NEWCASTLE UNIVERSITY
DIVERSITY COMMITTEE MEETING

Monday 3 October 2016 at 10.00 – 12.00

Present:
- Judith Rankin – Dean of Diversity, Chair (JR)
- Candy Rowe - Director of Diversity, FMS (CR)
- Kate Chedgzoy – Director of Diversity, HaSS (KC)
- Chris Phillips – Director of Diversity, SAgE (CP)
- Sally Ingram – Head of Student Wellbeing (SI)
- Paul Johnstone – Collingwood Legal (PJ)
- Rachael Kitching - Welfare & Equality Officer, NUSU (RK)
- Kelechi Dibie – E&D Project Officer, HaSS (KD)
- Leslie Platt, HR Adviser (E&D) (LP)

Guest: Rebecca Stinson – Stonewall (RS)

Apologies:
- Louise Edwards Holland (LE-H)
- Laura Delgaty (LD)
- Lindsay Marshall (LM)
- Chris Stafford (CS)

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<th>Item</th>
<th>Minutes</th>
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<td>1.</td>
<td>Welcome &amp; apologies</td>
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<td>JR welcomed everyone to the meeting in particular new members and apologies were noted as above</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Minutes of Meeting on 16 June 2016 &amp; Matters Arising</td>
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<td>The minutes were agreed.</td>
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<td>Transgender policy – policy sent to Stonewall for comment, awaiting feedback prior to consultation and implementation.</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>Membership</td>
<td>JR/LP</td>
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<td>CP now in post as Director of Diversity for SAgE. All three positions now filled. JR/LP to review wider membership of Committee.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Stonewall Global Diversity Champion – Rebecca Stinson</td>
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<td>RS is the Stonewall North East Programme Officer and was invited to the meeting to discuss what membership of the</td>
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Global Diversity Champion Programme (GDCP) entails for the University.

She talked firstly about Stonewall in general terms and its background and history in progressing and supporting LGBT causes. She also mentioned the role of Stonewall in supporting higher education, sharing good practice, how it can advise on policy and the annual Workplace Equality Index (WEI).

In terms of the GDCP, RS outlined the 3 zones of LGBT inclusion that countries fall into, the two-tier approach to how organisations should approach how they engage internationally (i.e. explicit or contextualised), applying policies to all staff for example on bullying and harassment and linking with local LGBT networks. She talked about ways of consulting with local staff (e.g. staff surveys), local lawyers and how linking with other GDCP organisations can help to better understand local nuances and traditions when it comes to LGBT issues.

An important aspect discussed was preparing information for staff (and students) travelling to countries where the situation was not as accepting in terms of LGBT issues as the UK. She mentioned the need for people to be aware of local customs pre-travel and also for returning LGBT students who may have their own fears about returning to their home countries. KC asked about sharing and collaborations with other organisations.

Among other issues discussed was good practice sharing and collaborative work with other organisations and the terminology relating to sexual orientation and gender identity. RS closed by stressing the need to reiterate the message of respect and acceptance without exception. JR pointed out how much being a member of Stonewall was a collaborative endeavour.

JR thanked Rebecca for coming to the meeting and for providing such a thorough insight to the GDCP.

5. VC Equality & Diversity Think Tank: Feedback and Outcomes

JR updated the Committee on this event which took place on the 15 September, the background and rationale to the event and the main points arising. She talked through a slide that outlined priorities and actions and how we could deliver on the recommendations.

A number of issues were discussed including how to utilise lived, personal experiences to help people better understand
and engage staff on equality, diversity and inclusion issues, the need for more comprehensive staff training on areas including unconscious bias, language and behaviour and galvanising research on E&D issues. In terms of awareness raising training, KC mentioned the need to link this across other agendas and communicating the wider contexts, while RK said that involving student societies could play a key part in getting the right messages across.

A discussion also took place around the benefits of subscribing to equality charters. Whilst there was a general acknowledgment that these can be highly beneficial as a benchmark to progress and sends a strong message about our commitment to inclusion, there would be resource and time commitment issues to consider. A point was raised by SI that the various standards and charters discussed must fit our requirements and tie in with our strategic equality objectives. JR said that a decision on which charters to go for would be discussed at a forthcoming UEB meeting and then at the January Diversity Committee meeting when a decision would be made.

JR said that an equality and diversity NU Connections special edition based on the Think Tank discussion is planned for Jan. 2017.

6. Athena SWAN Updates

The Institute of Cellular Medicine have successfully renewed their Silver Award. Also successful in the September 2016 award round was the School of English Literature, Language and Linguistics who became the first HaSS recipient of the Athena SWAN Bronze Award. The Committee gave their congratulations to both.

7. Diversity Consultative Group Feedback

In the absence of LD, LP provided an update on the last meeting of the DCG which took place on 22 September. Among the issues discussed were:

- DCG has met twice since LD took over as Chair, once with outgoing NUSU reps and once with incoming.

- Questions have been raised re: budgets for events etc. and we have been asked to bring this to the DC. JR said that this is an issue that could in future be considered via the proposed Diversity Investment Fund.
• The group is focused on a coordinated approach and improved communication for all diversity and equality issues with both staff and students. The group is exploring two calendar options which could help with this.

• A discussion around E&D relationships and processes took place using the structure chart that LP had developed. This helped the group to think more about these relationships and potentially identify gaps/overlaps.

• The group is looking at coordinating and sharing practice between NUSU workshops.

• There was a discussion and early interest in organising an event to highlight and share research done by our staff and students that directly relate to E&D issues within the University.

8. Black History Month (BHM) Update

LP provided an update on BHM that takes place every October. He said that we were using the opportunity to promote the University as an employer of choice to Black & Ethnic Minority (BME) people by having a presence on the official BHM website. This included having a University profile and banners, which when clicked, would take the reader directly to our job vacancies page. He said that the website was also an excellent year round resource for BME issues and that our profile and banners would remain there for the next 12 months.

He also mentioned that BHM people were very interested in our Martin Luther King 50th anniversary plans for next year and would like to do a major piece on this when the time comes.

LP and RK agreed to let each other know of any events taking place during the month.

9. Any Other Business

RK mentioned assessment needs for undergraduate students with a disability and referrals to Occ. Health. She said she would be speaking to SI regarding the Disabled Students Allowance and available funding to assist with this.

10. Date and Time of Next Meeting
The next meeting will be held on Thursday 26 January 2017 at 14.00-15.30 in Room 4.14, King’s Gate Building.