

THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE

STAFF CONSULTATIVE COMMITTEE (SCC)

Notes of a meeting of the **Staff Consultative Committee** held at 3.00 pm on Tuesday 14 May 2019 in the Committee Meeting Room, The Chancellery.

PRESENT:

University – Tina Crawford (by video-conference), Mark Kelly, Mark Wylie, Ruth Badham, Diane Bunch, and Dan Cummins, Anna Bennett (Teachers) and Emma Hamilton (Teachers)

NTEU – Terry Summers, Emma Joel, Alistair Rolls, Lance Dale, David Rambaldi, Paul Chojenta (Teachers), and Louise Noell (Teachers)

CPSU – Ben Trainor (by phone), Ian Braithwaite and Sue Freeman.

Guests: Rachel Fowell, Dylan Mitchell, Lindsay Hardy, Sharlene Leroy-Dyer (item 1), and Brian Jones (item 2).

APOLOGIES:

NTEU –

CPSU –

University – Darrell Evans, Lisa Fairlie and Lesley Phillips

Chair – Mark Wylie

Note-taker – Ruth Hartmann

1. ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER EMPLOYMENT

Ms. Rachel Fowell, Manager, Equity and Diversity attended the meeting for this item with Mr. Dylan Mitchell, Equity and Diversity Project Manager and Mr. Lindsay Hardy, Indigenous Employment Partner. The draft Maligagu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy and Action Plan 2019-2021 was tabled at the meeting. Ms Fowell noted that the Strategy and Action Plan has four Priorities - Attraction and Recruitment; Environment and Retention; Development and Advancement; and Governance and Leadership – with underpinning Principles/Activities and Specific Actions to deliver against. The draft document was presented to and positively endorsed by the Executive Committee (EC) on 9 May 2019. Consultation and engagement is now scheduled with established committees across the University and not limited to Wollotuka.

Lance Dale, NTEU Industrial Officer enquired as to whether members of this Committee could circulate the document to other staff members for comment. Mr. Mitchell explained that further staff feedback would be considered and requested that Mr. Dale co-ordinate and capture any feedback for provision to the Equity and Diversity team within a reasonable timeframe.

Union representatives requested information on the consultation process to achieve the draft document. Mr. Hardy reported that the DVC (A), Faculty Health and Medicine EDIC Bi, BATSIER, the Athena SWAN Working Party and both unions representing staff at the University were consulted in developing the draft. Mr Hardy advised that the document is not only a strategy document but an

action plan aimed at achieving indigenous employment targets across the University not just within Wollotuka.

Action 1: Unions – forward staff feedback on draft Maligagu Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Employment Strategy and Action Plan to Equity and Diversity team.

2. CAMPUS PLANNING AND PROJECTS

The Director, Infrastructure and Facilities Services, Brian Jones attended the meeting for this item reporting on the following:

- Gosford: In April, the Vice-Chancellor announced the Federal Government's \$18 million investment towards a Gosford campus – the first stage of the University of Newcastle's \$250m vision for a multi-campus presence on the Central Coast. Mr Jones advised that the University has developed a Central Coast Integrated Campus Strategy and discussions will continue with the Government for further funding to realise its full aspirations. Responding to an enquiry from NTEU representative, Mr Jones indicated he did not anticipate that he did not anticipate that the Federal election outcomes would have any impact on the Gosford development.
- Honeysuckle- The design for Stage 1A (Creative Industries Hub) of the 7 building plan has been submitted to Department of Planning for approval. Enabling works to commence shortly and a 300 bed student accommodation building plan has been approved by Council intended to open in 2021.
- STEMM: construction to commence at beginning of 2021 with a two year build program.
- IT: the Design Building at Callaghan is to be re-purposed as office space to consolidate all IT staff. Expected to be completed by first half of next year.
- CELFS: there have been preliminary discussions regarding staff units such as ELFS that could potentially be relocated temporarily in off-campus office accommodation to make way for the new STEMM building. However, there has been no firm decision made on this yet.
- Bio-resources: construction of a new facility (animal house) to support research is about to commence near the Bio-Med Building.

As previously foreshadowed to Union representatives, Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering reported that a review of the Port Macquarie campus has commenced. A consultation meeting with staff was scheduled for today. This follows recent announcements by Charles Sturt University and the NSW State government regarding a \$61 million expansion of the CSU Port Macquarie campus. The review will look at the viability of a range of options, including:

- Continuing our undergraduate programs at our existing campus which is shared with NSW TAFE
- Relocating to a new University teaching facility
- Refocussing our presence in Port Macquarie around enhanced research, post-graduate programs and clinical engagement with the local health service providers
- Discussing possible cooperation with CSU.

3. YOUR VOICE SURVEY

A copy of the Your Voice – High Level Results presented by the Vice-Chancellor at the all staff forum on 3 May 2019 was circulated to Committee members prior to the meeting. Tina Crawford, Director

People and Workplace Strategy reported that the next step entails detailed results briefings for Faculties, Schools and Units. The objective of these sessions is for leaders to work with their staff to explore and resolve 2 to 3 focus areas. The result will inform the University's new strategic plan as well as establishing action plans for Faculties, Divisions, Schools and Units.

Lance Dale, NTEU Industrial Officer enquired as to whether the 'workforce of the future' would be included in the new strategic plan. Ms Crawford responded that workforce planning is a critical component of the plan. A working party has been established to prepare a 'green paper' that will be available for staff consultation including the Consultative Committee.

Union representatives questioned the diversity of the working party members and enquired whether A&TSI and casual staff representation was or could be considered, including remuneration for casual staff's participation. Ms Crawford undertook to follow up with Joel Palmer, Director of SPP as to additional membership.

Action 3: University – check whether there is scope for additional members of the working party.

4. PERSONAL LEAVE

Union representatives relayed staff experiences with accrued sick leave from past years not being visible in HR Online. University representatives explained that staff have an entitlement of up to 25 days personal leave per year. As part of this personal leave entitlement up to 15 days sick leave accrues per year of service less the number of sick leave days taken. Due to manual entry requirements for staff with extended service, changes in EA entitlements over time and other system limitations, the balance of accrued sick leave is not available in HR Online. However, staff may request information on their leave balances from HR Services any time.

NTEU staff representative, Terry Summers offered his expertise in computing to assist the University in exploring system limitations of HROnline.

Action 4: University - Consider NTEU representative, Terry Summer's offer to assist the University in exploring system limitations of HROnline

5. EA IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 INDUCTION

NTEU representatives noted the commitment made by the University in bargaining to provide union contact details to staff at induction. Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering confirmed in an email to the union representatives prior to this meeting that contact details of both the CPSU and NTEU were now included in the staff induction checklist as well as the staff support and services module that is completed for on-boarding new staff. NTEU representatives requested further union information be included. Mr Kelly undertook to follow up on this request with Tina Crawford, Director, People and Workplace Strategy.

Action 5.1: University – follow up with DPAWS regarding provision of further union information at staff induction.

5.2 EQUITY AND EQUAL EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY

Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering responding to NTEU enquiries understood that the working party reviewing the University's inclusiveness policies had met during the bargaining period. Both the CPSU and NTEU were invited to nominate staff representatives early in the bargaining period. Mr Kelly undertook to follow up with the PVC Teaching & Learning, Professor Liz Burd as to the schedule of next meetings.

NTEU representatives also sought information on the terms of reference for the working party.

Action 5.2: University – follow up with PVC Liz Burd regarding review of inclusiveness policies and schedule of further meetings.

5.3 JOB SECURITY

Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering reported that 'first instance' internal advertising of new continuing Level A Academic and HEW Level 5 and below Professional staff positions had been implemented with 6 positions advertised since the new EAs were approved.

Expressions of interest are being taken from staff requesting career development and job seeking assistance such as resume writing and interview skills. HR staff provide assistance where possible and resources are available on Discover and Mind Tools. Mr Kelly advised that where there are sufficient numbers of staff expressing interest programs would be scheduled with Lee Hecht Harrison, the University linked external provider.

5.4 REDEPLOYMENT

Committee members requested further information on the career development programs and services offered by the external provider. University representatives agreed to arrange for a briefing session with Lee Hecht Harrison.

Action 5.4: University – arrange information session with Lee Hecht Harrison for Committee members.

6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Committee members discussed nominations for a pool of potential Independent Reviewers and Committee of Inquiry chairs. NTEU representative, Lance Dale indicated that he has provided the University with a list of suggestions. CPSU representatives are yet to submit any nominations.

Action 6: Union: – CPSU to provide the University with a list of potential Independent Reviewers and independent Chairs for Committee of Inquiry proceedings under the Enterprise Agreements.

PROFESSIONAL STAFF

7. ORGANISATIONAL CHANGE – STANDING ITEM

7.1 ACADEMIC DIVISION

The Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering, Mark Kelly reported that union representatives had met with DVC (Academic), Professor Darrell Evans last week to provide an update on the Academic Division re-design project ahead of the town hall session for staff.

Feedback from the meeting was positive particularly the effective use of simple language in communications. Sharing information on the expected timing of implementation phases and activities was also acknowledged and appreciated.

Union representatives look forward to further information and progress updates.

7.2 IT SERVICES

University representatives reported that IT Services is still in the design phase with feedback being sought from staff ahead of a change process likely to be launched in July 2019.

Union representatives requested updates be provided between Committee meetings.

8. ROSTERED STAFF

NTEU representatives reported feedback that staff working on the IT Services help desk were not being allowed to accrue flex time although at times they continued with phone calls or working on a task over their lunch break or after their rostered hours.

University representatives responded that EA provisions must be applied and requested further information on the issue be provided for discussion and resolution outside of the regular meeting schedule.

9. UNIVERSITY CLOSEDOWN – LEAVE

NTEU representatives requested information regarding options for staff with limited leave to work in an alternative job over the University closedown period.

Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering responded that the close down dates for the end of this year had already been communicated to staff providing sufficient time for leave planning. However, consideration will be given for newer staff with low leave balances and appropriately matched skills to work in an alternative area where operations require that work must continue over the close-down period and there is a shortfall in regular staff availability.

10. OTHER BUSINESS

Tina Crawford, Director People and Workforce Strategy announced that Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations was retiring from his position at the end of July 2019 but may continue working with the University on a part-time project basis until the end of the year. Mark Wylie has been appointed as Associate Director, Employee Relations and Work, Health & Safety.

TEACHERS

11. CATEGORIES OF EMPLOYMENT

NTEU representatives requested that discussion on this item from the last meeting be continued explaining that staff dissatisfaction remained regarding the recent recruitment of continuing Teachers positions. Staff in contingent positions were of the view that the funding for these positions should have been used to convert existing staff employed in contingent funded positions, specifically for Newstep. The rationale for this being that the staff appointed to the continuing positions would have less service but greater job security than staff in contingent positions.

University representatives explained that the positions recruited were to replace vacancies in specific discipline areas. These positions were and remain continuing positions in the staffing profile.

NTEU representatives requested that the University review circumstances of individual Teaching staff on contingent employment and consider converting these staff members to continuing employment.

Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering responded that staffing requirements would be considered as part of the broader review of Academic Division, the first phase of which is expected to occur in July 2019.

12. TRANSITION TO ACADEMIC

NTEU representatives requested consideration of Newstep teachers being converted or transitioned to Academic staff.

Mark Kelly, Associate Director, Employee Relations and HR Partnering responded that staffing requirements for the University's enabling program offerings would be considered as part of the broader review of Academic Division during which there would be Academic and Teachers specific consultation opportunities.

Discussion followed regarding a previous proposal whereby Newstep teachers could transfer to Academic staff as Scholarly Teaching Fellows. The previous Vice-Chancellor did not agree to this proposal put forward by the Director, Centre of English Language and Foundation Studies, Seamus Fagan. However, an alternative arrangement was implemented for existing Newstep teachers completing a PhD to have appropriate workload allocation. This arrangement was still in place.

13. SECONDMENT

Mark Wylie, Associate Director, Employee Relations and Work, Health & Safety reported that a framework for offshore secondments for University of Newcastle teachers had been drafted and will be circulated for Committee member feedback with the notes of this meeting.

Action 12: University – circulate draft offshore secondment framework for comment and feedback.
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14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

No further items were discussed.

Meeting closed at approx. 5.00pm