UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM

Minutes of a meeting held
on Tuesday 5 July 2011

Present:

Dave Hall (Chair)
Liz Bailey          Paul Goffin
Geoff Green       James Hunt
Dawn Kemp          Susan Lapworth
Alun Reynolds     Nigel Siesage
Richard Taylor

In attendance Gretel Stonebridge for item 11/M4 and Andrew Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for Absence were received from Anne Hall and Mary Visser

UNRESERVED (ONLY) BUSINESS

11/M1  TERMS OF REFERENCE AND MEMBERSHIP

The Group considered its terms of reference and membership. It was noted that it was vital that the group established a shared vision as to how the administration would improve the service it offered to students and academic colleagues.

The Group agreed
(a) minor amendments to be made to the terms of reference to more clearly articulate the role of the Group in formulating and leading a range of activities in order to harmonise business practice. Amended terms of reference are attached as an appendix to these minutes as PSMT/11/1 (App).
(b) that the activities and initiatives of the Group would be discussed and disseminated through divisional management meetings, and that the outcome of these discussions should be reported back to the Group as a means of monitoring implementation

11/M2  INTRODUCTION FROM THE CHAIR

The Group received an introduction from the Registrar and Secretary (Chair) regarding the proposed remit and activities of the Professional Services Management Team.

The Group’s activities would be framed with a view to providing demonstrative and evidenced improvements in professional service delivery. This would include a number of activities such as seeking improvements in customer service via the sharing, where appropriate, of good practice between divisions.

The Group agreed
(a) that the Director of Residential and Catering Services should be invited to attend a future meeting to discuss the initiatives she had implemented in order to improve customer service.
(b) that at its next meeting it would consider whether the current project management structure was providing an effective means of service improvement.
DEVELOPING THE PROFESSIONAL SERVICES

The Group considered a paper from the Registrar and Secretary entitled ‘The Role and Development of the Professional Services.’ This represented a draft of a letter to be sent to all Professional Services staff outlining the aim to develop a unified administration, and the role of the individual in achieving this.

The Group agreed

(a) that it was essential to articulate a common interpretation of a unified administration.
(b) that the document be amended to provide a clear link between the aspiration of achieving a unified administration and the actions required at both an institutional and individual level to achieve this.
(c) that the document should conclude with a number of questions requiring individual staff members to reflect upon their current role and how they might amend their business activities and behaviour within the context of a unified administration. The following questions were proposed:

- What is the purpose of your role from the customer’s perspective?
- What do you measure to determine how well you are achieving this purpose?
- What additional measurements or evaluations could you undertake to assess how well you are achieving this purpose?
- What actions are you going to take to improve the service you provide?

(d) that a revised version of the document be considered at a future meeting, for potential circulation to all Professional Services staff in the autumn term.

UPDATE ON UNIFIED ADMINISTRATION PROJECT

The Group considered an update on the Unified Administration Project from Geoff Green. It was noted that the ‘Visions and Values’ section was a helpful articulation of a unified administration and that this section of the document could usefully inform the re-draft of the Professional Services paper agreed under M3.

It was noted that the unified administration initiative represented an attempt to facilitate a shift in the business culture within the institution which would, over time, improve customer service.

The Group agreed

(a) that Geoff Green and Susan Lapworth would consider how to appropriately articulate the relationship between a unified administration and systems-thinking, noting in particular how systems-thinking would deliver a number of the elements of unified administration.
(b) that work would continue on developmental projects, for example, to establish a unified administration system, regardless of whether or not a systems-thinking approach could be initiated in the short-term.
INVESTORS IN EXCELLENCE

The Group considered a report from Gretel Stonebridge on the learning points from the Investors in Excellence initiative.

It was noted that the recommendations arising from the paper were being addressed through the unified administration initiative which provided an overall structure for the development of the Professional Services.

The Group agreed that the Investors in Excellence Initiative would be reviewed again in 12 months to consider whether at that point continuing with it would help the drive to improve service delivery.

DISTANCE LEARNING ARCHITECTURE PROJECT

The Group considered a progress report from Anne Hall regarding the Distance Learning Architecture Project. The report focussed upon the identification of sponsors for various projects proposed as part of the DL Architecture Programme.

The Group agreed that this should be finalised outside of the meeting.

DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

The Group noted the dates of future meetings as follows;

- 14 September 2011
- 11 October 2011
- 8 November 2011
- 6 December 2011

DURATION OF MEETING: 2 hours