

THE SCHOOL OF WELSH MEDIUM STUDIES

Date: 30 January 2008

Place: Council Chamber

Present: Dr Llion Jones (Chair), Mr. Geraint George, Mr Ifor Gruffydd, Ms Meri Huws, Dr. Lowri Hughes, Miss. Gwenith Hughes, Mrs. Bethan Wyn Jones, Mr Eifion Lloyd Jones, Mrs. Delyth Murphy, Mrs. Mairwen Owen, Dr Dafydd Trystan, Miss Bethan Williams, Dr. Catrin Haf Williams, Professor Gerwyn Wiliams, Dr. Prysor Williams

Apologies: Dr. Jason Walford Davies, Mr. Dewi Wyn Jones, Dr. Gwyn Lewis, Dr. Delyth Morris, Dr. Robert Pope, Professor Huw Pryce, Dr. Enlli Thomas, Mrs. Cheryl Wright, Dr. Einir Young.

1. WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Dr Lowri Hughes, Welsh Development and Promotion Officer, and Miss Gwenith Hughes from the School of the Environment and Natural Resources, to their first meeting of the School of Welsh Medium Studies.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 18 October 2007 were accepted as an accurate record.

3. MATTERS ARISING

(i) Item 3(ii) – Developments from the Colleges

It was reported that the College of Health and Behavioural Sciences had not yet responded to the request concerning Welsh medium developments.

It was agreed to ask Ms Meri Huws and Dr Llion Jones to seek a response from the Head of the College. (*Action: MH/LLJ*)

(ii) Item 3(iv) – Presentations

It was noted that Mrs Cheryl Wright from the Estates Department had been invited to make a presentation on the future of Neuadd John Morris Jones but was unfortunately unable to attend.

It was agreed:

- (i) To ask her to come to the School's next meeting.
- (ii) To ask a member of staff from the Management Centre to make a presentation on developments in the Centre. (*Action: ER*)

(iii) Item 4(ii) – Widening Participation Funds

It was reported that Widening Participation funds, including Welsh medium aspects, had been distributed. The range of applications was rather disappointing and a second call for applications will be made for the remainder of the funds. (*Action MH*)

4. TASIG REPORT

Meri Huws reported on the following issues:

- (i) The Planning Office's figures for 2006/07 show a 20% increase in Welsh medium FTEs, with the number having increased from 515 to 620 since 2005/06. There has also been an increase of 104 in the number of Welsh speakers and learners. The Schools will look closely at these figures and inspect the list of modules.
- (ii) 20 students from the Environment subject area will be sponsored this year through the AmNawdd project with funding from the Environment Agency, the Forestry Commission and the Countryside Council.
- (iii) It is hoped that the Welsh Language Board will have approved the University's Language Scheme by the summer.
- (iv) In response to a request from HEFCW (via HESG), the University has expressed an interest in leading Welsh medium provision in the following subject areas:

Music
Theology
Business Studies
Social Sciences
Health
Psychology
Chemistry
Computer Sciences and Engineering

Interest was also expressed in becoming leading partners in the following areas:

History and Archaeology
Linguistics
Modern Languages

HESG will select the main providers in February and then the work of preparing development plans for the various subject areas can begin. The situation will be clear for every subject area by the end of the academic year.

With regard to the areas that are being led through network panels, it was noted that the minutes of the panels are available on the website of the Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education.

It was agreed that all Welsh medium staff in the University should be informed of the web address of the Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education.
(Action: ER/LLJ)

- (v) The Schools must submit their applications for Scholarships and Fellowships by 11 February 2008.
- (vi) A letter was received from the Welsh Assembly Government enclosing the consultants' report (London Economic) on the review of the plan for the provision of Welsh medium teacher training. The Assembly will need to carry out further work and collect more data.

5. THE FUTURE OF NEUADD JOHN MORRIS JONES

1. It was reported that Mrs Cheryl Wright, of the Estates Department, had sent apologies to the meeting. However, she also noted that Neuadd John Morris Jones will remain at its present site in the short term and she also gave assurances that there will be a Welsh hall of residence in the future. They had also brought in experts to the hall to try and find the source of the bad odour there but without success.
2. The following comments were received from the members:
 - The social life in the hall needs to be promoted in the future.
 - Fewer students want to stay in the hall because of its condition and therefore there are fewer Welsh students there to sustain each other.
 - Marketing and recruiting is difficult this year and the situation in the hall is counter-productive.
 - It may be possible to request the use of part of one of the self-catering halls as a Welsh hall in addition to JMJ in the short-term.

It was agreed:

- (i) To establish a Sub-Group including Dr Catrin Haf Williams, Miss Sioned Medi, Miss Bethan Williams and Professor Gerwyn Williams to look into the matter and report back to the School. (Action: CHW/SM/BW/GW)
- (ii) To ask Mrs Cheryl Wright to come to the next meeting in order to discuss the issue. (Action: ER)

6. AN UPDATE BY DR DAFYDD TRYSTAN, DEVELOPMENT MANAGER, CENTRE FOR WELSH MEDIUM HIGHER EDUCATION

1. Dr Dafydd Trystan congratulated the University on the increase in the number of Welsh medium students and for ensuring reliable data. Bangor is now close to a position where the Welsh medium FTEs make up one-third of the students who speak Welsh. Increasing the number of FTEs to correspond to half the number that register as Welsh speakers should now be targeted.
2. Nationally, the Centre for Welsh Medium Higher Education is focusing on the work of the Network Panels. This will be a basis for the next 5-10 years and there are funds available to support the schemes, such as £90,000 for each of the Priority panels. Funds will also be available for three additional years after that.
3. In addition to the Network Panel, there is a new Sub-Group which is looking into e-learning and Julie Snelson from IT Services is a member. One idea that has been mentioned is the possibility of starting a learning café which will be popular with students and which will display a community/sociable side to learning.
4. The Chair thanked Dr Trystan for his presentation. It was agreed to ask the Sub-Group that is considering the future of Neuadd John Morris Jones to discuss the idea and to discuss a possible location for the learning café.

7. ELECTING THE SCHOOL CHAIR

It was reported that Professor Densil Morgan's temporary period as Chair of the School was now over and that he is currently away on Sabbatical.

A new chair for the School must be elected from among the academic staff.

It was agreed to invite nominations for Chair of the School from among the academic staff. (*Action: ER*).

8. DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held at 2.15, on Monday 21 April, 2008 in the Council Chamber.