

MEETING OF THE REMUNERATION COMMITTEE

Wednesday 6th April 2022 – 10:00-13:00

Meeting held via Teams

MINUTES

Present: Mohammed Saddiq (Chair), Linda Fletcher (Lay member of the Board of Trustees), Andrew Poolman (University Treasurer and lay member of the Board of Trustees), Jack Boyer (Chair of the Board of Trustees).

In attendance: Claire Buchanan (Chief People Officer), Hannah Quinn (Head of Governance), Hugh Brady (Vice-Chancellor, part-meeting), Robert Kerse (Chief Operating Officer, part-meeting) and Judith Squires (DVC & Provost, part-meeting).

Apologies: Andreas Raffel (Lay member of the Board of Trustees), Lucinda Parr (Registrar & University Secretary, for item 8).

1 WELCOMES, APOLOGIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

1.1 The Chair welcomed members to the meeting, noting that he had received comments from Andreas Raffel in advance of the meeting.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

2.1 There were no new declarations of interest.

3 MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

3.1 The minutes were APPROVED as a fair and accurate record of the meeting of 6 October 2021 and 8 March 2022 subject to the following amendments.

3.1.1 Update the membership on the 6 October 2021 minutes to confirm Andreas Raffel was not present.

3.1.2 Correct typo in 7.11.4 of the 6 October 2021 minutes

ACTION: Head of Governance

4 ACTIONS & MATTERS ARISING

4.1 The Chair noted progress on each item.

4.2 The Chief People Officer confirmed that practice at Bristol was compliant with the new CUC Remuneration Code and that in future, the Committee may wish to consider looking at best practice outside of the sector. Agreed to revisit in April 2023

ACTION: Chief People Officer

5 CHAIR'S REPORT (reference REMC/21-22/009)

5.1 The Chair introduced the item.

5.2 The Committee NOTED the report.

5.3 The following points were DISCUSSED

5.3.1 The exemplary process followed to recruit and appoint the incoming Vice-Chancellor and agree her remuneration. The outstanding group of candidates considered, the contribution from the appointment panel and the support to conduct the process. A desire for more Board engagement in any future process.

5.3.2 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**

5.3.3 That the Chief People Officer was the Vice-Chair of the Russell Group HR group, and Chair for the Southwest region and the relative differences in remuneration processes. For example, some Remuneration Committees only met once per year, and some four times. These positions provided useful insight into comparator information.

5.4 NOTED the change of date of the next meeting which would move to 10 October 2022.

6 UPDATE ON UCEA NATIONAL PAY NEGOTIATIONS

6.1 The Chief People Officer introduced the item.

6.2 The following points were NOTED:

6.2.1 The recent 18 days of Industrial Action. Of 8,000 staff and 1700 UCU members, 700 colleagues had taken strike action, which was less than 10%. The impact had been more significant in relation to academic colleagues. With approximately 25% of academic staff being members of UCU, Bristol was the sixth biggest branch in the UK and the branch was engaging staff well, particularly in relation to early career researchers (ECR).

6.2.2 That pay could be retained for action short of a strike, which had not been popular. **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**

6.2.3 Two further ballots had been issued by UCU in relation to pay and pensions and would close on the 8 April, with results available shortly thereafter. Should there be a mandate for action, this would likely include a marking & assessment boycott over the summer.

6.2.4 The position taken by students, a small number of whom had taken part in a recent occupation of the Wills Building Great Hall in solidarity with staff but could not be considered to have represented the whole student body. There had been a similar volume of student complaints about the impact of Industrial Action as there had been student support for it. The Students Union had passed a motion in solidarity with the occupation.

6.2.5 That national pay negotiations had commenced for the next pay award for 2022- 2023. 147 institutions were members of UCEA, of which 24 were in the Russell Group. There were three rounds of national bargaining and Bristol was seeking a multi-year pay deal. The Union submission would not be discussed until the second meeting on 21 April. The final meeting would be the 5 May. That for the last four years, the pay award had not been agreed with the Unions but had been implemented anyway.

6.2.6 Negotiations were constrained by the range of institutions and their different budgets. Bristol was keen to also reward staff locally if possible, and this had been discussed recently at the Board of Trustees. The institutional reward strategy would be considered by the University Executive Board.

6.2.7 That it was important to acknowledge staff morale and the impact of increased costs of living. Bristol would keep pushing nationally and supporting staff locally. There was not a significant issue with attrition of staff but turnover may change in future.

6.3 The following points were DISCUSSED:

6.3.1 That some issues, e.g. cost of living were being felt nationally and not related to the sector.

6.3.2 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**

6.3.3 The establishment of the role of Professors of Practice which enabled recruitment of non-traditional staff groups and partial contracts.

6.3.4 The need to be able to deal with operational impacts, for example graduating students, alongside the consideration of how staff discontent would impact on the longer-term ability to deliver on the strategy.

6.3.5 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**

7 GENDER & ETHNICITY PAY GAP REPORTS (reference REMC/21-22/010)

7.1 The Chief People Officer introduced the item.

7.2 The following points were NOTED:

- 7.2.1 That the reports had been published by the statutory deadline and reported to the Board on the 1st April. Overall the gender pay gap had reduced for all groups across part and full time roles.
- 7.2.2 That the reports did not include casual staff but this information would be gathered from next year.
- 7.2.3 That there were many initiatives in place to support staff including family friendly policies and the academic promotions framework.
- 7.2.4 That in relation to the sector, Bristol was middle of the pack and had more work to do to improve this.
- 7.2.5 That a distribution issue remained in the Gender Pay Gap, with more female staff working in lower quartile roles, and more male staff in higher quartile roles, despite a small improvement. The NHS clinical excellence awards continued to have a gendered impact and workshops had been delivered for female colleagues to support their applications.
- 7.2.6 That the Ethnicity Pay Gap report was not yet a statutory requirement and Bristol continued to publish this in advance of any requirement. It was therefore difficult to benchmark against peers. The pay gap had reduced, with a median of zero, however, there remained a higher pay gap in favour of white men.
- 7.2.7 There was also a better representation of BAME staff across all quartiles and progress had been made on establishing a talent pipeline, with apprenticeship schemes and PhD programmes.

7.3 The following points were DISCUSSED:

- 7.3.1 The Committee commended the reports and the rate of positive change.
- 7.3.2 The potential impact of including casual staff in future reporting. This was difficult to predict, considering the range of casual roles, which included, for example students working on Open Days.
- 7.3.3 The introduction of anonymised shortlisting for professional services roles. This had not been implemented for academics as they would remain identifiable through their citations.
- 7.3.4 The need for future focus on disability representation and support.
- 7.3.5 How the reporting considered self-identification and multiple gender identities. Declaration of gender was not constrained to male/female, however, given small numbers of staff, data was not often published as it could lead to identification.
- 7.3.6 That while the term BAME was used for reporting, internal discussions would consider disaggregated data, for example, considering the pipeline of Black professors.
- 7.3.7 That reports had been shared internally and discussed with Faculty Boards.

8 MID-YEAR REVIEW OF OBJECTIVES OF STAFF IN REMIT GROUP (reference REMC/21-22/011)

8.1 The Chair introduced the item. The Vice-Chancellor, DVC & Provost and the Chief Operating Officer joined the meeting.

8.2 The Vice-Chancellor presented the paper, the following points were NOTED:

- 8.2.1 The considerable progress made despite the challenges faced and incredible resilience of the organisation.
- 8.2.2 The multiple threats to success, including the continuing impact of the pandemic, staff workload, industrial action, inflationary pressures and Brexit which have impacted staff recruitment, the research pipeline, supply chains and morale.
- 8.2.3 The priority to simplify courses and assessment, and the critical revision of the structure of the academic year (SAY) which would support student mental health and staff workload. Whilst there would be short term pressure in relation to change, there was significant opportunity going forward.
- 8.2.4 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests].**

- 8.2.5 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.2.6 The importance of building the brand for Bristol and consideration of whether the right skills and staff were in place to do this.
 - 8.2.7 The transitional position of the metrics and objectives in relation to the development of the new Strategy
 - 8.2.8 The recent UKRI strategy developments and the need to consider who to partner with in relation to addressing the levelling up agenda.
- 8.3 The DVC & Provost addressed the Committee, the following points were NOTED:
- 8.3.1 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.3.2 The need to take action as possible within a constrained context. Work with Unions was underway to identify specific actions to take over the next three months and UCU had made some useful suggestions, which were being considered, including converting more staff to core, providing bridge funding for staff between contracts, and support for early career research colleagues and postgraduate research students who teach.
 - 8.3.3 The consultation around the SAY which had been extensive and resulted in a model new structure to be implemented over two years. The need to benchmark ourselves against others, with less assessment and fewer teaching weeks. This change would be foundational to clear out complexity.
 - 8.3.4 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests].**
 - 8.3.5 Ongoing impact on the student experience and student wellbeing and mental health post pandemic. The particular challenge of transitioning students from school and the need to invest to support services, particularly Residential Life, Wellbeing, links with the NHS and digital education.
 - 8.3.6 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.3.7 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.3.8 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
- 8.4 The Chief Operating Officer addressed the Committee, the following points were NOTED:
- 8.4.1 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.4.2 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.4.3 Potential impact on the Chinese student market from the zero-tolerance approach to Covid.
- 8.5 The following points were DISCUSSED:
- 8.5.1 The need for a smooth transition to a set of new objectives which would be generated in line with the new Strategy.
 - 8.5.2 The importance of considering the size and shape of the institution, which had been part of the integrated planning process this year. **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests].**
 - 8.5.3 The key issue of the SAY. Bristol taught for more weeks than many competitors, and there were ongoing challenges with the length and timing of the assessment and re-assessment periods which impacted the student experience and did not provide clear space for staff to undertake research. The current structure had been created over time, which had allowed accretion of complexity and volume of assessment. Over assessing students added to wellbeing and workload issues and required additional time on educational administration processes. There was clear consensus for change however this would be a major change.
 - 8.5.4 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.5.5 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests]**
 - 8.5.6 **[REDACTED: May prejudice commercial interests].**
- 8.6 The Committee noted thanks to the Executive for their commitment and hard work, and commended the progress made despite challenges.
- 9 FUTURE SALARY BENCHMARKING AND NOTICE PERIODS (reference REMC/21-22/012)**

9.1 The Chief People Officer introduced the item.

9.2 The following points were NOTED:

9.2.1 **[REDACTED: Confidential Personal Information]**

9.2.2 **[REDACTED: Confidential Personal Information]**

9.2.3 The relative merits of a longer notice period, which provided stability for colleagues and allowed additional time for recruitment of a replacement, however, could result in a longer, or more costly process when serving notice to an employee.

9.2.4 That colleagues leaving the institution would be expected to work their notice, unless engaged in any conduct or capability procedure.

9.2.5 That any decision taken would apply to new appointments of the direct reports of the Vice-Chancellor only, namely the Registrar & University Secretary, Chief Operating Officer and DVC & Provost.

9.2.6 **[REDACTED: Confidential Personal Information]**

9.2.7 That it was not possible to change terms and conditions of staff currently employed, without their agreement.

9.3 AGREED a notice period of six months for new appointments of the Vice-Chancellor's direct reports.

9.4 **[REDACTED: Confidential Personal Information]**

9.5 **[REDACTED: Confidential Personal Information]**

10 EQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION

10.1 The Ethnicity Pay Gap and Gender Pay Gap reports.

11 COMMUNICATION AND CONSULTATION

11.1 The need to communicate in relation to REMC/21-22/012 notice periods

12 ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 The Committee discussed the appointment of Professor Judith Squires as Acting Vice-Chancellor **[REDACTED: Confidential Personal Information]**.

12.2 A discussion would be scheduled with the Chair and Deputy Chair of the Committee, and the Chief People Officer in relation to objective setting and timescales.

ACTION: Chief People Officer