UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM

Minutes of a meeting held on
Tuesday 11 March 2014

Present:

Dave Hall (Chair)
Geoff Green
Trevor Humphreys
Dawn Kemp
Martyn Riddleston
Caroline Taylor

Anna Harding (vice Nigel Siesage)
Becky Johnson
Professor Sue Law
Frances Stone
Thomas Veit

In attendance: Judith Mogra, Jan Davies and David Long (for M22), Angela Walker and Andrew Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Liz Bailey, Alun Reynolds, Professor Jon Scott and Nigel Siesage

UNRESERVED (ONLY) BUSINESS

14/M16 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Group considered and approved the minutes of the meeting held on 4 February.

14/M17 MATTERS ARISING

Arising from M10 the Group noted that the SITS re-implementation paper had been well-received by the Audit Committee, and that a further presentation would be made to the Financial Forecasting Group later in the month.

Arising from M12 the Group noted that the Library and the Division of Finance had both volunteered to trial the Microsoft Lync Unified Communications tool.

The Group agreed:

a) That a report on the Microsoft Lync trial should be provided to a future meeting;  
Action: Secretary to co-ordinate

14/M18 CHAIR’S BUSINESS

The Chair reminded members that:

a) In the interest of promoting co-operation across functional boundaries it would be helpful if divisional level away days incorporated representatives from other divisions or offices;

b) All Heads of Divisions within the Corporate Services must maintain regular oversight of their budgets in order to be able to track current costs, account for changes in costs and project future trends in divisional costs.
14/M19  PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT: DIVISION OF FINANCE

The Group received a presentation from Martyn Riddleston on the priorities for development within the Division of Finance.

The Group noted that the division was reviewing its work to ensure that the core values of providing excellent customer service and ensuring a strong control environment were central to all its activities, and to link more closely with the priorities identified in the Rolling 8 Quarter Plan and the Professional Services Change Programme. In order to achieve this the divisional management team was reviewing each of the teams to define those characteristics within the areas of Process, Organisation, People and Technology which were central to good service delivery. Senior managers had evaluated each team to identify how they met these criteria, and each area would be reviewed on a six monthly basis to track improvement.

The Group noted in particular the work to identify divisional values. Following this the Group noted that it would be helpful to review the current expression of values for the Professional Services as a whole.

The Group agreed:

a) That each member of PSMT should present to the Group over the coming meetings regarding the priorities for development within their Division or College;  
   Action: Secretary to co-ordinate
b) That it would be helpful to develop a revised set of values for the Professional Services;  
   Action: for consideration at a future meeting
c) That colleagues within the Professional Services should be invited to contribute to the process of drafting such values.

14/M20  CORPORATE SERVICES PROFILES

The Group considered a draft financial profile template for the divisions and offices of the Corporate Services. The profiles would support the planning process by providing information for colleagues in the Colleges on where, how and why central costs had changed over time, and in particular illustrating where the costs in the Corporate Services were directly supporting the academic activity of the institution. The Group noted that the Research Support Office was trialling the format.

The Group agreed:

a) That the profiles were a helpful way of demonstrating the costs and cost movements in the Corporate Services;  
   Action: All Heads of Division
b) That the profiles should use actual costs rather than budgets and use appropriate measures to evidence changes;  
   Action: All Heads of Division
c) That a short commentary should be provided with each submission to explain particular features where required;  
   Action: All Heads of Division
d) That when the profiles were released it would be helpful to hold a forum style event to introduce academic colleagues to the profiles and how they could be used.
14/M21 PROFESSIONAL SERVICES CHANGE PROGRAMME

The Group considered updates to the Professional Services Change Programme for the spring term and noted the range of service improvement projects underway. The Group also noted that discussions were underway with IT Services to agree how the programme could align more closely with the work of the IT Portfolio Board.

The Group agreed:

a) That the Secretary should liaise with IT Services regarding the management of the programme in relation to the ITPB and the Rolling 8 Quarter Plan;  
   Action: Secretary

b) That it would be helpful to have visual timescales associated with projects;  
   Action: Secretary

c) That students should be consulted in the service improvement process wherever possible, noting that this could be achieved through the gathering of demand data.

14/M22 SYSTEMS THINKING UPDATE: RESEARCH SUPPORT OFFICE

The Group received a presentation from the team in the Research Support Office which had been improving the process of contract extensions for research staff. The Group noted that the process had several stakeholders including principal investigators, funding bodies and internal staff members and that the team had worked closely with academic departments, particularly the Departments of Health Sciences and Infection, Immunity and Inflammation to understand the nature of the demand upon the system.

The Group was pleased to note that the team had achieved significant service improvement through removing layers of approval, moving to electronic forms and through greater sharing of data between those groups involved in the process. Improved communication with and between research staff had also been achieved through the establishment of regular Research Group meetings.

The Group noted that excellent feedback had been received from the departments involved. The team reported that the next steps would be to implement a new electronic system to record research contract data and interact with the SAP system and then roll the revised processes out to a wider range of academic departments.

The Group agreed:

a) That the project had delivered clear evidence of improved service, with the potential to roll this out more widely across academic departments.  
   Action: Secretary

14/M23 SERVICE IMPROVEMENT CONFERENCE 2014

The Group considered a summary of the feedback from the Service Improvement Conference that had been held in January 2014. The Group was pleased to note that the feedback was extremely positive. The Group also noted that due to high demand a number of the breakout sessions from the conference were being offered again over the coming months, as well as half days ‘Introduction to Systems Thinking’ courses for staff. The Group welcomed the continuing programme of events, however noted that it was essential that once colleagues had learnt about the method they were given support to apply it to their own workplace.

Cont/...
The Group agreed:

a) That the programme of events should be circulated to staff in divisions and attendance encouraged;  
   Action: Secretary to circulate to members
b) That PSMT members should attend a session where possible to support the method;  
   Action: All PSMT members
c) That PSMT members should put in place mechanisms to encourage staff to apply the method in their own areas.  
   Action: All PSMT members

Duration of meeting: One hour and 30 minutes