

THE UNIVERSITY OF READING

STAFFING COMMITTEE

17/01 A meeting of the Staffing Committee was held on Tuesday 14 February 2017 at 2.00 pm in Committee Room 2, Whiteknights House

Present:

Professor R Van de Noort (Chair)
Mrs C L Bennett
Professor D C Berry
Mr J J Brady
Miss C E Eckett
Professor M D E Fellowes
Mrs A Hackett
Professor O B Kennedy
Dr R J Messer
Mrs J Pich
Mrs C Rolstone
Mr J Russell
Dr C Tissot
Professor D Zaum

Mr A J Twyford (Secretary)

Apologies were received from Mr Ben Cooper, Mrs J Rowe and Professor S Chandler-Wilde,

The Committee welcomed Professor Dominik Zaum, Research Dean to his first meeting.

17/02 The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2016 were approved.

Arising from the minutes:

Minute 16/20 (16/10, 16/01, 15/22, 15/11, 15/01, 14/25): Consultation in respect of proposed changes to USS and forthcoming pension changes

The Director of Human Resources informed the Committee that the latest valuation figures in respect of the USS pension scheme are likely to be a cause of some concern. He agreed to keep the Committee informed of progress and agreed to report back to a future meeting.

Minute 16/21: People Strategy

The Director of Human Resources informed the Committee that the HR Leadership Team had now consulted with individual members of the UEB as well as with the Leadership Group and were now reflecting on the comments received. He confirmed that a meeting with members of the Planning and Strategy Office was planned and a detailed programme would be presented to UEB by the end of March.

17/03 Campus Jobs

The Assistant Director of Human Resources (Operations) and Mr Jay Russell, Campus Jobs Manager provided the Committee with an overview of the Campus Jobs project. They outlined the project's main objectives, including being able to inspire and motivate students to think about their career options and employability from the start, to maximise student participation in on-campus work, and to streamline and simplify the process for engaging and paying workers in any non-substantive vacancy.

They confirmed that the project was a collaboration between HR, Careers and Procurement and had been funded by the Information Systems Management Group (ISMG). They indicated that Campus Jobs would be formally launched on the 18 September 2017 to coincide with Welcome Week and that the system would be piloted during the Open Days in June. They also confirmed that the time sheet process would be tested throughout the Summer Term.

A comprehensive communication and consultation exercise would be taking place starting with a presentation to Staff Forum members on the 22 February 2017. They indicated that further discussions and workshops would be taking place with relevant Heads and key staff from now until the launch date and they would continue to work closely with colleagues in Marketing, Communications and Engagement (MCE).

Mr Russell outlined the benefits of the Campus Jobs service for the student population, for temporary workers and for recruiting managers and described the process in detail.

The Committee welcomed the development of Campus Jobs and could see the benefits of a standardised and simplified internal recruitment process for all non-substantive roles across the University.

17/04 Staff Survey

The Assistant Director of Human Resources (People and Talent) provided the Committee with an update on the forthcoming staff survey due to go live on the 6 March 2017. She confirmed that a working group had been

established to develop the survey and had been working closely with Capita, the external provider, to refine the survey and to determine the campaign material. She indicated that further surveys would be conducted in future years with a smaller survey scheduled for 2018.

She informed the Committee that the survey had now been piloted across the University, and decisions would be made shortly in respect of:

- The length of time the survey will remain open;
- Whether staff would be given an incentive for completing the Survey;
- How and when will the results of the survey be published.

She confirmed that the HR professional team would be available to support relevant Heads with publicising the survey and with action planning.

The Committee thanked the Assistant Director of Human Resources (People and Talent) for the update and welcomed the running of a staff survey.

17/05 Apprenticeship Levy and Apprenticeships

The Assistant Director of Human Resources (People and Talent) informed the Committee of the apprenticeship levy being introduced by the government from April 2017 to fund apprenticeships. She confirmed the levy would apply to those organisations with a pay bill in excess of £3 million and for the University of Reading this worked out at about £800K.

She confirmed that the UEB would be discussing this in more detail shortly and would be considering its options as to how it intended to use the levy.

The Committee discussed at some length the Apprenticeship Levy and the implications for the University. Colleagues were informed that work was underway to offer degree apprenticeships at the Henley Business School and consideration was being given to use the Levy for a number of different purposes - for academic development, for leadership development, for doctoral training, as well as in other support functions (Technical Services and ITS).

The Director of Human Resources informed the Committee that the introduction of the apprenticeship levy was also proving a challenge across the sector.

17/06 Annual Diversity and Inclusion report

The Assistant Director of Human Resources (People and Talent) informed the Committee that the Diversity and Inclusion Report for 2015/16 had been published and was now available on the HR webpage. She confirmed

that the report format had changed from previous years and was now much more concise with a greater emphasis on the University's priorities in respect of diversity and inclusion (gender, sexual orientation and race).

She summarised some of the activity highlights for 2015/16 and priorities for 2016/17. These included:

Activity highlights for 2015/16:

- Submission of the ATHENA Swan Institutional Bronze application;
- Submission to the Stonewall WEI;
- Launch of the D&I strategy and targets and an overhaul of the D&I committee structure;
- A push on encouraging staff to complete their personal data resulting in an increase in disclosure across all areas;
- Launch of termly series of Diversity and Inclusion Lectures.

Priorities for 2016/17:

- Understanding reasons for leaving to see if there is a D&I aspect;
- University Staff Survey to inform wider actions needed;
- Launch of an applicant tracking system in order to collect data at all stages of recruitment;
- Undertake a review of fixed term contracts;
- Review of D&I training including unconscious bias training, monitoring and coaching.

She identified some aspects that require further analysis and attention including:

- The success rates for both men and women in the personal titles process fell in 2015/16;
- The University still has a small number of BAME staff particularly at senior level.

The Committee thanked the Assistant Director of Human Resources (People and Talent) for the update.

17/07 Staff Forum

The Director of Human Resources reminded the Committee that the Staff Forum had been created in 2014 to provide opportunities for staff on Grades 1 -5 to hear about and discuss matters affecting their working experience. This followed the de-recognition of Unite and Unison.

He sought the Committee's views on:

- The possible expansion of the Staff Forum to include employee representatives from Grades 6 and above given that a proportion of staff on these grades did not feel adequately represented;
- The possible re-balancing of the membership of the Staff Forum including a reduction in management representatives and a proposal to invite members of the Leadership Group to attend meetings where items related to their area.

The Committee was broadly supportive of the proposals and welcomed having a single and consistent process for all staff groups. The Committee also recognised the sensitivities surrounding the proposals, and the need to consult with UCU locally in the first instance. The Director of Human Resources confirmed that he was meeting with the President of Reading UCU shortly to discuss the implications of expanding the Staff Forum. He stressed that the University was not looking to undermine UCU and saw this proposal as being complementary to the existing arrangements.

The Director of Human Resources agreed to keep the Committee informed of progress and would report back to a future meeting.

17/08 Impact of Brexit on staff

The Director of Human Resources informed the Committee that the University was hosting a number of information sessions in February aimed at staff potentially affected by the impact of the EU Referendum outcome and Brexit. To date about 300 staff had signed up.

He informed the Committee that an immigration expert from Mills & Reeves would deliver these sessions and would provide practical information and guidance covering:

- Applications for permanent residency and registration certificates;
- Applications for naturalisation and will cover the status of children of EEA nationals living in the UK.

The Director of Human Resources also reminded the Committee that as a signal of support, the University had agreed to fund the cost of residency card applications.

The Committee thanked the Director of Human Resources for the update.

17/09 Benefits+ and changes to Salary Sacrifice

The HR Manager (Reward and Benefits) informed the Committee of the changes to the tax treatment of benefits in kind provided through salary sacrifice arrangements effective from April 2017. She indicated the impact of these changes to some of the University's salary sacrifice schemes,

namely the Bus+ scheme, the Parking+ scheme and the Mycar scheme. She outlined the University's preferences regarding the continuation of these three schemes and these were as follows:

Parking+

All employees in possession of a parking permit at 5 April 2017 are protected and can continue paying for their permit through the salary sacrifice arrangement until April 2018.

New applicants for parking permits from 6 April 2017 will continue to pay their parking permit by deduction from net salary.

Bus+

All staff already in possession of a Bus+ card are protected until April 2018. The Bus+ scheme will be closed to new applicants from April 2017.

Mycar

The University will continue to offer the Mycar scheme to staff, as it represents an attractive package, and the impact of the tax changes will vary depending on the type of vehicle selected – for example, Ultra-Low Emission Vehicles are exempt from the changes. Staff who joined the scheme, or have a confirmed order, before 6 April 2017, will not be affected by the changes and will continue to benefit from the tax and NI savings until the earlier of:

- An end, change, or renewal of the arrangement;
- 5 April 2021.

The Committee approved the plans as outlined by the HR Manager (Reward and Benefits).

17/10 2015/2016 Rewarding Excellence

The Committee received a paper from the HR Manager (Rewards and Benefits) setting out some statistics relating to the different reward and recognition arrangements for 2015/16. These included:

Reward Committees

A total of 62 cases submitted in 2015/16, 58 of which were successful.

Lump Sum awards

A total of 427 Lump Sum awards made in 2015/16 (275 awards to women and 152 awards to men), totalling £229,825.

Celebrating Success scheme

A total of 649 awards were made in 2015/16 (429 awards made to women and 220 awards made to men)

The Director of Human Resources confirmed that a review of the reward arrangements would take place towards the end of this academic session and a paper would be brought back to a future meeting of the Committee.

17/11 Remaining dates of meetings for the 2016/17 Academic Session:

Tuesday 2 May 2017, 11.00 am (reserve)

Wednesday 21 June 2017, 2.00 pm