

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE



Minutes of the meeting held on 29 November 2011

Present: Professor T. Ward (PVC Academic) (in the Chair), Dr A Grant (Dean of Students), Mrs C Piper (Director of Human Resources), Mr R Bond (Director of Estates and Buildings), Mr P Levy (Head of Staff and Educational Development), Professor P. Gilmartin (Executive Dean of Faculty of Science), Professor Ian Harvey (Executive Dean of Faculty of Medicine and Health), Professor D. Peters Corbett (Executive Dean of Faculty of Arts and Humanities), Ms S Connolly (Senior Lecturer (Faculty of Social Sciences)), Mr J Colam-French (Director of Information Services), Ms L McGillivray (Independent Member of Council), Mrs S Forder (Human Resources Manager), Ms J Abson (Disability Co-Ordinator, DoS) and Ms T Ross** the Community & Student Rights officer of the Union of UEA Students except for business marked **.

With: Ms H Murdoch (Head of Equality & Diversity and CRB), Ms R Broadway (Assistant Manager, Equality and Diversity and CRB), Ms E Towner (Director of Continuing Education)

Apologies: Mrs S Gook (Head of Marketing and Communications Services), Ms A Lucchesi (Trade Union Representative),

1. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

The Chair welcomed Rhianna Broadway to the meeting and the role of Assistant Manager, Equality, Diversity and CRB.

2. MINUTES

Confirmed

the minutes of the meeting held on 7 June 2011. An amendment to Jane Abson's title is noted – this should read Disability Co-Ordinator (DOS).

3. REVIEW OF THE TERMS OF REFERENCE

Considered

the current membership and terms of reference. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D009)

In discussion it was noted that:

- continuity and knowledge of the Committee is desirable
- that there should be presence from Directors of University Services (DUSs) as well as Deans
- It's not feasible to have presence from all four Deans and all four DUSs

Agreed that the Equality and Diversity Manager contact all Deans and DUSs and ask them to nominate two people from each post to be permanent representatives of each position on the Committee.

ACTION : HM

Terms of Reference were also discussed and in particular point 3b which tasks the Committee with:

monitoring the requirement that the institution is operating equitably.

External responsibilities in this respect were discussed, with particular reference to procurement. It was felt that currently this aspect was covered legally by Finance and that a report from Finance could be requested at a future meeting. (**Secretary to note**).

The Annual Statistical Report was discussed as a key means of monitoring equitable access, success and achievement levels by different groups. It was noted that there is a wider vision in terms of development of this management information and this is becoming, or planned to become, a reality over time. It was agreed that content of this would be discussed in the next Equality Committee meeting.

It was agreed that mapping of the institutions activities, domains, the relevance of equality and subsequent relevant requirements would be extremely useful and could then be appended as an Annex to the Terms of Reference.

ACTION: HM

4. ATHENA SWAN MEMBERSHIP

Received

a paper reporting on the membership of AthenaSwan and initiating discussions on next steps. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D001)

It was noted that failure to achieve a Silver Award within AthenaSwan poses a high risk, rather than medium as stated in the paper.

The Committee agreed to establish a Steering Group to co-ordinate work effectively and efficiently to achieve the aims required for the awards.

It was agreed that Tom Ward will Chair the Steering Group. Membership will be nominated from within Schools. The Head of Norwich Medical School was specifically nominated as this area is most likely to be affected by achievement of the awards. The Deputy Associate Dean for Research was nominated and seen as a vital member of the Group.

A member of Human Resources will be nominated to attend.

ACTION: CP-B

Sara Connolly was specifically nominated to attend due to her experience and research in this area.

The Deans of Faculty for Science and Health are to nominate participants and representation from ResNet is still to be nominated. The Secretary to the Committee is to email a request for nominations for membership.

ACTION: HM

It was also agreed that the Equality and Diversity Office set up and maintain a web page and blackboard site specific to AthenaSwan to help effectively co-ordinate activity.

ACTION: HM

5. EQUALITY ACT 2010

Received

a paper providing an update on Equality Act 2010 and outlining new specific duties with recommendations on their fulfilment. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D002)

(The specific duties were highlighted as most recent changes, introducing new legal requirements to the University. To support the requirement to publish information to evidence how the institution works on equality issues across the campus, the Head of Equality and Diversity requested one person in each School and Service area be nominated to send a set of bullet points outlining work on equality that has taken place in their area. It

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was reported that Norwich City Council use impact assessment to evidence this work and agreed that UEA can also incorporate its EIAs.

An email is to be sent to request contact details for those nominated.)

ACTION: HM/Heads

6. GENDER

Received

an oral report on the Talent, Leadership and Contribution Project.

(It was noted that the final stage of the project has been delayed recently by the impact of restructuring however, the focus groups and individual interviews will be undertaken and outcomes discussed and agreed with the aim of meeting the deadline of the end of the first quarter 2012. The outcomes will dovetail with work on the AthenaSwan awards. Work with Estates is to be initiated as this group of staff did not participate in the original survey. The work will be carried forward by those on the core working group.)

ACTION: HM

7. EQUAL PAY REVIEW

Received

a confidential paper detailing the latest Equal Pay Review. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D003). This is the fifth equal pay audit carried out by Human Resources and the Committee noted the report contains a great deal of valuable data and information. It was noted that the pay gap at UEA for those staff covered within the report (Grades 1 – 10) is now 10.1% compared to 15.5% which is the national average and that only one group of staff at Grade 4 had a gender pay gap greater than 5% (due to a shift allowance). It was noted this national average covers all sectors and it was suggested that an average for the HE sector be included for more specific comparison. For clarification, it was also suggested that an appendix explaining staff groups within the grades covered by the report be included.

It was noted that there was no pay gap for either disabled or BAME staff at UEA in the grades covered by the report.

Human Resources have worked consistently to achieve greater awareness through training to ensure distortions in salaries do not occur when staff are recruited or promoted and it was noted that HERA has contributed to the implementation of a robust salary structure.

It was further noted that the analysis of individual salaries is not included in this report and it was suggested that further analysis be carried out. A further report was requested to cover this group of staff.

ACTION: CP-B

8. DISABLED STAFF SUPPORT

Received

a short paper suggesting areas for review in supporting disabled staff working at UEA. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D004)

(The Head of Equality, Diversity and CRB qualified the submitted paper, subsequent to discussion with the Human Resources Manager, and emphasised the purpose is to look at whether the current process can be amended or improved based on feedback received over time from some disabled staff. There is no implication of lack of expertise or professionalism in the Human Resources Division. It was also explained and noted that there is no insistence that staff approach their Line Manager or use Occupational Health (see page 5) and that each case is assessed on its merits.

The Disability Co-Ordinator (for students) stated that some staff came to her to discuss possible assistance and she signposted them to HR. She stated staff could however feel nervous of approaching Human Resources and there was nothing on the web site to indicate where to find help. The Dean of Students noted the psychology of the issue is key in encouraging staff to feel they can seek support.

It was noted Norwich City Council use an Independent Employee Assistance Scheme which works as an independent third-party route for staff to explain concerns, explore options and where the third party signposts the staff back to internal resources and routes as well as supplying Council management with data about number and nature of contacts (non-attributed).

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It was explained that the University offers support to staff through both Occupational Health and the Counselling Service which produces an annual report on number and nature of contacts.

It was noted by the Dean of the Faculty of Health that none of the actions or recommendations were costed.

The Chair suggested that the issue be further explored by E&D/HR and recommendations be developed and costed in a further paper.

ACTION: HM/SF

It was noted that the Mental Health Team in the Dean of Students office recently received a certificate recognising their achievements in training a wide range of staff in Mental Health First Aid. Two more courses have been funded and arranged in conjunction with CSED.)

9. EQUALITY CHAMPIONS NETWORK

Received

a short paper initiating discussion to determine the value and appropriate mechanisms of a network of equality representatives. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D005)

(It was noted that there is some confusion about the existing Disability Liaison Officers which have been established in (most) Schools. These roles exist to support disabled students and ease the facilitation of reasonable adjustments, liaising with the Disability Co-Ordinator. They do not, however, form a network of Equality representatives disseminating information and initiating action across the full range of protected characteristics.

It was noted that:

If a network of equality champions were established it would be vital to encourage participation from staff in underrepresented groups since existing networks at UEA do not cover the full range of protected characteristics (there is, for example, no network for BAME staff);

The Carbon Crew model does not work in every respect for a potential equality network model as the people recruited are not key influencers;

Resource, capacity and continual effort are needed to ensure a network succeeds – the Carbon Crew equates to a full time job for one person.

Different network models were considered by the Committee. It was reported by the Disability Co-Ordinator that at her previous HE employer the network was focussed on Impact Assessment but as understanding of equality throughout the network was varied there was a requirement to commit to thorough training and refresher training for a networks participants.

Consideration was given to conflating this initiative with the Athena Swan Steering Group but that initiative is very focussed on one characteristic and very time critical in terms of goals to achieve. Therefore it was agreed to keep the two issues separate and that as the Athena Swan initiative is more pressing the Equality Champions initiative could be revisited at a later date.

It was suggested requirements for a network be mapped with the overall goals and strategy of the University in respect of equality looking at what problems are being addressed and whether a network of champions does in fact provide an effective and resource efficient answer.

ACTION: HM

10. ANNUAL REVIEW STATISTICS 2011

Received

a confidential report prepared for the Trade Unions (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D006)

11. DATES OF MEETINGS IN 2011/2012

Reported

that the future dates of the Equality and Diversity Committee had been set as:

Tuesday 21 February 2012 – 9.30am
Thursday 10 May 2012 – 9.30am

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12. MEMBERSHIP OF THE COMMITTEE

Received

the membership of the Committee. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D007)

13. RESERVED AREAS OF BUSINESS AND CONFIDENTIALITY

Received

the reserved areas of business and confidentiality. (A copy is filed in the Minute Book, ref. EDC11D008)