

UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COUNCIL AND GENERAL BOARD
HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

10 November 2011

Present: Professor Jeremy Sanders (Chairman), Mr Graham Allen, Professor William Brown, Dr Jude Browne, Professor Dame Athene Donald, Professor Andrew Gamble, Dr Ian Lewis, Professor Nigel Slater.

In attendance: Ms Rebecca McIntosh (Secretary), Mr Indi Seehra, Ms Emma Stone. Ms S Fowler attended for minute 1331/11, and Mrs S Botcherby for minute 1336/11.

Apologies: Professor Carol Brayne, Professor Simon Deakin, Dr Jonathan Nicholls, Dr George Reid.

Professor Martin Daunton is on sabbatical leave.

MINUTES

1328/11 Declarations of Interest

Professor Sanders declared an interest in minute 1341/11, a request for an extension beyond retirement from a member of the Department of Chemistry.

1329/11 Minutes

The minutes of the meeting held on 6th October 2011 were approved.

1330/11 Matters Arising

There were no matters arising.

1331/11 VSS – Summary and Expected Savings

The Committee received paper 10/11/11/HR182, on the results of the Voluntary Severance Scheme including a detailed profile of severance costs and expected savings by School, UAS and Non-School Institutions.

It was noted that:

- 636 expressions of interest and 361 formal applications were received. 205 applications were supported. The final number of leavers under the scheme was 194.
- Delivery of the savings would be monitored by school finance managers.

The Committee commented that it had been a well managed scheme, and that the benefits were not just in cost savings, but in providing the opportunity for re-structuring within institutions to better align staffing structures with operational needs.

The Committee noted that this paper would also be sent to the Resource Management Committee.

1332/11 Consultation on a Future Retirement policy

The Committee received paper 10/11/11/HR183, summarising the feedback received following the informal consultation with institutions, and the timetable for the final Report.

It was noted that:

- The most recent round of consultation with the Schools had closed on 22 October 2011
- The consultation had requested views on whether Schools supported the principle of an EJRA, whether an EJRA should be set at 67 or 70, and the criteria that might apply to staff wishing to work beyond an EJRA.
- The responses were generally in support of an EJRA for established officers only, and set at age 67. The responses also made clear that the draft criteria required some further consideration.
- The data clearly showed that the greatest number of vacancies in academic posts were created by retirement. This was not the case for other types of post and therefore strengthened the justification for not applying an EJRA to unestablished, contract research and assistant staff.
- The final paper was being prepared for the DRA working group with a view to taking a draft Report, the draft Retirement Policy and relevant supporting data to the next General Board.

1333/11 Online Pay Slips

The Committee considered paper 10/11/11/HR184, recommending the introduction of online pay slips as an alternative to the current default method of paper pay slips.

The Employee Self Service module in CHRIS allows staff to view their electronic pay slip in addition to viewing other personal data. The paper proposed that electronic payslips should be the default delivery method unless there was a specific justification for an individual to continue to receive paper payslips. Following discussion it was agreed to make electronic payslips the default option but to make it possible for any individual to opt back in to receiving their paper payslips by making a call to the CHRIS helpdesk.

1334/11 Combined Equality Scheme

The Committee considered paper 10/11/11/HR185, outlining the amendments required to the University's Combined Equality Scheme (CES) in response to the provisions of the Equality Act 2010.

The Committee noted the principal amendments to the CES as follows;

- inclusion of all relevant protected groups (age, disability, gender reassignment, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief and sexual orientation)
- removing reference to previous legislation and using terminology aligned with the Equality Act 2010, and
- replacing the existing General and Specific Equality Duties with those provided for by the Equality Act 2010

The Committee approved the amendments and noted that the revised CES would be considered by General Board and Council before publication in the form of a Notice.

1335/11 HESA Staff Data Requirements

The Committee considered paper 10/11/11/HR185, summarizing the range of changes made by HESA to the staff equality data fields with a proposal for how the University should respond to these changes.

The Committee agreed that the proposed database changes set out in the paper be made to allow the capture of data on protected characteristics, and that staff should be notified of the revised requirements and their options in responding to these requirements.

1336/11 Fixed Term Contracts

The Committee considered paper 10/11/11/HR187, proposing revisions to the 'Ending of Fixed Term Contracts Procedure' in the light of legal changes and to align with the recently launched Redundancy Avoidance Policy.

The key proposals are:

- notification of redundancy to be provided 1 month before the end of the 90 day consultation period
- contracts can be renewed on a fixed term basis for up to three years before moving to an open ended contract

The Committee noted that the legal qualifying period for claims of unfair dismissal will be extended from 1 to 2 years which should be taken into account in the revisions to the procedure. The Committee asked that the proposed amendments be taken forward for discussion with the trade unions.

1337/11 Screening Policy

The Committee considered paper 10/11/11/HR188, proposing the introduction of an overarching screening policy to safeguard individuals, buildings, property, and assets through the processing of appropriate pre-employment checks.

The Committee noted that:

- an earlier draft of the policy had been considered by the Committee in 2010
- further work had been undertaken to clarify the number of posts that would require advanced checks. This number had reduced considerably with a consequent reduction in the cost of implementation.

The Committee approved the policy.

1338/11 HR Director's Report

The Committee received paper 10/11/11/HR189, a report from the Director of Human Resources.

The HR Director updated the committee on:

- Contributory Pension Scheme (CPS) consultation feedback and that a meeting of the Special Joint Negotiating Committee is expected to be held in December.
- On line Equality and Diversity Training being a pre requisite for membership of Appointments Committees.
- 30 November Day of Industrial Action; contingency plans are being put in place to minimize any disruption to University business.

1339/11 Management Information

The Committee received paper 10/11/11/HR190, containing data for staff in Council and General Board institutions.

The Committee noted the data on 'grade drift', and agreed the importance of taking a regular overview of such information to inform future policy and practice. A further paper will be presented to the Committee at a later date.

Reserved Business

1340/11 Market Supplements

1341/11 Extensions beyond Retirement Age

1342/11 Voluntary Research Agreements

1343/11 Any Other Business

There was no other business.

1344/11 Dates of Meetings of the Committee in 2011/12

Meetings of the Committee for 2011/12 will be held on Thursdays at 2.00 p.m in the Old Schools Meeting Room.

08 December 2011
09 February 2012
22 March 2012
24 May 2012
21 June 2012