

Minutes of the meeting of the Cardiff University Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Committee held on 12 May 2021 via Zoom

Present: Professor Karen Holford (Chair, KH), Michelle Aldridge-Waddon (from 2.30pm), Venice Cowper, Kathryn Davies, Georgie East (GE), Claire Morgan (CM), Jude Pickett (JP), Helen Obee Reardon, Abyd Quinn Aziz, Claire Sanders, Cadi Thomas, Professor Damian Walford Davies (DWD), Professor Ian Weeks (until 3pm).

In attendance: Hayley Beckett, Julie Bugden, Susan Cousins, Ceri Davies Karen Harvey-Cooke, Ruth Harwood, Tom Hay, Rashi Jain, Michelle Jones, Andrew Lane, Ben Lewis, Andy Lloyd, Sue Midha, Abyd Quinn-Aziz (from 3.15pm), Tim Phillips (until 3pm), Errol Rivera, Charlotte Shand, Tracey Stanley, Geoff Turnbull, James Vilares, Dafydd Bowen

Apologies for absence were received from Professor Rudolf Allemann, Jane Chukwu, Professor Kim Graham and Dr Sam Hibbitts.

763 Welcome

Noted that the Chair opened the meeting and welcomed observers to the Committee.

764 Minutes

Noted

764.1 that the minutes from the meeting held on 14 January 2021 (20/427) were confirmed to be an accurate record and would be signed by the Chair.

765 Matters Arising

Received and Noted paper 20/580, 'Matters Arising'. All actions have been completed

765.1 Adoption of IHRA and All-Party Parliamentary Group of British Muslims Definitions. Damian Walford-Davies to provide an update in the College Updates.

766 Conflicts of Interest

All members were invited to disclose any and all direct or indirect pecuniary or other interests which could influence their judgement in discussing the items on the agenda.

Disclosure of interest should be made before an item is discussed and the individual concerned should either withdraw from the meeting or not take part in the discussion, as appropriate for that part of the agenda.

767 Items from the Chair

Noted

- 767.1 The Chair observed that the end of Ramadan is almost upon us and wished Eid Mubarek to all colleagues.
- 767.2 The Chair expressed dismay at the turn of events in the conflict between Israel and Palestine and urged anyone affected to reach out to the various support services.
- 767.3 The Chair acknowledged a recent BBC documentary which referred to the racist incident at our School of Medicine in 2016. We have asked Professor Dinesh Bhugra, who conducted an Independent Review into the matter, to review our actions over the last five years and to give us further guidance. This committee will be updated as this progresses.

768 **College/Professional Services Update**

Professor Damian Walford Davies, PVC for the College of Arts, Humanities and Social Sciences provided an update on EDI initiatives and activities within the College.

Noted

- 768.1 that the AHSS ED&I Committee, established as a result of the pandemic, has been meeting regularly and has been engaged in discussions and communications with the University's core equality working groups and networks all with a view to meeting the vision of the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024.
- 768.2 That areas of focus and discussion included
- Pandemic related workload stress alongside campus health and safety matters.
 - ED&I issues have become visually and holistically discussed with respect to teaching, learning and research at College Board.
 - Workload for both Academic and P.S. staff has been a major topic of discussion.
 - AHSS forged the Strategic Framework for Sustainability, Enhancement and Wellbeing 2020-2023 and includes decolonisation of the curriculum. The over-arching aim is to tackle workload by rejecting ways of working that add hours without adding value.
 - AHSS are preparing for the full introduction of the new workload model in 2022/23. Our suggestion that the college co-ordinates a frank and accessible discussion of tariffs has now been taken up. A framework in which the co-ordination and the dialogue between schools and staff is coming out this month.

- A Research Repair and Recovery Strategy is being led by Professor Claire Gorrara. It is a strategy designed to support researchers and scholars, to repair and recover their research and scholarship which was impacted by COVID.

768.3 Welsh Language Strategy

PVC AHSS has been working with the Dean for the Welsh Language to prepare an implementation plan. Catrin Jones has been appointed as the manager of the Welsh Language “Academi”, which brings all our Welsh Language activities together. Governance of Welsh Language matters will change so that there is one co-ordinated group, linked to other committees to implement the strategy and our other Welsh Language obligations.

768.4 Athena Swan

It has been announced today that the School of Dentistry have been given the Silver award, SHARE and SOCSI are bronze holders. DWD had expected the Buckingham Review to be more radical and would invite fellow members and officers to approach with advice on how to re-engage with the charter. KH noted our formal congratulations to Dentistry on the Silver Athena Swan award.

768.5 Adoption of IHRA definition of Antisemitism and the All Party Parliamentary Group of British Muslims’ definition of Islamophobia

Following approval of EDI Committee (noted as not unanimous), the paper was approved at Governance Committee however Senate felt that we should pause the adoption of these definitions. The paper followed on to Council whose response was that we should not go down the route of adopting those or any definitions.

Committee member Abyd Quinn-Aziz submitted the following questions ahead of the meeting but was not in attendance at this point:

1. What plans and resources have been made to address the uptake of the definitions?
2. How have the Assurance staff been trained in addressing these new definitions that are different to their procedures on dealing with racist incidents.
3. Will reports and actions be recorded and will this information be publicly available?

The first two questions were no longer applicable as we are not adopting the definition.

Resolved

- 768.6 The University is currently working on how we capture and deal with complaints which includes how we keep a record of racist incidents. The Committee will be kept up to date with progress.
- 769 **Enfys Staff Network**
- Received an oral presentation from Karen Harvey-Cooke, Chair of the Enfys Staff Network.
- Noted
- 769.1 That Enfys now has 522 members (both LGBT+ and allies) and has continued to increase during lockdown.
- 769.2 That the Stonewall Equality Index did not run last year, but we will be submitting this October.
- 769.3 Specific work the network has carried out includes:
- Contributions to the Strategic Equality Plan, LGBT+ Working Group and policy consultation. The Trans Policy Consultation is now used across the sector and is an example of good practice.
 - Some of the Enfys budget has been used to send staff on Stonewall's Trans Allies training.
 - That work has been done within Healthcare to get LGBT+ considerations into the curriculum.
 - That KHC has worked closely with the Student LGBT+ Officer regarding employability.
 - That Enfys has run and supported several events, including Glitter Talks, Alexander the Great and a virtual event in LGBT History month with LGBT+ Cymru.
 - A Yammer conversation about favourite LGBT books, programmes and became games was very popular.
- 769.4 That despite equality groups having asked for various changes within the University over the years, these changes have taken place this year because of pandemic. The Chair of Enfys concluded with a respectful challenge to Committee that we should accept the experiences of those who are telling us that change is required. The change should not just occur because of a crisis.
- 770 **Students' Union Update**
- 770.1 Received an oral update from Georgie East and Jude Pickett on the activities of the Students' Union.
- Noted
- That JP advised that some of the communities are back on campus and up and running. They are currently looking at elections in

September and integrating with Fresher's week to improve student experience.

- That the SU has been looking at EDI training for key committee leaders, including Race Equality and Awareness, Consent and How to be an Ally training. They have also looked at how to make more staff and students EDI aware and have created 20 commitments to this cause.
- That a motion to the AGM was to prioritise student safety in and around the campus.
- That GE has spoken with Race Alliance Wales and want to align with their manifesto and are currently creating a document to take to the Board of Trustees. They would be one of the first HE Students Unions in Wales to align with this. They have also had conversations with the Student Race Equality Steering Group and are looking at how to train volunteers as well as the culture within the Students' Union and creating an Ethics Lounge where staff can ask questions.
- A request to consider student EDI champions within the school was discussed.
- That the Disability Steering Group Officer is continuing to next year. They will present on Access Able at the next meeting.

770.2 The Committee expressed its thanks to Jude, Jane and Georgie and recognised the significant and valuable work they were undertaking in these unprecedented circumstances.

Items received for discussion

771 Ethnic Diversity on interview panels

Received and considered paper 20/581 Ethnic Diversity on Interview Panels. Dafydd Bowen, HR Recruitment Manger presented this item.

Noted

771.1 The work which has been done to raise the profile of BAME+ colleagues and working towards achieving ethnically diverse interview panels.

771.2 That there will be a list of volunteers who can be contacted and asked to sit on a panel. If no-one volunteers, recruitment will proceed as normal. Interview panel data will be recorded in BrassRing.

771.3 It was acknowledged that this initiative immediately impacts upon a lack of diversity of applicants and interviewees, but the hope is that it will raise awareness and play a significant role in our goal to improve the diversity of our workforce.

771.4 The pilot will shortly be reviewed with a full launch scheduled for June 2021.

771.5 The following questions were raised.

- 1 Will there be feedback to volunteers?
Yes, this is crucial.
- 2 Is it possible to ensure that volunteers' time will not count against their productivity?
A paper will be going to the next Operations Group about how this may work. DB will take feedback on this.
- 3 Do we have a tactical approach to how this will be upscaled to ensure we do not become over-reliant on a potentially small (relatively) group of volunteers?
This was acknowledged point to consider as the initiative moves from pilot to embedded. The plan for now is to target the areas where it is needed most.

Resolved

771.6 That this presentation would be taken to the Professional Services Leadership Network in the near future to be arranged with the Chief Operating Officer.

772 EDI in REF update

Noted

772.1 James Vilares, Business Manager to PVC Research, Innovation and Enterprise was present to advice the principles of inclusivity, transparency, consistency and accountability were applied to REF. A significant EDI training programme was developed to target all levels of staff involvement in the process.

772.2 That the EIA looked at independence and output allocation, not availability. There was an expected improvement in the percentage of females returned under the process since 2014 which will be mainly due to different rules for the submission.

772.3 That the EIA had established no adverse impact toward any group when looking at allocation of 3*/4* outputs. However when looking at 4* alone, there is an adverse impact shown toward female, BAME, disabled and early career researchers.

772.4 Our REF EDI approach will now be rolled out across research and innovation portfolio. This approach has already led to the EDI becoming embedded in new initiatives and leadership groups. Consideration will also be made toward carrying out EDI training earlier in the process.

773 Special Item- Accessibility of our Physical and Digital Estate

Noted

773.1 Geoff Turnbull, Deputy Director Estates and Campus Facilities, was present to provide an update on the physical accessibility of the University's estate.

773.2 Planned accessibility audits began in 2019 but were paused due to the Pandemic. These have now been reinstated and audits are still being carried out on Park Place, Cathays, Newport Road and Queen's buildings with the intention to be finalised by August for the planned building maintenance case.

773.3 Further updates that were provided include:

- Actions have been costed for the audits that have completed. A number of actions will be able to taken forward through normal maintenance activity. Both Law and Main Building have actions of significant cost in relation to lifts.
- Sir Martin Evans and Tower building reports have highlighted that ramps and accessible toilets do not meet the required standards. The required work has been costed in the region of £500k.
- There are major and considerable accessibility issues with the Heath Campus buildings in terms of ramps, parking, steps etc. Tŷ Dewi Sant, Geraint Evans and Tenovus buildings have accessible toilets issues. Current estimates are £650,000
- Total costs taking into account all building clusters that have been audited are in excess of £2m.

773.4 The Chair requested that Estates ensure these actions are prioritised and the costings are covered in full through future UEB papers requesting maintenance costs and encouraged EDI Committee members who are also members of UEB to help ensure this is the case.

773.5 Andy Lloyd, Senior Curriculum Development Advisor, reported on Accessibility in Learning Environment and Inclusive Curriculum. Priority work for The Centre of Education, Support and Innovation (CESI) includes:

- Work on Welsh Medium provision with Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, learning analytics and implementing a Partnership project on Learning Community.
- How we use the curriculum to promote inclusion, equality and diversity. The Student Experience Strategy Group (SESG) endorsed a working definition for the Inclusive Curriculum. CESI have collected data from equality contacts in the schools, and Errol Scott Rivera has been appointed as the dedicated Inclusive Curriculum Office. Funding has been provided to recruit and academic partner to provide academic leadership for the Inclusive Curriculum.

- As part of this Inclusive curriculum project a wider plan will be developed with clear timescales and deliverable outcomes and we will be engaging with Advance HE to help us with this project.
- To consider the ethical and accessibility implications of technology in the blended learning and teaching environment. A model will be developed and implemented to ensure inclusivity and accessibility is embedded in the programme development process.

- 773.6 Karen Harvey-Cooke, HR Organisational and Staff Development Manager, reported on the University's engagement with the Business Disability Forum to help us meet the requirements of the Disability Confident employer standard:
- 773.7 That to meet the Disability Confident Employer standard there are still some criteria that the University does not yet meet. There are issues that have been raised separately in this item about the accessibility of our physical and digital estate, if improvements are not made here this will present a problem meeting the standards.
- 773.8 A key area of focus is around inclusive and accessible recruitment. From the work that has taken place with respect to improving diversity in interview panels, there is now scope to consider similar actions from the perspective of disability. Offering interviews to disabled people and how we understand what our meet minimum requirements for interview, has been a big challenge for us. As such a large institution with devolved responsibilities in recruitment we are now working with Colleges to establish how we can meet this standard as a priority.
- 773.9 Ceri Davies, Assistant Director, IT and Enterprise Architecture, presented about the University's plans for accessibility in our Digital Strategy:
- 773.10 That our Digital Strategy focusses on the reduction in the use of forms, to encourage the use of tools that are more accessible and to train staff to use them. A major challenge is to ensure all new digital acquisitions are assessed for accessibility before purchase and being implemented.
- 773.11 The following further points were highlighted:
- That according to a tool we have purchased, approximately 50% of our content on Learning Central scores well for accessibility.
 - Captioning for live content is very expensive and we need to investigate what we required to provide.
 - We only have a small budget for maintaining accessible software such as screen readers and is insufficient for improving support to all students.
 - That they look forward to engaging in the Disability Steering Group to put forward business cases to make the necessary improvements.

Resolved

- 773.12 Following a request for this item to return to Committee as a more in-depth discussion, it was resolved to bring this to the next meeting as a focussed item.

774 **Items received for information**

Noted the following papers received for information:

Paper 20/582C, Gender Pay Gap Report
 Paper 20/585HC, Briefing Note for Vice-Chancellor- Chinese Staff and Students
 Paper 20/583, Terms of Reference for BLS' EDI Committee
 Paper 20/584, Widening Participation Strategy
 Paper 20/615, College Equality Network
 Paper 20/616, Staff Equality Networks Update

Resolved

- 774.1 A query was raised regarding Paper 20/585HC and whether interested parties had been consulted. The Chair acknowledged the speed in which it was brought together and confirmed that the VC is to convene a group to help resolve the matters raised and that she (DVC) will ensure relevant officers of this Committee will be included.

775 **Any Other Business**

- 775.1 The Chair was thanked by members for chairing the EDI committee and her dedication to work on the EDI agenda.
- 775.2 The Chair of the Gender Equality Steering group raised concerns regarding staff return to campus and the impact on their mental health. This issue has been raised in many meetings and it is important that we support staff back to work.
- 775.3 The committee were asked to note Cadi Thomas is stepping down as Chair of the Rhwydwaith and as a member of the Committee. The Chair thanked Cadi for her excellent work. Wyn Davies is continuing as the Chair.
- 775.4 Abyd Quinn-Aziz raised the current issues of violence in Palestine and requested that the University put out a message to staff and students condemning the violence and offering support.

776 **Date of next meeting**

Noted the date for the next meeting: 20 September 2021 at 14:00.