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LIVERPOOL HOPE UNIVERSITY

JOINT CONSULTATIVE AND NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE

Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th October 2022

PRESENT: Ms S Weir (Chair), Ms S Beecroft, Dr A Bennett, Mr A Catterall, Mr B Grice, Dr S Mercer, Revd Professor Newport, Ms L Thompson, Dr K Wilson

APOLOGIES: Professor A Nagar, Dr A Yeates

SECRETARIAT: Mr M Jones

1. Minutes of the previous meeting

Members had received minutes of the meeting held on 17th May 2022. These were **APPROVED** as a correct record.

2. Matters Arising

(i) Workload

Professor Newport confirmed that he had had four meetings with UCU in relation to this and would update members under agenda item six.

(ii) Fossil Fuels Divestment Statement

Ms Beecroft informed members that the University has instructed its investment managers to reduce the amount of money the University invests in fossil fuel companies. Ms Beecroft informed members that a number of fossil fuel companies are also investing in green energy. Ms Beecroft informed members that, in light of this, the University would not be making a Fossil Fuels Divestment Statement.

3. Management Items

(i) Finance

Ms Beecroft informed members that the operating surplus at the end of the 2021/22 financial year was £3.8m (6.7%). Ms Beecroft added that the forecast surplus for the 2022/23 financial year is £1.8m, with a detailed reforecast exercise taking place in November. Ms Beecroft informed members that the University's energy costs in 2021/22 were £1.7m, adding that in 2022/23 the energy costs will be £2.6m. Ms Beecroft informed members that the increased energy costs would negate the

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University's surplus. Ms Beecroft informed members that UK undergraduate fees remain fixed at £9,250 until at least 2024/25.

(ii) Student Numbers

Professor Newport informed members that student attrition has seen a significant increase recently and presents a cause for concern. Professor Newport added that overall student numbers are down by c.200. Professor Newport reminded members that a deterioration in continuation rates could adversely affect the University's TEF rating.

(iii) Accreditations

Professor Newport informed members that the University was successful in phase one of the ITT reaccreditation process. Professor Newport informed members that DfE will assign the University an 'associate' to work with the University during phase two of the process.

(iv) Wellbeing

Mr Catterall informed members that scheduled health checks (including bone density testing) have been set up for Domestics, Catering and Campus Service, for whom attending a day-long event would not be possible due to work commitments. Ms Beecroft informed members that the staff stress survey would be sent out in the coming weeks.

4. UCU Items

(i) HE Funding

Dr Mercer informed members that UCU welcomes the President of UUK's recently-stated commitment to a national conversation in order to discuss a long-term funding solution for UK universities. Dr Mercer asked whether the University would commit to taking part in this exercise. Ms Beecroft confirmed that this was the case. Dr Mercer assured members that UCU would take part in any consultation exercise related to this.

(ii) Promotions

Dr Mercer passed on Dr Yeates' thanks for the information about written feedback. Dr Mercer added that Dr Yeates had highlighted a number of instances in which feedback was not given. Mr Catterall requested that Dr Yeates contact him re this.

ACTION: Dr Yeates to contact Mr Catterall, as above.

(iii) Research Mentoring

Dr Mercer requested that management encourage Heads of Schools and Departments to institute Research Mentoring Schemes in their areas. Professor Newport suggested that the University produce a university-wide Research Mentoring Policy and asked Mr Jones to contact Professor Nagar re this.

ACTION: Mr Jones to contact Professor Nagar, as above.

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5. Unison Items

(i) Industrial Action

Mr Grice informed members that UNISON had undertaken three days of industrial action during October 2022.

(ii) Cost of Living

Mr Grice noted that UCEA had informed its members that they are permitted to make cost of living payments to staff, adding that a number of universities has already done so. Mr Grice requested that senior colleagues meet with union representatives to discuss a way forward in relation to this. Mr Catterall confirmed management's willingness to do this. Mr Catterall reminded members that the University had asked the unions whether they wanted to withdraw from national bargaining and that the unions had declined to do so. Mr Catterall expressed the University's disappointment with the 3% pay offer and informed members that the University's own preference had been rejected by UCEA. Mr Catterall informed members that management has been discussing the possibility of making a cost of living payment to staff since May/June 2022 and emphasised that this was unrelated to recent, or pending, industrial action. Mr Catterall informed members that the University would make an announcement re cost of living in November.

(iii) Holiday Entitlement/Pay following Brezel Ruling

Mr Grice drew members' attention to the Brezel Ruling, which confirms how holiday pay must be calculated for permanently retained part-year and irregular hours workers (these staff must receive a minimum of 5.6 calendar weeks' statutory annual leave). Mr Catterall informed members that a small number of term-time part time support staff could be affected by the ruling, adding that the University is currently working through issues relating to this and will provide UNISON with an update by the end of the year.

(iv) Hybrid Working

Dr Wilson informed members that a substantial number of UNISON members have expressed a desire for the University to allow hybrid working. Dr Wilson added that there is a perceived lack of consistency between areas on the University in relation to hybrid working. Dr Wilson informed members that a number of administrative colleagues have left the University in recent months due to the University's disinclination to allow hybrid working. Mr Catterall undertook to look at the Leavers' Report to see whether any patterns in reasons for administrative staff leaving the University were discernible. Ms Beecroft informed members that the University's perception of itself as a community necessitated all colleagues being physically present on campus during working hours.

6. Workload Model

Members had received the updated workload document. Professor Newport informed members that following discussion with UCU and USET the document had the University's full approval. Professor Newport added that the 1,500 hours in the model excludes graduations and liturgical days. Dr Bennett asked whether graduation would therefore be considered a voluntary academic commitment. Professor Newport responded that attendance at graduation remains a requirement. Dr Mercer queried the removal of a sentence stating 'Everyone at Liverpool Hope works a notional 35 hour week'. Dr Mercer reminded members that the notional 35 hour week is stated in the national framework and asked for clarity as to the status of the

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national framework document. Mr Catterall responded that the document in question was written in 2006, adding that UCU's agreement to a 1,500 hours model would take precedence over this. Dr Bennett asked whether the University considered the national framework document to still be relevant. Mr Catterall responded that this was not the case. Mr Catterall asked Dr Mercer to liaise with Professor Newport as to whether the 35 hours in the national framework document is notional, as opposed to the 35 hours UCU are arguing for nationally.

ACTION: Dr Mercer to liaise with Professor Newport, as above.

7. AOB

The Chair noted that this was Professor Newport's final JCNC meeting prior to his retirement. Members joined the Chair in thanking Professor Newport for his service on the committee.