

**Notes of meeting no 9 of the special, combined JNC held on Friday 24 April 2020**

**Present (virtually)**: Stephen Shute, Pro Vice Chancellor, (Planning and Resources) (SS); Tim Westlake, Chief Operating Officer (TW); Peter Brook, Interim Director of HR (PBr); John Hallam, Interim Assistant Director of HR (ER) (JH); Andrew Chitty (UCU) (AC); Joanne Paul (UCU) (JP); Michael Moran, Regional Officer, UCU (MM); Paula Burr (UNITE) (PB); Daniel Hyndman (UNITE) (DH); Claire Colburn (UNISON) (ClCol); Holly Foster (UNISON); ); Caroline Fife, (UNISON) (CF).

**Apologies**: Adam Tickell; Chris Chatwin; Alan Mayers.

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| 1/9 | **Notes of the previous meeting (no 8, 170420)**  These were agreed as a correct record subject to further written comments to be submitted by UCU. | UCU |
| 2/9 | **VC Update**  SS said there had not been much change since the last meeting. It was becoming clear that social distancing might continue for a long time. This would present challenges to the educational and learning objectives of the University. It seemed likely the future of some Universities could be at risk longer term. Despite lobbying by UUK, there were no indications yet that the Treasury was willing to underwrite any of the losses being incurred by the sector due to loss of income from accommodation and also international students. TW noted that the University of Manchester was anticipating losses of income of between £150m and £270m for 20/21. In such an environment, mergers might have to occur. It was therefore important to look at different possibilities and options for the future.  AC argued it was not viable for the Government to allow some Universities to fail or face bankruptcy. He did not consider this to be inevitable and noted that Gavin Williamson, Education Secretary, was lobbying the Treasury. MM said that UCU would be happy to join in common cause with the University to lobby the Treasury. SS thanked MM for this offer. However, SS noted that the Treasury view of UUK’s lobbying to date appeared to be ‘sceptical.’  AC also said that the unions had now prepared a fully developed set of objections to the new FRGs that would be published to members shortly and which would be the basis of a campaign. AC agreed to circulate a copy of this to the management side. AC welcomed the suggestion in the VC’s recent update to staff that the HE sector appeared to be setting aside ‘competition’ for ‘collaboration.’ SS said the Government probably would be looking to achieve a balance which retained student choice alongside an effectively managed sector, avoiding unfettered competition. | AC |

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| 3/9 | **Voluntary Severance Scheme (VS)**  SS reported that further meetings of the VS sub-group had been held. Design principles had been shared and discussed. A draft VS scheme had also been circulated, based on those design principles. This would be brought to the JNC for approval shortly. The sub-group was making good progress. It was intended to launch the VS scheme in May 2020. | PBr |
| 4/9 | **Government Job Retention (JRS – Furlough) Scheme**  JP reiterated concerns about the wording of aspects of the HR FAQs on covid. It was noted these had recently been updated. JP said she would review these further. It was suggested all FAQs should have a ‘date last updated’ reference on them. This was agreed.  PBr said that Government guidance on the JRS had been complicated by new guidance which made it clear that any cases submitted would be subject to a ‘public funds’ audit test (i.e. where roles were publicly funded, they would not meet the furlough criteria). HE funding streams were complex. HR had initially identified with managers around 230 permanent roles that might be ‘furloughed.’ There were also a number of possible casual roles – not yet fully quantified. HRBPs had been working to identify staff with managers using a set of criteria. These were now being tested against the principle that cases could only be submitted if the role was not publicly funded. TW said it was important that the University submitted bids which were accurate and in the spirit of the furlough scheme. He would be taking a paper to UEG next Wednesday. The intention was a submission would be made by 30/4 via the Government’s portal. PBr said he hoped the joint trade unions would support the University’s bids. SS said this was a work in progress and would almost certainly include staff with caring responsibilities – where they met the other scheme criteria. AC said that the unions were supportive of furloughing staff, subject to the concerns identified by JP being addressed. He asked if the criteria being used by HRBPs could be shared? JP said it was important that JRS was used to protect those most vulnerable. It was important communications about this was undertaken as quickly as possible. Staff were suffering under the current silence. It seemed some staff thought they had already been furloughed. TW confirmed no staff had been furloughed as yet. It was agreed TW and PBr would liaise closely with JP to ensure she was informed of developments. | JH  PBr |
| 5/9 | **Workers Memorial Day**  CF said that Tuesday 28/4 had been designated as Workers’ Memorial Day and a minutes silence would be held at 11.00 a.m. She asked if the University would be encouraging recognition and observance of this. PBr undertook to make colleagues in External Relations aware of this, if they were not already aware. | PBr |
| 6/9 | **Vice Chancellors’ Pay**  AC noted that the recent announcement that VC had taken a voluntary pay cut of 10%. He asked if there was any sector co-ordination of the responses of other VCs. SS said he was not aware of any such co-ordination – these were individual decisions. |  |
| 7/9 | **Date of next Meeting**  The next joint combined meeting was scheduled for Friday 24/4 @ 14.00 |  |

**Human Resources**

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