UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

PROFESSIONAL SERVICES MANAGEMENT TEAM

Minutes of a meeting held on
Tuesday 21 May 2013

Present: Dave Hall (Chair)
Geoff Green Dawn Kemp
Alun Reynolds Martyn Riddleston
Nigel Siesage Frances Stone
Richard Taylor Mary Visser

In attendance: Liz Bailey, Angela Walker and Andrew Petersen (Secretary)

Apologies for absence were received from Jo Aitkins, Rebecca Johnson and Trevor Humphreys

UNRESERVED (ONLY) BUSINESS

13/M30 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The Group approved the minutes of a meeting held on 23 April 2013.

13/M31 MATTERS ARISING

No matters arising were identified.

13/M32 CHAIR’S BUSINESS

The Chair reported:
a) That a provisional date of 28 January 2014 had been selected for the next Systems Thinking Conference;
b) That recruitment for a number of senior posts within the Corporate Services, including the Academic Registrar and the Director of Marketing was underway. The Chair also reported that Professor Sue Law had accepted the post of Director of the Academic Practice Service for 2 years;
c) That, arising from M19, he was undertaking a series of meetings with the relevant Pro-Vice Chancellors and the Heads of Research Centres, regarding the administration of each Centre;
d) That his recent meeting with Heads of Academic Departments to discuss the programme of service improvements underway had been productive.

The Group agreed:
a) That provisional details for the main themes for the Systems Thinking Conference should be considered at a meeting early in the next academic year; Action: Secretary to coordinate

Cont/...
The Group received a paper that had previously been presented to the Planning Support Group detailing the Corporate Service budget bid and draft financial forecasts to 2016/17.

The Group noted that the Corporate Services savings requirement for 2013/14 was £1.167 million, and although some of this could be achieved through vacancy savings, a significant amount of additional savings would still need to be found in the coming year. The paper requested additional resources for two high priority projects within the Corporate Services, the website upgrade and the strategic purchasing project, however the Group noted that in the current financial climate there were reduced funds available for investment.

The Group considered an idea from the Registrar to increase the opportunities for communication between the Colleges and the Divisions of Corporate Services. A series of meetings was proposed, each of which would be themed around a particular service or activity of the Corporate Services, such as enhancing student employability or space management. It was noted that the Registrar was to discuss the idea further with the Vice-Chancellor.

The Group agreed:

a) That it would be helpful to hold such meetings to enhance the dialogue between Colleges and the Corporate Services;

The Group considered a report outlining the resource savings resulting from the service improvements achieved through the application of systems thinking to the administration of distance learning. The Group considered the savings achieved through the wider ongoing systems thinking work, noting in particular that the most significant savings were in the area of academic and administrative staff time. The Group noted that the Chair would be presenting further details on service improvement and the impact of the investment at the VCAC away day on 4 June.

The Group agreed:

a) That additional examples of the savings achieved through service improvements underway across the Corporate Services and the Colleges should be forwarded to the Secretary for inclusion in the report to VCAC

The Group considered the output of the previous meeting, in which members had identified those factors which prevented them from spending a greater proportion of time working with frontline staff. The Group discussed the actions each member had taken to increase the amount of time that they were able to spend with their front line staff. The Group noted in particular that it was helpful to have support from the Systems Thinking Team when working with front line staff, in order to identify how to gather information that would allow them to take effective action on the system.
The Group also considered proposals for the PSMT Away Day scheduled for 13 June. Members would be spending time visiting staff delivering services within the institution in order to learn about the nature of demand and the current capacity of a particular system to respond to it.

The Group agreed:

a) That members seeking to spend time in the work should contact the Systems Thinking Team for support where required.  

Action: All PSMT members

DURATION OF MEETING: 1 hour 30 Minutes