

GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE
University of London

COUNCIL

JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC)

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 18 February 2008

Present: Mr Hugh Jones (Chair), Dr Philip Broadhead, Mr Des Freedman (UCU),
Dr Ben Levitas (UCU), Professor Simon McVeigh, Ms Suzanne Stead
(UNISON)

Apologies: Ms Pamela Beevers, Mr Chris Pearson, Ms Denise Smith

In attendance: Ms Johanna May

1 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 29 October 2007 were approved.

2 MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

(re: minute 6 (iii) Review of Occupational Health, the identification of a comprehensive OH provision was now being investigated, in conjunction with the Health and Safety Adviser. It was noted that the current medical centre was not and had never been a first response service for medical emergencies.

(re: minute 6 (iv) re: research) the report of the Pro Warden Research and Enterprise to the effect that the survey of departments had been completed and examined by the Research Committee. Around half of academic departments had well established and long running schemes for research leave, in others the provision was informal or fragmentary and overall there was a spread of departmental entitlement. This matter would be discussed at a forthcoming Senior Management Team and a meeting was proposed with HR and UCU before this to discuss the survey and how this issue could be moved forward so that research leave could be made more equitable.

3 REVIEW OF ESTATES AND ESTATES STRATEGY

Noted:

(i) the report of the Registrar and Secretary that a job description for the new Director of Estates had now been drawn up and that several other posts were being advertised including the post of Maintenance Manager and Head of Capital Projects. The objectives for the Review of Estates had been refined and it could be that the new Head of Estates would consider that the posts concerned with facilities management and maintenance could be combined.

(ii) although not much progress had been possible on the Security and Access Working Party, the issue of ID cards was being taken forward by a part time consultant – Ian James. With regard to the cleaning

contract a company called Resource (which had now taken over Pall Mall) was the preferred bidder .

- (iii) a building condition survey was currently being undertaken and in conjunction with this process a group had been convened to review the best use of space, involving the Pro Warden Students and the Registrar and Secretary. The plan was to complete the review this academic year; the cost of drawing up the plan would be around £50K but the process was necessary to obtain planning permission from the Local Authority. The review would advise how best to co-locate departments, studios and workshops. It was noted that there would be a need to consult all staff on the proposals, including technical staff who prepare and support workshops and users.

4 HARMONISATION OF CONDITIONS OF SERVICE

Noted:

- (i) that the draft capability procedure attached to the agenda had been discussed extensively in the harmonisation working party. The proposed ratification of this procedure was a joint recommendation.
- (ii) that there was a related sickness policy currently being developed and that training would be needed for managers about these procedures; there needed to be a good communication and training process to ensure the capability procedure was disseminated and implemented appropriately.
- (iii) current cases of capability were dealt with under the terms of the disciplinary procedure which was not considered to be desirable. It would be ensured that the transfer from one procedure to another would not involve any detriment to any individual member of staff.

5 HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW

Noted:
: that the Director of Human Resources would be consulting with the with the Trade Union representatives about the staffing implications of the HR review and that the report and outcome would be put onto the web site.

6 REVIEW OF THE JCC

Noted:

- (i) that at the last meeting of the committee it had been agreed that both sides would consider proposals for the way forward on this matter and bring them to this meeting.
- (ii) the view expressed by the UCU that they would prefer a Joint Negotiating Committee which could sign off issues that had been previously been the subject of consultative processes. Current examples of the consultative process included the Pay Forum, the

Harmonisation working party, and the discussions to take place on the review of HR. Hence the JNC would be kept as a separate and final point of agreement or departure. In the past some matters had been delayed in coming into the orbit of union consideration since they had been brought for consultation at the JCC. Such consultation would have been better done on an ad hoc basis, raising questions as they had arisen. The fact that the College only currently had a consultative forum sent a message that the College declined to give the views of the union appropriate weight. A JNC would provide a forum for negotiation in relation to the local application of nationally agreed conditions. The existence of a JNC would not preclude discussion, consultation or the provision of information but would be the formal end point of processes involving both negotiation and consultation

(iii) the view of the UNISON representative that there was not enough consultation in the College and that a once a term meeting of the JCC was not sufficient to ensure this process; she was aware that the Director of Human Resources wanted to have more frequent meetings with the branch and local TU reps. Discussion on pay and conditions of service were ongoing which involved both consultation and negotiation, while pay was negotiated nationally other conditions of service were locally determined

(iv) the response of the Registrar and Secretary that while it was helpful to hear these views negotiation was not the only function that would be required of any JNC – processes such as ratification, consultation, and discussion were also involved while negotiation had a specific status. “Negotiation” also had broader connotations and have implications for governance since there were some matters that could not be in the remit of this Committee. It could be that an alternative name for this body could incorporate these various functions. At this point he would consider the trade union representations further and come back with some specific proposals on this matter.

7 DEPARTMENT OF ART

Noted

(i) that the report on the outcome of the review into the Department of Visual Arts had been circulated and the interim management group appointed.

(ii) the views of the union representatives that while they were happy with the outcome of the review they were concerned at the time it had taken, and the delays in the notification of the arrangements for the management group. They were also concerned at the time it had taken for the management of the College to realise that something was wrong in the department; matters had reached a critical point before the review had been put into place.

(iii) that the College was very happy to look at lessons learnt in this case. It was encouraging that so many staff in the department had said they

were happy with the outcome of the review process and it was recognised that the situation would need ongoing and careful monitoring.

8 SURVEY OF BULLYING AND HARASSMENT.

Noted:

- (i) that both unions had been involved in designing a questionnaire about bullying and harassment which had been piloted in the former Department of Visual Arts . It was planned to roll out the questionnaire in other departments and publicise its existence in Hallmark. The pilot had elicited 20 responses, with pages of comments, which had been given to the Registrar and Secretary. Sixty three per cent of the respondents felt they had suffered from Bullying and Harassment, 90% said they had not been acknowledged for work done and had unmanageable workloads. The outcomes were to be discussed with the Acting Head of the Department of Art and union representations
- (ii) the College did have a policy to combat Bullying and Harassment and a network of trained advisers on this subject who were overseen by the EO Adviser. Reports of incidents were monitored and recorded by the Human Resources who could provide data, if required, to the unions.

TIMING OVER FUTURE MEETINGS OF THE JCC

9

Noted that as from the next academic year meetings of this Committee would be taking place on Wednesday afternoons.

NURSERY FEES

10

Noted:

- (i) the information provided by the Pro Warden (Students and Learning Development) that the Nursery fees were not yet fixed for 2008-9; the College was current looking at level of subsidy provided to the Nursery in the context of market rates and competitive rates.
- (ii) the costs of a potential new nursery had been found to be higher than originally calculated. The College was now re-visiting its plans to see if there was any way of building a new Nursery more economically or alternatively, finding funding from another suitable body.

11 PAY FORUM

Noted:

the Registrar and Secretary's remarks that there had been good progress towards the implementation of the Framework Agreement and with several future meetings planned and the list of outstanding items shorter than previously, there was a real possibility of agreement being achieved in the near future.

12

FINANCIAL POSITION

Noted:

- (i) the comments of the Director of Finance to the effect that the surplus outturn for 2006-07 was £1m, which was £1m less than had been originally planned.
- (ii) in relation to the current year, while the June 2007 forecast had been for a deficit of £600K, on the last review this figure was down to £200K which was a significant improvement. Going forward the College was aware that the employer's costs associated with the LPFA pension scheme would be rising considerably which would cost an additional £120K and next year there would be similar problems in USS Funding. There was also likely to be additional costs arising from the pay award which had been negotiated at inflation or 3%. Three percent had been budgeted but since inflation was at this level currently, the cost would be more than budgeted for.
- (iii) while the College could meet the costs of the pay award and Framework Agreement implementation, it did not have the funds to invest sufficiently in its estate nor to achieve the 3% surplus required by HEFCE. There would be a need for savings in the longer term to make the necessary progress towards financial sustainability.

ANY OTHER BUSINESS

13

The Registrar and Secretary indicated that he had a draft notice to staff on their responsibilities under the Freedom of Information/Data Protection provisions on which he wished to consult the trade unions in due course.

DATE OF NEXT MEETING

14

The date for the remaining meeting of this Committee was Monday 19 May 2008.