Bangor University

**COUNCIL MINUTES**

At a meeting of the Council held in the University on Friday, 9th October 2015.

**Present** :

The Rt. Hon Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM (Chair), Mrs. Stephanie Barbaresi, Sir Peter Davis, Miss Fflur Elin, Dr Peter Higson, Professor John Hughes, Professor Jerry Hunter, Mr. Ifan James, Mr Geraint Jones, Dr Griff Jones, Dr. Karen Jones, Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Dr. Lorrie Murphy, Professor Richard Parry-Jones, Ms. Ellen Parry Williams, Dr. Alwyn Roberts, Dr. Dewi Roberts, Professor David Shepherd, Professor Paul Spencer, Professor Carol Tully, Professor Oliver Turnbull, Mr. David Williams, University Secretary, Director of Finance, and the Director of Estates.

**Apologies** :

Dr Gillian Davies, Mr. Alun Ffred Jones, Dr. Olwen Williams, Director of Human Resources.

**DEATHS**

The Chair referred to the recent deaths of:

Geraint Stanley Jones, an Honorary Fellow

Dafydd Wynn Parry, a former member of staff in the School of Biological Sciences

Roger Hughes, a former member of staff in the School of Biological Sciences

Sarita Anwar, a student in the Bangor Business School

Elizabeth Bunton, a student in the School of Education

Denzil Taylor Smith, a former member of staff in the school of Ocean Sciences

Mary Burrows, a former member of Council

and members stood in tribute to their memory.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

The Chair expressed the Council’s congratulations to Professor Emeritus Andrew Barker who had been awarded an Honorary Chair.

The Chair also expressed congratulations to:

[1] Emeritus Professor Tom Corns who had been awarded a Fellowship of the British Academy (FBA).

[2] The Students’ Union who have won an NUS Green Impact Excellence Award, and were also one of the top five scoring Students’ Unions nationally for their Love Bangor Community Partnership project.

**MINUTES**

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 10th July 2015 were confirmed and signed.
2. With reference to :

[1] Page 3 (**Initial Teacher Training**), the Vice-Chancellor updated the Council on the initial findings of the inspection recently undertaken by Estyn. The final report is due to be published shortly and will show an overall rating of *Unsatisfactory*, although some elements are rated *Adequate*. An issue of non-compliance is also highlighted in the report. A new Head of School and new staff are in place and many of the issues are historical. A detailed action plan has been produced in response to the issues raised and HEFCW are also providing support on addressing the issues. It was noted that the framework for teacher training across Wales is currently under review by the Welsh Government.

[2] Page 4 (**Financial Forecasts**), the Director of Finance informed the Council that Santander had given consent and the Barclays Loan had been redeemed.

**VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

The Vice-Chancellor raised a number of issues with the Council.

1. **Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research and Impact)**, following an appointment process involving Council members, the Vice-Chancellor recommended that Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone be appointed to the role.
2. **St. Mary’s**, it was noted that 600 new bedrooms have opened but there are some teething problems identified. With this in mind, rent for the first week had been waived for all residents on the site.

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

1. The Report of the meetings of the Executive held between July and September 2015 (attached as Appendix I to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[1] Page 2 (**Oxford International Education Group**), consideration was being given to a partnership with OIEG for an embedded on-campus International Pathway College at Bangor which would offer foundation and pre-masters courses to overseas students to provide access to Bangor degree programmes. It is suggested that Oswalds be utilised for teaching accommodation and an initial entry of 50 students is expected in September 2016 rising to over 200 students in 5 years.

[2] Page 2 (**Bangor City FC Stadium Sponsorship**), the benefits of becoming the headline sponsor for the Nantporth Stadium were discussed which included the use of the pitches, enhanced student experience and community engagement.

[3] Page 3 (**League Tables**), the Council noted Bangor’s position with regard to completion in the recently published Sunday Times University Guide and requested a report on what steps are being taken to address this. It was noted that the metric reported is forecast based on progression of previous cohorts and is not an actual measure of current retention. Current performance by this metric is 77.7% against a benchmark of 80.3%.

**NATIONAL STUDENT SURVEY**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) gave a presentation on the outcome of the recently published National Student Survey in which Bangor came top in Wales and in the top 10 in the UK in terms of overall satisfaction, for the second year in succession.

**STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

1. A paper was tabled providing the most up to date recruitment figures.
2. The Council noted:

[1] There is likely to be an overall shortfall in tuition fee income of up to £500k, compared to the financial forecasts, which represents less than 1% of fee income.

[2] The downturn in Home/EU postgraduate student enrolments is matched by a corresponding increase in undergraduates progressing to year 4 of extended undergraduate programmes.

[3] Overseas students are still arriving, but visa restrictions have continued to impact recruitment from overseas.

**PROMOTING THE USE OF WELSH IN THE WORKPLACE**

1. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh Medium & Civic Engagement) presented a paper on Promoting the Use of Welsh in the Workplace. The plan was the result of 2 year’s work and proposed new creative ways of working. No new resources were requested.
2. The Council noted:

[1] The benefits of promoting and facilitating a bilingual workplace included staffing flexibility, more effective administration, and increase in staff satisfaction, and better service for the customer.

[2] The Plan focussed on 4 key areas: raising awareness; building confidence; maintaining critical mass; and identifying areas which would benefit from collaboration.

[3] The need for clearer objectives, targets and measures to ensure delivery could be monitored.

[4] Staff confidence is important and there is a need to look at Welsh confidence and competency as part of the PDR process.

1. The Council enthusiastically and unanimously supported the plan.

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on the 14th September 2015 (attached as Appendix II to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[1] Minute 542 (***Long Term Debt Matters***), EIB have contacted the University to ascertain if there is any interest in extending the £45M loan facility up to the £53M level that they were originally prepared to make available. The Committee had authorised the Director of Finance to extend the loan facility, subject to obtaining necessary consent from Santander.

[2] Minute 547a (***Capital Programme Update***), the Council requested further information about the capital programme and its relationship to spend of the EIB loan and University resources.

[3] Minute 547b (***Pontio***), it was noted that the University have taken possession of the building, but not reached completion. The fit out of the building is currently ongoing with the Mechanical and Electrical installation nearing completion. There are some outstanding issues in relation to finishes and leaks. The financial risks have been mitigated to some extent by the commercial settlement, but further legal advice has been sought.

**AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on the 28th September 2015 (attached as Appendix III to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[1] Minute 339 (***Performance Development Review and Staff Development Processes***), the committee were encouraged to note that a completion rate of 83% has been achieved, excluding some areas that were exempted where new management structures were being implemented.

[2] Minute 339 (***Pontio Review***), a draft scope and approach was circulated for consideration by Council and it was noted that the timing of the review needs careful consideration in order that it does not prejudice any legal action. The Council discussed the scope and ownership of the review in detail and discussed the merits of the audit approach and the root cause failure analysis approach. It was agreed to give this further consideration outside the meeting and come back with a proposal to the next meeting.

[3] Minute 340 (***Committee Composition, Terms of Reference and Schedule***), the Council **resolved** that an “Annual review of the performance of the Committee” should be added to the terms of reference for all Council Committees.

[4] Minute 344 (***Risk Assurance Report***), the contents of the updated risk management policy and procedures document and the draft risk appetite statement were noted and **agreed** by the Council.

**NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee held on the 18th September 2015 (attached as Appendix IV to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[1] Minute 111 (***Internal Audit – CUC Higher Education Code of Practice***), the Council **agreed** to adopt the CUC HE Code of Practice.

[2] Minute 114 (***Appointment to Committees and Other Representatives***), it was **resolved** that the following Council members be appointed to serve on the Committees shown:

* Finance and Resources Committee : Professor Richard Parry Jones
* Audit and Risk Committee : Dr Alwyn Roberts
* Bilingualism Committee : Lord Elis-Thomas

It was also **resolved** that Dr Griff Jones would be appointed as Chair of the Audit and Risk Committee from the 1st February 2016.

**REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Redundancy Committee held on the 11th July 2015 (attached as Appendix V to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to Minute 4 (***Anonymised list of staff***), it was **agreed** that those staff whose fixed term contracts were due to expire between 1st August 2015 and 31st January 2016 be dismissed by reason of redundancy should no suitable alternative employment opportunities by identified.

**HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS**

1. The Council received a report on Human Resources matters.
2. It was **resolved** that Professor Tony Bushell be granted the title ‘Emeritus Professor’.

C. A list of recent appointments was received.

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

The Council received data concerning research grants and contracts awarded, student numbers, applications, and quarterly financial performance indicators.

**UPDATE FROM THE STUDENTS’ UNION**

The Council received an update report from the Students Union for information.

**SEALING**

The Council ratified the sealing of documents listed in Agendum 12.

**VALEDICTION**

The Chair expressed thanks to Dr Dewi Roberts whose term on the Council is ending shortly.