

University and College Union

UNISON

UNITE

University of Bath

Claverton Down

Bath

BA2 7AY

26th October 2013

Dear Chancellor

We extend a welcome to you as the new Chancellor of the University of Bath. We write on behalf of the three trade unions recognised by the University as representing University staff.

We enjoyed a cordial relationship with your predecessor Lord Tugendhat, with whom we raised matters of concern on a number of occasions. One of these matters related to decisions by the University's Remuneration Committee, a committee of University Council. The Committee's terms of reference include the determination the remuneration of the Vice-Chancellor and a number of other senior managers in the University.

The point we have made to Lord Tugendhat and to members of University Council and University Court is that the Remuneration Committee has continued to make pay awards which are out of all proportion to the awards made to the vast majority of staff at the University. In 2012 we published **The University of Bath High Earners Report** in which we documented the growing disparity between the pay of a small number of people who manage the University and most staff who work here. We enclose a copy for your information. Nearly all staff have seen a 13% cut in the value of their pay since 2009. While we recognise that workers in this country have seen the value of their pay cut, we also note that university staff have been on the receiving end of what has been described by the Principal of Hertford College, Oxford, as "one of the largest sustained wage cuts any profession has suffered since the Second World War".

We represent not only the academic staff of the University, but also the administrative, support, manual and technical staff. Many of the latter groups feel the more extreme effects of the growing pay gap. According to the University's own figures, it employs more people on the minimum wage than any other university in the country. The problem is also one of increasing insecurity as well as reduced pay. The University employs more of its teaching and research staff on zero hours contracts than all other universities.

This large and growing gap between the pay and security of the vast majority of those who work at the University of Bath, and the pay and security of its senior managers is a real and growing source of grievance for university staff. We believe Lord Tugendhat recognised this when he chose to address the more general problem of the widening pay gap in this country. In his farewell lecture he observed of business leaders that "when their pay and pay increases so far outrun those of the people who work for them and the population at large, they lose moral authority, their words will be discounted." We hope you will agree with us that this applies not just to business leaders but to all those who lead large organisations, including universities.

We had hoped that Lord Tugendhat's words may have had a sobering effect on the annual deliberations of the University Remuneration Committee when it met earlier this year. In June we submitted a petition signed by 360 members of staff at the University calling on the Remuneration Committee to

- (1) Postpone its decision on the remuneration of the Vice Chancellor and others whose pay it controls until a settlement is reached in national HE pay negotiations between employers and unions
- (2) Agree that the remuneration of the Vice Chancellor and others should be increased by no more than the pay settlement for all others working in HE
- (3) Recommend to University Council that it calls on UCEA, the employers' body in HE pay negotiations to make an offer that restores some of the 13% lost in the value of HE pay since 2009.

We were disappointed to hear two weeks ago that the Remuneration Committee had rejected all the modest requests of the petition and decided to award the Vice Chancellor and other senior staff an aggregate increase of 9.59% over the previous year. This has incensed many staff at the University and it is little wonder that many of those we represent have very reluctantly voted to take strike action on October 31st unless our employers, including the University of Bath, increase the 1% offer made to us. This offer represents a further cut in the value of our pay because it is much lower than the annual rate of inflation.

Strike action is not something we undertake lightly. We are the staff who have worked hard to make sure that the University's reputation has grown and that its students rate their experience here highly. We teach them, we clean their rooms, we ensure their safety, we prepare their food, we attend to their concerns, we make sure the University runs as smoothly as possible. We are not perfect, but we care about our work and about the students who come to Bath. That is why we want to make sure that the commitment of staff to meeting the academic and pastoral needs of students is not undermined by a moral vacuum in the university's leadership.

We wish you a long and happy period of office as Chancellor of the University, and we would be happy to meet with you to discuss these and other matters relating to our role as representatives of University staff,

Yours sincerely

Marie Morley

President, University of Bath UCU

Julie Samways

Acting Secretary, University of Bath UNISON

Chris Coy

Secretary, University of Bath Unite