

**UNITE NEGOTIATING COMMITTEE (JNC)**

Minutes of the meeting held 14 October 2019.

**PRESENT**

Richard Young (UNITE), Paul Agnew (UNITE), Gareth Scott (UNITE), Paul Davidson (People & Culture), Kelly McBride (People & Culture), Christine Irwin (People & Culture)

**APOLOGIES**

Craig Shilliday, Rhonda Black, John Mulholland, Judith Hough (UNITE)

**IN ATTENDANCE**

Rhona Reid (People & Culture)

Mr Davidson opened the meeting and welcomed all.

**MINUTES OF MEETING HELD 29 May 2019.**

The minutes of the meeting were approved. It was agreed to amend minute 19.12, final paragraph and change the wording from 'the unions' to 'UNITE'.  
(Refer to action 1)

**19.16 MATTERS ARISING**

- a. Minute no. 19.14(i) **Facilities time:** Mr Davidson advised that the offer to backfill a UNITE trade union representatives post(s), on a part-time basis, was still on the table.

Mr Young queried why the backfill offer was for part time only, when UCU and UNITE conducted the same work, regardless of membership numbers. Mr Davidson pointed toward the difference in case load that goes with greater membership numbers.

Mr Davidson confirmed that the offer didn't alter University adherence to regulations regarding time-off for union activity and that it was not management who would decide which UNITE rep was backfilled.

Mr Young confirmed that UNITE would like to avail of the offer and will respond formally in writing with details on how the post is to be allocated.  
(Refer to action 2)

- b. Minute no. 19.14(ii) **Trade Union Rooms:** Mrs McBride advised that Mr Davidson had raised this matter at the last GBD meeting. Mr Davidson confirmed that he had raised to Mr Shane Fitzpatrick, Director of the Strategic Programme Office (Belfast Vision), the need for good quality rooms in a prominent location with appropriate lockers, for trade union use, on each campus.

Mrs McBride took an action to speak with Karise Hutchinson, Provost (Coleraine) about room size and computer access, for the Coleraine room and to speak with Mr Billy Scampton, Technician - Video Production, about a room at the Magee Campus. The meeting accepted that each Union needed separate pc facilities. Mr Scott stated that access to room booking, for UNITE, was required. Mrs McBride took an action to speak with Professor Raffaella Folli, Provost (Belfast) about a notice board on the Belfast Campus. (Refer to action 2)

### **19.17 GBD.**

Mr Davidson advised that it is timely to begin to open a conversation with the trade unions around how to engage with staff and trade unions about the move to the new Belfast campus. Mr Davidson proposed a suggested framework for discussion, to cover 1. Policy issues. 2. Transport (including hours of work; flexi-work and homeworking). 3. Individual cases.

Mr Young confirmed that UNITE were keen to meet to discuss the move and advised that some staff were concerned that there would be less space in Belfast. Mr Davidson acknowledged that the footprint in Belfast, is different and that People and Culture planned to create platforms on which to engage with all stakeholders.

The additional workload that the GBD project will place on the Trade Unions was acknowledged and it was noted that for Pan University policy Unite would be consulted in line with normal processes and that there was potential for an increase in for Individual cases.

Mr Agnew queried common clustering in the Belfast Campus and Mr Davidson advised that GBD are looking at test fits. In addition, Mr Davidson advised that there would be no severance schemes in place for the move to Belfast as it approximately 6 miles from Jordanstown.

Mr Mulholland expressed concerns over a recent correspondence with DWU staff in relation to a possible re-organisation. Mr Davidson advised that at some point, closer to the time of the move to Belfast, there will be a need to undertake a review off DWU. Mr Davidson provided assures that any review would be in line with the requirements of the Organisational Change Policy. Mr Scott requested a communication to this effect, Mr Davidson agreed to this request. (Refer to action no 3)

Mr Young said that 'parking' remained one of the biggest concern for staff. Mrs McBride said that she and Mr Agnew (Unite representative) had attended a recent Car Parking Strategy Workshop and advised that there are approximately 350 spaces in Belfast, 193 bike spaces, 18 disabled and 7 car charging spaces.

### **19.18 GRADE 6 STAFF– HOURS OF WORK.**

Mr Davidson advised the Committee that a meeting had taken place with Unite to discuss a move to 35 hours for all Grade 6 staff. The Committee noted that Unite had accepted the offer to harmonise all Grade 6 staff to 35 hours per week.

Following discussions it was agreed that Mr Davidson would investigate and respond to queries raised by Unite in relation to a small number of individual cases.

(Refer to action 4).

Whilst the move to a 35 hour week for all grade 6 staff was welcomed Mr Young stated that UNITE's position remained that all staff regardless of Grade should be harmonised to 35 hours. It was noted that this formed part of the on-going negotiations on Pay and Grading taking place at a National level.

### **19.19 PS5 & 50 UPDATE**

Mr Davidson provided an update on PS5&50 as follows:

- **ISD:** It was noted that all Grade 9 posts have been filled. Currently in the process of completing Job evaluations and Job Descriptions for remaining posts in structure - this work is nearly complete.  
It was also noted that on 1st November 2019 first stage consultation opens and 15 November 2019, the 2nd stage. Affected staff are invited to attend a session which will be run a number of times in the same day at the same times, cross-campus.  
Mr Davidson said that P&C would invite UNITE to a meeting later this week to discuss the ISD in more detail.
- Campus Life is completed
- Finance are still at the formulating ideas, best practice and research stage.
- Student Admin have made a request to SLT to review structures and are awaiting response.

Mr Young raised concerns over a number of technical posts within FIRECERT, in particular, that vacant posts were not being filled. It was agreed that this query should be passed to the relevant People Partner for the area to respond.

(Refer to action no 5)

## **19.20 UPDATE ON HEALTH SCIENCES**

It was noted that a meeting took place with both Unite and UCU on the 23 September to discuss an impact assessment on the future location of the School of Health Science.

Mr Davidson advised that a staff briefing on the OSC policy took place following the trade union meeting on the 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019. Mr Young apologised that UNITE was unable to attend. It was noted that the staff briefing had been very well received.

Mrs McBride advised an e-townhall meeting is due to take place on 18<sup>th</sup> October 2019. It was noted that both Unite and UCU had been invited to attend.

## **19.21 PRE-RETIREMENT SEMINARS / INFORMATION SESSIONS**

Mr Young suggested that the University hold retirement seminars/ information sessions which could provide staff with information about retirement on an individual level, to include phasing retirement as well as financial advice. It was also suggested that external organisations could also attend for example Age Concern and the Men's Shed.

It was agreed that this would support the Universities 'Wellbeing' strategy and that Alastair Smith, Section Leader, Employee Wellbeing would be asked to consider this suggestion.

(Refer to action no 7)

## **19.22 UPDATE ON THE ER WEB PAGE**

Mrs McBride advised that the newly created trade union information web page, which will be hosted on the People and Culture site, was the forum going forward for publishing minutes of JNCs and JUCNC's. It was noted that all staff will have access to this information. It was agreed that minutes would be circulated following JNC / JUCNC's, for initial sign off for publishing to the web page. The minutes on the web page would remain as 'draft' until confirmed at the next meeting.

It was also noted that Unite had agreed the web page content as created by the Employee Relations team.

(Refer to action no 8)

### **19.23 TRADE UNION INFORMATION AVAILABLE ON THE PORTAL AND AT STAFF INDUCTION**

Mr Young asked that the trade union web page be linked to the staff portal and be accessed via a 'tile' on the portal front page.  
(Refer to action no 9)

### **19.24 ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **(i) IPADs / Planon App**

Mr Scott queried the process was for having a role re-evaluated through the HERA system. Mr Davidson advised that if a significant or substantive change was demonstrated, an evaluation could be requested by contacting People and Culture.

Meeting Closed. (Duration 1 hour 15 minutes)