

Full minutes

1. Introduction and Apologies
 - a. Introductions: Welcome to new attendees: Tom Hall (ICT), Michelina Gaudio (HR), Grace Walder (HR); ICE Reps: Lewis Petterson (HEE), Jenny McCullagh (HR/VCs rep),
 - b. Apologies: none
2. Minutes of the last meeting were nominally approved
3. Matter arising from the minutes:
 - a. BusinessWorld: an update was given by TH
 - i. Background: It is a 'programme of work' around Aggresso, widening the scope of Aggresso and helping to manage research (SAS). It 'could move forward to provide better functionality'. It was adopted at the end of the contract with Northgate (who provided the previous software). Northgate could not meet the requirements so the University looked for alternative means, which led them to BusinessWorld, which was the best function for the best price.
 - ii. Process: The first step was 'back office work' for 'different clients', which would consolidate four separate clients to reduce the amount of system overhead. IT will have improved reporting facilities (not yet implemented) and a 'stronger footing going forward'
EW: Why haven't the deliverables for each department been delivered?
TH: they had to move as quickly from Northgate to BusinessWorld in a short period of time to deliver the basic requirements
DM: Why was the decision made so close to the end of the Northgate contract?
CM: Adequate scoping/testing was apparently not done with the defined end date of the Northgate contract
TH: They worked on the basis that they had enough time, better position to move away at that time
EW: Did we underestimate?
MM: 'Crisis management' approach as result
EW: Not 'crisis management', just too large of a project
MM: Yes, crisis management
TH: We didn't allow sufficient time; in retrospect it could have been managed better, but we delivered on enormous amount although the final elements are not completed
EW: Yes, yes.
TH: We moved away from Northgate and discovered there were holes in the data on it.
Colin: Looking back at the all-staff meeting, do you feel like people have become disengaged with it? The general feeling is that the product is rushed
TH: A system used by all staff and we were not good at communication (information on where, how, deadlines). We should have communicated priorities, had to release stuff they weren't happy with

Colin: Replacing something not brilliant but that worked with BusinessWorld is a problem from users' point of view

TH: Trying to bring it up to the level of before deadline

CM: What was the period of time?

TH: Interim licence renewal was in 2015 for Northgate

EW: Two years

LP: HEE doesn't have easy access, can that be enabled?

TH: Yes

EW: Communications bit has been rubbish and people will be better engaged if better communications

TH: We are aware, communications is important to get right, new staff have been hired to deal with that

GA: Her team didn't find it disastrous. There were some hiccups but Stuart Brown's updates were very good. Post-project appraisal would be the time to judge; 'you guys must be used to brilliant delivery of IT projects' and the minutes should reflect how good it was

EW: SHL and SAS experience was less well done

GA: Yes but the percentage of project was still good

EM: There is a need to improve Saturday working for SHL (this is complex and not meant to criticise)

TH: We need time to work with 'you' on that, someone will talk to SHL

Michelina: The project team has been working hard and they will be looking closely at users and how users use it. Communication yesterday said there will be a feedback form, so they can focus on what needs to be worked on. The HR project team will pick that up.

TH: Next, we are aware of some failings so more resource is put on HR so there is a knock on effect to research and finance elements, will get comparable functionality

MM: Disagreed with GA about post-project review, better to have brought it up during planning. There has been no forum for feedback (despite attempts to engage with Finance about it) and people have not been receptive to the feedback that has been given, so it is good to talk about this in this forum.

TH: He welcomes feedback, will be honest when they disagree and will give reasons for that

DM: Future projects should come up in the ICE forum much earlier.

Actions: Tom Hall to meet with library users & confirm what period of time they had between knowing they would not renew Northgate licence and end of that licence (Feb 2018).

b. Dignity at Work policy – general update

- i. KE confirmed that policies have been finalised, working groups will be sending out communications and training for dignity at work contacts will start

DM: Will the policy apply to outsourced workers?

GW: It was written for all University staff at present

Angela: GA says contractors have to conform to the policy so why not outsource workers?

GA: Contractors must adhere to policies

Angela: Will it include contracted-out staff? Would we expect some standard of dignity to be extended to contracted-out staff? And couple contracted-out staff use the policy?

KE: It applied to UoL employees and CoSector but not to contracted-out staff

EW: There is something in contracts that says they should have similar policy. "All providers are asked to agree to university's policies during the tendering process"

DM: But contractors should?

GW: Any staff experiencing negative behaviour from contractors should consult HR

DM: What if policies change mid-contract? Do they have to adopt them?

Angela: Equalities Committee stated harassment prevention must be responsibility of employer; can UoL do this?

DM: There's a simple solution, end outsourcing

Angela: "Stop contacts" will be senior managers, is it better to widen that?

KE: They are still reviewing contracts

Angela: Spread widely, makes it less intimidating

EW: They have to get buy-in from senior management first but it is important for wider involvement

MM: How soon can we find out about it applying to outsourced worker?

KE: As soon as Caroline comments, but before the next ICE meeting?

Action: Kayleigh to circulate this information before next meeting.

c. Vacancies

- i. KE: These were sent out to HR and HEE; Careers still has two vacancies. Jenny is new rep for HR and VCs group.

4. FM Review – general update

EW: it was a good update before the last all-staff meeting

GA: She won't repeat herself from that meeting. The consultants' security review scoping paper arrived yesterday but is not ready to send around yet, just the scoping document. There is no update on student residential life or on the customer service model, which new staff will 'take forward'. There will be something ready for implementation after the November 2018 Board of Trustees meeting.

DM: Is that the next Board of Trustees meeting?

GA: October is but it is easier to aim for November. Give it to them to consider in Oct and decide in Nov.

Tim H: Back in house is a year down the line, but staff is worried it is already dragging on

GA: It is not dragging on, business case has to be made, looking at 'what is the return on the investment'

DM: I am baffled by the process, the meeting was opaque, the Board of Trustees considered two options, went with all in house, now getting bogged down.

GA: UoL has not agreed to bring services in-house, Board of Trustees has not agreed to that.

DM: But statements have said in-house option was selected. There was a hybrid model and an all-in model presented to BoT and they rejected hybrid. Therefore must be all in. But now talk is about security review, student

residential life and customer service model. The workers' deadline is 19 July 2019 and UoL is not responding; it shouldn't be that complicated. (The case of SOAS: numbers aren't that different. SOAS has approx. 170 outsourced workers, we have approx. 300. Not Four times as many as Chris Cobb claimed)

GA: Process but must fit with Board of Trustees. Need to 'take them on a journey' so understand how this can fit with charitable objects and create investment. I hope you will take a wider interest and give me time to do it, 'let me get on with it'

EW: SOAS has not done it yet

DM: they are in process of doing it

GA: UoL has five contracts

DM: Two contracts are with the same company

GA: Trying to reduce the cost to UoL, trying to do best by staff, trying to best by Board of Trustees, it is too hard to deliver it, 'Not going to happen the way you envisage it'

DM: I think it is going to happen

GA: You be the one who answers at the all-staff meeting. UoL would have to do this without striking staff and occupying students

DM: Workers are on different contracts

GA: They different hours and have different leave, but in the end, outsourced workers won't want to be paid less

EW: Agrees with GA because of the bundling of contracts

MM: This is the first time he has heard about the complexity of contracts

EW: Give GA time

DM: Outrageous to ask for time when workers don't get pension contribution – the longer this goes on the longer these people are left without.

GA: There is no right to a pension under TUPE.

CM: People get things they don't necessarily have a right to

Tim H: Pensions were included in the scoping documents we saw.

GA: Don't promise something you can't deliver.

DM: I am not promising this to the workers; they are campaigning and pushing for it.

GA: Pensions are not a right, nor holidays.

CM: message for Board of Trustees on 'journey' toward this: workers in these fields weren't always outsourced so there is no contradiction with the University's charity or business aims, just a return to the state of 15 years ago. Board of Trustees could come to the ICE forum

GA: Board of Trustees understands, but costs need to bring a return. UCU and Unison are working with us. 'We are not in conflict', the quicker we can agree on that, the quicker we can reach a solution.

DM: We keep discussing irrelevant things. What the workers want to know is when they will be treated equally. There is a deadline. If that is not met, campaign continues. Every worker who was shown the Uni's statement was uncomprehending or angry. UoL is taking completely the wrong approach to this.

RD: This issue has brought out a dark side of the University. The intranet statement about the IWGB 'disrupting university operations' was frustrating and caused staff to blame IWGB. All staff have found security frustrating and as an employee and member I have felt disrespected by University's communications. People are intelligent enough to understand what is going on.

LP: A point to bear in mind is that changing the contracts wasn't considered all that complex when they did it to us at HEE.

DM: The Cordant manager did not meet Dignity at Work Policy, nor Bouyges. That is three contracts not meeting it. This just underlines need to move this forward.

GA: These are individuals, no companies

DM: Not systemic?

GA: They would be horrified to think that it was and are repeating their training. There will always be individuals who are a problem.

5. Asbestos – general update [This was actually discussed after #6]

GA: They have appointed consultants (Lucian) on the management of asbestos. The Board of Trustees considered a remediation contractor appointment. The asbestos management plan is being finalised and will go to Chair of H&S committee for comments/approval. Remediation works will be overseen by the remediation contractor. Referrals should be made to Occupation Health for anyone concerned. Contact John O'Donnell with concerns regarding drilling holes and other works.

DM: Kim Frost promised for 6 months that he would provide us with history of how asbestos issue has been handled. Left before doing so. When will we get it?

Action: Asbestos info to be delivered as promised.

6. USS Pensions Reform

TT (by phone): She just received an update that morning and would be sending it out shortly. Consultation is in September about changes to contributions. It is 'not pretty'. UoL will have presentations for staff around September. There will be a consultation around changes to staff contributions. Likely increase to 8.8% members contributions, 19.5% employers. (Currently 8%:18%) The joint panel is ongoing in the meantime.

Tim H: That means 'the big red button' is not being pushed?

TT: there will be increases in April 2019 as well. This proposal comes from USS, not joint panel.

Tim H: deficit has been revised already – from £17bn quoted before, now saying £8bn.

EW: We should wait for TT's email

TT: Questions can be emailed to her, more information will be coming soon

7. Family Friendly Policies

GW: A suite of policies is being reviewed, including the redundancy policy. They started work on the Family Friendly policy and it is being updated to fit the newest legislation e.g. on LGBT rights.

EW: This include a whistle-blower policy?

GW: Have included it but setting priorities now about what to address first.

Angela: It includes flex working? How is that applied?

GW: It includes flex working, yes.

Lindsey: Will it include carers, too? Members of staff caring for elderly parents etc.

GW: Yes, that is on the agenda

MM: In SAS there is a concern that number of staff (including part-time staff) are counted toward UoL central charges rather than FTE, so managers may be more reluctant to approve p/t working due to financial cost.

EW: I hope that doesn't happen, but we will see

GW: There is legislation to protect staff working p/t and we have to fair in applying that. We must apply the legislation.

Michelina: 100%

LP: Will these policies apply to HEE? And can HEE get policy updates?

EW: HEE staff need to be engaged with

Michelina: She will look into it

KE: HR has forwarded everything to HEE and points to HEE's version of Sharepoint. Let her know if it is not there.

LP: HEE staff don't know UoL policy. If you're managed by a HEE manager but you're UoL staff they won't know and will apply wrong policies.

Michelina: Fair but the HEE HR manager will be talked to.

LP: will all policies apply to staff on UoL contracts at HEE?

Michaelina: don't know.

CM: This is the third ICE meeting and there have been questions about HEE at every one. The answer is always 'I don't know'. Not good enough. Someone knowledgeable in HEE matters should attend.

Michelina, EW: Maybe

CM: GW, you're reviewing policies, can you send a list of the whole suite of them?

GW: In the process of looking at them but they will come out soon. First the process must be agreed then the list can be circulated... all before they are finalised.

Angela: LP, who are the employers at HEE?

EW: It is a 'mixed economy' and understanding will be happening.

Action: GW to email policies under review. EW to ensure a HEE contact is present at meetings.

8. Any other business

a. Lunchbox café: It is closing an arrangements have been made

b. First Aid policy: EM:

i. The amount paid to First Aiders has not gone up (is still £8.50/month) and is below average

ii. Not all first aiders are being paid

EW: She would like comparatives to other universities. Spelled out the requirements and stated need to get on top of it. Michelina asked to be emailed about it, saying that backdating of payments can be made if people are working as first aiders & not being paid.

Angela: What about mental health first aid?

KE: Inclusion champions are looking at it; Mark H is working on it (can talk in next meeting)

CM: Did mental health first aid training and it was excellent. It should be compulsory for any managers, can clear up misunderstandings

EW: That is a good idea

Angela: What are inclusion champions?

KE: Mark asked for volunteers recently

EW: Mark will come to the next meeting

Action: University to review first aid payment levels. UoL to check list of first aiders is up to date.

[TimH gave a quick update on pensions here]

c. Home working

CM: A quick query about home working and the voluntary nature of it, when there are desks available for only a percentage of staff (70%). There are costs to working from home and there is a government scheme to support homeworking but only when it is not voluntary. Can ABW be reclassified as non-voluntary in these circumstances?

GW: Background on the self-assessment when working from home; if someone needs adjustments while at work but doesn't get them at home, they can't work from home... but the University can be willing to help out)

Jelony: There are other spaces in the building where staff can work

GA: There 50% more spaces than needed for all staff, though only 70% desk space

CM: Can the government tax relief be advertised to make people aware?

GW: That tax relief is based on people working full-time at home but we can look into it

GA: As to risk assessments, there is guidance in the Beveridge documents and that can be shared

LP: are Level 4s entitled to ask for home-working? (Not allowed at HEE currently)

Jelony: That is the old UoL policy

EW: shouldn't be decided by grade.

CM: what about desk assessments and Health & safety? A member of staff has asked what happens if their home work space does not meet requirements.

GW: If someone is making a fundamental change to working at home, then there needs to be more dialogue and potentially contract changes. If disabled, someone could visit home & assess.

MM: There isn't consistency about working at home and childcare. If minding children, is it working from home or an absence?

GW: Some other arrangement needs to be made with manager as different from working from home. When working should be fully attentive.

d. Recruitment chill

Lindsey: Does it include consultants? If not, why not?

Michelina: It does not (explanation coming back soon)

Action: Migi to answer this

e. Deller Hall

Colin: Will the wooden staircase into Deller re-open?

GA: Will check on that

f. London weighting:

DM: final amount paid in August but the issue can be re-opened because the London Living Wage went above 6% (11.5%)

Angela: There will be a JNCC meeting on 6 August about it between UoL, UCU and Unison

Further discussion about ICE inclusion in that meeting.

ICE reps request a meeting on this issue and will seek views of staff.

g. SAS website

Lindsey: How much does the SAS website cost?

EW: Pre-negotiation quote is £250,000 but that is only a quote and final cost will be lower. Won't pay that price.

Date of next meeting

The next meeting is 28 November from 10-12.