

## **Bangor University**

### **SCHOOL FOR WELSH-MEDIUM STUDIES**

**Date** : 26 January 2011

**Present** : Dr. Llion Jones (Chairman), Dr. Tegau Andrews, Dr. Andrew Davies, Miss Sara Davies, Dr. Peredur Davies, Mr. Hefin Francis, Miss Edith Gruber, Mr Hefin Gwilym, Dr. Rhian Hodges, Miss Eleri Hughes, Prof. John Hughes, Dr. Lowri Hughes, Mrs. Bethan Wyn Jones, Mr Owain Wyn Jones, Miss Sioned Medi Jones, Dr. Gwyn Lewis, Prof. Peredur Lynch, Mrs. Delyth Murphy, Mrs. Mairwen Owen, Mrs. Siân Peris Owen, Mr. Alan Wyn Parry, Dr. Sara Parry, Mr. Huw Tomos Pritchard, Mrs. Delyth Prys, Mr. Euryn Rhys Roberts, Dr. Paula Roberts, Dr. Sara Elin Roberts, Miss Mair Rowlands, Mr. Wyn Thomas, Prof. Gerwyn Williams, Mrs Llinos Wyn Williams, Miss Manon Wyn Williams, Miss Sarah Williams, Miss Sharyn Williams, Dr. Einir Young, Mr. Emyr Roberts (Secretary).

**Apologies** : Ms. Shân Ashton, Dr. Eryl Wynn Davies, Dr. Jason Walford-Davies, Miss Siân Esmor, Mr. Ifor Gruffydd, Dr. Jerry Hunter, Mrs. Elen Huws, Mr. David James, Mr. Dewi Wyn Jones, Dr. Eifiona Thomas Lane, Mrs. Pauline Loftus, Dr. Delyth Morris, Mr. Gerwyn Owen, Ms. Nia Powell, Dr. Angharad Price, Ms. Angharad Rhisiart, Mrs. Anwen Roberts, Mrs. Gwerfyl Wyn Roberts, Dr. Enlli Môn Thomas, Mrs. Gwenan Williams.

#### **1. WELCOME**

The Chairman welcomed the new members to their first meeting of the School. He welcomed especially Mr Wyn Thomas, who had recently been appointed Pro Vice-Chancellor with responsibility for the Welsh language and Civic Engagement. He was warmly congratulated, and reference was made to his tireless work promoting and developing Welsh-medium Higher Education, both in Bangor and on a national scale.

#### **2. PRESENTATION BY VICE-CHANCELLOR**

1. The Chairman was delighted to welcome Professor John Hughes, Vice-Chancellor, to the meeting, and he was warmly congratulated on his appointment to the post. He referred to the significance of the fact that two of the issues for which members of the School had been making strong representations for some time, namely the appointment of a Pro VC with responsibility for the Welsh language, and a commitment to invest in Neuadd John Morris-Jones, had been authorised since Prof. Hughes had started in his post. In the context of these developments and the advent of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, the Chairman noted that a real opportunity now existed for Bangor to strengthen her position as main provider of

Welsh-medium H.E., and as a leading establishment in the domain of bilingualism, despite the uncertainty created by the difficult financial climate and the proposed restructuring of H.E..

2. The Vice-Chancellor noted his pleasure of being able to attend the meeting, but explained that he could not at the moment address the meeting in Welsh. Nevertheless, he stressed that this situation would eventually change.

He was totally committed to maintaining and developing the Bangor site as the leading HEI for the Welsh language, and the appointment of Mr Wyn Thomas as Pro V-C was a clear guarantee of this. He conscientiously believed that bilingualism and multilingualism enriched life. He referred to his experience of reviving the use of Irish at the University of Má Nuad (Maynooth), his experience of learning German during his period in Austria, as well as his efforts at learning Chinese. He was already enjoying learning Welsh, and was gaining from the experience and experience of the excellent tutors of the Department for Lifelong Learning.

He expressed his wish to see an increase in the numbers of undergraduates and postgraduates choosing to avail themselves of the Welsh-medium provision, and stated his willingness to invest in order to ensure this. He referred to the applications already submitted by the University under the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Staffing Scheme, and also noted that he had stressed, during his recent visits to all the Academic Schools, the need to develop further the Welsh-medium provision.

He stressed the importance of the University's bilingual roots and its location in a naturally bilingual area to his vision of creating an international university for the region. He referred to the office which had recently opened in Beijing, and to the other offices which are in the pipeline. He stressed that internationalisation was not synonymous with losing site of the locality, but that the contrary was true.

He noted that the University was fully supportive of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol, and welcomed the appointment of the former VC to the Chairmanship of the Coleg. He added that he would do his best to ensure representation for Bangor on the Board of Directors.

The Chairman thanked the Vice-Chancellor for his presentation, and welcomed his promise to invest in the Welsh-medium provision, as well as his commitment to safeguard and develop the position of Welsh at the University.

3. Following the presentation, members took the opportunity of asking questions to the Vice-Chancellor.
  - 3.1 In view of the fact that the strength of the Welsh-medium provision was centred of but a few academic schools, Dr Paula Roberts asked how other Schools could be encouraged to develop their provision.

The Vice-Chancellor replied by stating that all Academic Schools had responded very positively to his encouragement, during his recent visits, for them to develop their Welsh-medium provision.

3.2 Dr Einir Young noted that it was important to urge staff to play an active role in the work of encouraging students to choose Welsh-medium modules.

The Vice-Chancellor agreed that this was a message which would have to be conveyed to Schools and Colleges.

3.3 Dr Lowri Hughes noted that one of the influences on the recent development of Welsh-medium provision was the demand which had come from employers for staff with bilingual skills. She enquired as to the kind of role which the Vice-Chancellor anticipated the University playing with regard to the further development of the partnership with local and national employers?

The Vice-Chancellor explained that this matter was of great interest to him, and that the University would have to create a close rapport with the local community. He had already attended several occasions in the city, and had met Chiefs, Chief Executives and industrialists in the area. Also in this context, he noted that he would keep a close watch over the development of the Pontio project, and ensure that the team responsible for the scheme were aware of the importance of the Welsh language to the importance of the project.

3.4 The Chairman asked how the University intended responded to the plans of the Education, through HEFCW, to decrease the number of HEIs in Wales to 6 by March 2013.

The Vice-Chancellor explained that the University intended responding positively to this agenda, by building on the strong rapport which already existed between itself and Aberystwyth University. He noted, nevertheless, that he and the new VC at Aberystwyth were entirely agreed that the amalgamation of the two institutions was not under consideration.

### **3. MINUTES**

Minutes of the meeting of the School held on 14 October 2010 were accepted as correct.

### **4. MATTERS ARISING**

#### **1. Item 6(2) The Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

Following the request of Dr Einir Young, it was agreed to amend the original minute, so as to highlight the strong feeling expressed by some members concerning the fact that the Chairman and Director of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol would be expected to work without payment, and concerning the decision to base the administration of the Coleg at the present centre in Carmarthen.

#### **2. Item 4(i) Bursaries**

It was reported that the establishment of a P-G scholarship scheme for M-level courses at the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol was progressing, and that it was expected to be in place by September 2011.

3. Item 4(2) Welcome Week

It was reported that TASIG had agreed to establish a sub-group in order to discuss the Welsh aspect of Welcome Week. Plans already in preparation include a package for staff which will give guidance on how to promote and champion all aspects of Welsh-medium provision.

4. Item 5(2) Neuadd John Morris Jones

It was reported that the Executive Committee had agreed to develop a full link corridor between the buildings of Tegfan and Bryn Dinas, in accordance with the wishes of the students, so as to create a single community at Neuadd John Morris-Jones. The link will be wide enough at one end to add to the social space at the Tegfan Common Room. The first stage will be a planning application for the work. It is hoped that building can commence during the summer, in the hope that it can be completed by the end of the year. The cost of £200,000 will come from University central funds.

It was agreed to note formally the delight of members that the work was going ahead.

5. Item 5(6) Project for Welsh-Medium Enrichment

It was reported that a full report on the Project for Welsh-Medium Enrichment would be submitted to the next meeting of the School in April.

**Action: LJJ**

## **5. CHAIRMAN'S MATTERS**

### **1. Welsh-Medium Statistics 2009/2010**

For information, the Welsh-Medium Statistics for 2009/10 were circulated, as extracted from the details provided by the Planning Office for HESA.

The Vice-Chancellor had already referred to them in his submission, and it was reported that the main heading was an increase of 30.4 in the number of FTE Welsh-medium students from the previous year. Reference was made to the considerable increase seen in Education and Social Sciences, as well as the encouraging increase in the domains of Business and Psychology. Nevertheless, it was noted that the decrease in the Arts and Humanities was a cause for concern.

### **2. Undergraduate Scholarships of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

#### **a. Main Scholarships Scheme**

- These scholarships are worth £3,000 over 3 years, and are limited to areas where it is possible to take at least 80 credits per year through the medium of Welsh.
- 171 were received nationally.
- Approximately 60-65 of these applications were for Bangor.
- The scholarships will be awarded in Bangor through entrance examinations.

**b. Incentive Scholarships Scheme**

- These scholarships are worth £1500 over 3 years, and have been earmarked for specific areas where a least 40 per year can be taken through the medium of Welsh.
- The closing date for applications is **25 March 2011**.
- To be eligible for scholarships, prospective students must submit an application using the form on the *mantais* website.

**3. PhD Scholarships of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol 2011/12**

Applications had been submitted in the areas listed below:

- Business (developing provision in the School's Accounts section)
- Social Sciences (developing provision in the area of Social Policy)
- Health Sciences (developing provision in the area of Health Care)
- Welsh (developing provision in the area of Welsh and Communication Technology)
- Psychology (expanding the provision from the current generic areas into more specialist fields)

**4. Staffing Scheme of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol**

Applications have been submitted for positions in the following areas:

Chemistry  
 Music (×2)  
 Environmental Sciences  
 Social Sciences  
 Modern Languages  
 Nursing/ Health Sciences  
 Psychology  
 Social Work

The awards panel for the PhD scholarships and Staffing Scheme meets on 9 February.

It was noted that forward planning was necessary for 2011/12 and the future.

**6. "INTRODUCTION OF COLLABORATIVE PROVISION" – PRESENTATION BY SARA DAVIES AND DR PAULA ROBERTS**

With the advent of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol and the increasing emphasis on collaborative provision, Sara Davies a Dr Paula Roberts were invited to report on their experiences of dealing with the introduction of Welsh-medium collaborative provision.

Sara outlined the module “Y Gyfraith yn Gymraeg” provided by the School of Law and Canolfan Bedwyr to students at Bangor, Aberystwyth and Glamorgan. She explained how the module was a combination of three days of workshops at one institution, formal learning sessions through video-conference, and distance learning materials on the national platform known as Y Porth.

The pattern presented by Dr Paula Roberts was different. The ‘Methodoleg Maes’ module was being presented as a common week-end residential course for students from Bangor, Aberystwyth and Swansea. The three institutions in turn assumed responsibility for organising and hosting the week-end, but it was noted that the setting and marking of assignments was the responsibility of the individual institutions. Paula noted that such an arrangement was very dependent on lecturers’ good will, and that it was necessary to keep a close eye on QA issues.

In the context of quality issues, and the need for the University to manage any risk, it was noted the pattern being adopted for the validation of national collaborative provision was to validate it in each individual institution.

As more individuals and Schools plan to introduce collaborative provision, members were reminded that Eirian Jones, Canolfan Bedwyr, was available to facilitate any arrangements.

## **7. PRO VICE-CHANCELLOR’S MATTERS**

The P V-C reported that he had two short-term priorities when starting in his post. The first was the need to increase the use of Welsh in the PONTIO project, and the second was to relocate Canolfan Bedwyr more centrally.

In the context of the first priority, it was agreed that a letter should be sent on behalf of members of the School to Prof. Fergus Lowe, stressing the fundamental importance of Welsh to the development and success of the PONTIO project and to its future day-to-day running.

**Action: LJJ**

## **8. AOB**

Miss Mair Rowlands reported that the Union would host a Q & A session with the Assembly’s Presiding Office, Lord Dafydd Elis Thomas, at MALT, at 6.00pm on Friday, 28 January. It was added that the SU would also be hosting a public debate on the devolution referendum on 8 February.

## **9. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the School will take place at 2.15pm, Monday 4 April 2011 at the Council Chamber.