Bangor University

**COUNCIL MINUTES**

At a meeting of the Council held in the University on Friday, 11th December 2015.

**Present** :

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

**Apologies** :

Mrs Stephanie Barbaresi, Dr Peter Higson, Dr Lorrie Murphy, Professor Richard Parry-Jones, Dr Olwen Williams.

**WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone, who will take up her role as Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Impact) in January, to her first meeting of the Council and Professor Andrew Edwards who is returning to the Council as a representative of the Senate.

**DEATHS**

The Chair referred to the recent deaths of:

Dr Stephen Colclough, a member of staff in the School of English Literature

Mr Gwynfor ab Ifor, a former member of staff

Professor Leo Sachs, an Honorary Fellow

and members stood in tribute to their memory.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

The Chair expressed the Council’s congratulations to the following who had been **awarded a Personal Chair**:

Andrew Edwards, Dean, College of Arts and Humanities

Jonathan Roberts, Computer Science

Stuart Jenkins, Ocean Sciences

Louise Hassan, Bangor Business School

Tony Dobbins, Bangor Business School

Dean Williams, Medical Sciences

**On the award of Readerships:**

Michaela Swales, Psychology

**On the award of an Honorary Chair:**

Dr Linda Clare

Ms Angela Hopkins

The Chair also expressed congratulations to:

David Williams for receiving a Special Recognition award for his services to business at the Daily Post Awards

At the Royal College of Nursing in Wales 2015 Nurse of the Year Awards.

* Steffan Roberts was awarded the title ‘Student Nurse of the Year’ in recognition of his commitment and contribution to quality and patient safety.
* Dr Malcolm Godwin, won the award for ‘Nurse Educator of the Year’.
* Professor Christopher Burton, Head of School, was a runner-up in the Nurse Researcher award category.

Dr Sophie Williams, a lecturer in conservation, has been awarded the Marsh Christian Award for Education in Botanic Gardens.

Helena Robinson, 29, a postgraduate student at the School of Medical Sciences, was awarded the Ebola Medal following her five-week deployment to Sierra Leone in December 2014.

**MINUTES**

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 9th October 2015 were confirmed and signed.
2. With reference to :

[1] **ITT (Page 2)** The detailed action plan had received positive feedback from HEFCW. An Estyn visit will be undertaken in January. A joint board has been established with Council representation from both universities. Ellen Parry Williams is representing Bangor University on the board.

[2] **League Tables (Page 3**) Professor Turnbull updated the Council on the steps that had been taken in relation to retention issues and in particular the discussions held with Deans and Heads of Schools regarding providing improved contact especially in the run up to Christmas.

[3] **Student Recruitment (Page 3**) The recruitment position remains similar to that reported at the last meeting of the Council.

**VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

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

1. **Welsh Government Budget:** There is a proposal to cut the budget to HEFCW by 32% and all Welsh Universities are working collectively to make a case for HE Funding. The Council were dismayed by the decision and believed it would further exaggerate the funding gap with England. The Council resolved to support the University taking a strong position against the proposed cuts.
2. **Hazelkorn Review:** A review of the governance of HE in Wales is being undertaken and will report in the New Year.
3. **Pontio**: A number of successful events have been held in the building and they have received a positive response locally.

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

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

[i] **Minute 1, St. Mary’s**: Following some additional snagging issues, the site has now moved into a stable phase of full operation.

[ii] **Minute 2, UK Green Paper**: An update on the UK Green paper and the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) in England was given. It was reported that Welsh HEI’s are also likely to engage with TEF to remain competitive.

**OXFORD INTERNATIONAL EDUCATION GROUP**

The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Students) updated the Council on the partnership with the Oxford International Education Group. It was noted that the partnership is expected to create a steady and sustainable stream of overseas students through the creation of an embedded College, located in Oswalds, delivering foundation level pathways to programmes at Bangor University. There will be no loss of oversight as the University will be responsible for academic validation and UKVI compliance and students will be integrated into the University.

The Council supported the project, noting the benefits and risks associated with the project and the mitigation in place to minimise the risk.

**STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIPS**

An update paper on that status of various strategic partnerships was considered. The Council noted the depth and extent of engagement that the University has with other institutions, which is part of our strategy both locally and internationally. It was noted that longer term partnerships with Aberystwyth University and Group Llandrillo Menai had recently been refreshed and new strategic alliances with Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board and Glyndŵr University had recently been signed and were at the early stages of development.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE**

An update of the Strategic Plan Key Performance Indicators for 2014/15 was considered by the Council together with a copy of the Strategic Planning and Engagement Document (SPED) which has been updated for submission to HEFCW. The Council noted the University’s performance against its strategic plan, particularly noting areas where risks were identified. One such area was Research Council success rates and the new Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research & Impact) noted that it was a priority to address this.

The Council approved the document for submission to HEFCW.

**ACCOUNTS 2014/15**

1. The Council received and considered the Audited Statement of Accounts for 2014/15. These have been approved by the Resources Committee and have been considered by the Audit and Risk Committee. Introducing the Accounts, the Director of Finance drew attention to:

[1] The 2.7% increase in income and 1.4% increase in expenditure, leading to an overall operating surplus of £1.24m.

[2] The significant increase in tuition fee income and the corresponding decrease in funding from HEFCW.

[3] The improving position of University subsidiaries, and particularly the first surplus from the Management Development Company.

[4] Capital expenditure in year was £14.4m, of which £8.1m was funded from the University’s own sources.

[5] The strengthening position of the balance sheet, with net assets increasing from £121.1m to £127.2m.

[6] A post-completion valuation of Pontio and Seacams are due to be undertaken.

1. After full consideration, it was **resolved**:

[1] That the Accounts for 2014/15 be approved and presented to the Court in January 2016.

[2] That the Letter of Representation to the Auditors be signed by the Chair.

1. The Director of Finance provided an update on the capital programme and drew particular attention to :

[1] The EIB Loan was intended to fund 50% of a £95m capital programme of investment in teaching and research from 2012 onwards. The loan contains covenants on operating cash generated and targets high energy efficiency.

[2] £25m of the original £45m has been drawn down and a further £8m has been agreed. The remaining funding must be drawn down by March 2017.

[3] The current capital programme stands at £117m.

[4] Over the period 2012/13 to 2018/19 debt servicing costs (including capital repayment) total £25m and capital expenditure (net of grants) total £65.6m. Over this same period net debt increases from £7.3m to £10.4m and net fixed assets increase by £71.2m

[5] The content of the capital programme is under review to reflect the latest thinking on the Science Quarter development, heritage assets including Main Arts, and the Normal Site. This is accompanied by a review of long term funding and affordability with a view to producing a new baseline to underpin the 2016 financial forecasts.

1. The Council welcomed the update and noted the need to keep a close review of the impact of covenants and loan servicing costs. It was agreed to include an update of the capital programme as part of the annual presentation of the accounts.

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Finance and Resources Committee held on the 16th November 2015 (attached as Appendix II to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to Minute 559 **(Report of the Capital Programmes Board**), full planning permission for MSParc may be delayed owing to the imminent local elections. The capital grant funding profile for the Parc is currently being negotiated with WG and WEFO.

**AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on the 23rd November 2015 (attached as Appendix III to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[i] Minute 357(**Pontio “lessons learned” Review**), the Committee agreed that this matter would now lie with Council and that the internal audit programme would assess the assurance provided through the University’s new project management protocols as per the agreed internal audit strategy.

It was agreed to establish a small steering group (Dr Griff Jones (Chair), Dr Karen Jones, Professor Richard Parry-Jones, Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Professor David Shepherd and Dr Kevin Mundy) to consider the scope and timetable of the review and bring a detailed proposal to the next meeting of the Council.

[ii] Minute 359 (**External Audit Report**), the Council noted the External Auditor’s Management Letter and its contents. Members agreed that the report was very positive, but noted a number of outstanding recommendations.

[iii] Minute 360 (**Internal Audit Report**), the Council noted the recent Internal Audit report.

[iv] Minute 365 (**Annual Complaints Report**), the Committee received a summary report providing details of all complaints received by the University.

[v] Minute 366 (**Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee**), the Council noted the Annual Report of the Audit and Risk Committee prior to submission to HEFCW.

**BILINGUALISM COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Bilingualism Committee held on the 12th November 2015 (attached as Appendix IV to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to Minute 343 **(“Rhoi’r Iath yn y Gwaith” Conference**), the Council thanked Canolfan Bedwyr for organising a successful conference.

**ETHICS COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Ethics Committee held on the 9th November 2015 (attached as Appendix V to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[i] Minute 203 **(Policy Review**), it was noted that approval had been given to amend the Ethical Policy Framework and the Research Ethics Policy.

[ii] Minute 205 **(Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board**), the Committee endorsed the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Board 2014/15 Annual Review; the Animal Welfare and Ethical Review Process and the Regulations for Animal Work Abroad.

**HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Health & Safety Committee held on the 11th November 2015 (attached as Appendix VI to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[i] Minute 471(b) **(Chairman’s Report**), it was noted that the University has adopted the Leadership and Management Guidance from UCEA and a number of draft Key Performance Indicators have been produced.

[ii] Minute 471(c) **(Health and Safety Policy Statement**), the Council ***resolved*** to approve the revised Policy Statement.

[iii] Minute 473 **(Major Accidents and Incidents**), concern was expressed over the increase in accidents in 2015. It was noted that improved reporting may account for the increase in figures; no significant trends are cause for concern.

**HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS**

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

C. A list of recent appointments was received.

**SENATE**

The minutes of the Senate meeting held on 19 October 2015 were received for information.

**PREVENT UPDATE**

The University Secretary provided the Council with a brief update on the progress with implementing the requirements of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 and the *Prevent* duty. Over 160 staff have signed up for training; the Code of Practice on Freedom of Speech, the IT Acceptable Use Regulations, and the Information Security Policy have been reviewed and updated; a Freedom of Speech Oversight Group has been established and this group will also oversee the management of the faith rooms.

**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 15.

**VALEDICTION**

The Chair expressed thanks to Mr Geraint Jones whose term on the Council is ending shortly and to Sir Peter Davis, who has announced his intention to retire from the Council, but will continue to be a co-opted member of the Nominations and Governance Committee until the Summer.