Stage 2 of the Change Management Process for the Review of Administration Arrangements within the University Accommodation Division comprises 3-4 weeks of consultative meetings with staff and students, ranging from smaller workshops through to individual meetings. These meetings offer staff the opportunity to provide feedback on the recommendations as outlined in the review.

A summary of the meeting held on Thursday 12 August 2010 at 11.00am in the Rabbit Room, Toad Hall is provided below.

Present: Karen Hill, Change Manager (Facilitator)
Kellie Bertolin (Ursula Hall)
Gina Denman (Graduate House)
Sarah Docker (Bruce Hall)
Jeanette Robinson (Burton & Garran Hall)
Susanne Smethills (Fenner Hall)
Lucinda Watt (Toad Hall)

Apologies: N/A
Absent: N/A
In Attendance: Karen Ford, Change Consultant (HR)

1. Meeting Purpose

The purpose and structure of the meeting was outlined by the facilitator:

- A discussion around key strategic themes and recommendations from the Review of the Administration Arrangements within the University Accommodation Division;
- An opportunity for feedback, commentary and questions on these themes and recommendations;
- Discussion regarding current roles and responsibilities;
- Attendees were offered the opportunity for individual meetings if required.

2. Roles and Responsibilities - Issues and Concerns

- The facilitator acknowledged that the Review process has caused anxiety, reinforcing that the consultation meetings are forums for comments, feedback, questions and suggestions;
- It was noted however that there will be change in some respect; it is intended that a key outcome of the Review will be increased cooperation, collaboration and consistency in the provision of accommodation services to students as well as greater exposure to the broader strategic direction of the university;
- Attendees noted that a major concern for their group is the apparent “down grading” of their roles and a loss of responsibility; the review documentation presents their role to be that of a “Senior Front Desk Officer” and implies a change from a strategic to an operational level of focus and responsibility;
Attendees felt that there is conflict between their job responsibilities and those of the Deputy Head of Hall; the responsibilities of the latter includes Finance and HR which are currently the responsibilities of the Administration Manager;

The potential change in reporting line of Halls Maintenance to a central area was seen to remove a managerial responsibility from the Administration Manager. Attendees concurred that the role of Administration Manager will reduce in scope (in particular a loss of budgetary, HR and supervisory responsibilities) causing questions and concerns about salary reductions and redundancies;

The facilitator reiterated that no job losses or salary reductions are intended as an outcome of the Review and noted that ideally an outcome of this process will be a holistic review of roles and responsibilities across the Accommodation Division;

Attendees were of the opinion that the role of Deputy Head of Hall should be pastoral and academic in focus and the role of Administration Manager should continue to be to operationalise and provide support to the Head of Hall and Deputy Head of Hall.

3. Rotation of Administration Managers on an Annual Basis

Attendees strongly disagreed with this recommendation, in their view this would be disruptive to the Hall and their team and they could see no benefit in this suggestion;

The facilitator explained that the rationale was to provide Administration Managers with exposure to the broader university which in turn could offer career and skills development opportunities;

Attendees voiced their strong disagreement and indignation with the statement on page 7 of the report that “Heads agreed that Administration managers would benefit from training…..” noting that this view appeared to be widely held and that it indicated a lack of trust in their capabilities;

The group agreed they have a strong body of knowledge and skills and would welcome ongoing development and broader university exposure. They explained that this was previously restricted under the current structure.

4. University Accommodation Function

Attendees felt that this central area is under resourced; there was a strongly held view that as a result of this under resourcing they were not receiving a service commensurate with the fees paid;

It was seen as critical that an outcome of the Review be a re-defining of roles and responsibilities and a refresh of procedures for Halls Administration and University Accommodation;

In particular, attendees noted that they would like to see increased transparency of information between all parties, for example through a review of Delegations and the implementation of joint meetings between all parties.

5. Centralisation of Administration Function

It was agreed that the proposed change in reporting line is confusing and that while there could be some positive outcomes in the centralisation model, if the role of Administration Manager reported in to a person outside of the Hall it would be “chaotic” (for example daily performance management could be difficult);

6. Recommendation 1: Establish an Executive Level Committee to Oversee Strategic Planning for Residential Communities

Agreed to be a positive suggestion but essential that Heads of Halls be included.

7. Recommendation 2: Disestablish the UA Division and replace with Residential Communities Department

Concern that this would be a change in name only and that in practice there would be no change to current arrangements;

The facilitator noted that various models would be considered including close alignment with the Registrar's Division and the development of a service charter for the new central department (the idea of the service charter was supported);

The reports - to- responsive to model was discussed.
8. Reporting Lines: Heads of Halls to continue to report to PVC (Students) with a review of this arrangement at 12 months
   - A review at 12 months was not viewed as a good suggestion; it was agreed that it was important that once the new structure is implemented a period of stability is essential.

9. Recommendation 3: Transfer University Accommodation in to Facilities and Services and Recommendation 5: Investigate the viability of transferring the UA/ Halls Residential Admissions Function into the Registrar’s Division
   - Attendees did not support recommendation 3 agreeing that it “did not make sense”;
   - The “core business” of the Accommodation Administration function was defined as being “to support the pastoral and academic aspects of a student’s life in the Hall” and it was therefore considered to align well with the Registrars Division but not with Facilities and Services whose responsibilities were seen to be the structural aspects of the Halls.

10. Recommendation 7: Transfer transactional functions to the F&BS Shared Services Office
    - This was agreed to be a good suggestion.

11. Recommendation 9: Establish a Halls Maintenance Zone Team. to be Managed by the UA Facilities Manager and Report to F&S
    - Attendees did not agree with this suggestion noting the security concerns; they stated that students are presently very comfortable with the current structure as they know who is coming in to their room;
    - It was felt that it would be difficult for a centralised manager to assess the work of the local maintenance teams and there was concern that service times would increase together with costs if a centralised model were implemented;
    - It was noted that maintenance is under resourced in some Halls;
    - A user group and centralised processes was considered to be a good idea but the present model of local maintenance was preferred.

Meeting was concluded at 1.00 pm