

**Department of Paediatrics  
Management Committee/Graduate Studies Committee  
Wednesday 05<sup>th</sup> October 2022 12:00-14:00  
Via MS Teams**

**1. Apologies for absence**

*Ben Gregorio, Matthew Wood, Charlotte Walber, Irene Roberts, Andrew Pollard, Alexander Jones, Teresa Lambe, Philip Goulder, Sorcha Edmiston*

**2. Minutes of meeting 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022**

Accepted as a true record of the meeting.

**3. Conflicts of Interest (SO)**

The University's Conflict of Interest Policy includes guidance about the management of conflicts within committee business. It recommends that the issue of what a conflict is, and how it should be managed, should itself be an item on the agenda of each committee at its first meeting of the academic year. Members of the committee were encouraged to read the document carefully and to familiarise themselves with its provisions. The policy document was circulated to the committee for information and will be included on the agenda of each meeting as per University guidance.

**4. Public Sector Equality Duty (SO)**

The policy document was circulated to the committee for information.

**5. Matters arising and Action Points from meeting 14<sup>th</sup> June 2022 (not covered elsewhere)**

None noted

**6. Graduate Studies Committee (CR)**

- The department has been asked to feedback on proposals to uplift the stipend for clinically qualified DPhil students. KS modelled the potential impact of the proposed changes. The proposals, if adopted, would represent an additional financial pressure on the department that would need to be tensioned against other competing priorities and would sit alongside the other generous support packages that were recently put in place to help support DPhil students. It may be possible to mitigate the potential impact by partnering with colleges (who could potentially benefit from the ability of such students to teach or contribute in other ways to college life and work) or by pursuing opportunities for philanthropic funding. We may also decide that such awards should be made in the context of how a candidate has scored in the GSSC, to enable any such discretionary awards to be targeted at exceptionally qualified individuals only. For the time being there is no need for a decision while other Departments in MSD deliberate on the issue of an uplift of stipends.

**7. Administrative staff update (SO)**

**Divisional updates**

- The Division generated a surplus of £6.9m in 2021-22 from total income of £670m, in comparison to a budgeted deficit of £3.6m from total income of

£623m. Income increased by £57m from the prior year, while year on year the surplus increased by £6.2m

- FRGPC received a presentation from the Director of Research services, Stephen Conway centred around ongoing difficulties with the provision of contracting support to departments. He set out proposals for an uplift in funding during the next financial planning round as part of a broader strategy for addressing the current challenges. Members of the committee endorsed the proposals, which if approved centrally would help to alleviate the situation, but only in the longer term. For now, departments were encouraged to flag key priorities directly to Research Services.

#### **More cross-group interaction**

- Monthly informal gatherings at IDRМ have now been organised. First to take place on 11 October.

#### **University response to rising energy costs**

- A new working group has been formed to respond to increased energy prices.
- The Energy Supply Working Group (ESWG) will coordinate how to respond to rising costs to the University, as well as to external developments such as Government interventions.
- The group will send its first recommendations for energy usage policies in departments in response to the crisis to Council later in October. It is expected that additional energy-saving measures will be required during the winter months, in line with the University's sustainability commitments.
- Once the new measures have been agreed, a University-wide campaign will be launched to encourage departments, staff and students to work together and adopt behaviours that will reduce discretionary energy consumption, and address waste. More information will be available in the near future.

#### **Staffing levels in HR**

- The HR team currently remains understaffed, however staffing levels will increase once Sorcha returns from maternity leave in November. In the meantime, CW is proactively considering buying-in outside support via TSS.

### **8. HR update (CW)**

- Recruitment waiting list had to be introduced, working through priorities as provided by managers.
- Rota is now in place to start visiting the IDRМ (Thursday). Finance & Grants will also be working on a rota basis from IDRМ.
- New policies launched (as presented in last meeting's update) e.g., visa support, priority nursery and bridging support.
- Building on the work undertaken by the Wellbeing Programme Board, a new strategy and programme is being developed to support staff wellbeing. The Wellbeing programme: *Thriving at Oxford* was officially launched at the Professional Services Conference on Monday 26 September and dedicated webpages will launch on the Staff Gateway on Monday 3 October. Staff will be encouraged to visit the website for resources and news to support their wellbeing whilst working at Oxford. Plans for the Staff Counselling Service are also progressing well and details will be shared with HR staff in October. Paediatrics Staff Learning/ Professional Development Scheme applications for

1 October deadline: four approved at a total cost of £ 4,494, almost 50% of the total available budget.

- Virtual right to work checks ended 30/09, now all checks must be done in person.
- 7 recruitments currently live.
- 17 In the recruitment process (shortlisting/interview, staff request raised, awaiting grants approval).
- 33 appointments made since 14 June 22 (last MCM) and 22 due to start.
- 34 leavers since 14 June 22.
- 5 leaving up to 31/12/2022.

#### **9. Finance update (KS)**

- Final financial position for 2021-22: The final outturn for the Department of Paediatrics for the 2021-22 financial year was a surplus of £2.7m. The Q3 2021-22 budget forecast for the department was £2.4m surplus. The final outturn represents favourable variance of £248K. The favourable variance was driven by OVG research activity. The Department of Paediatrics achieved a very healthy 30% overheads income rate in 2021-22 financial year.
- Forward view: budget 2022-23 and Q1 forecast: Agreed 2022-23 budget is set to generate £2.3m surplus, this represents £0.4m surplus reduction compared to 21-22 actuals. The reduction comprises of increased overheads due to new PIs joining Paediatrics which are offset by departmental strategic investment in IDR.M.
- The Quarter 1 forecast will be completed in November 2022 and the Management Committee will receive an update on the Q1 financial position at the next meeting in February.

#### **10. Health & Safety Update (SO)**

- Safety glasses and IRIS: The committee were reminded that The Department will pay for prescription safety glasses for anyone who needs them and that they should contact Mary or Britta Urban (who will take over DSO responsibilities from Mary Deadman as from November) if anyone requires prescription safety glasses. It was also flagged that all accidents and incidents, including injury, fire, dangerous occurrences and near misses, must be reported without delay to the University Safety Office via University online Incident Reporting and Investigation System (IRIS)

#### **11. Equality & Diversity Update (RS)**

- Update on outcome of meeting. Key highlighted points were:
  - New initiative to use data to drive down pay disparity between men and women. The aim is to present historic data in a timely manner to key decision-making bodies within the department so that it can be reflected on before decisions are taken.
  - Review of committee membership and appointment of new ATHENA Swan Coordinator, Stephanie McClain.
  - It was also flagged that we should consider taking a similar approach to race equality issues.

#### **12. Comms (SO)**

- Social media accounts are growing steadily. August was a slow month which is reflected in the analytics, this is expected as users are on annual leave/summer

holidays. The start of a new term should see an increase in overall engagement and growth. Please reach out to Ben Gregorio for any dept content you wish be shared via these platforms.

- IDRМ Communications Support
  - Paediatrics comms support for IDRМ is coming to an end as of November. The IDRМ launch promotional video is the final project to be delivered.
  - Other IDRМ projects completed include:
    - intranet site built for internal staff and students
    - social media support,
    - newsletter software, template and mailing list.
    - Website content & Google Analytics reporting
    - Marketing materials
  - An official handover has been created for the new IDRМ Communications Officer with a handover week scheduled on w/c 17th to bring them up to speed.

### **13. OUCAGS/ACF/ACL updates (AJ)**

- Job description and advertisement have been updated for the ACF position which is due to go live on the 7th October. There will be one post, with applicants chosen from those applying to Paediatrics (ST1 to ST3), Chemical Pathology (ST3 only) and Histopathology (ST1 to ST3). There are 5 prospective applicants already. They have been encouraged to get in touch with prospective supervisors in the department to discuss possible ideas for projects in advance of their application. Prospective applicants have also been encouraged to take a look at the NIHR shortlisting criteria for 2021, which are not much changed for this round. Anyone in the department who might be promoting an application to this fellowship to point their applicant in this direction, too.
- Recruitment request form and the job description for the Victoria Smallpeice Fellowship to have now been sent to HR for processing with a view to advertisement in November. Geetha Anand is supportive and will circulate the information to the Thames Valley Paediatrics trainees as soon as the advert goes live.  
**ACTION:** SO and GH to review the advert for the VS Fellowship to ensure it is defined sufficiently broadly so as to attract the widest possible pool of potential applicants.
- A response from the RCPCH about the regional representative position has not yet been received. Further update will be provided once further information is received.

### **14. AOB**

None noted.

### **15. Date of next meeting: Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> February 2023, 1200-1400**