

STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY



Minutes of the meeting held on 6 May 2014

Present: Mr K. Harper (Chair), Dr T. Southon, Mr R. Delahaye and Dr L. Marsden.

Apologies: Ms C. Richards

With: The Director of Planning (Mr I. Callaghan).

1. MINUTES

Confirmed
the Minutes of the meeting held on 1 May 2013.

2. STATEMENTS BY THE CHAIR

3. MEMBERSHIP OF THE STANDING COMMITTEE OF THE ASSEMBLY 2013/2014

Reported

(1) that the membership of the Standing Committee of the Assembly was:

Ex-officio – VC & PVC's

Members elected by the Assembly:

Mr R. Delahaye (2014)
Mr K. Harper (2016) (Chair)
Dr L. Marsden (2014)
Ms C. Richards (2014)
Dr T. Southon (2014)

+ 3 vacancies

(2) that the membership of the Standing Committee of the Assembly provides for 8 members elected by the Assembly;

(3) that nominations have been invited for the three vacancies and the four positions that will arise following terms of office ending on 31 July 2014;

(4) that nominations received are listed below:

Ms Lucie Dack (FMH-LS) (S&C)
Ms Natasha Gales (SCI) (S&C)
Ms Claudina Richards (LAW) (ATR)

During the meeting a nomination form for Mr R. Delahaye was received.

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- (5) As a result no election is necessary and the four have been declared members of the Standing Committee of the Assembly, 1 August 2014 - 31 July 2017:

Ms Lucie Dack (FMH-LS) (S&C)
Mr Richard Delahaye (REN) (S&C)
Ms Natasha Gales (SCI) (S&C)
Ms Claudina Richards (LAW) (ATR)

- (6) for 2014/15 there would therefore be 5 members and 3 vacancies.

Minutes note:

Subsequent to the SCOTA agenda being issued a nomination form was received in respect of Mr Richard Delahaye as described in (4) above. At the Assembly meeting Amanda Williams was nominated, seconded by Susan Sayce. There being no objections and no other nominations both Richard Delahaye and Amanda Williams were elected to serve on the Standing Committee of the Assembly for the period 1 August 2014 to 31 July 2017.

This results in there being six members and two vacancies for the year 2014/15.

4. ASSEMBLY AGENDA ITEMS THAT HAVE BEEN PROPOSED

To consider the items which have been submitted and to identify their status as motions or questions.

From Antje Kreutzmann-Gallasch (NBS)

Given the UEA nursery have lost early years funding and the current fee structure lacks transparency, is it not time for UEA to revise the nursery business model involving parents directly in the management of such revision and working with Norfolk County Council to enable reinstatement of the early years funding? Such revision should consider increasing the transparency of the fee structure, assess access for all potential users (e.g. how many students have children at the nursery?), and address Athena swan type issues such as having extended opening hours e.g. 8am-6pm so working parents have greater flexibility.

From Katy Quigley (LTS – UEA Unison Equalities Officer)

Can the University please justify the inequality demonstrated within their car park charging policy, and outline the details of any equality impact assessments undertaken prior to implementing these charges.

From Prof Alan Finlayson (PSI)

"In the most recent QS World Rankings of Universities nine subject areas at UEA were ranked within the top 200: Biological Sciences, Communication and Media Studies, Earth and Marine Sciences, Economics and Econometrics, English Language and Literature, Environmental Studies, Geography, Medicine and Politics.

This is an impressive achievement. The breakdown of the figures indicates just how impressive it is. For instance, the QS rankings show that Politics research at UEA receives more citations per paper than Politics research at Stanford and Yale; Media and Communications research at UEA has more citations per paper than at Yale; Earth and Marine Sciences research at UEA receives more citations per paper than Yale, University of Pennsylvania, UCLA and Oxford. Environmental Studies at UEA has a higher rate of citations per paper than UC Berkeley – ranked first for this subject area. The situation is similar all the UEA subject areas in the top 200 (and quite possibly for subject areas that fall just outside that top 200).

Yet in all these cases these subject areas fall far lower in the rankings than the data on their academic achievement would suggest. This is because, although scores indicating the quality and influence of our research are very high, our scores for "Academic Reputation" and "Employer Reputation" are miserable.

For instance, Media and Communications at UEA is held back by an employer reputation score of just 40.3. Economics and Econometrics scores very highly in citations but is let down by an employer reputation of just 39.5. Environmental studies has incredible citations scores (94) and a truly world class academic reputation (84.5) but its employer reputation is just 50.2. This figure undoubtedly keeps ENV out of the

world top 10 (perhaps even from the number 1 spot). Geography has an employer reputation of 48.10 despite a rate of 97.8 for citations. In Politics a citations ranking that merits a top 20 position is held back by an employer reputation score of just 33.3. In short, the evidence shows that the attainment of academic researchers at UEA is being let down by a failure on the part of the profession as a whole to recognize that UEA is a centre of world-class research. This is a matter that cannot be addressed by subject areas. It is an institutional problem.

The following questions thus arise:

What discussions have the Executive Team had about this problem? What do members of the Executive Team think is the cause of this problem?

What has the Executive Team done to identify clearly the causes of this problem?

What plans are being developed to remedy this problem?

How does the Executive Team plan to assist subject areas in improving their academic reputation amongst their peers?

From Chris Hall (SSF) supported by Shaun Gibbs (SSF)

We understand that due to financial constraints, UEA has not been able offer more than a 1% pay rise to staff in recent years. However, to compensate for this can serious consideration be given to granting all staff a 60 minute lunch break instead of the current 45 minutes. This would then give staff sufficient time to use the Sports Park if they wanted to or pop into Norwich on occasions. The Sports Park have questioned why more staff don't use their facilities over the lunch period and the simple answer is that staff can't fit it into 45 minutes, especially if they work at the far end of Campus and have a long walk to get there and back again.

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From Dr Spyros Themelis (EDU)

A UCU study published in 2013 based on a sample of 14.000 university workers, revealed very high and increasing stress levels among academics, underpinned by heavy workloads, a long hours culture and conflicting management demands. It also stated that academics experience higher stress than those in the wider population.

Assembly calls upon the university management to take active measures to monitor and protect the mental health of all UEA employees and to work towards the promotion of a working environment with low stress levels.

5. ANY OTHER ITEMS

Subject to confirmation