

**Trinity College Dublin
The University of Dublin**

Minutes of the People and Culture Committee

**Thursday, 19th September 2pm to 4pm
Trinity Boardroom, TBS**

PRESENT:

Prof. Darryl Jones (Chair)
Ms. Antoinette Quinn (Secretary - Director of HR)
Prof. Lorraine Leeson (AVPEDI)
Prof. Eoin O'Sullivan (Senior Dean)
Ms. Kathryn Whyte (External Member – Chief People Officer Enterprise Ireland)
Mr. Lucky Khambule (External Staff Member)
Ms. Paula Hicks (College Staff Member)
Dr Rachel Moss (College Staff Member)
Prof. Sylvia Draper (Dean of STEM)
Ms. Gillian Connolly, secretarial support

APOLOGIES:

Mr. Andrew Duffin (College Staff Member)
Ms. Orla Cunningham (COO)

Section A1

PPC/23-24/22 Minutes

The minutes of 9th May 2024 were approved by the Committee for signing by the Chair.

Section A2

PPC/23-24/23 Matters arising from the Minutes:

The Chair of the Committee informed the meeting that the Report on Employment Contracts and Patterns of Employment was approved by Board on the 22nd of May 2024, and the Reward and Recognition report was approved by Board in February 2024.

A query arose regarding the student membership of the P&C Committee. The Chair explained to the Committee that he discussed this matter with the Registrar, Prof Neville Cox, and that the student membership of the P&C Committee will be established soon.

In response to this, the Senior Dean raised a point that the former Graduate Students Union has recently been amalgamated with the SU.

The Director of HR sounded a word of caution that while student representation on the People and Culture Committee was welcomed, it should not be seen as a forum for negotiation on terms and conditions of employees, which was the remit of the recognised trade unions.

In response to this, Prof. Lorraine Leeson raised a point regarding the remit of the P&C Committee, in the TOR it references that it will review, challenge, and monitor the content and approach to University strategies including its Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy, inclusive of students. If the Committee was to take this approach, it would dilute the work of EDI.

Ms Antoinette Quinn responded that she was referring to the terms and conditions of employment, which are negotiated by recognised Trade Unions and the University cannot enter into discussions with an entity which is not recognised for the purpose of collective bargaining.

The Chair confirmed that he would discuss the student membership of P&C with the Registrar.

Prof. Sylvia Draper, the Dean of STEM raised action points from the last meeting regarding Adoptive Leave that needed to be addressed.

Director of Human Resources advised that Ms. Mary Leahy, the Head of Employee Relations would address these action points later in the meeting.

Mr. Lucky Khambule enters meeting.

Section A3

Ms. Fedelma Mc Namara, Director of Academic Services Division enters the meeting.

PPC/23-24/24 Presentation on Developing our new Strategic Plan 2025-2030.

The Chair welcomed and introduced the Director of Academic Services Division to the P&C Committee.

Ms Fedelma Mc Namara presented on the ongoing work the VP's office are undertaking for the development of the Strategic Plan (2025-2030). The Strategic Plan outlines challenges the University faces brought on by globalisation, technology, and environmental change.

The Strategic plan is currently in the consultation phase, where input and feedback from key internal and external stakeholders is being gathered to inform the Plan's development.

The Director of ASD outlined that the previous Strategic Plan was approved during Covid, which resulted in a delay and as a result they have sought a 3-month extension which means the new strategic plan will go live in July 2025. Key elements in the Plan are Civic Action, Organisation, Research, and Education.

Ms. Fedelma Mc Namara outlined that as part of the consultation process, they circulated a survey to all staff that asked a number of key questions which included 1) What one strategic action could we take that would transform the way we operate during the next five years (2025-30)? 2) Why do you consider this important for our institution? 3) What needs to change or be in place to achieve this?

She explained that there were some notable trends that emerged from the survey, which include the way we value, reward, recognise and develop staff. Research and Civic engagement are other trends that stood out significantly.

The Director of ASD advised that they have posed the same questions circulated in the survey to all staff when engaging with other key internal stakeholders.

A discussion followed:

The Chair raised a question about the high number of students in comparison to the staff.

The Director of Academic Services Division confirmed that Trinity currently has 22,000 students. The student services in the college are saturated and unable to cope with the demand. Some examples of issues faced are an increase in Postgrad Research, non-EU vs CAO applicants.

A number of suggestions followed including taking the presentation to the Capitation Committee, Risk and Compliance committee, and other principle committees of college.

Ms. Fedelma Mc Namara advised they have met with the other Principal Committees.

In response to this, Prof. Sylvia Draper makes a recommendation that they should meet with the Risk and Compliance committee as they would have valuable input into the Strategic Plan.

The Director of ASD highlighted that exchequer funding of higher education is a challenge. She explained that there will not be a focus on Capital Projects in this Strategic Plan. The focus will be on refurbishing to allow for the allocation of space.

**Ms. Fedelma Mc Namara, Director of Academic Services Division leaves the meeting. **

Section A4

PPC/23-24/24 Presentation on Update on People Projects

Before the Director of Human Resources began her presentation. The Chair referred to Board minutes from 26th May, where he highlighted to the Board that many decisions that that the P&C Committee would be making would have financial implications.

The Director of Human Resources asked Prof. Lorraine Leeson to highlight any EDI related matters.

The three key projects, SAPC, Reward & Recognition & Career Advancement for Professional Staff and Employment Contracts & Working Patterns have all been approved by Board this year. These projects have been supported by behavioural values and the accountability framework.

The Director of Human Resources provided an update on the work to date and the next steps of implementation of SAPC, Reward & Recognition & Career Advancement for Professional Staff and Employment Contracts & Working Patterns.

The Director of Human Resources mentioned to the Dean of STEM, Sylvia Draper that she will seek input from her regarding potential involvement in the steering committee who will be responsible for the direction the project and the final sign off on each workstream.

The topic was opened to the committee members for discussion:

Prof Sylvia Draper queried the timeline of the People Projects.

The Director of Human Resources advised that a Project Manager was being hired to support this work. It is anticipated this person will be in place before end of this year.

Prof Sylvia Draper raised a point that University of Limerick provides buy-outs to allow full time employee elected union members to participate in committees.

Action: Following a question Ms Antoinette Quinn confirmed that the documents would be discussed with the Trade Unions.

The Chair asked whether the Committee supported the ideas articulated in the document, though noted that it was presented for their information, rather than as a formal policy document.

All committee members agreed to support the document.

Section B1. Items for Approval and Noting

PPC/23-24/25 EDI-Sub Committee TOR

Prof. Lorraine Leeson outlined the revised Draft Terms of Reference for the new EDI subcommittee.

Prof Leeson also outlined that the language in 2.2 in the TOR had been updated to better reflect equality and gender of the committee.

B2. Items for Noting

Policies (Parents' Leave)

The changes in the Parents' leave policy are as follows, Parents' leave increased from 7 weeks to 9 weeks for children born or adopted after 1st of August 2024.

Parents can claim the additional 2 weeks' parents' leave if their child is under the age of 2 on 1st August 2024 or their adopted child had been with their family for fewer than 2 years on 1st August 2024. The extra leave must be completed on or before the child's second birthday or within 2 years of the adoption placement.

Parents' Benefit also increased from 7 weeks to 9 weeks for each parent.

Section C

PPC/23-24/26 Any Other Business

Prof. Sylvia Draper, the Dean of STEM asked whether there was a fund to replace someone who takes up adoptive leave. She outlined that 9 week leaves a workforce gap, individuals may not take this leave due to the impact it may have.

Action: Ms Mary Leahy, Head of Employee Relations will follow up and close off any action items Prof Sylvia Draper has in relation to Adoptive leave.

Prof. Lorraine Leeson extends her congratulations colleagues for their participation in the Athena Swan award successes, contributing to Gender and Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion.

Dr. Rachel Moss queried if the People Projects presentation could be shared with the Unions.

Action: Ms Antoinette Quinn agreed that the People Projects presentation would be shared with the Unions at the next HR/Union meeting.

Action: The Chair and Ms. Antoinette Quinn mentioned that the next P&C meeting will need to be rescheduled. The Committee members will be contacted after the meeting to confirm the next meeting in November 2024.

No further items were raised, and the meeting was concluded.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tony Jones". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized 'T' and 'J'.

Date: 3/12/24