

## EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE



### Minutes of the meeting held on 1 March 2016

- Present:** Pro Vice Chancellor (Academic) (Professor Neil Ward) (in the Chair), Dean of Faculty of Social Sciences (Professor Jacqueline Collier), Dean of Faculty of Science (Professor Philip Gilmartin), Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Health Sciences (Professor Dylan Edwards), Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities (Professor Yvonne Tasker), Acting Dean of Students (Ms J. Amos), Director of Estates (Mr Roger Bond), Director of Human Resources (Ms Cecile Piper), Director of Information Services (Mr Jonathan Colam-French), Head of Strategic Marketing (Mr Giles Whattam), Head of Staff and Educational Development (Ms Amanda Giles), Trade Union Representative (Dr Susan Sayce)
- With:** Head of Equality and Diversity (Ms Helen Murdoch), Equality and Diversity Project Officer (Mr Matthew Gooch)
- Apologies:** Human Resources Manager (Mrs Santha Forder)

#### 14. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

None

#### 15. MINUTES

##### **Confirmed**

the minutes of the meeting held on 9 November 2015.

##### **Agreed**

All actions from the meeting on 9 November 2015 completed except:

The Annual Equality Report to UEA Council to be approved by this committee at the meeting on 10 May 2016. **ACTION: HM**

The findings of the UEA Staff Counselling Services Report presented at the meeting on 9 November 2015 to be raised at other key UEA meetings. **ACTION: JA/JC**

Review current arrangements for external counselling for DOS staff with the aim of re-establishing a central budget. **ACTION: JA/JC**

Ensure Campus Users are consulted when Access Audits are completed by the external consultants Andrew Lord Associates. **ACTION: RB**

EIA required on training for staff in relation to the Prevent agenda to ensure the UEA is equality and diversity compliant **ACTION: HM**

16. **ATHENA SWAN UPDATE**

**Considered**

the report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC15D009)

(The current position and forecast on Athena SWAN was presented along with an update on the institutions position with the ECU Subscription Model. In addition, reports from the Athena SWAN Eastern Regional meeting hosted by UEA and the UEA Athena SWAN Central Steering Group were made. The Equality and Diversity Office had continued to support the ECU with Athena SWAN Assessment Panels with additional responsibility for the current November round by acting as Panel Chairs and completing the relevant ECU training. A brief overview of the Faculty of Science Athena SWAN Project Co-ordinator role was provided **(MG)**.

The new Faculty of Science Athena SWAN Project Co-ordinator was derived from two drivers; the increase in academic workload; to avoid duplication of similar actions across all the Faculty schools **(PG)**.

HUM has until this point been unable to engage with Athena SWAN so considering this new post will not increase capacity in the central resource moving forward should we not be considering additional central resource which can support the other faculties **(YT)**. )

17. **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY STRATEGY – WORKING GROUP INTERIM REPORT**

**Considered**

the report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC15D010)

(A few meetings of the Equality and Diversity Strategy Working Group had taken place which had proved productive. It was recognised that Athena SWAN is important to the institution and schools but was mainly focussed on gender and was a dominant resource which should not increase from current levels. The interim report provides the current gaps with the remaining protected characteristics and sets these out in order of priority **(YT)**.

Race/Ethnicity was highlighted as the major gap with nothing specifically which had been done compared to the rest of the characteristics. The overarching areas in the interim report cover all characteristics **(HM)**.

An overview of the ECU Race Equality Charter was provided with an indication that if the institution wished to engage with this charter this would require considerable resource and planning and should be considered at this stage **(MG)**.

Training for Estates and Catering staff would be very welcome and supported if this could be considered in future planning for training provision **(RB)**.

Unconscious Bias training for students would be a positive move particularly with international students and is something which should be considered **(YT)**.

Dean of Students Office would be keen to develop and support an Unconscious Bias module for students **(JA)**.

It was clear that the committee were supportive of developing an Unconscious Bias module for students and this is something which we should keep on the agenda to develop in future **(NW)**.

Dignity and respect is an area all Unions were keen to support and contribute towards as required **(SS)**.

The Equality and Diversity Committee in the present format did not have representatives covering the various protected characteristics as it was noted that 50% of ET combined with Senior Managers from ETR were in attendance. The membership of the committee was an area for further thought **(NW/JC)**.

It was important that the views of all characteristics were taken into account **(SS)**.

This needed to be balanced as this committee could become quite large **(CP)**.

We needed to consider the effectiveness of the committee but we could dedicate one committee meeting per year to invite representatives from the various networks including Access for All and Staff Pride **(YT)**.

Concerns were expressed about Ramadan, particularly in 2018 **(NW)**.

**Agreed**

Final report with recommendations and resource implications to be presented to the meeting on 10 May 2016 with links to the Corporate Plan.  
**ACTION: HM**

Investigate within the sector the implications for Ramadan and how this is being addressed.  
**ACTION: JA**

**18. UNION HOUSE ACCESSIBILITY**

**Considered**

the report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC15D011)

(The current position is that a Project Board Meeting has been arranged to deal with the internal issues at Union House to include the provision of accessible toilets and an interim lift to access the top floor. However, the external lift by Music would be parked as this will be incorporated into the Lasdan Wall Project. This paper was presented to the committee to raise awareness and receive an oral report **(RB)**).

The report provided a different view to the oral report and therefore it was important to understand whether lifts are checked before major events (i.e. Open Days); how are Project Boards populated to ensure that they have the appropriate representatives; how can we ensure that new builds and refurbishments are taking accessibility into account **(NW)**, endorsed by **(JC)**.

The Design Principles are expected to be signed off after Easter, but a draft version is already in use and has received comments and input from the Access All Areas Group. The Design Principles are seen as what would be expected when new builds and refurbishments are undertaken. Lifts are routinely checked but there have been issues with the lift contractors **(RB)**.

The Lasdan Wall Project will take considerable investment from the institution and therefore it would seem appropriate for this committee to be briefed on the 15 year plan for this project **(AG)**, endorsed by **(NW)**.

It was important that the author of the paper be advised that this committee has discussed this matter in depth but cannot support this **(JC)**.)

**Agreed**

the author of the paper to be given a verbal report of this committee and that the Lasdan Wall Project briefing be included on the agenda for a future meeting.

**ACTION: RB**

**19. ANNUAL STAFF PROFILE REPORT**

**Considered**

the report. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC15D012).

(Key headlines from this report indicate no change in terms of age; a positive increase in staff feeling they are able to declare their disability as shown by the year on year reduction in those refusing to provide the information. Ethnicity has seen an increase in the percentage of staff refusing to provide their ethnicity, although it is recognised that with the introduction of the employee self-serve this could be promoted to make improvements. Religion and Belief and Sexual Orientation were showing positive effects with the numbers of unknown or prefer not to say reducing. The final version of this report would be presented at the meeting on 10 May 2016 **(HM)**).

Concerns were expressed that the numbers for ET appear to be incorrect and that it would be useful for the data to show numbers and percentages **(JC)**.

The inclusion of ETR and ETA would also be useful **(CP)**.)

**Agreed**

the revised Annual Staff Profile Report to be presented at the next meeting on 10 May 2016.

**ACTION: HM**

**20. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

**Reported**

that the next meeting of the Equality and Diversity Committee meeting would be held on 10 May 2016.