UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM

Minutes of a meeting held on
Wednesday 14 September 2011

Present:

Dave Hall (Chair)
Paul Goffin        Geoff Green
Anne Hall          James Hunt
Dawn Kemp          Susan Lapworth
Alun Reynolds      Richard Taylor
Mary Visser

In attendance Dr John Parnham and Andrew Petersen (Secretary)

UNRESERVED (ONLY) BUSINESS

11/M8 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Group considered the minutes of a meeting held on 5 July 2011. The Group approved the minutes as a correct record.

11/M9 MATTERS ARISING

The Group noted the amendments that had been made to its Terms of Reference following its inaugural meeting.

The Registrar and Secretary reported that he had asked the Deputy Director of Finance to undertake an analysis of the total cost of the administration of the institution, in order to identify cost movements over time.

The Registrar and Secretary also reported that the Leadership Foundation had expressed an interest in supporting the work currently underway at the University with reference to developing a unified administration.

The Group agreed:

a) That, in line with the Group’s remit to ‘identify appropriate measures to record progress in achieving service improvement’, members should prepare for the November meeting examples of how service performance and enhancement was measured in their Divisions.

b) That the Registrar and Secretary would clarify the relationship between the IT Portfolio Board and the Professional Services Management Team to ensure effective workload distribution and reporting.

c) That the Registrar and Secretary would liaise with the Leadership Foundation to discuss how they might be introduced to the initiative to unify the administration.
DEVELOPING THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Group considered a draft letter from the Registrar and Secretary to all non-academic staff addressing the role of the individual in the drive towards achieving a unified administration. The letter required staff to actively identify and report one aspect of their business behaviour that they would alter in order to reach this goal. Responses would be considered within existing management structures and issues reported up as appropriate. The group discussed the proposal in detail and agreed that it was a helpful means of engaging staff with the concept of a unified administration and the actions necessary on the part of the individual to achieve this.

The Group agreed:

a) That the letter should be sent to all Professional Services staff, subject to minor amendments to:
   i) Emphasise the need to break down the barriers between and within the Corporate Services as well as with Colleges;
   ii) Highlight the need for staff to consider the broad aims of a unified administration by requiring them to reflect on key questions similar to those identified in M3 in the minutes of the previous meeting;
   iii) reduce the number of proposed actions by individual staff members from three to one;
   iv) encourage staff to discuss the issue with their line managers and, where appropriate, their teams before submission of their proposed action.

b) That the Professional Services Forum should be held in advance of the letter being sent to reinforce the key principles to staff.

c) That Heads of Division and Directors of Administration should have preliminary discussions with their management teams to prepare for the exercise.

d) That the Registrar and Secretary would meet separately with relevant colleagues to discuss means of data collection, extraction and analysis.

e) That a means of responding be established for colleagues who may not have access to the internet.

UPDATE ON UNIFIED ADMINISTRATION

The Group received a paper from Geoff Green on progress with the unified administration initiative.

The Group discussed the work underway on changes to working behaviours. A set of principles was under development in the Division of Human Resources to act as a reference point for managers seeking to develop a cross-institutional perspective within their teams.

The Group agreed:

a) That this was a helpful document which provided a good basis for wider discussions within the Professional Services.

b) That Geoff Green be invited to produce a version of the document suitable for circulation to managers to inform ongoing discussions regarding the movement towards a unified administration.
11/M12  IT STRATEGY

The Group received a report from Mary Visser regarding progress with the implementation of the recommendations of the KMPG Total Cost of Ownership (TCO) report.

In response to the report’s recommendations IT Services was seeking to unify all IT support into one team, directing all support requests through the IT Helpdesk. This had been largely achieved with the exception of two Colleges, for which IT Services and the relevant Directors of College Administration were gathering data on IT support needs in order to develop proposals for delivering a more efficient service.

The Group agreed that Mary Visser be invited to produce a report for the next meeting on implementation of the other TCO report recommendations.

11/M13  DISTANCE LEARNING ARCHITECTURE PROGRAMME

The Group received a report from Susan Lapworth on the Distance Learning Architecture Programme. It was noted that as part of the Sunrise Project a team from the School of Archaeology and Ancient History was working with representatives from Corporate Services to analyse patterns of student demand in order to re-design the approach to the management and recording of distance learning in the School.

The Group agreed that Susan Lapworth be invited to produce a report for the next meeting on progress with the other elements of the DL Architecture Programme.

11/M14  REPORTS FROM DIVISIONS

Richard Taylor reported that a review of admissions systems was underway utilising a systems-thinking approach.

Susan Lapworth reported that a new style of student and staff identity cards had been finalised and these would be issued shortly.

The Group also noted that visits would shortly be taking place to Liverpool, Coventry and Cardiff Universities to report on the work underway in these institutions in terms of administrative development.

11/M15  PROJECT MANAGEMENT

The Group agreed to defer consideration of this item until the following meeting.

DURATION OF MEETING: 1 hour 30 minutes