



Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Committee meeting

Thursday 9 June 2022 at 2.15pm

Virtual meeting via Teams

Present:

Rajani Naidoo, Vice-President (Community & Inclusion) - *Chair*

Richard Brooks, Director of Human Resources

Meg Crossman, SU Community Officer

Marion Harney, Athena SWAN Lead

Su McNab, Lay Member appointed by Council

Lizzi Milligan, Equality & Diversity Network (EDN) Co-Chair

Liz Simmons, Elected Staff Representative (Management, Specialist & Administration)

Joel Staley, Equality & Diversity Network (EDN) Co-Chair

Jane White, Elected Staff Representative (Education & Research)

Annie Willingham, SU President

Mandy Wilson-Garner, Member appointed by the Students' Union

In attendance:

Tim Ibell, Dean, Faculty of Engineering and Design

Abi Lyons, Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion)

Aiste Zubiniene, Equality & Diversity (E&D) Officer

Secretariat:

Fiona Blackmore, Secretary

Apologies:

Ben Davis, Elected Student Representative

Paula de la Torre Jimenez, Elected Student Representative

Gareth Eyles, Elected Staff Representative (Operational & Facilities Support)

Cassis Reis, Elected Staff Representative (Technical & Experimental)

Ania Zalewska, Member appointed by Senate

Introductory Items

986 - Welcome and Quorum

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and confirmed that a quorum was present.

987 - Declarations of Interest

No members had interests to declare.

988 – Minutes of the Previous Meeting - Paper EDIC21/22-19

EDIC considered the minutes of the meeting held on 28 April 2022 and approved them as a correct record of the meeting.

989 - Actions and Matters Arising – EDIC21/22-20

EDIC noted the full action log.

The Chair provided a verbal update on actions 14, 15 and 16 listed within the action log. Confirming that in discussion with the Head of Governance with regards to the review currently taking place around committees, their relationships to other committees and membership, the Chair was looking at how EDIC would fit into current and new initiatives. The Chair therefore proposed that once the work of the Governance Team was complete, a revised set of Terms of Reference would be circulated to EDIC via email for comment and a meeting would be convened if any significant issues were identified.

Action: Revised ToR taking account of feedback and work undertaken by the Governance Team to be circulated to EDIC via email for feedback with a meeting convened should any significant issues be raised.

EDIC noted that an update in relation to action 17 on the action log was provided under item 991 of the meeting.

990– Chair’s Business

EDIC noted a verbal update from the Chair which contained the following:

- The EDI support was growing with a newly appointed EDI Coordinator within HR who would be working closely with the Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) and the Equality & Diversity Officer. Additionally, a Student Inclusion and Culture Training Officer and a Student Policy Officer would be appointed within the Student Support and Safeguarding Team.
- EDI networks were being set up across the University such as the Disability Network. Next steps included looking to gain financial resources for EDI networks to lead on initiatives. The Chair agreed to provide a further update under Chair’s business at the next EDIC meeting.

Action: Chair to provide a verbal update under Chair’s business at the September meeting on progress with gaining financial resources for EDI networks across the University.

- UEB had approved the creation of a memorial garden with requests that the space was available to all individuals to come together and support one another. The garden would be open to those with all beliefs and would include a generic plaque to remember all those in the University community who had passed away. The Chair paid special thanks to Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion), the University Chaplain, The Estates Department and the Library for their work on this.
- The Chair reported that they had received a number of EDI concerns around the Climate Action Framework (CAF) policy and emphasised the importance of trying to reconcile EDI and CAF priorities to avoid any conflicts that may arise. For example, the Chair had tested the exemptions process under the Travel Policy related to CAF,

especially with regards to disability and noted difficulties. She had constructive discussions with the Head of Procurement and Purchasing and these issues were resolved.

- Council had agreed to form a pool of experts to draw on for appeals relating to student disciplinaries. Having a pool would provide more scope and will avoid exhausting the same people whilst also making it easier to provide and maintain training and consistency in the decision-making.

Part 1: Items for decision and/or discussion

991 – Accessibility Audit Update - Paper EDIC21/22-21

EDIC considered the priorities and recommendations relating to accessibility improvement works as set out in paper EDIC21/22-21 presented by a Co-Chair of EDN (Joel Staley).

EDIC thanked the Co-Chair of EDN for presenting the paper which they felt clearly set out plans and priorities of which they were supportive. However, concerns were raised around the budget presented in the paper and if this was enough to carry out the works, potentially becoming a limiting factor to its success.

The Dean of the Faculty of Engineering & Design suggested that the works proposed in the paper could be included within the University Long Term Maintenance Plan (LTM) which would then increase its urgency as well as the potential budget available. The Chair of EDIC and Co-Chair of EDN agreed to discuss the possibility of including the audit accessibility plan within the LTM with the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor.

Action: Chair of EDIC and Co-Chair of EDN to discuss including the audit accessibility plan within the University LTM with the Deputy-Vice-Chancellor and report back on progress at the September meeting.

992 – The Gender Identity Policy and Update on Implementation - Paper EDIC21/22-22

EDIC considered the verbal update provided by the Chair on the Gender Identity Policy and its implementation. The Chair made the following points:

- The policy had been supported by EDIC and approved by UEB and Council with it now being at implementation stage.
- The experience of other institutions in implementing a similar policy and conflict that had arisen as a result was noted as well as the CEO of UUK's recent involvement.
- Feedback had been received from certain groups already but there had not been any conflict which the University was keen to avoid as much as possible by being mindful of all the different groups the introduction of such a policy could have an impact upon.
- The Chair explained that implementation plans would include speaking with Heads of Department to discuss the policy, any changes to their processes and structure

that may be necessary and any concerns they may have. Following this, the policy will be published across the wider University.

Following the update, EDIC discussed the following points:

- EDIC queried how much evidence was available to indicate that implementation of the policy would be highly contested or perhaps concerns were being voiced by a minority. The suggestion was that this could be ascertained through conversations at the next Heads of Department meeting.
- EDIC agreed that it would be beneficial to implement the policy when momentum was healthy but asked what the University's response to questions that may arise would be and what EDIC could do to actively help with the implementation. The Chair confirmed that Jacqui Corduroy (HR Business Partner) had developed a guidance document on the different aspects of the policy and agreed to circulate to EDIC for feedback.

Action: Secretary to circulate guidance document on the Gender Identity Policy to EDIC asking for feedback.

993 – Statement of Equality Objectives and Annual Programme – EDIC21/22-23

EDIC considered an update on progress with the Statement of Equality Objectives and Annual Programme as set out in paper EDIC21/22-23 presented by the Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) adding that:

- A working group had been established and the scope expanded with the working group taking time to reflect on the University Strategy along with clear guidance from the Chair of EDIC. The working group was currently in the process of reshaping the objectives with a view to sharing a draft version with the Chair by end of June 2022.
- The original objectives document covered three themes (creating a fair, balanced and inclusive culture, creating inclusive institutional infrastructure and supporting future directions of EDI) which were built upon to include actions that were short-term and manageable but had long-term provision.
- The Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) agreed to circulate a draft version of the Statement of Equality Objectives and Annual Programme to EDIC when ready for input.

Action: Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) to circulate a draft version of the Statement of Equality Objectives and Annual Programme to EDIC once available asking for feedback.

994 – Equality Impact Statements – EDIC21/22-24

EDIC considered an update on progress with Equality Impact Assessments as set out in paper EDIC21/22-24 presented by the Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) adding that:

- Work was currently ongoing with the Equality & Diversity Officer around reflecting on best practice use of EIAs in this space with a view to producing simple guidance on when its appropriate to conduct an EIA and how with templates already under development.

- Discussions were underway with Faculties and their committees to try and embed EIAs within the community rather than taking a centralised approach.
- Work on carrying out EIAs would be completed by the end of June 2022 to present to the Staff Experience Board and shared with EDIC at the same time for implementation from the start of the 2022/23 academic year.

Action: Deputy Director (Culture & Inclusion) and Equality & Diversity Officer to provide an update on work undertaken around EIAs to EDIC once available.

Following the update, EDIC discussed the following points:

- EDIC agreed that the need to carry out EIAs should be embedded into the process of creating a new or revising an old policy to avoid it becoming a tick-box exercise and to ensure consistency. It was recognised that this would involve a cultural shift rather than centralising the process.
- However, EDIC also agreed that it didn't want any opportunities for learning or gaps to be lost by embedding it into localised processes.
- EDIC acknowledged that the reputation of EIAs would need improvement and to shift focus from just analysing the adverse impact but amplifying the positive impact new policies can bring too.
- EDIC suggested that EIAs could be linked to other University processes such as SDPR or Recognising Excellence to encourage their use.

995 – Equality & Diversity Network – EDIC21/22-25

EDIC considered an update on the May 2022 Equality & Diversity Network (EDN) as set out in paper EDIC21/22-25 presented by the Co-Chairs of EDN adding that:

- The link between EDN and EDIC was appreciated with changes being made and positive outcomes seen.
- With June being Pride month, Pride was taking place on campus on 10 June and with EDN having such a committed and enthusiastic base, it was positive to have that platform and share their experiences and as a Committee those strengths of membership could be utilised.

Part 2: Items for noting without discussion

996 – Harassment Prevention Working Group – EDIC21/22-26

EDIC noted the meeting notes from 17 May 2022.

997 – Access and Participation Plan Update - EDIC21/22-27

EDIC noted an update on the Access and Participation Plan Update as set out in paper EDIC21/22-27 presented by the Head of Widening Participation as part of their engagement with stakeholders and other governing bodies before the final plan is agreed by UEB, Senate and Council.

The EDIC noted the University's good work with regards to widening participation but agreed that more could be done to engage with all students and not just the gold scholars once they have started at the University.

EDIC agreed that regular updates from the Head of Widening Participation on progress with the plan would be useful and suggested this as a regular agenda item.

Action: Secretary to add 'Update on the Access and Participation Plan' as a regular item within EDIC's programme of work for meetings.

998 – Programme of Meetings for 2022/23

EDIC noted the programme of meetings for the 2022/23 academic year.

In response to a query raised at the April meeting around meeting arrangements, it was agreed that a short survey should be circulated to gather views on arrangements for the 2022/23 programme of meetings to see where any suggested amendments could be made to encourage inclusivity.

Action: Secretary to circulate a short online survey to gather feedback on future meeting arrangements and discuss areas where changes could be made with the Chair.

999 – Any Other Business

EDIC noted that it was the last meeting for Annie Willingham (SU President) and Meg Crossman (SU Community Officer) and thanked them for their hard work and valuable contribution in supporting EDI across the University during their time in the role as well as wishing them the very best for the future.

No further business was discussed.

The meeting finished at 3.48pm.

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