THE HAPPINESS MANIFESTO

There is much **unhappiness** among the postdoctoral population, the students and the professionals services staff (PSS) in SPS. If Head of School (HoS), my priority would be to improve the happiness of these three groups. Here are some ideas:-

Unhappiness:

What makes people unhappy is the feeling of having no control over the environment in which they work, becoming pawns that are pushed around rather than people with agency and confidence to operate within clear parameters. If people don't perform well they want to know what to do to get better. If they do perform well, they would like to see appreciation and reward. Lack of understanding of how they fit into their environment, into their team, into their department is what causes most of the distress, discomfort and mental health issues. Performing well and not being promoted is just as bad as not performing well and being promoted on spurious grounds.

At the policy level, this translates into treating PSS/PostDocs/students like partners in the organisation rather than subsidiaries. At the moment, and rather tellingly, only HR are defined as "business partners", sitting in the driving seat of the rules and regulations which define everyone else's working life. At the practical level, this translates into ensuring everyone has clear and transparent information on their roles, rights, responsibilities and opportunities. It also means that the organisation's management are held truly accountable if they fail to provide that, or if they fail to act in accordance with policies. This includes the HoS, of course.

Remote Postdoctoral Positions:

Postdoctoral workers are shuttled around the world like airline luggage. By the time you've done an undergraduate degree and then a PhD, life has probably happened to you. Maybe you love the place you live in, the people you know, the relationships you have. Yet, it is normal and widely accepted in academia that you'll need to move to find a postdoc in your field — often uprooting every two or three years for a decade. This suits some, but for many others it is hugely damaging.

Much of our work in research hinges on collaborative discussions followed by solo work (eg coding, problem-solving). The discussions often take place via Zoom/Teams in lab meetings, journal clubs, project planning and group meetings with students. Many large science projects are driven forward by ideas/coding on Slack, GitHub and other collaborative tools. The pandemic has given a huge push both to remote collaboration & new working methods. I want to develop new ideas on remote postdoctoral positions. For example, a postdoc could live & work anywhere in the UK, yet have regular visits to Cambridge (say, one week every two or three months) to meet supervisors and team members. At a policy level, this means providing flexible 'timeshare' accommodation in which multiple postdocs use the same property, but with allotted periods of time to visit. Though it is easiest to get such a scheme running in the UK, remote postdocs need not be geographically restricted — there are tax/legal implications to solve, but I want to see the option of remote postdocs available worldwide.

Bullying & Harassment:

I'm using "bullying" as an umbrella term for all manner of toxic behaviour, including sexual harassment, racist/homophobic/gender harassment, belittlement and aggression. My view on bullies in academia is that they're a feature, not a bug. Grants, press releases, first author publications, charisma and huge egos are prized. The qualities associated with "top scientists" in academia are present in the kinds of people who bully others. Not all "top scientists" are bullies, but quite a few are. They are difficult to deal with. They ruin careers. They destroy lives.

We should start by defining "success" as achievements that build other people up (especially students & postdocs) and that contribute positively to society. So, in filling tenured positions, I will insist on much greater weight being placed on evidence of successful mentorship of early career researchers, on free sharing of problem-solving tools/software and on open access to experimental data. I will introduce postdoc and graduate student representation on tenured appointment committees, as well as require a reference from an applicant's student. A good

scientist must be defined not just by what he or she has done to advance the field, but also by what he or she has done to help others advance the field. Science is a collaborative endeavour.

My take on the University's "Dignity at Work" (DaW) is that it is a great policy, in principle. My own experiences lead me to believe it doesn't work, in practice. What evidence (statistical, testimonies) do we have that DaW is working and used as a means to resolve conflict rather than as a weapon against those who suggest that there is such a thing as inappropriate behaviour? As HoS, I will implement an immediate School-wide review of this policy to assess whether it is working properly, and find out whether improvements are needed.

Policy must come with the recognition that bullying exists, and that it almost always operates vertically and derives from power. Implementation must be based on the principle that it is individuals who are the victims of bullying and who are in need of protection, not the organisation. Bullying is thus much better dealt with by an independent body with power — an Ombudsman — who can genuinely assess any wrongdoing even by senior people (they are usually the bullies). I will press for the creation of such a figure in the University to make DaW more effective and to bring bullies & harassers to account.

Citizen Science:

In research, the future will see more emphasis on inclusivity. Citizen science is the involvement of non-professional volunteers in the scientific process — in data collection, quality assurance, data analysis and interpretation, problem definition and dissemination of results. My subject, astronomy, has always valued the engagement of amateurs, who have dominated some areas (eg discovery of long-period comets). The onset of big databases has made the role of the citizen science more prominent. Voorwerps are a class of astronomical objects discovered in 2007 by a primary school teacher (Hanny van Arkel). She was participating as a volunteer in the Galaxy Zoo project. Just last month, amateur astronomers discovered an enormous emission nebula near the Andromeda Galaxy, the closest large spiral galaxy to us. What is astonishing is amateurs found something striking and unexpected in an area of the sky much studied by professionals.

Citizen science can bring benefits for science, for society, for policy and for the participants themselves. People become more aware, directly involved and fascinated by scientific problems. The advent of huge open data sources, free AI technology & ready availability of personal computers with significant processing power means that this style of research is becoming very powerful. There are citizen science projects in astronomy, physics, environmental sciences, geography, meteorology and computer science. Inspired by Rob Kennicutt's Interdisciplinary Lectureships when he was HoS, I will set up a number of Citizen Science Lectureships (in any field). These dovetail naturally with the new Masters program on Data Intensive Science, as it is the availability of big data and the AI tools to analyse it that drives good citizen science projects.

Money & Open Journals:

Open Access has become a serious hindrance to open science, as it involves inflated costs to authors in an attempt to protect the revenue of publishers. 10 per cent of all mainstream QR funding is given to Journals in subscriptions/page/journal charges. There is little enough money in science research these days for us to be paying a tithe to Elsevier, Wiley, etc. Scientific publishing is a racket on an impressive scale. I will encourage all SPS researchers to use Open Journals that are free. A major driver of this waste of money is the desire to publish in high impact Journals. Publishing in *Nature* or *Science* is seen as a passport to tenure or promotion. As HoS, I want appointments/promotion to be based on the contents of papers, not the impact factor of Journals. Squandering research money on braggadacio will be counted against you.

The culture of science: it's us. It's the choices we make every day. Every time we review job candidates, assess performance, talk about others' work, hire a postdoc, choose a journal to publish in, support a colleague in distress, give a lecture or supervision, appoint a Head of School, we're setting the culture.

My take on the culture in SPS is that we can, and should, **collectively** be doing way, way better.