Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee meeting
Thursday 4 November 2021 at 2.15pm
Virtual meeting via Teams

Present:
Alex Butler, Chair
Richard Brooks, Director of Human Resources
Meg Crossman, Students' Union (SU) Community Officer
Marion Harney, Athena SWAN leader
Su McNab, Lay Member appointed by Council
Lizzi Milligan, Equality & Diversity Network (EDN) Co-Chair
Cassis Reis, Elected Staff Representative (Technical & Experimental)
Liz Simmons, Elected Staff Representative (Management, Specialist & Administration)
Jane White, Elected Staff Representative (Education & Research)
Annie Willingham, SU President
Mandy Wilson-Garner, Members appointed by the Students' Union
Ania Zalewska, Member appointed by Senate

In attendance:
Otter Baker, Observing
Jacqui Corderoy, HR Business Partner (for minute no. 967)
Stephen Godber, Director of Estates Operations (for minute nos. 961-966)
Tim Ibell, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Design
Joel Staley, Deputy Director Student Services (Disability and Operations) alternate for
Anthony Payne
Aiste Zubiniene, Equality & Diversity (E&D) Officer

Secretariat
Caroline Harris, Secretary

Apologies
Ben Davis, Elected Student Representative
Paula de la Torre Jimenez, Elected Student Representative
Rajani Naidoo, Head of the Race Equality Task Force
Anthony Payne, Director of Student Services

Introductory Items

961 - Welcome and Quorum
The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting, in particular the new members, and confirmed
that a quorum was present.

962 - Declarations of Interest
No members had interests to declare.

963 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting – Paper EDIC/22-009

The minutes of the meeting of 30 September 2021 were approved.

964 - Actions and Matters Arising

Equality & Diversity Network (950.1)

The Deputy Director Student Services (Disability and Operations) to speak to his manager about expressing interest in the Co-Chair role. *This has been agreed and confirmed by the E&D Network.* **Complete**

Action: Write to the Vice-Chancellor to confirm the appointment by the Chair

965 – Chair's Business

Religious Inclusion/Interfaith report (Minute 952): The Chair reported that there had been a good discussion at UEB on the proposals, which were supported. No resources had been requested.

Action: Ask for UEB minutes extract for sharing by Secretary

Part 1

966 – Accessibility Audit Group

The Director of Estates Operations explained that during the 2019 Condition Survey of the estate the surveyors were asked to also undertake an access audit. He shared the outcome; a page per building with work on access ramps, signage etc. highlighted totalling £3.2 million. By law the results should be shared with disabled staff and students but despite presenting the results to several groups over the past two years he stated that no-one was taking the work forward. He asked for support with prioritising and asking for budget for the work. He also reminded members of the AccessAble (was DisabledGo) information on accessing buildings, which now included city centre buildings.

During discussion the following points were made:
- The Chair acknowledged that there were many competing priorities for budget;
- The SU was very supportive;
- A member from the previous Accessibility Audit Group commented that they had been given a budget which enabled prioritising;
- When buildings were refurbished using long-term maintenance funding access improvements could be incorporated;

The Committee agreed to support the need for works described by the access audit and take advice on how to proceed.

Action: Small group to take forward by Alex Butler, Stephen Godber, Joel Staley and Meg Crossman.

967 – University Gender Identity Policy – EDIC21/22-010

The HR Business Partner attended for this item to present the draft policy, explaining that a single policy had been drafted for both staff and students, drawing on good practice. The policy gave clear support for Gender Identity and a framework for operating; however, there were more than 180 University systems/software in which staff or student data was

stored so it was complex to make the required changes. Guidance was also provided on supporting staff transitioning and managing expectations.

During discussion the following points were covered:
- Not all systems were connected, and they had different refresh patterns; rigorous work was needed to identify where work was needed;
- Student safety was at risk hence this work should be a high-level priority; ideally the student would only have to mention the change once;
- The aspiration was for every department to examine their systems, policies and processes to allow the department head to understand where changes were needed;
- The SU were very supportive of the policy;
- There was a gender identity spectrum with around 750 students and 130 staff likely to not identify with a gender;
- It was suggested that information be included in staff and student induction.

The Committee <u>agreed to recommend</u> the University's Gender Identity Policy to UEB.

The Committee <u>noted</u> the considerations for implementing the Policy and requested feedback.

968 – Students' Union Top Ten

The Students' Union (SU) Community Officer talked of the SU Top Ten issue "Commit funding to projects which will provide more inclusive spaces on campus". She suggested that campus accessibility should be improved from the legal requirement to best practice but noted that funding was required for improvements. Culturally appropriate support was needed to increase inclusivity for the diverse student body; for example, a black hairdresser was planned.

Members made the following comments:
- The best use of the campus post-pandemic, re-imagining it to be more welcoming, was needed;
- Quiet spaces for some students, for example, those with neurodiverse needs, and spaces for groups of students to meet were required;
- Student opinions needed to be at the heart of discussions;
- An area of reflection (not a memorial garden) was also suggested.

The Committee <u>supported</u> the SU Top Ten issue.

969 – Equality & Diversity Network

The Co-Chair of the EDN said that the meeting held on 2 November had been very good. Issues discussed included:
1. CAF, and whether EDI issues had been fully considered in the guidelines being developed from it; EDI input had been requested late on.
   This led to a discussion on whether policy development generally rigorously considered EDI aspects and whether there was awareness of the needs of different groups. It was noted that policies needed to make positive pro-active progress.

Action: Consider capturing information on needs, perhaps via a survey of staff and students, by Alex Butler, Richard Brooks and Annie Willingham.

Some universities had collected good practice examples from the pandemic, and it was felt to be beneficial to draw on the experience; this was time sensitive.

Action: Have a conversation to identify good practices that developed due to the pandemic, to enable learning from the experience, by Alex Butler and Annie Willingham.

Action: To include outcome as part of feedback to the VC and Council after a year in post by Alex Butler.

2. That some non-EU members of staff were having their visas paid for by departments and some were not, which was discrimination.

Action: Visa payment for non-EU staff to be investigated by Richard Brooks and Lizzi Milligan.

970 – Leadership of Equality, Diversity and Inclusion – Paper EDC21/22-011

The Director of Human Resources introduced the paper explaining that, using the opportunity of senior team restructuring, investment was planned to deliver and embed EDI in the culture. There would be investment in a senior role and more staff based within Human Resources; UEB supported the proposals.

Discussion covered the following issues:
- Members were supportive but concerned about the tokenistic nature of the senior role; it was noted that several senior roles were part-time;
- It was noted that there were many white men dealing with EDI; diverse appointments would be aimed for;
- Improvement to the organogram were suggested to show EDI as a team;
- To date there had been two EDI posts and going forwards there would be a Vice-President (VP) (Community & Inclusion), five posts and an administrator; recruitment would start before Christmas, and it was anticipated that the VP role would be an internal appointment;
- The SU President commented that the structure appeared focussed on staff; student EDI would be within the new Student Policy and Safeguarding Team not Student Services;
- Suggested to include "passionate and inclusive leadership" in the job description.

Action: Shape the future structure to ensure student coverage by Alex Butler, Richard Brooks and Annie Willingham.

The Committee supported the proposals.

971– Draft Equality Objectives 2022-2025 – Paper EDC21/22-012

The Chair updated the Committee following UEB's consideration of the draft Equality Objectives; it had given broad agreement to the direction of travel. However, it was acknowledged that further development was needed and that the current objectives could continue for another year or so within the legal requirements. She commented that as she would only be in post for another few months it would be wise to leave finalising the Objectives to the new Vice-President.

Members were concerned about losing the forward momentum gained and suggested a smaller group to consider details.

Action: Small group to meet to discuss the Objectives to propose changes by Jane White, Joel Staley, Marion Harney & Aiste Zubiniene.

Action: EDIC discuss second level objectives in February by Secretary.

Part 2

972 – Black History Month 2021 Online Event – Paper EDIC21/22-013

The Committee <u>noted</u> feedback on the event held on 11 October 2021.

973 – Harassment Prevention Working Group – Paper EDIC/22-007 (A-B)

The Committee <u>noted</u> minutes of the meeting held on 15 September 2021.

974 – Programme of Meetings for 2021/22

The Committee <u>noted</u> the programme of meetings for remainder of the current academic year. All meetings on Thursday at 2.15pm:

- 10 February 2022
- 21 April 2022
- 9 June 2022

The meeting finished at 4.15pm.

Please contact the Governance Team If you require any further assistance regarding this meeting.