

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE
STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Staff Consultative Committee** held at 10.00am

on Wednesday 5 June 2024 via Zoom & CH-205

PRESENT:

University – Martin Sainsbury, Chief People & Culture Officer; Andrew Cairns, Associate Director Workplace Relations, Governance & Policy; and Ruth Hartmann, Senior Employment Relations Specialist.

NTEU – Terrence Summers; David Rambaldi; Annika Westrenius; Decheng Sun (NTEU Industrial Officer); and Jenny Whittard (NTEU Newcastle Branch Organiser).

CPSU – Mark Smith; Michelle Dillon; and Lisa Nelson (CPSU Industrial Officer).

Chair – Ruth Hartmann

Guests - Simone Jordan, Indigenous Employment Partner (item 1); Kate Havrilka, HR Business Partner (item 2); Simon Bush, Director, Future Students (item 2); Sarah Pepperall, Executive Officer Future Students Communications and Engagement (item 2); and Professor Zee Upton, Deputy Vice Chancellor Research & Innovation (item 2).

Observers - Angela Mills (Employee Relations); Jess Fitzpatrick (HR Business Partner); Krystal Rees (HR Business Partner); and Naomi Fibbens (HR Business Partner).

APOLOGIES – Ian Braithwaite (CPSU Organiser); Roy Murcutt, and Zain Hamid.

Notetaker: Alison Heitmeyer.

BUSINESS ARISING FROM PREVIOUS MEETING

- a) *Your Voice data report distribution - completed.*
- b) *Nominations for inquiry officers/independent chairs agreed pools - NTEU to confirm.*
- c) *Nominations for appointment to internal research code breach panels - NTEU nominations confirmed.*
- d) *SCC member request for research code breach training - under consideration by the University*
- e) *NTEU 1 Teacher and 1 Professional staff member SCC nomination - NTEU to confirm.*
- f) *SCC terms of reference/meeting protocols drafted and circulated by University - NTEU feedback received.*
- g) *Categories of employment report circulated by University - for discussion in meeting today.*

1. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT – STANDING ITEM

Simone Jordan, Indigenous Employment Partner, Office of Indigenous Strategy and Leadership attended the meeting for this item to provide an update on the Maligagu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy including that the number of staff who identify as Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander now sits at 100, representing 3.04% of staff across the University.

Information was provided on current roles being advertised, and the merging of Wollotuka and the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Leadership including the proposed leadership structure. Ms Jordan also provided a report on staff completing the Thirri Wirri Leadership program, information on community partnerships and Reconciliation Week activities. Discussion followed on opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander staff access to superannuation information.

2. MAJOR WORKPLACE CHANGE – STANDING ITEM

2.1 Pre-major workplace change reviews

The University reported that, with the exception of the Academic Calendar which is in preliminary consultation with staff, they were not aware of any formal reviews in progress.

Martin Sainsbury, Chief People and Culture Officer explained that the merging of Wollotuka and the Office of Indigenous Strategy and Leadership flagged by Ms Jordan (see item 1 above) had not progressed beyond initial announcements, and while there are no significant impacts on staff expected, the University will provide more detail as it emerges.

2.2 Major workplace change

a) Centre of Excellence for Equity in Higher Education (CEEHE) staff relocation

Kate Havrilka, HR Business Partner for the College of Human and Social Futures attended the meeting to provide an update on this change process and advised that the proposed CEEHE staff relocation to NuSpace Level 4, is on hold pending further discussion with the Space Optimisation team and the leader of the group returning from a period of extended leave.

b) Future Students

Simon Bush, Director Future Students attended the meeting for this item to provide an update on the proposed changes to the Future Students team. Mr Bush reported that the formal consultation period for this change occurred for 5 weeks and during this time affected staff had opportunity to provide comments, recommendations, submissions and/or alternative proposals regarding the proposed change. Mr Bush presented information on some of the key themes of the 296 pieces of feedback received.

NTEU representatives requested that all feedback/submissions be circulated to SCC members and sufficient time be allowed for the SCC to complete its obligations in accordance with clause 9.1.14 of the Enterprise Agreement. Associate Director, Workplace Relations, Governance and Policy Andrew Cairns responded that a summary of the feedback received would be circulated by the University following this meeting

Action: University - circulate summary document of submissions/feedback received during formal consultation period to SCC members.

NTEU representatives expressed concern that the paper for this change process had not been published for all University staff to comment on. It was also noted that the paper provided to affected staff did not include financial, staffing and other information as required by the Enterprise Agreement.

University representatives noted that there had been changes agreed to the change clauses as part of enterprise bargaining and the process may not necessarily be the same as required by previous Enterprise Agreements.

c) One person change process

University representatives noted consultation with the staff member impacted by a proposed change that impacts only one position in Infrastructure and Facilities Services (IFS) had commenced.

d) Potential change processes

NTEU representatives reported feedback from staff regarding changes in reporting lines for research institutes.

Mr Sainsbury acknowledged challenges for staff experiencing change in their workplaces and noted the University's obligations to consult with staff under its the Enterprise Agreements.

e) Post-Implementation Review

Deputy Vice-Chancellor, Research and Innovation, Professor Zee Upton attended the meeting for this item and presented the findings of the post-implementation review of the Division's change process.

3. EA IMPLEMENTATION – STANDING ITEM

3.1 SCC terms of reference / protocols

Circulation of SCC terms of reference / protocols document drafted by University was noted. Feedback was received from the NTEU. CPSU to review and provide comments.

Action: CPSU – review draft terms of reference document and provide feedback.

3.2 SCC Reports

A report on the incidence and scope of casual and fixed term employment at the University and across the sector was circulated to SCC members prior to the meeting.

NTEU representatives requested that future reports show the data at Division, College and School level.

4. WORKPLACE HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Health and Safety report for the quarter was circulated to SCC members prior to the meeting.

5. OTHER BUSINESS

WEGA - Mr Sainsbury advised that a Workplace Gender Equality Compliance Report has been submitted per the Act, including statistics, profile and data. Staff may make comments on the report. University to circulate information to SCC members after the meeting today.

Action: University –circulate WEGA report and contact details to SCC members.

SCC membership - NTEU Branch Organiser, Jenny Whittard advised the SCC that she is taking an extended period of leave, and this may be her final meeting as a member of the SCC. Representatives acknowledged Dr Whittard's service and wished her the best for the future.

CPSU representatives also noted that SCC member, Shell Dillon, had been recognised by the CPSU at their annual conference with the award of Higher Education Delegate of the Year.

Meeting concluded 12:23pm