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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

JOINT CONSULTATIVE AND NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 24th October 2019

PRESENT: Dr S Marwood (Chair), Dr G Anderson, Ms S Beecroft, Mr A Catterall, Dr R Moth, Ms L Mottram, Revd Professor Newport, Dr N O'Sullivan, Ms L Thompson

SECRETARIAT: Mr M Jones

1. Dispute

Members had received the 'UCU Branch Position' document. Professor Newport said he did not believe that the adoption of the current SAM constituted a change of staff's working conditions. Professor Newport added that the University had never been unwilling to work towards the development of a three part Workload Policy and queried whether there was in fact a dispute. Drs Moth, Anderson and O'Sullivan adjourned the meeting to discuss this question.

Upon their return, Dr Moth informed members that at the previous meeting of JCNC (8th October 2019) UCU had acted upon a mandate from its members to reject the 'A SAM focussed view of learning & teaching at Hope' document, request a return to the status quo ante and request development of a three part Workload Policy. In light of the University's refusal to comply with this, the dispute had arisen.

Professor Newport suggested that the four points in the 'UCU Branch Position' document be disaggregated, and treated separately. Professor Newport characterised the four points as follows: (i) UCU members are of the view that there has been a significant change to staff's working conditions, (ii) UCU members are of the view that the JCNC Recognition Agreement has been breached and that there is a problem with the way JCNC is currently working, (iii) UCU members are of the view that the current SAM is not workable, (iv) UCU members wish to engage management in discussion of the feasibility of a three part Workload Policy. Professor Newport voiced the opinion that UCU had not succeeded in proving the allegations in points (i) – (iii) and suggested that discussion focus upon point (iv). Drs Moth, Anderson and O'Sullivan adjourned the meeting to discuss this suggestion.

Upon their return, Dr Moth reiterated UCU's opinion that a significant change to staff's working conditions had occurred and informed members that UCU would be undertaking more survey work to look into this. Dr Moth suggested that if a Risk Assessment could be undertaken in order to identify pressure points with regards to workload then UCU would see this as a positive move forward. Professor Newport acknowledged the possibility of staff feeling that there has been a change in their experience of work as a result of the new SAM. Mr Catterall suggested, in light of this, that UCU and the University work collaboratively to address this. Dr O'Sullivan voiced the opinion that a future survey undertaken by UCU would provide further evidence of a significant change to staff's working conditions. Professor Newport voiced the opinion that a change of conditions at work does not necessarily constitute a change to working conditions. Dr O'Sullivan asked when the most recent Risk Assessment of staff working conditions was conducted. Mr

UNCONFIRMED

Catterall replied that an organisational Risk Assessment was conducted a number of years ago and that the Health & Safety Consultative Committee is currently in talks about undertaking a staff stress survey. Dr O'Sullivan undertook to consult with UCU members as to whether they believed the Risk Assessment would be worthwhile.

Professor Newport asked UCU representatives whether the union still considered itself to be in dispute with the University on the basis that staff's legal working conditions had changed. Drs Moth, Anderson and O'Sullivan adjourned the meeting to discuss this. Upon their return Dr O'Sullivan stated that UCU believed the state of dispute to be ongoing, adding that she believed the evidence presented was sufficient to show a significant change to working conditions. Dr O'Sullivan undertook to relay to UCU members a choice between undertaking a Risk Assessment, or awaiting the outcome of the Health & Safety Consultative Committee's stress survey. Mr Catterall asked Dr O'Sullivan to make UCU members aware that any concerns about stress can be raised with Personnel. Dr O'Sullivan undertook to do this. Dr O'Sullivan added that UCU believed the dispute re SAM to be ongoing but that an assurance on the University's part that it would be open to working towards a three-part Workload Policy would potentially remedy this. Mr Catterall reiterated his assertion that the University had never been unwilling to look into a three-part Workload Policy. Professor Newport suggested that discussions on this matter might take as their starting point two questions: (i) Is a three-part Workload Policy desirable? and (ii) What form would such a policy take?

The Chair asked for clarification as to whether being in an ongoing dispute meant that work towards a three-part Workload Policy could not commence. Mr Catterall said he believed that to be the case. Professor Newport offered to put his disaggregation of, and response to, UCU's four points in writing, following discussion with Dr Haughan.

ACTION: Professor Newport to work with Dr Haughan to produce document, as above.

The Chair noted that the University and UCU remain in dispute and requested that another meeting be scheduled within ten working days.