



Wellbeing Committee Meeting

Monday, 30 November 2020, 1 pm
Meeting held remotely via Teams

Minutes

Present:

Dr Andy Rice (Chair, ACR)
Jo de Bono (JD)
Caroline Stewart (CS)
Celia Burns (Secretary, CB)

1. Apologies for Absence

None.

2. Minutes of the Last Meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2020 were approved for publication on the Committee website.

3. Situation Update

Committee members each gave a brief update on how they were coping in relation to the coronavirus situation.

4. Update on Action Items

- i) Central HR's Review of the Staff Review and Development (SRD) Process*
Committee members agreed to review the feedback from central HR's SRD review and to share any comments at the next meeting.

Action: Committee members

- ii) Counsellor for the West Cambridge site*

This initiative is being considered by the Shared Facilities Hub Project Board. As JD is awaiting an update from Daniella Manca, Secretary of the West Cambridge Advisory Board, it was agreed that this item would be removed from the agenda until the update is received.

- iii) Staff survey about Department members' current wellbeing*

Committee members discussed two types of survey: a short, regular, pulse survey and a longer comprehensive survey. A concern with the longer survey was the question of whether responses could be adequately actioned by the Wellbeing Committee (the feeling being that this would be more of an HR Committee role).

After discussion, the Committee agreed to create a short pulse survey, with five questions (around the areas of leadership, mental health, level of work enjoyment and workload, for example). Ordinarily, a pulse survey would ask participants to revise their scores each time, but this would not be the case with this survey due to the extra work involved as well as anonymity issues. It would be important to choose questions that would make sense every time the survey was done and to differentiate between questions relating to the Department and to the University since responses to each could be different.

JD noted that it was important for the objectives of the survey to be clear and ACR responded that by sending regular (monthly) concise surveys (no more than five questions), we would get high-level responses which would over time provide an understanding of the wellbeing of the department in light of the impact of the pandemic. And it is something that the department could continue doing (some companies send a pulse survey every week to track their organisation's health).

JD agreed to set up a spreadsheet listing all the questions used in the three sample questionnaires which had been reviewed by the Committee (two which CS had put together and one which JD had received from the Sainsbury's Lab).

Action: JD

To gain consensus on preferred survey questions, Committee members agreed to note on the spreadsheet those questions they would like to know the answer to and/or that could be actioned if responses indicated a requirement for action. Committee members would then take the idea to the HoD Team and Wednesday meeting to see if there was some interest in the principle of a survey before proceeding.

Action: Committee members

iv) Proposal for an HR Committee

CS reported that she had passed on the proposal for an HR Committee to the HoD Team, who have agreed to discuss it in January. It was agreed that JD would drive the discussion at the meeting (since CS would be there in her HoD Team capacity) and ACR would also attend. CS and JD agreed to report back after the HoD Team discussion.

Action: CS and JD

v) Linkages with Wellbeing Initiatives in other Departments on the West Cambridge Site

JD reported that she had sent the top three agreed takeaways from the last meeting to Irene O'Flynn, Department of Physics, but had not received a response. It was agreed that the Committee would continue to send the top three agreed takeaways, with the hope that Physics might reciprocate.

Action: CB and JD

vi) Departmental social offerings

(a) Virtual carol concert: JD suggested doing a virtual carol concert for Christmas and said she would make some initial enquiries.

Action: JD

- (b) *Post-Wednesday Meeting breakout rooms*: this initiative had been agreed by the HoD Team and introduced since the last Wellbeing Committee meeting. The Committee discussed the feedback, which had been mixed but generally positive, including the issue of group size (ideally no more than 6), making participation optional, and the possibility of allocating a suggested discussion topic to each breakout room to initiate conversation, and inviting participants to choose which group they join. CS said she would feed this back to the DHoDs as one of them would be chairing the next Wednesday Meeting, and JD agreed to set up the breakout rooms as before.

Action: CS and JD

5. Expected Reports

i) *Research Staff Forum (RSF): wellbeing-related suggestions*

The RSF had discussed wellbeing at its meeting on 6 November and had suggested some issues for the Wellbeing Committee to consider (minute attached; see also Discussion Items 6 (ii) and (iii) below). Due to lack of time at this meeting, Committee members agreed to read the report offline and flag anything notable in the Teams channel or as an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action: Committee members

ii) *Research Staff Forum (RSF) wellbeing report*

See item 5 (i) above.

iii) *Graduate Student Forum (GSF) wellbeing report*

A wellbeing report is expected after the GSF's next meeting, in Michaelmas term (date to be arranged).

6. Discussion Items

Due to lack of time at this meeting, Committee members agreed to consider these discussion items at the next meeting.

i) *Saying thank you*

<https://www.ourcambridge.admin.cam.ac.uk/resources/saying-thank-you>.

ii) *Mental health first aiders*

A suggestion from the RSF (item 5 (i) above; minute attached). See

<https://www.sja.org.uk/courses/workplace-mental-health-first-aid/>.

iii) *Mindfulness taster sessions*

A suggestion from the RSF (item 5 (i) above; minute attached).

7. Next Discussion Item(s)

The Committee has agreed to leave discussion of more general wellbeing items until the pandemic situation stabilises, and for now address the more pressing issues relevant to the pandemic as they arise.

8. Any Other Business

There was no other business.

9. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting will take place at 1 p.m. on Monday, 11 January 2021.