

*University of Wales, Bangor*

**School of Welsh-Medium Studies**

- Date:** 15 May 2006
- Place:** Seminar Room, Hen Goleg
- Present:** Dr Einir Young (Chair), Ms Meri Huws, Professor Denis Morgan, Dr Eryl Davies, Dr Enlli Thomas, Mrs Gwerfyl Roberts, Dr Pwyll ap Siôn, Dr Sally Harper, Dr Cen Williams, Dr Keith Hughes, Mr Geraint George, Dr Llion Jones, Ms Bethan W Jones, Mr Brian Mervyn Jones, Dr Eifiona Lane, Ms Siân Pierce, Mr David James, Dr Delyth Morris, Mrs Delyth Prys (Minutes).
- Apologies:** Ms Carys Roberts, Mrs Delyth Murphy, Professor Margaret Deuchar

**1. MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the School held on 1 February 2006 were accepted as being correct (after noting the correction of July 2003 to 2004 in Section 5.1).

**2. MATTERS ARISING**

**1. Presentation by Dr Ioan Matthews**

- ii. It was reported that his new website would, according to the information on the old website, be launched at the Urdd Eisteddfod.
- vii It was reported that the report on the questionnaire distributed to 6th form pupils in September 2004 had not appeared. Meri Huws said that she was aware of a draft report but she confirmed that the final report had not been circulated.
- xi The Director had suggested that scholarship/fellowship holders should visit institutions and was awaiting a reply.

**4. i. Mentoring and Peer Guide Scheme**

It was reported that 30 Welsh speakers had been recruited to the scheme – less than in the previous year but more than in the one before that.

It was reported that the School of Nursing, Midwifery and Health was having difficulty in recruiting peer guides in general and that they were working with Kim Davies to solve the problem. The Law department were also working with Kim Davies to recruit peer guides.

**ii. Presence in the Eisteddfod**

Members of the School were once again requested to let Elinor Elis-Williams know about any events (launches and suchlike) that they intended holding during the National Eisteddfod and any other activities in which they had a part.

**iii. Library Restructuring**

It was noted that Meri Huws and Dr Llion Jones had now met with Alison McKenzie, the new librarian.

**iv. The Centre for Creative Industries**

It was reported that Llion Dafydd had resigned as students' President and that Gerallt Wyn Roberts had been elected in his place. He would undertake the duties of reporting back to the School.

#### **5.4 Peer e-mail groups**

It was noted that the postgraduate students remained active but that their latest events had had to be postponed because of snow. It was also noted that there was need to assess how to progress with contacting Welsh-medium students effectively – at present only the Director is able to connect to the lists.

#### **5.1 Assessment of Options (under Director's Business)**

16 July 2003 was changed to 16 July 2004.

It was reported that Brett Dugan etc. had met with the School's Director. A draft report will be presented to the sector on Thursday, 18 May 2006.

#### **5.2 Report on the University Board for Welsh-Medium Teaching**

It was reported that the next meeting of the Board had been postponed or cancelled. As only two meetings a year are held this was a matter for real concern. As the custom was that minutes of the previous meeting were circulated some three days prior to the next meeting, the minutes of the last meeting were thus not available. Previous requests to have the minutes distributed in electronic format had been rejected and this likewise did not facilitate the exchange of information. The members at the meeting expressed their concern that this tardiness might suggest that the Board was being wound down, and that it was further evidence that the University of Wales as a federal body was disintegrating. It was important that the Board had its say in the options exercise, but this was not happening. The Board was also the only independent forum where the work of the Centre for Welsh-Medium Studies in the Universities of Wales could be discussed and scrutinised, and this was a further reason why there was concern that the Board was not meeting.

**RESOLVED to write to Lynn Williams and Gareth Jones to ask what was happening with the Board. [Action: Einir Young].**

#### **5.3 Gwerddon**

The next meeting will be by video network on 25 May. The members were reminded that the call for papers was still open. It was once again asked whether the periodical was acceptable for RAE and according to Dr Ioan Williams the answer was affirmative, although there was some doubt as to the accuracy of this.

**RESOLVED to contact Professor Ioan Williams for confirmation in writing [Action: Einir Young]**

#### **6.2.ii Scholarships**

It was reported that four of the five applications had been successful, and that scholarships had been awarded in the areas of History, Modern Languages/Creative Industries, Psychology and Law.

#### **iii Fellowships**

It was confirmed that the term of the current fellowship in the field of Social Studies had been extended. A new one in the area of Agriculture had also been awarded to UWB. Information about the new Vocational Fellowships had arrived, and information about these would be circulated shortly. It was confirmed that candidates would not need to have a higher degree in order to gain these fellowships.

### 3. WELSH-MEDIUM PROVISION IN THE NEW COLLEGES

Meri Huws reported that she had met 5 out of the 6 new shadow heads. There had been discussions regarding transparency and the sharing of information about the new shadow boards. An enquiry was made as to whether the minutes of the shadow boards were available to university staff. Some members received the minutes of the shadow boards of their present schools, but where a school was being divided, with some members of staff moving to a different college, the staff were not receiving minutes of the shadow board for their new location. This left those staff in a vacuum, not knowing what the new structure would be and not hearing about relevant developments. Geraint George and Gwerfyl Roberts noted that their requests to see minutes of the new shadow boards that would be of relevance to them had been turned down. Meri Huws said that she was concerned that the minutes were not being openly distributed and that this went against the principle of transparency.

**RESOLVED to ask Einir Young to request, on behalf of the school, that minutes of the shadow college boards be sent to the Director of the School (Einir) and to the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh Medium) (Meri). [Action: Einir].**

#### **Report by Brian Jones**

Brian Jones was a member of the shadow board of the new college that would be responsible for Banking, Business, Law and Social Sciences. His responsibilities on this Board included that for the Welsh language. He gave the following information about the number of staff in the new college who would be able to speak Welsh:

Department	Total number of staff	Number able to speak Welsh
Banking and Finance	16	0
Management	8	3
Regional Studies	9	9
Management Centre	3	1
Administrative staff	10	9 (+ 1 learner)
Social Sciences	28	7
Administrative staff	6	4
Law	7	4
Administrative staff	2	2

He also noted that 14 modules of the old SBARD would be available in Welsh in the first year, 16 in the second year and 5 in the third year, and it would be possible to teach every one of these through the medium of Welsh. Full provision through the medium of Welsh was available in Sociology, but for no other full degrees. All core modules in Law were available through the medium of Welsh. He also noted that there was a shortage of students prepared to study through the medium of Welsh, as they were being lost in the 6th form. A lack of confidence in studying through the medium of Welsh posed problems for both students and staff. The new emphasis on recruiting staff on the basis of their research militated against attracting staff able to lecture through the medium of Welsh. Because of the uncertainty about what would happen to courses such as the environment under the new arrangements (and even the courses that would run in the next academic year) there was difficulty in recruiting students.

Brian Jones was thanked for his report. Enquiry was made as to whether it would be possible to receive similar reports from the other 5 shadow colleges. It was noted that Densil Morgan who was present was head of the proposed Humanities college. The other 4 colleges had yet to respond. Concern was expressed that the Welsh language was in danger of losing ground under the new collegiate regime. Of the 50 new posts recently advertised, only 6 had mentioned Welsh. It was mentioned that the wording 'Welsh essential' had been removed from the wording of one post between leaving the relevant department and reaching the press. It was asked whether the code of practice for advertising posts had been broken. Meri Huws commented that an investigation was taking place into this matter.

### **The School, TASIG and the Shadow Boards**

A discussion took place on how the School might influence the safeguarding and strengthening of Welsh medium provision within the new collegiate regime. Densil Morgan said that he was happy to speak on behalf of the School at the Board of Heads of the Shadow Colleges. Meri Huws commented that there was a need for people to get together to make suggestions to these Shadow Boards and it was agreed that the School should be proactive in doing this. Geraint George commented that a meeting had been arranged for the following Thursday (May 18th) with Professor Ted Gardner and Professor John Farrar to discuss where the Environment lecturers fitted into the new arrangements and their concerns regarding the future of Welsh medium provision.

In discussing the role of the School under the new regime the School was reminded of the need to work through TASIG as the appointed committee for Welsh medium teaching in the university. There was however also room for the School as a forum that included all UWB academic staff who wished to be members. The role and location of the School within the new collegiate regime therefore needed consideration.

### **RESOLVED to request the School Director to**

- a). ensure that information regarding the Shadow Boards, and also their minutes, are both generally available by approaching Kevin Mundy as secretary of the Executive Committee to make sure this happens. [Action: Einir].**
- b). call the Welsh speakers in all the proposed colleges together to consider what steps should be taken with regard to Welsh medium. [Action: Einir].**
- c). contact Geraint George after his meeting with TG and JF and take further action if necessary, taking our concerns to the Vice-Chancellor regarding the location of the Environment lecturers and their future [Action: Einir].**
- ch). look further at the location of the School (or body, forum or whatever it is to be called) under the new collegiate regime and draw up a document on this for presentation to the Council of UWB. Meri Huws, Cen Williams, Densil Morgan and Delyth Prys were asked to assist Einir Young with this task. It was agreed that a draft of the document should be circulated to members of the School for comments and amendments before a final version is prepared. [Action: Einir, Meri, Cen, Densil, Delyth].**

## **5. MARKETING**

It was reported that the higher education fairs arranged in the south by Ioan Matthews' office had been cancelled. The Marketing Unit had been part of the fairs in the North (Porthmadog, Llandudno, Mold) but that as Bangor had been very active

with schools in the north, attending fairs in the south would have opened new doors. Doubts were being expressed in the Marketing Unit as to the value of cooperating with the Centre on these, mainly because they were not prepared to give ‘unfair’ attention to Bangor. It was decided to ask TASIG to discuss this further.

**RESOLVED that this needed to be considered as a valid concern [Action – Meri to place it on the agenda].**

Surprise was expressed at the plans to ‘brand’ Welsh medium education that were emanating from IM’s office. No-one had seen this new branding (which would be launched with the new website at the Urdd Eisteddfod). Not one of the marketing officers of the universities that were the principal providers (Aber, Bangor, Trinity) had been consulted about the new branding, and their request to have a preview had been refused.

### **Freshers’ Week**

An event to market Welsh medium education during Freshers’ Week was discussed. An event on the Saturday **before** registration was being looked at as students had to choose modules on the Monday, and it was too late afterwards to influence their choices. There could however be conflict between this plan and official plans for welcoming students to Bangor.

Meri Huws reported that she had been in discussion with Gwynedd Council about commissioning a comedy performance, with actors such as Dewi Rhys taking part, to attract people back to the north to work. She suggested that this might be suitable for performing at such an event. This idea was supported and the organisers would be asked to look carefully at the best date for holding this. It was also suggested that it might be performed on the UWB stand at the National Eisteddfod, possibly as part of the event for teachers that was to be part of the School’s presence at the Eisteddfod.

**RESOLVED to investigate the possibilities further [Action – Einir to contact Sioned and the UMCB President]**

It was reported that a new mentoring pack would be launched at the Urdd Eisteddfod in memory of Dafydd Arthur.

## **6. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

No other business was raised at the meeting.

**7. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING:** Not yet announced