

## PEOPLE COMMITTEE

**24 March 2025 in room 209, Sutherland Building, City Campus West**

### CONFIRMED SUMMARY MINUTES

**Contact Georgina Bailes [georgina.bailes@northumbria.ac.uk](mailto:georgina.bailes@northumbria.ac.uk), Secretary to the Board of Governors, with any queries about these Summary Minutes.**

Present: P Judge (Chair), Dr R Blackman-Woods, H Fairfoul, Prof A Long  
 Apologies: H Kajee, Dr P Rumbold  
 Secretary: G Bailes and B Lenney (Assistant Secretary)  
 In attendance: Dr S Corbett, J Embley, Prof T Lawson, L Mayfield [Pension Update]

### MAIN ITEMS DISCUSSED/DECIDED ON AT THE MEETING

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| <b>1</b> | <p><b><u>Vice-Chancellor's Horizon Scanning</u></b> [Oral Report]</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor and Chief Executive provided an update on national, regional and local sector and policy developments and their implications for Northumbria. Recent headlines reflected the financial strain on universities, with many announcing job cuts and cost-saving measures. Northumbria remained in a strong financial position but would continue to plan prudently to ensure long-term stability, the UCU had launched a 'stop the cuts' campaign, reflecting the Union's refocus on job cuts as opposed to pay and conditions. Strike action was ongoing at Newcastle University, and Northumbria would participate in the national process to negotiate the 2025/26 Pay Award which was due to begin at the end of March. Work continued on the areas required to support the launch of the new Academic Structures including data and systems changes and estates considerations, and recruitment was underway for three FPVC roles and several leadership roles within the new Schools. The University had submitted an Athena Swan application for the institutional Silver Award, emphasizing the commitment to its EDI ambitions. EDI Director, Rachel Brown, had won Mentor of the year at the recent Northern Power Women Awards, and Northumbria had been shortlisted five times at the 2025 Educate North Awards, showcasing some of the fantastic work underway to support its students and encourage engagement across the region. The annual SHINE awards ceremony would be taking place again in July, with an aim to recognise and celebrate colleagues who personify the University's Values, as demonstrated by their Behaviours and the way that they work and make an outstanding contribution to the University. <b>The Committee noted the update.</b></p> |
| <b>2</b> | <p><b><u>Items for Approval or Consideration</u></b></p> <p><b><u>Pay Gap Report</u></b> [PC24/17]</p> <p>The Committee considered the Pay Gap Report for 2024 which showed some progress with a slight reduction in the mean gender pay gap. Women remained underrepresented in senior positions which continued to contribute to slow progress and, while over the ethnicity gap was minimal, ethnic women faced wider gaps than their white counterparts. The disability pay gap had increased, which was likely influenced by an increased disclosure from staff in lower-graded roles. The report contained for the first time LGBTQ+ pay gap analysis which showed a mean gap of 4.6% and while there had been some improvements from the measures implemented in 2022, further work was required to accelerate progress however, this was increasingly challenging given the current financial climate and reducing workforce, turnover and recruitment to vacant roles. <b>The Committee noted the Pay Gap Report, noting that the data in the report was based on 2024 and therefore did not reflect actions taken in the current year to address it, the positive impact of the Academic Development Review on the gender pay gap and the intention to continue that trajectory, requested the report be updated prior to submission to Board of Governors to include trend data, requested a 'snapshot' report on the 2025 pay gap data, including further information on clear strategies being implemented by other institutions who have been successful in eliminating the pay gap, be shared with the Committee at a future meeting, and approved the Pay Gap Report data for 2024 for publication on the University's external website.</b></p>   |

	<p><b><u>Pensions Update</u></b> [Presentation]</p> <p>H Fairfoul and Prof A Long declared an interest in this item as holders of USS pensions; P Judge declared an interest in this item as a holder of USS and T&amp;W LGPS pensions Dr R Blackman-Woods declared an interest in this item as a holder of a TPS pension.</p> <p>The Committee considered an update on the University's pension schemes. The University employed c. 1,200 colleagues in TPS, with an employer contribution rate of 28.68% and an affordable yet competitive pension scheme was required as an alternative for academic staff. <b>The Committee noted the update.</b></p>

Beth Lenney, Assistant Secretary to People Committee  
April 2025