

SCHOOL OF WELSH MEDIUM STUDIES

- Date** : 19 October 2006
- Venue** : Council Chamber
- Present** : Prof. Densil Morgan (Chairman), Dr. Eryl Wyn Davies, Mr. Geraint George, Mrs. Eleri Hughes, Ms Meri Huws, Dr. Keith Hughes, Mr. David James, Mrs. Bethan Wyn Jones, Dr. Llion Jones, Dr. Iestyn Pierce, Dr. Robert Pope, Mr. Huw Powell, Mrs. Delyth Prys, Mr. Gerallt Roberts, Dr. Pwyll Ap Siôn, Dr. Enlli Thomas, Prof. Thomas Watkin, Dr. Cen Williams, Dr. Catrin Haf Williams, Mr. Prysor Williams, Dr. Einir Young, Mr. Emyr Roberts (minutes).
- Apologies** : Dr. Jason Walford Davies, Prof. Margaret Deuchar, Dr. Wil Griffith, Mr. Dewi Wyn Jones, Ms. Gwenda Rhian Jones, Ms. Gwenan Hughes Williams, Dr. Gwyn Lewis, Mrs. Delyth Murphy, Mrs. Carys Wyn Roberts, Dr. Dyfed Roberts, Prof. Deri Tomos, Dr. Eddie Williams.

1. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Mrs. Eleri Hughes, Mr. Gerallt Roberts and Mr. Prysor Williams to their first meeting of the School.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the School held on 15 May 2006 were accepted as correct. (After it was noted that the title of item 2.4.1v should be amended to read President of UMCB).

3. MATTERS ARISING

1. Item 5.2 University Board for Welsh-medium Teaching

It was resolved to ask Meri Huws to circulate the constitution of the to members of the School (*Action: Meri Huws*).

2. Item 5.3 Gwerddon

It was reported that there would be no prejudice anybody who published in Gwerddon when submissions are made to the RAE.

3. Item 3 Welsh-medium Provision in the New Colleges

- (i) It was reported that the Shadow College Boards were now permanent, and that their minutes would be placed on the Web as soon as the system had been updated.
- (ii) The Department of the Environment has now steered in the Building for this year. The staff feel that they should be part of the College of Natural Sciences, where there is a great potential for progress, and discussions are continuing.
- (iii) A meeting was held between Meri Huws, Cen Williams, Densil Morgan, Delyth Prys and Einir Young concerning the School's place within the new Collegiate system, and the report was circulated. However, the situation has changed, and it is hoped that the job-description of the new Head of Canolfan Bedwyr will be examined, with view to the inclusion academic planning matters.

4. Item 5 Marketing

- 4.1 It was reported that Meri Huws and Carys Wyn Roberts were part of the Advantage Management Team, which means that attention will be given to the needs of the establishment.
- 4.2 During Welcome Week, students from Neuadd John Morris Jones and also those living at home were spoken to. Approximately 200 names have been received for the Society of Welsh Learners.

Gerallt, Prysor, Carys a Sioned were congratulated for their good work during Welcome Week.

However, there was one disappointment, in that complaints were received concerning the cleanliness of Neuadd JMJ. It was noted that the cleaners had had to move to the Ffriddoedd Halls before Welcome Week. It was noted that the Executive Committee had discussed this, and that the Estates Department has been informed.

Resolved: to note the School's dissatisfaction, and to write to the Head of the Estates Department concerning the standard of hygiene at Neuadd JMJ.
(Action: DM/ER)

4. TASIG REPORT

Meri Huws reported on some items which had been discussed at its meeting on 18 October 2006.

- (i) The London Economics on Welsh-medium provision had been published but, unfortunately, was disappointing, in that it contained no recommendations.

HEFCW was going to make specific recommendations, and the establishment and individuals will have an opportunity to respond.

- (ii) A number of meetings had taken place with representatives of UW Aberystwyth, and also with Mr. John Howells from the Assembly and the Vice-Chancellor, in order to discuss the way forward on the report on Assessing the Options. A seminar has been arranged for 27 October, and HEFCW will need to make a recommendation to Jane Davidson by December.
- (iii) From now on, Dr. Llion Jones will be working on the Language Scheme for 4 days per week. Furthermore, Dr. Cen Williams will be retiring next summer.

It is intended that the job-description of the Head of Canolfan Bedwyr will be examined, and that consideration will be given to the appointment of another person to develop Welsh-medium studies on the academic side. The role is intended to be very specific, and that the post-holder should be someone of status in Wales.

- (iv) HEFCW has asked UWB to undertake the work of organising Development Schemes for Welsh-medium Staff. Nia Gwynn from the Human Resources Department will be responsible for this throughout the sector in Wales. Dr. Gwyn Lewis, Dr. Iestyn Pierce and Dr. Cen Williams were asked to assist with the work.
- (v) HEFCW had allocated PhD scholarships to the following students:

Owain Llwyd Brown – Music
Heledd Fflur Dafydd – Biological Sciences
Hedd Morlais Glyn Thomas – Psychology
Heledd Fychan – History & Welsh History
Nia Griffith – Psychology
Menna Wyn – Modern Languages

Fellowships had been allocated to the following staff:

Ms. Gwenda Rhian Jones – School of Social Sciences
Mr. Prysor Williams – School of the Environment & Natural Resources
Miss Bethan Llwyd – School of Health Care Sciences (half-time)

Heads of Schools need to identify capable students and make applications for up to 5 scholarships for next year (**Action: MH**).

- (vi) Mr. Alan Parry, Head of Communication, had established a small team to oversee the arrangements which are made for the Eisteddfodau and National Festivals. It is planned that the stand will continue to be used in the form of a pavilion.

Staff need to think quickly if they wish to launch anything at the Eisteddfod in Flintshire. Prysor Williams will be the contact with TASIG and Alan Parry's team.

A strong possibility also exists that UWB will be responsible for the Science tent in the future.

(vii) PYCI had recently noted that UW Aberystwyth was noting at the end of all job advertisements that it was a bilingual establishment which implemented a Language Scheme. It was agreed to recommend that the Executive Committee should approve the following wording for inclusion at the end of all job advertisements.

“Sefydliad dwyieithog sy’n gweithredu: Cynllun Iaith Gymraeg ac sydd wedi ymrwymo i Gyfle Cyfartal. A bilingual institution which operates a Welsh Language Scheme and is committed to Equal Opportunities”.

5. NATURE AND FUTURE OF THE SCHOOL

- 5.1.1 The Chairman reported that The School had now been in existence since around 1986, originally under the chairmanship of Gwyn Thomas. There had been a succession of Chairpersons who were part of the University’s activities. Since the beginning of that period, it was felt that very positive changes had occurred regarding the Welsh-medium position of the University. There had been a change in the culture, so that the establishment was now normalising the use of Welsh as part of its make-up and core activities.
- 5.1.2 The mid-90s saw the integration with the Coleg Normal, which brought new developments in its wake, followed by the establishment of Canolfan Bedwyr, and a commitment by the Vice-Chancellor to continue with the work which had been done.
- 5.1.3 In 1993, the Welsh Language Act came into force, giving statutory rights regarding the Welsh language, and 1997 saw great changes in Wales, with the referendum and the establishment of the Assembly in 2000. The status of Welsh has increased, but the problem now is that we take the language for granted; the situation calls for perpetual monitoring.
- 5.1.4 Great changes have occurred to the structure of the University, with the creation of 6 new Colleges, and the ensuing opportunity to begin a new era and to consider the future of the School and its *modus operandi*. It was felt that the School is not receiving the priority which it previously had, and that it does not have the same influence as it had. It has now reached a crossroads, and a decision now needs to be made on its future and its position in the new Collegiate structure.
- 5.2 The Chairman then invited members to state their opinion and ideas. The following points were noted:-
- 5.2.1 Initially, the Colleges’ potential needs to be seen. With the prospect of a new full-time appointment Canolfan Bedwyr, there is now an opportunity for the body to expand, but with the energy coming from the Colleges.
- 5.2.2 The long-term position needs to be examined; what the ideal will be in 20 years. It is necessary to consider the foundations now.

- 5.2.3 Some felt that the School had lost its influence and effectiveness, with TASIG now being chaired by the Vice-Chancellor. A body independent of TASIG is needed in order to voice the opinion of the majority of the staff, and the Colleges need strong Welsh-medium representation. One possible way forward would be to have a small Welsh-medium school within each of the Colleges, with their opinions being carried forward to TASIG.
- 5.2.4 The Colleges are now substantial and strong bodies, and free to create their own forums and contact each other.
- 5.2.5 It is important to give support to the Director of the Language Scheme, and for it to bring together a forum of the 6 Colleges as and when necessary. The Language Scheme Officer may be able to undertake some of the duties of the Chairman of the School, such as attending meetings, both internally and externally.
- 5.2.6 It is essential to ensure that the Welsh-medium banner should be waved at meetings of the Board of College Heads. It is also necessary to ensure that the School has influence, so that it can, as necessary, persuade the Executive Committee on matters.
- 5.2.7 It was suggested that a Deputy Head could be appointed in all Colleges, with responsibility for the Welsh-medium portfolio in accordance with the new procedure which has been established in the College of the Arts and Humanities.
- 5.2.8 The School needs to continue to meet 3 times per year, at least for this year.

RESOLVED

- (i) To ask the members to go back to their Colleges and ensure that the status of Welsh is safeguarded, and that appropriate structures are put in place.
- (ii) To ask Meri Huws and Llion Jones to arrange that the work is developed between them.
- (iii) To maintain the status quo of the School and hold 3 meetings per year. Its main function will be to provide a platform for the airing of problems, and for the Pro Vice-Chancellor to note and agree on action and recommendations.
- (iv) To maintain the relationship with TASIG, with some members attending the Task Group.
- (v) To circulate the minutes of the School to Heads of Colleges and request a report of the developments at all Colleges for the next meeting of the School.
- (vi) To review the situation in a year.

6. JOB ADVERTISEMENTS

Dr. Cen Williams his disappointment that an advertisement for the position of Chief Executive at the College of the Arts and Humanities had appeared with the wording ‘ideally able to communicate through the medium of Welsh’. He asked the staff to be more vigilant that this does not occur for any post, and to ensure that all new appointments comply with the detailed requirements of the language policy.

The Chairman confirmed that the advertisement had been amended and that the response to the post had been very favourable with regard to the Welsh language.

7. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 2.15pm on Wednesday, 31 January 2007 in the Council Chamber.