

**GOLDSMITHS COLLEGE**  
**University of London**

**COUNCIL**

**JOINT CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (JCC)**

**Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 19 May 2008**

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

Apologies: Mr Barry Douglas, Ms Denise Smith

In attendance: Ms Johanna May

**1 MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 February 2008 were approved

**2 HUMAN RESOURCES REVIEW**

Noted: the implementation of the review of Human Resources had been delayed but was now proceeding. The Director of Human Resources had given a presentation on the review to the Warden's Advisory Group and Human Resources Committee and proposed to provide a similar briefing to the Trade Unions as soon as possible. A central plank of the review was to create the role of Business Partners who would be the "face of HR" for the College

**3 COLLEGE NURSERY**

Noted:

- (i) the report of the Pro Warden (Students and Learning Development) that while the 2006 Review of Childcare had recommended the construction of a new Nursery building, the tenders were well above the original estimates and there were additional issues over construction and ground works. As previously reported, the College was now re-visiting its plans since there was a considerable deficit in relation to the current nursery provision
- (ii) the recommendation going to Finance and Resources Committee at its next meeting would be for a 4.5% increase in nursery fees which was substantially less than the previous three years when the increase had been 11%
- (iii) currently there were no plans to introduce staged fees for staff users on lower salaries but this proposal could be part of the review of childcare which had also included provision for a 50 week per year contract for users

#### **4 FUTURE OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH PROVISION**

Noted: that Human Resources, in association with the Head of Health and Safety were in the process of drawing up a detailed specification for a new Occupational Health service and that this Committee would be kept up to date on this process

#### **5 RESEARCH LEAVE**

Noted: the comments of the Pro Warden (Research and Enterprise) to the effect that there had now been a constructive meeting with UCU representatives (Des Freedman and Brendan Prendeville) himself and the Director of HR which had reached a broad agreement on the way forward on this matter. A number of options were now being explored, looking at practice in other institutions. The Director of HR planned to report back to the Senior Management Team (SMT) before the end of term. Once SMT had approved outline proposals, there would be further consultation with UCU with – if necessary – the proposals also being submitted to other committees

#### **6 REVIEW OF CURRENT COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**

Noted:

- (i) the comments of the trade union representatives that the review of the Department of Art has highlighted the need for systematic grievance procedures to include some provision for dealing with issues within stated timescales. Some issues had continued for months and it would have been helpful to have had much more accountable and transparent procedures
- (ii) the comment of the Director of HR that while it might be possible to respond to a grievance against the College within 28 days, a situation where an employee was complaining about someone else might require substantial investigation
- (iii) the suggestion that a response could be given within say, 5 days, to the effect that X was dealing with this issue, together with a draft timescale of how matters would be taken forward. There should be an expectation that no case should remain unresolved for more than 6 months
- (iv) the comments of the Director of HR that the HR review had highlighted the need for a new Dignity at Work policy and this was being drawn up by the Equality Adviser. There would be training for new staff in these procedures. The review had also recommended the review/updating of all procedures. This would involve negotiating/consulting on the new procedures with the unions and publicising them

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### PROCESS OF REVIEW OF WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

Noted:

- (i) the comments of the UCU representatives that the Whistleblowing policy had been revised apparently to correct some anomalies but UCU had not been involved in the changes. This was regrettable since this was an area where there could usefully have been more participation and consultation. The procedure was not very robust or independent e.g. there was a lack of external oversight and the nature of feedback back to protagonists was not specified.
- (ii) the comments of the Registrar and Secretary that the failure to invite views on this matter had been an oversight since the review had been regarded solely as a change to regulations. He indicated that he would welcome any comments from the UCU on the procedure; the UCU representatives indicated they would be submitting comments

## 8

### CONTRACTING OUT OF STAFF

Noted:

- (i) that a letter detailing the position on the contracting out of the cleaning service had recently been sent to the UNISON full time officer, which had clarified this matter
- (ii) in relation to catering, the current contract had ended and was rolling on, pending the review of the provision. The future provision of the service was under review. It was noted that users could provide comments on the catering service via the feedback forms available in the refectory. It was agreed that the attention of staff and students should be drawn to the existence of the current review to encourage more feedback to be given
- (ii) in relation to the porters it was noted that the Estates department was looking at how the working routine of the porters could be changed to accommodate the new 35 hour working week. There was however no proposal to outsource this service at this time

## 9

### REVIEW OF THE JCC

Noted

- (i) the recommendation from the Registrar and Secretary (attached to the agenda as report 08-238)
- (ii) that while there should not be duplication of discussion at various Committees, it could be useful to have a short information report which informed one committee of the decisions of the other

**Resolved:**

**that the proposed changes to the terms of reference of this committee be recommended to Council for approval**

**10****RECOGNITION AND PROCEDURE AGREEMENT**

Received: the recommendation from UNISON 08-239

Noted:

- (i) that previously there had been joint proposals from both unions on this matter and it might be useful to look at both unions' recommendations together
- (ii) the indication from UCU that they did wish to work up some proposals on a similar basis but in order not to delay consideration of the UNISON proposals they proposed formally to endorse the UNISON proposals and agree to submit their own specific proposals to the College as soon as possible

**11****PAY FORUM**

Noted:

- (i) the results of the ballots on the adoption of the draft Framework Agreement: UCU had a 94 per cent vote in favour from a 38% turnout and UNISON a 95% vote in favour from a 58% turnout. This was a resounding positive vote and a credit to the hard work of many people on both sides
- (ii) that the formal agreement would be signed at a future meeting of the Pay Forum subject to the clarification of some dates
- (iii) a lot of work had been done in relation to the implementation of the Agreement which meant the College was a long way ahead of other universities
- (iv) some matters remained for discussion at future meetings of the Pay Forum i.e. the position of Visiting Tutors and hourly paid staff, progression and probation processes

**12****REVIEW OF ESTATES AND ESTATES STRATEGY**

Noted:

- (i) the post of Director of Estates had been advertised and interviews would take place on 11 June 2008.
- (ii) the consultants undertaking the Building Condition Survey results had submitted their report which detailed a 10 year programme to achieve the desired standards costing £26m. The survey had looked at every building and assessed the condition of every element, prioritising issues for statutory compliance and looking at the best usage of buildings. This knowledge would improve the process of maintenance with an on line management system
- (iii) the cost of the building survey had been £40-50K but it had provided the College with a functioning database, an audit trail to the standard required by the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors and a benchmark which HECFE will require of us.

**13****FINANCIAL POSITION**

Noted:

- (i) the comments of the Registrar and Secretary to the effect that the new forecast was for a deficit of £300K next year, £600K the year after that and £100K the year after that. These forecasts were based on two assumptions – firstly that there would be savings of £750K due to Voluntary Severances and other non pay savings (such as those arising from an improved purchasing policy) and secondly that there would be an increase in tuition fees from overseas students of £1M
- (ii) the budget had had salary increases and salary costs built in but only 2.5% had been budgeted for the September pay rise and there would be an additional cost here due to inflation
- (iii) the Framework Agreement implementation costs had also exceeded budgeted provision
- (iv) the employer's contribution to the LPFA pension fund had increased and a similar increase was expected on the USS scheme – precise figures would be known in December
- (v) HEFCE's policy on equivalent and lower qualifications (ELQs) would result in a reduction of £1.1m in the College's block grant, although there was transitional funding for three years to cushion the loss.
- (vi) regrettably it did not appear that the College would meet the HEFCE criteria which would enable it to obtain additional student numbers
- (vii) the College planned to increase its student income and research income but to achieve this would need big strategic initiatives. The College wanted to reach the HEFCE recommendation of having 3% surplus
- (viii) it was agreed that in future the report on the College's financial position would be given in the form of a written report

**14****VOTE OF THANKS**

**Resolved:**

that the Committee record a formal vote of thanks to Ms Pamela Beevers, who had been a union side representative of this committee and its predecessors for more than twenty years; the Director of Human Resources indicated he would write a letter of thanks to Ms Beevers on behalf of the Committee for her dedicated and constructive contribution to the work of this committee over this long period of time

**15****DATES OF MEETINGS NEXT SESSION**

Noted:

the dates of the meetings of this committee next session were to be confirmed.