it had been agreed they had asked for more information to be provided. Some of this could be provided by SC but some may need to be provided by UCU. SC said that she would clarify the requirements and confirm to UCU.

**ACTION – SC to request information required by UCU by Friday17 October.**

1. **Academic career paths (para 5)**

This meeting to discuss this matter had been due to take place on the morning of 10 October was unavoidably cancelled. It would be rescheduled as soon as diaries allowed.

**ACTION – Meeting between SS, SG, JH and UCU to discuss academic career paths to be rescheduled as soon as possible.**

1. **Workload model (para 12)**

This was on the agenda for the current meeting, and a separate meeting would be arranged to discuss this matter in more detail.

**ACTION – SC to arrange meeting between SS, PH and UCU regarding progress on the workload model, to take place before Christmas.**

1. **Associate Tutors and strike deductions (para 7)**

MM asked whether SG had made a decision about whether to reimburse strike deductions for Associate Tutors. UCU’s position was that they were amongst the lowest paid staff in the University and they should not be unduly punished for defending their pensions. SG said that the University had a stated position on this, however the University would consider UCU’s request and provide a response within one month.

**ACTION – SG to consider UCU’s request to reimburse strike deductions for Associate Tutors and respond by mid-November.**

1. **Attendance monitoring for visa holders (para 6).**

There was some discussion about whether staff still had concerns about the attendance monitoring process for visa holders. SG said that a balance needed to be struck to make sure that colleagues did not feel threatened by the process on the one hand, but that the University could demonstrate to UKVI that they were meeting their statutory obligations on the other.

PH felt that the revised monitoring systems had been implemented in Schools and were working well. He suggested that if any staff came to UCU with concerns, they should be encouraged to speak to their Head of School to resolve the matter.

RP said that the Home Office interpretation of unauthorised absence regarding industrial action had changed, and requested that information was disseminated. SG agreed to do so and at the same time to remind Heads of School to make relevant staff aware of the new attendance monitoring models, and to contact their Head of School if they still had concerns.

**ACTION** **– JH to organise an email from HR compliance regarding the change in Home Office interpretation and a reminder of the new attendance monitoring procedures.**

**4. Workload model**

 SS recapped the work that had been carried out to date (as discussed at previous JNC meetings).

SS said that the initial pilot had been completed, and had gone well. Phase 2 had now commenced and would be completed in the second part of 2019. SS said that more detail could be provided in a dedicated meeting on this subject.

RF asked if UCU could have a copy of the tariffs and categories of work. SS agreed.

**ACTION – SS to send UCU the tariffs and categories of work for the new workload model by end November.**

**5. New Life Science building update**

SS said that a project board had been set up which was being chaired by the Deputy Vice Chancellor. It was in the early stages of scoping the requirements for the new building. More information would be available next year.

**6. Staff survey update**

 SG said that a Pulse survey would take place at the beginning of November. The questions would be based on the previous survey for consistency and benchmarking purposes. The next full survey would take place in 2019 but it would likely be different from previous surveys. A steering and a working group comprising of a cross section of different categories of staff had been set up, to review good practice from elsewhere and propose a new model for the staff survey .

**7. USS Joint Expert Panel**

 UCU asked for the University’s view on the panel’s recommendations.

SC said that Allan Spencer, Director of Finance, had been unable to attend the meeting but had provided a response to this question as follows:

*Like most other employers, we welcome the report of the Joint Expert Panel as a constructive approach to understanding the assumptions underlying the deficit to the Pension Scheme.*

*We hope that UUK and UCU will be able to use it to develop a joint proposal at the JNC that will both resolve the industrial dispute and satisfy the Trustee and the Regulator that the integrity of the scheme is maintained.*

*UUK is currently consulting all employers on the proposal.  Because the potential financial implications of any change to the scheme are significant, the University’s governing Council will be responsible for our response and we plan to finalise this response in time to respond to the UUK consultation by the end of October.*

MM asked whether the University would share their response with UCU. SS said that he would consider MM’s request.

**8. 2017/18 budget**

 UCU asked for an explanation of the drop in budget surplus to £2 million for 2017/18 that was displayed on the slides at the VC’s Open Meeting.

SC said that at the meeting, the Vice Chancellor had explained that this was due to a number of one-off costs that were being written off. In advance of the JNC, Allan Spencer had said that the reduced surplus reflects the forecast provided to Council in June 2018 and largely reflected the impact of writing off the development costs to date of £7m for the Life Sciences Building. Underlying performance was close to budget.

SC suggested that a Finance Update meeting with all three unions and Allan Spencer be arranged in January after the accounts had been published. UCU agreed.

**ACTION – SC to arrange Finance Update meeting with the unions, to take place in January 2019.**

FO noted that Schools were being asked to make savings due to the current financial situation, and asked whether they would be expected to make redundancies in order to do so. SS clarified the one-off costs were not the reason that Schools were being asked to make savings. The current situation was that the Augur review was shortly to be published, postgraduates had under-recruited, undergraduate fess were frozen, pensions costs were due to increase and overseas recruitment was becoming increasing competitive. The University was doing everything it could to protect its position in the context of rising costs and flat-lining income. At the moment there were no plans for Schools to make redundancies to achieve the required cost savings.

**9. Short-term contracts**

MM asked why 9 month teaching contracts were being given to Teaching Fellows. He clarified that this was in the context of rolling contracts rather than once-off short-term cover for maternity leave or study leave.

SC said she had run a report and provided information to Chris Chatwin that there were only 2 Teaching Fellows in the University who had teaching contracts of less than a year’s duration. GW said that this could not be the case because there were 4 in his School. SC asked UCU to provide the names of as many people as possible who were in this situation, as examples, so the data could be revisited.

**ACTION – UCU to provide SC with names of people they were aware of who were on rolling contracts of less than one year’s duration.**

SS said that the University had a policy on the use of Fixed Term Contracts that had been brought to the JNC before, and this would be re-circulated.

**ACTION – SC to send policy on Fixed Term Contracts by end November**

PH said that Heads of Schools generally reviewed their staff who were on Fixed Term Contracts every autumn, to consider whether they could be made permanent.

**10. Gender Pay Gap**

SC said that Jackie Rymell (Head of the Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Unit) and Steve Walsh (Reward Consultant) had met with all three unions to update them on progress.

MM said that he and Charlotte Skeet had attended that meeting and it had been helpful.

MM said that UCU would be submitting a claim to the University regarding Equal Pay on 6 November 2018.

**11. Any other business**

FO asked how long the current post freeze would continue. PH clarified it was not an absolute post freeze; some posts were approved and each was considered on its own merit. SS said that he could not say how long the current arrangements would continue.

**12. Date of next meeting**

Wednesday 6 February 2019, 14.00 – 16.00, Sussex House Committee Room

Sarah Cox

12 October 2018