

General Meeting, Tuesday 9 March 2010 Fulwood Room, University House, 1-2pm

A G E N D A

Members and visitors from the Students' Union, Paul Tobin (President) and Holly Taylor (Education Officer) were welcomed to the General Meeting.

1. Notes from previous meeting

Available at: <http://ucu.group.shef.ac.uk/documents/100208%20gm%20notes.pdf> were agreed as a true and accurate record.

2. Funding and staffing cost cutting

Update on negotiations taking place with the university on the implications of potential funding cuts was given by Branch Officers and the UCU Regional Official, Marianne Quick. Mick Ashman introduced a paper, attached to a letter sent jointly by all of the Campus Trade Unions sent on 8/3/10, which outlined some options the University had put forward for saving staff costs. On the 17th March, the University will receive its funding letter from HEFCE at which time informed discussions can start.

It was highlighted that in order to take forward staffing cost issues in an informed way, we are asking members to share any information they can with the branch about the Workload Allocation Model in their Department. This has been discussed at a recent Departmental Contacts meeting following which around 8 departments have shared this information.

National issues will be supported nationally by UCU but the disputes at Sussex, Kings and Leeds (amongst others) have shown us the importance of strong, responsive, well organised branches in taking forward local issues. It was noted that members would welcome more information from the branch. The branch agreed to consider calling an extraordinary general meeting.

3. Hourly paid – an update on work being undertaken to regularise hourly paid

We are currently very concerned at the apparently cynical way the university is implementing the agreement reached with campus unions in 2008 (and on the back of which the university has won human resource awards). The overwhelming number of people being reviewed are being regularised on to 'bank worker' contracts which gives them little security of employment, less holiday, worse sick pay arrangements than those who are transferred onto employee

contracts and with no access to pension schemes. This was not the outcome that was envisaged when the agreement was signed in 2008.

Good practice guidelines are needed for the employment of PG students and this is something we are working on with the Students Union and the university. It was noted renegotiation of the 'teaching only' policy is going to take place.

4. Proposal to make a donation of £200 to Sheffield Pensioners Action Group (SPAG)

Proposed by SUCU Branch Committee; Nick Howard, SPAG member and retired SUCU member invited SUCU to give a donation to the SPAG group to support their work in campaigning to achieve better pensions, benefits and facilities for older people. The proposal was passed with one vote against.

5. Any other business

Update on University of Leeds dispute: Following a very well organised campaign by the Leeds UCU branch, including a positive vote endorsing industrial action, UCU and Management at Leeds have negotiated and agreed a ground breaking policy on reorganisation.