WELLBEING SUB-COMMITTEE

MINUTES of the 12 May 2022 meeting (held via Teams)

Present:
Jo Jones* (Chair)

Andrew Allison	Oliver Bray	Andrew Cooper
Roland Cross	Katie Davies	Kate Davis
Wendy Huntriss	Steve Mardy	Susan Smith
Daniel Stanley	Sarah Swales	

In attendance:

Nicola Beaumont (Secretary)	Ann Coulson	John Goodwin
Lucy MacDonald	Jenny Malcolm	Cate Querin
Sarah Tomlinson	Paul Tyrer	

Apologies:

Mobina Begum	Dev Capps	Lee Jones
Sarah Kelsey	Erika Laredo	Andrew Manley
Stephen Murphy	Mphango Simwaka	Gareth Robertshaw
Bryony Walker	Chris Watts	Dee Grismond

*Chaired the meeting

Part A: Preliminary Items

Welcome, Introductions and Apologies

058.2122.WSC   The Chair welcomed all members to the Wellbeing Sub-Committee and apologies were reported by the Secretary.

Insights gained from the Student Advisory Group (University Mental Health Charter)

059.2122.WSC   The Committee received a presentation from the Associate - Head of Membership Engagement and the Welfare and Community Officer to feedback on the insights gained from the Student Advisory Group (University Mental Health Charter).

060.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

a) The group consisted of 24 students drawn from all SU liberation communities and represented the different Schools and different modes of study.
b) The group were split into an in person and online group.
c) There were three rounds of focus groups, which started with open questions to get general student opinion on mental health at Leeds Beckett.
d) The first sessions provided the themes that were then looked at in more detail over the sessions that followed. The final round was used to present findings back to the student groups to ensure what had been discussed had been fully understood and that the students were happy with what was put forward to the University Mental Health Charter Working Group.
e) The five reoccurring themes that had emerged were:
    1. The university could consider what more it could do to actively promote positive mental health and increase the provision of activities that supported this.
    2. The university could do more to recognise the pressure that course delivery and assessment structures can have on the mental health of its students.
    3. The university could take a more consistent approach to communication, signposting, and provision of support, which varied greatly across the different Schools.
    4. The university could give more consideration to the external pressures faced by students, and how this impacted on their ability to study.
    5. The university needs to consider the level and type of support it provides specifically for international students, to support their integration into the university and UK culture.
f) The discussions had been in the main extremely positive; the group believing that, overall, students at Leeds Beckett have a good experience in terms of their mental health and wellbeing.
g) If it could be evidenced that apprentices had been spoken to regarding this, it would be good evidence to use towards the future Ofsted inspection and would be useful to feed into safeguarding conversations.
h) Early discussions were taking place around setting up a representation structure to engage with apprentices.
i) If the university was going to take action to have the greatest impact, the themes 4 and 5 (as above) should be prioritised. These two areas were also evidenced in other research and insight.
j) The School-based Wellbeing Practitioners were coming up to their first year in post. It was hoped that, as some academics see the positive feedback about Wellbeing Practitioners delivering on their courses, word would spread, and others would invite them too.
k) There could be greater awareness, understanding and training amongst the non-specialist groups of staff (outside of the specialists within Student Services) who interact with students on a daily basis, so they are aware of their impact before there is a crisis.

l) CARES had been having discussions with colleagues who saw students regularly such as food services teams, in addition to the training that already occurred with security and accommodation colleagues.

m) The Associate Director of Student Services wondered whether there is a need for wellbeing impact assessments.

n) The Service Secretary for Quality Assurance Services believed it would be helpful to embed wellbeing guidance and support within policies, processes, and practices.

Committee Terms of Reference and Membership 2021/22

061.2122.WSC   The Committee received a report (paper WSC-2122-014) on the Terms of Reference and membership.

062.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

a) No changes were to be made to the Terms of Reference and membership.

Chair approved Minutes of the last meeting held on 20 January 2022

063.2122.WSC   The Committee received a report of the Chair approved Minutes of the last meeting held on 20 January 2022 (paper WSC-2122-015).

064.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

a) The 20 January 2022 Chair approved minutes were an accurate record and Committee approved.

Matters Arising – From the 20 January 2022 meeting

065.2122.WSC   The Chair presented a report on the matters arising from the minutes of the last substantive meeting of the Committee held on 16 September 2021 (paper reference WSC-2122-016).

066.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

a) Two matters arising needed to be looked at, these were:
   1. 047b.2122.WSC – The Deputy Director of Human Resources updated the committee to confirm this was being worked on. This would be made more of a call to action, other information would be provided about other absences. No end date was provided for completion of this work; an update would be provided at the next meeting on the 15 September 2022.
   2. 052b.2122.WSC – This was around the support and interventions available such as the EAP or Active Care where, despite lots of evidence of communications, there was feedback that some managers were still not aware of the comprehensive support available. Any thoughts from the committee as to how this could

be better connected to colleagues in their area would be welcomed. The Head of Campus and Business Support Services would connect with the Organisational Development Partner to feedback on this directly outside of the meeting.

b) The Committee accepted all remaining updates and completions on the matters arising as shown on the report.

Part B: Items of Business:

Colleague & Student COVID update

067.2122.WSC   The Committee received a verbal update from the Deputy Director of Human Resources and Associate Director of Student Services on the Colleague & Student COVID respectively.

068.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

Colleague update:
a) Government rules changed on the 1 April 2022 and there are no restrictions or requirements to test or report in the same way. The university is under no obligation to report any cases to either Public Health England or the Office for Students.
b) The university still has provisions for people to report colleagues with Covid cases on iTrent. Covid is still prevalent in the university community.
c) In March 2022 there were 109 cases reported, in April 46 cases reported, and in May, 3 cases have been reported already.
d) Human Resources no longer conduct follow up contact tracing in terms of contacting managers to check whether colleagues with Covid have been on campus.
e) The university is in a transitional period from the pandemic to living with Covid, as part of the Government's direction and agenda. The university will continue to monitor.
f) As part of the Government's easing of restrictions and changes in guidance, the Head of Health & Safety advised that the HSE have been specific that organisations don't need a Covid risk assessment; it is not a HSE enforceable matter it's a Public Health matter, however organisations must still consider ventilation and cleaning as part of the welfare regulations.
g) Health and Safety are continuing to manage ventilation across campus through mechanical ventilation and through opening windows as has been encouraged throughout the pandemic.
h) The university is continuing the robust cleaning regime that CARES have efficiently managed. This is being reflected in a new batch of risk assessments.
i) Old PUWER risk assessments will be archived, and a series of PAN university risk assessments will be introduced. The first two will be around general risks in teaching spaces and general risks in office

spaces, and will include control measures for communicable disease, which covers ventilation and cleaning.

j) Even though there had been a relaxation in guidance, the Health and Safety Manager wanted to assure the committee that the control measures have not been eased across the university.

k) The risk assessments that reflect the university's continued control measures are currently within the consultation process with the Trade Unions.

Student update:

l) Following Government guidance, students are not required to test and to report as they were previously.

m) Student Services are notified of some students that have Covid, normally those coming through mitigation. They are also informed of those with Long Covid who are coming through the disability process as they are declaring it as a disability.

069.2122.WSC

It was **AGREED** that:
a) The Colleague & Student COVID update would be removed from the agenda as a standing item.

The University Mental Health Charter

070.2122.WSC   The Committee received a verbal update from the Associate Director of Student Services and Deputy Director of Human Resources on the University Mental Health Charter, along with a report of the Colleague Advisory Group terms of reference and membership (paper reference WSC-2122-017).

071.2122.WSC   **Update on the wider project & student aspects**

It was **noted** that:

a) Since the last Wellbeing Sub Committee in January 2022, the University Mental Health Charter Working Group had continued to meet and had completed the gap analysis against the 18 themes of the Charter.

b) An improvement plan is being created to address gaps and owners were being identified for actions.

c) The University Mental Health Charter Working Group decided that they will request to be audited in March 2023; this requires a self-assessment to be completed by January 2023.

d) There is a self-assessment document that will need to be produced covering the 18 themes which covers the university's entire business; the theme leads will be talking to people over the next few months for input into the self-assessment document.

e) The University Mental Health Charter Assessment Team will attend for two days and will facilitate:

1) a student and staff focus group, which is voluntary and is about them meeting a group of staff and students, to understand the felt experience,
2) a leadership panel, which will involve either the Vice Chancellor or the Vice Chancellor and other members of the leadership team,
3) a work panel, which will focus on staff wellbeing and staff development,
4) a live panel, which will focus on student life outside of the curriculum, including their living accommodation and social integration,
5) a learn panel, about transitioning to university, learning and teaching and progression,
6) a support panel, looking at support and the cohesiveness of support across the institution
7) a campus tour.

f) It is a national Charter, funded by Office for Students and managed by Student Minds (the national charity).
g) The findings from the focus groups, which were shared with the committee by Student Union colleagues (refer to 059.2122.WSC and 060.2122.WSC), will feed into the University Mental Health Charter Working Group. The Associate Head of Membership Engagement and the Welfare and Community Officer are part of the Working Group and have facilitated the Student Advisory Groups. This has informed the gap analysis.

Update on the colleague aspects and Colleague Advisory Group terms of reference and membership

h) From a colleague and staff perspective, there are four themes within the Charter: staff development, staff wellbeing, leadership, and inclusivity. A gap analysis has been carried out for each of the four themes.
i) A lot of care and thought had gone into the Colleague Advisory Group (see paper WSC-2122-017 which outlines who is on the group) to ensure the group was representative, diverse, and inclusive. This was achieved through a variety of different routes, including through existing wellbeing networks, the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion networks, and colleague networks; recommendations came from the aforementioned and other sources.
j) The Colleague Advisory Group was established and met on the 3 May 2022; this meeting was to build rapport, get the group working together and the focus was to look at the gap analysis and key themes.
k) The question of what was having the biggest impact on mental health in the workplace was posed at the meeting on the 3 May 2022, and the themes which emerged from the initial discussion were:

1) leadership, and the difficulty for people to either acknowledge issues or be able to do anything,
2) high workload,
3) career progression,
4) financial uncertainty,
5) a target driven culture,
6) lack of awareness and investment in staff mental health issues,
7) there wasn't the same consideration of colleagues as there were students needs

l) When the four themes were looked at in more detail, some of the feedback was around staff development; pockets of good practice were recognised, including the topic specific sessions that had taken place around the menopause (which helped that particular group).

m) One area of concern raised was who was accountable from a staff perspective to support wellbeing, as many of the people who support it are in effect doing it in voluntary roles that are added onto other jobs, such as the Mental Health Champions.

n) From a wellbeing perspective, themes that emerged included the need for safe spaces for colleagues to discuss wellbeing and mental health concerns, the normal route through line managers was not always deemed the best way. Feedback acknowledged that mental health may be covered up by other absences.

o) In terms of leadership, there was feedback around accountability, expectations, lack of visibility and role modelling, consistency of messaging and approach from leaders.

p) There was a recognition from within the group that interaction was needed between the communication around mental health, wellbeing, EDI, and inclusive practice.

q) A mixture of managers at different levels, individuals, academic areas, and professional services areas were included in the Colleague Advisory Group.

r) The investment in time into the University Mental Health Charter was evident and a question came about whether there was a sense of colleagues knowing about the Charter, the positive activity surrounding it, and an appreciation of what it is trying to achieve.

072.2122.WSC	It was **AGREED** that: a) When the plan and gap analysis is complete it will be shared with the committee, by the next meeting on 15 September 2022. b) The Colleague Advisory Group would meet every other month between now and the end of the calendar year with the intention of focusing in more detail on the themes summarised at a high level and come back through this group and the University Mental Health Charter Working Group to look at what is needed and how it moves forward.

Update on student mental health support

073.2122.WSC   The Committee received a verbal update from the Head of Student Wellbeing on student mental health support.

074.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

a) Student self-referral data had been reported from MyHub. Over four consecutive years, 2018-2019 had been the busiest year on record until this year. All four years followed a similar trend which allowed Student Wellbeing to predict when more resources were required throughout the year.

b) Student referral rates dropped off when the pandemic arrived in 2020 which was seen across the sector and was seen in NHS mental health services.

c) Several surveys during the pandemic have shown that student mental health has been impacted quite negatively, with students reporting high levels of loneliness, higher than elderly people.

d) It doesn't appear that the drop in referral rates has been due to reduced need.

e) Contextual distress was being identified and students were coming forward with the same issues as pre pandemic but in higher numbers.

f) There has been a huge focus on wellbeing, seen in the Vice Chancellors message of the day, around looking after one's mental health. The increased awareness of wellbeing and mental health could have impacted on demand.

g) Data was shared with the committee (this academic year until the end of April 2022) which showed who was signposting and the reasons for referring. This data was consistent with previous years.

h) Generally, students are referring themselves or are being referred for anxiety and depression or anxiety and mood changes, consistent with the general population and the main reason people seek mental health services externally.

i) There are crisis protocols at the top of the staff pages which direct colleagues to call Student Advice; the reason for this is the number is prioritised and will get answered.

j) Most concerns reported went straight through to Student Wellbeing.

k) The university's counsellors use CORE-10, a validated measure of psychological distress with students using counselling. This year the core data shows that 63% of students saw a reduction in psychological distress because of the intervention that they received.

l) The data shows that 91.2% of students who attended any type of appointment with Student Wellbeing this year are still engaged with their studies.

m) This year, for the first time, external counsellors and a mental health practitioner have been employed to address the waiting list.

n) The Sports & Active Lifestyles (SAL) programme provides a positive source of support for student mental health; there is strong evidence around physical activity and behavioural activation for depression.

o) Sport & Active Lifestyles are prioritising their programme that provides mental health support for students. Sport & Active Lifestyles are in the

middle of developing their new strategy and the student wellbeing programme is a core part of what they are looking to do.

p) Sports & Active Lifestyles have had a lot of success with the student wellbeing programme and are now looking for further resource to expand the programme further. If it can be resourced properly, SAL can help students avoid the need to go to Student Wellbeing, reduce waiting lists and the need for students to see counsellors. A big part of what SAL do is provide social interaction and reduce the level of isolation.

q) The data showed that the curriculum timetable and assessment appeared to effect students more dramatically than other kinds of triggers in a wider cultural sense.

r) The Deputy Director of the Centre for Learning and Teaching (CLT) acknowledged how the university have been trying for years to do better at assessment timetabling and be more inclusive in course design. There is the inclusive course design tool which is a useful way for course teams to reflect on how inclusive they are being, and mental health and wellbeing is touched upon in this.

s) The Education for Mental Health Toolkit published this year is an incredibly useful document and has an abundance of practical ideas at the end of each section. CLT are using some in their workshops and are going to try and integrate them into the upcoming DEAP conference, coming out of the University Mental Health Charter.

t) At the end of the year, Student Wellbeing captures some demographic data, which generally reflects the student population.

u) The data available for both students and colleagues may not be giving the full picture as many are not seeking help and support.

v) The Director of Arts highlighted that last year in Performing Arts, a 10-credit module was piloted called Mental Health and Artistic Practice which went extremely positively in the subject area, and part of the five-year strategy is to roll the module out across the whole of the School.

w) Mental health is very much in people's consciousness and shouldn't just be addressed at triage point or at point of crisis but also within the curriculum.

075.2122.WSC	It was **AGREED** that: a) The Head of Sport, Health and Wellbeing would share the response from the University Executive Team (UET) with the Wellbeing Sub-Committee following the June 2022 UET meeting, where Sports & Active Lifestyles are to present their ideas on the student wellbeing programme.

Stress Risk Assessment review project

076.2122.WSC   The Organisational Development Partner referred to the report presented to the committee around Stress Risk Assessment collation – Key themes. This report provided a summary of findings based on the most recent Stress Risk Assessment reports (carried out in the last six months). It set out common and

emerging themes and highlighted common actions being taken in response, at both a local and university wide level (paper reference WSC-2122-018).

077.2122.WSC It was **noted** that:

    a) Due to time limitations during the meeting, the Organisational Development Partner requested this agenda item (paper reference WSC-2122-018) be held back, and for the focus to be on the next agenda item (paper reference WSC-2122-019).

078.2122.WSC It was **AGREED** that:
    a) The committee would feedback directly to the Organisational Development Partner and Wellbeing Manager, prior to the report going forward to the next Health & Safety Committee in June 2022.

079.2122.WSC The Organisational Development Partner provided the Committee with a report and update on the Stress Risk Assessment Review since the last Sub-Committee in January 2022 (paper reference WSC-2122-019).

080.2122.WSC It was **noted** that:

    a) The purpose of bringing the report to the committee was to update the committee and talk through the proposed changes, to seek views about the proposed changes before a whole proposal is taken to the Health & Safety Consultative Committee on the 9 June 2022.
    b) This is a key part of the workforce plan and connects with how the university is investing in colleague wellbeing; it is a process that has been well established for several years and one which was due for review.
    c) There was feedback on the process and the form itself which highlighted that something needed to be done with how the process was run to make sure it was delivering the outputs that it was intended to deliver.
    d) Things have moved on since this was introduced and there is now a broader picture around wellbeing as opposed to focusing purely on stress as it did at the outset, connected with legal requirements of the HSE.
    e) As the current Stress Risk Assessment (SRA) activity stands, nothing has changed yet and any SRA activity that is in train is unaffected. This now needs signing off at this committee and at the next Health & Safety Consultative Committee on the 9 June 2022.
    f) Stakeholders had been contacted, key themes had emerged, and the project team had worked through this and these findings were presented to the committee.
    g) Stakeholder consultation from December 2021 to February 2022 involved 18 colleagues and managers from across the university, Trade Unions, and members of the Wellbeing Sub Committee. The aim was to be as representative as possible and to seek different views on how impactful this was within local areas and organisation wide.

h) Feedback suggested that a deficiency model approach was being used and to instead use a strengths-based approach to better identify improvements, as well as risks and issues.

i) Key themes looked at repositioning the focus of the stress risk assessment conversations to both enhance wellbeing and reduce stress and reviewing the form in its entirety to better support the conversation.

j) It was suggested that the new SRA form be re-named as a 'School or Service Wellbeing Assessment Tool'. This was open to suggestion and was not intended to distract from what the SRA process was meant to do.

k) The form was an important part of how colleagues are listened to throughout the year, alongside the colleague survey. The frequency of the process was not changing and would remain at 6 months, more often if there was a significant change.

A newly proposed Stress Risk Assessment Form (appendix 2, paper reference WSC-2122-019) was shared with the committee that was aimed to better fit with how a positive conversation may take place.

l) The Organisational Development Partner was seeking the following:

1. Views and feedback on the proposals overall.
2. Specific feedback on the form (appendix 2, paper reference WSC-2122-019) .
3. Thoughts on the name change.

The committee broke off into three separate virtual breakout groups to discuss the points above.

m) The Wellbeing Sub-Committee were invited to review the report and newly proposed Stress Risk Assessment Form and consider any further recommendations that could be included and highlighted for action or consideration at the next Health and Safety Consultative Committee in June 2022.

081.2122.WSC	It was **AGREED** that: a) The Organisational Development Partner would share the new Stress Risk Assessment Form with the committee again to seek further reflections and combine them with the notes from individual discussions. b) For those not in attendance, or if time was too constricted in the discussions, the committee would send any feedback and thoughts on the Stress Risk Assessment Review to the Organisational Development Partner, Wellbeing Manager or Learning and Organisational Development Adviser. c) Feedback on the Stress Risk Assessment Review and newly proposed SRA form would be considered, and an annual report will go to the Health and Safety Consultative Committee in June 2022.

Occupational Health Report

082.2122.WSC   The Committee received a report from the Occupational Health Manager for information and to note. The report provided an overview of Occupational Health referrals and Occupational Health provision (paper reference WSC-2122-020).

083.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:

    a) There had been a steady increase in management referrals for Covid which went with the spike seen in December 2021.
    b) The main reasons why people were being referred to Occupational Health were musculoskeletal and mental health issues.
    c) Occupational Health are moving towards a hybrid way of working and all cases would be assessed on an individual basis.
    d) A new Occupational Health Adviser had been appointed on 21 March 2022.

Part C: Other Business

Any other business

084.2122.WSC   It was **noted** that:
    a) No further business was reported by the committee.

Date of next meeting

085.2122.WSC   The date of the next Wellbeing Sub-Committee meeting is the 15 September 2022.

Confirmed by the Committee/Board as a correct record and signed by the Chair:

Signed: Sarah Swales

Date: 16/09/22