

# CANTERBURY CHRIST CHURCH UNIVERSITY

## MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY COMMITTEE HELD AT 2.15 PM ON WEDNESDAY 2 FEBRUARY 2011 IN THE FREDERIC MASON ROOM AT THE PRIORY

**Present:** Dame Janet Trotter (Chair), Professor Tony Lavender (Pro-Vice Chancellor [Dean of Social and Applied Sciences]), Ms Moira Mitchell (Equality & Diversity Manager), Mr Steve Godwin (SU President), Mrs Debbie Grantham (UNISON Rep), Mr Bryan Hawkins (UCU Rep), Mr Geoff Haworth (Director of Student Support & Guidance), Revd Jeremy Law (Dean of Chapel), Dr Louise Mansfield (Social & Applied Sciences), Dr Janet Melville-Wiseman (Health & Social Care), Dr Burkhard Scherer (Arts & Humanities), Mr Simon Wright (Acting Director of Human Resources)

**In Attendance:** Mr Paul Bogle (Clerk to the Governing Body)  
Mrs Heather McCulloch (Committee Officer)

### **162. Apologies**

Apologies were received from Miss Ren Chinnadurai and Mr Andy Bloor.

### **163. Declarations of Interest**

There were none.

### **164. Chair's Remarks**

There were none.

### **165. Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 October 2010**

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 20 October 2010 were agreed and signed as a true record.

### **166. Matters Arising not appearing elsewhere on the Agenda**

#### **166.1 Equality Act: Specific Duties Consultation Response [Paper C113]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C113, Equality Act: Specific Duties Consultation Response, for information.

**NOTED**

### **167. Staff Data Monitoring [Paper C114]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C114 on Staff Data Monitoring. The Paper was a revised version of the Staff Data Monitoring paper that had been presented at the last Committee meeting in October 2010. The previous paper had contained an incomplete data set due to the transition to a new e-recruitment

system by Human Resources. The revised version contained a complete data set from 2005 to 2010 which had been analysed by the Pro-Vice Chancellor (Dean of Social & Applied Sciences) and the Equality and Diversity Manager.

Overall, the figures were positive, with increasing numbers of disabled and BME staff employed at the University year on year. One trend had emerged which appeared to require further investigation, namely that BME academic candidates were less likely to progress from application to short-listing stage. The reason for this may be because significant numbers of overseas applicants appeared to be submitting non-specific CVs for numerous posts in the UK and/or did not have work permits.

The Committee discussed the issue and the following points emerged.

- The trend applied to academic staff and not to support staff.
- A suggestion to break down the figures by campus, then compare them with the BME percentage of the population figure for that geographic area. This figure will vary from campus to campus.
- A suggestion that Human Resources produce a more detailed analysis of the figures for one year.
- Internationalisation was to be one of seven strands in the new Strategic Plan, therefore it was important to consider the diversity of the workforce in seeking to meet this aspiration.
- Consideration of the figures of a comparator institution may prove useful in BME and other aspects.
- Consideration of how internal promotions may affect the figures.

The Chair indicated that to date the Committee's remit had been to monitor the figures on staff data. However, with the introduction of a new Strategic Plan the Committee may wish to consider setting target figures in the future.

The Equality and Diversity Manager suggested that possible target setting be an agenda item at a future meeting once the new Strategic Plan had been published. The current Government was placing greater reliance on data, and it was likely that public organisations will be required to make figures much more available to the public in future.

The Chair requested that further work be undertaken with regard to the BME figures discussed, and to comparator work with other 'like' institutions.

#### **NOTED**

#### **168. Single Equality Scheme Consultation [Paper C115]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C115, the Single Equality Scheme Consultation. At its meeting in October 2010 the Committee agreed that the University would develop a Single Equality Scheme, which would cover the nine protected characteristics of the Equality Act 2010. Consultation was currently underway with both staff and students. Staff had been asked if they wished to be involved, and those that volunteered will form small groups. Students had been asked to complete an online survey, and so far eighty five had done so.

The Equality and Diversity Manager commented that developing a Scheme to cover so many protected characteristics will be challenging. The Chair suggested that a single Scheme could be produced, with a number of appendices that would cover each of the protected characteristics.

The Committee discussed the format of the online student survey and a number of reservations were expressed. The Committee welcomed the advance in trying to collect new types of data, but considered the wording of a number of the questions not sufficiently sophisticated and the use of tick boxes problematic. The Committee did acknowledge the inherent difficulties in trying to achieve desirable levels of sophistication with a computerised system. The Equality and Diversity Manager will check the guidelines from the Equality Challenge Unit that were followed in drawing up the survey, and report back to the Committee at its next meeting.

Both staff and student consultations will be followed up with focus groups and the results brought back to the Committee. The Equality and Diversity Manager encouraged Committee members to email any further comments to her following the meeting.

The Chair stated that the Single Equality Scheme would form a substantial item on the agenda of the next meeting.

#### **NOTED**

#### **169. University Proposed Values Narrative [Paper C116]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C116, the University Proposed Values Narrative. The Pro-Vice Chancellor explained the background to the Paper. Whilst developing the propositions for the new Strategic Plan, the seven working groups considered the values that had underpinned the last Strategic Plan. It became apparent that a number of staff considered there were too many values underpinning the last Plan, and the result was the development of a new set of five proposed value statements that were endorsed by the Governing Body at its away days in early January 2011. These five values were thought to better reflect the current values of the institution.

The Committee discussed the Proposed Value Statements and a number of issues were raised.

- Some of the Statements contained explanatory sub-text, some did not, thereby creating an inconsistency.
- The first Value Statement was inconsistent in its use of singulars and plurals.
- There was no reference to sustainability or the environment despite this aspect featuring as one of the seven strands in the new Strategic Plan.
- Reference to 'diverse and inclusive' would be appropriate in the Statement about equal opportunities.
- 'Friendly and supportive' could be regarded as a weak phrase.
- Reference to education as a value in itself should be included.
- There was nothing distinctive or unique in the Statements; perhaps reference to the unique geographic location of the University could have been included.

As a large number of staff had contributed to the Values Statements, and as they had already been approved by the Governing Body, there was little opportunity for radical change at this stage. However, the Pro-Vice Chancellor agreed to feed back the issues raised by the Committee to the Director of Marketing, who had chaired the focus group on values.

The Committee expressed the view that its expertise in such areas should have been sought before the Values Statements were finally approved, and closure of the process should have been more clearly signalled.

## **NOTED**

### **170. Student Data Monitoring [Paper C117]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C117 on Student Data Monitoring. The Equality and Diversity Manager recorded her thanks to the Assistant University Secretary for his work in monitoring and analysing data about Student Procedures from an equality and diversity perspective.

In addition to the data presented here, this year's Equality and Diversity Annual Report will also contain data relating to student destination and degree classification, which were being regarded as increasingly important.

The Committee considered the data and whether any trends were emerging. One aspect of the data that may require further analysis related to the high figure for 'interruptions' by females. It may be that faculties that tended to attract a greater proportion of mature female students evidenced a higher figure for 'interruptions' that could be attributed to trying to 'juggle' too much both in and outside the home.

Further breakdown of the raw data at faculty and departmental level would be required to support such an analysis, although the theory also seemed to be supported by the data on age. The Equality and Diversity Manager agreed to make a recommendation to the Widening Participation Committee to consider this further.

The Committee raised other issues around gender, religion and age and the common denominator to further progress on analysis appeared to be a lack of data. The Equality and Diversity Manager agreed to check which protected characteristics were captured at the registration process; she will further raise questions around whether an age category of '30+' on the registration form was compatible with age as a protected characteristic.

The Committee discussed the issue of collecting data on all protected characteristics. The Equality and Diversity Manager confirmed that the Vice-Chancellor will be guided by the Committee in this regard. Technical issues around implementation and timing of the introduction of monitoring of new characteristics were raised, together with the cultural issue of preparing the ground. Some universities had extended the number of characteristics monitored for staff, but it was regarded as more problematic where students were concerned. The Chair indicated that it was the Committee's decision whether to recommend to the Governing Body that data be collected on all protected characteristics.

Operational issues around implementation were the remit of the Equality and Diversity Delivery Group.

It was agreed that the Equality and Diversity Manager will consult with the Equality and Diversity Delivery Group and prepare a paper for the Senior Management Team and the Equality and Diversity Committee proposing which new protected characteristics should be monitored for staff and students.

**NOTED**

**171. Revised Equality and Diversity Policy Statement [Paper C118]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C118, the Revised Equality and Diversity Policy Statement, for information.

**RESOLVED TO RECOMMEND:**

that the Revised Equality and Diversity Policy Statement be approved by the Governing Body.

**172. Dignity at Work [Oral Update]**

The Equality and Diversity Manager reminded the Committee of the background to this item. A network of Dignity at Work volunteers was proposed in response to a figure of 16% of staff indicating, through the Staff Survey, that they had experienced or witnessed bullying/harassment. The work in this area had been led by the Senior Pro Vice-Chancellor, now retired.

Difficulties were encountered with UCU, which regarded the proposal as an inadequate response on the part of Management. The Union called for a review of the related HR policies to which Management agreed. UCU had agreed not to oppose the development of the volunteer network.

The item was presented for the Committee's information only.

**NOTED**

**173. Notes of the Meeting of the Equality and Diversity Delivery Group held on 11 November 2010 [Paper C119]**

Members of the Committee received Paper C119, the Notes of the Meeting of the Equality and Diversity Delivery Group held on 11 November 2010, for information. The Chair commented that the revised operational arrangements for the Group appeared to be working well, and she recorded her thanks to the Group for its work.

**NOTED**

**174. Any Other Business**

The Equality and Diversity Manager raised the issue of the University's subscription to Stonewall, the LGBT campaigning charity. The subscription had just expired and

she was seeking the Committee's opinion regarding its renewal. The annual cost of the subscription was £2,400, which was more than a quarter of the Equality and Diversity non-pay budget. In the past Stonewall had not always reviewed the University favourably, particularly around the issue of civil partnerships, though the situation had improved as a result of communication between the Equality and Diversity Manager and the Director of Stonewall.

The Committee took a vote on the issue and unanimously agreed that it was appropriate for the University to renew the subscription. The Pro-Vice Chancellor agreed to ask questions regarding whether an alternative means of meeting the subscription cost could be found, perhaps sharing the cost with other departments. Members of the Committee also considered that the University could make more use of its membership of Stonewall, particularly with regard to marketing and recruitment materials.

**NOTED**

**175. Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 27 April 2011 at 2.15pm.

The meeting closed at 4.25pm.