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Minutes MP SU – Extraordinary Meeting 27th March 2023

Participants: Jens Christian Moesgaard Rauhe (JCMR) (formand), Benny Endelt (BE) (Næstformand), Astrid Heidemann Lassen (AHL), Jette Marie Christensen (JMC) (referent), Lars Rosgaard Jensen (LRJ), Kjeld Nielsen (KN), Klaus Kjær (KK), Lars Diekhöner (LD), Karina Kjeldgaard Ludvigsen (KKL).

Unable to attend: Brian Vejrum Wæhrens

Other participants: Dekan Mogens Rysholt (MR); TR Michael Eriksen (ME), DJØF; TR Jakob Skovrup Stampe (JSS), DM; TR Luise Bolther (LB), HK Lab; samt Camilla Skjødt Jacobsen (CSJ) og Mathilde Vestergaard Nielsen (MVN) fra AAU HR.

1. Approval of Agenda

Order of business: *Approval of agenda for today.*

Approved with a note that item 2 begins with relevant information from FSU.

2. Discussion of statement of budgetary challenges at Department of Materials and Production

The Department of Materials and Production has challenges in the budget for 2023 to 2025 of an unacceptable deficit, which makes it necessary to reduce costs by DKK 6 million. For more info, refer to Appendix 2.0 'Report on budgetary challenges at the Department of Materials and Production 2023-25'.

Order of business: It is recommended that the consultation committee, in accordance with the appendices,

- discusses the background of the meeting and the consequent need for staff reductions, including special attention being drawn to Appendix 2.2 'Notification of the Regional Labour Market Council'.
- discusses process plan.
- discusses frameworks for mitigation measures, including conditions for voluntary severance schemes in addition to senior schemes.
- discusses selection criteria.

Appendix:

Appendix 2.0: Redegørelse for budgetmæssige udfordringer på Institut for Materialer og Produktion 2023-25.

Appendix 2.1: Forslag til procesplan

Appendix 2.2: Varsling af Det Regionale Arbejdsmarkedsråd

Appendix 2.3: Notat vedr. afværgenforanstaltninger



Appendix 2.3.1: Medarbejderorientering om frivillig fratrædelsesordninger

Appendix 2.3.2: Medarbejderorientering om seniorordninger

Appendix 2.4: Notat vedr. udvælgelseskræterier

From FSU:

A proposal has been handed over from FSU that the timetable is changed so that the deadline for preventive measures is postponed 2 days, i.e. to Thursday April 13th. This means that appendices for the next FSU/SU will not be issued until Friday April 21st. This was accepted by FSU, although it is not in accordance with the rules of procedure. As FSU discusses the process for VIP, the proposal is sent to SU in MP to discuss whether a similar change should be made for TAP. SU in MP agrees with this change.

Statement of budgetary challenges at MP:

Head of Department JCMR presented the published report on the department's financial situation as well as the measures already taken to clarify and improve the situation. The situation has been discussed with the dean and with the finance department. The report shows a deficit of approx. DKK 6 million in 2024 and 2025.

Discussion:

KK suggests that the reduction should be managed continuously in MP, as the decrease occurs gradually. There must also be resources to cope with assignments and teaching in line with declining student numbers, etc. JCMR promised to take this into consideration.

ME asked about the expectation of bringing in external funds. JCMR replied that MP has budgeted for an increasing project turnover in the period from DKK 50 million to DKK 60 million.

KN asked about the rent reduction on Skjernvej. Is it possible to speed this up? It has been on the agenda since the start of MP, so it is unacceptable that nothing has happened here and that we have to face staff reductions as a result. MR replied that it is more complex than that. Mathematics is also on Skjernvej in a joint lease, so a comprehensive solution must be found. Cleanroom construction has been challenged by rising prices. Realistically, it probably cannot be expected to go faster than moving out of as much as possible from 2025.

LD asked why the department has to deal with the consequences of the delays? If we had achieved this earlier, we would not be in this situation. After all, it is not at the department that the process has been delayed. JCMR stated that the faculty pays the rent for the cleanroom, while the department has operating costs. The savings on rent from 2025 will take place as FIB will be condensed at the same time.

KN pointed out that the rent savings from Skjernvej will be fully realized from 2026, which then alleviates a large part of the challenges. He therefore calls for the challenges to be met with natural departure in that light. He also wanted to know how much is to be found in preventive measures to avoid redundancies? MR stated that the faculty's total budget and accounts must be balanced. As there are also challenges elsewhere at the faculty, it is necessary that MP aims to achieve budget balance.

JSS asked whether it is possible to wait with deciding on reductions until we have new admission numbers, as he believed that admissions were extraordinarily low last summer due to COVID, so a slightly more positive intake must be expected this summer.

KK asked for an explanation why the situation is so negative when MP came out with a profit in the financial statements of 2022. JCMR explained that this is due to declining education income and increased expenses for rent, etc. against the backdrop of higher energy prices and inflation.

JCMR thanked for all comments, which he promised to consider in further work.

The further process:

JCMR reviewed the timetable for further action.

Discussion:

ME supported the wish to push the process a few months until new admission figures are available, to which KK added that it is also possible to revoke terminations during the notice period. JCMR replied that it is always a trade-off when to react to such a situation.

LD asked whether it is the policy of the university management in the future to implement this kind of redundancy rounds rather than ongoing adaptations and adjustments? MR replied that we are not alone in the difficult conditions. Unfortunately, this is something we see across the sector (universities) these years. Multi-annual budgets give us a better basis for assessing developments and conditions. There may also be a need to make room for strategic development.

LD asked whether it is conceivable to lay off one place and hire elsewhere? JCMR replied that we must constantly focus on adapting our resources so that we deliver in the best possible way regarding our core task of research and education.

LB asked whether there is not an opportunity to bring equity into play? MR replied that there is equity at AAU and faculty level, while the departments do not have independent equity, even though the faculty tries to remember how this has been contributed. ENG has little equity that is disposed to some deferred expenses after sequencing during COVID. There is no equity capital that allows permanent deficits at institution level.

KKL supported postponing the process, as MP will then also receive a response to some applications for external research funding. After all, it is of no use that we lay off and then there are no hands to execute on the projects.

KN called for due diligence from the faculty in the future in relation to strategic challenges. He also asked how comments from SU will be taken into account going forward. MR replied that it will be part of the work leading up to the SU meeting in April.

MR then left the meeting to attend an SU meeting at BUILD.

JCMR informed that AAU is informing the Labour Market Council about possible mass redundancies, as this may be relevant for AAU. He also presented appendices on preventive measures and selection criteria for discussion, noting that appendices on voluntary redundancies and senior schemes are expected to be distributed to staff later today.

The staff side had no comment on the appendices and did not wish to discuss them, noting that they take note of preventive measures and selection criteria.

Finally, KK noted that it was desirable for there to be transparency in financial statements across departments (and faculties).



Communication:

SU as well as relevant union representatives are informed and involved on an ongoing basis in accordance with the process plan.

The staff of the department shall also be informed in accordance with the timetable.

3. Other

Nothing.