Bangor University

**COUNCIL MINUTES**

At a meeting of the Council held in the University on Friday, 10th July 2015.

**Present** :

The Rt. Hon Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM (Chair), Mrs. Stephanie Barbaresi, Ms. Elinor Bennett, Dr. Gillian Davies, Miss Fflur Elin, Professor John Hughes, Professor Jerry Hunter, Mr. Ifan James, Mr. Alun Ffred 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 Helen Wilcox, Mr. David Williams, University Secretary, Director of Finance, and the Director of Human Resources.

**Apologies** :

Sir Peter Davis, Mr. Geraint Jones, Dr. Griff Jones, Professor Oliver Turnbull, Dr. Olwen Williams, Director of Estates.

**STUDENT VOLUNTEERING**

A video showing the activities of Student Volunteering Bangor was shown to the Council. The Council wished to pass on their appreciation for the contribution made to the community by the students. Dr. Dewi Roberts informed the meeting that he has secured a £20,000 contribution from the estate of Dorothy Hall for the High Sheriff Award for Student Volunteering.

**WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Miss Fflur Elin and Mr Ifan James to their first meeting.

**DEATHS**

The Chair referred to the recent death of Gwilym Prichard, an Honorary Fellow and members stood in tribute to his memory.

**CONGRATULATIONS**

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

John Parkinson (School of Psychology)

Raluca Radulescu (School of English Literature)

And the following on the award of an Honorary Chair:

 Benita Parry

The Chair also expressed congratulations to Ian Gregson who was nominated for the Oxford Professor of Poetry.

**MINUTES**

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 17th April 2015 were confirmed and signed.
2. With reference to :

[1]Page 3 **(HE in North East Wales)**, following a number of recent meetings with the Acting Vice-Chancellor, it was noted that Glyndwr University are keen to sign a broad memorandum of understanding with Bangor to collaborate on issues of interest to both universities. The Council agreed to enter into a time-limited memorandum. It was also noted that Bangor University is the single provider for nursing provision across north Wales, but that non-academic student facilities in Wrexham could be provided in collaboration.

[2] Page 6 **(Nomination of Trustee)**, a Council member is still being sought to be an employer nominated trustee for the local pension scheme.

**VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

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

[1] **Draft Institutional Risk Letter**, the letter was circulated with the Council papers. It was noted that Bangor was given a ‘low risk’ rating for the first time.

[2] **Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research)**, following changes to the role of the Deputy Vice-Chancellor, who will oversee restructuring, efficiency and major developments, it was **resolved** that a new Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research) be advertised shortly.

[3] **Graduate Employment**, it was noted that in the recently published UK Performance Indicators for graduate employment, 93.8% of Bangor UK-domiciled leavers obtaining first degrees from full-time courses were in employment or further study. This is the highest level achieved by the University and places us above the sector adjusted benchmark for the first time, with an improvement of over 5 percentage points compared with two years ago.

[4] **Quality Assurance Consultation**, it was noted that a consultation has been issued by the Funding Councils on ‘*Future approaches to quality assessment in England, Wales and Northern Ireland*’. Amongst the key elements are a light-touch review and increased reliance on an institution’s own review and governance processes, strengthening the governing body’s role to provide assurances about security and reasonable comparability of the academic output standards of students. HEFCW’s role is also under review and different arrangements may be implemented in Wales.

[5] **Initial Teacher Education**, the Minister has made a statement in response to the ‘Teaching Tomorrow’s Teachers’ report on the future or Initial Teacher Education in Wales. It was noted that he had welcomed the report and its recommendations, including a 4-year undergraduate Masters programme leading to QTS.

[6] It was **resolved** to change the title of **Vice-Chancellor** to *President and Vice-Chancellor,* in line with a number of other universities, to provide better clarity overseas. The Charter, Statutes and Ordinances would be amended in due course as they are reviewed.

[7] **Role of Secretary**, following a period of review, the Council **resolved** that:

* The role of ‘University Secretary’ be established following the non-replacement of a Secretary & Registrar.
* Dr Kevin Mundy be confirmed in the role of University Secretary.
* Statutes and Ordinances should be revised in due course, reflecting the new role.

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

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

[1]Page 2 **(Bangor Institute for Health and Medical Research),** the Executive has agreed to establish an overarching Institute for Health and Medical Research to co-ordinate activities in a coherent way and strengthen the brand of medical and health research at the University.

[2] Page 3 (**IELTS, English Language Test),** the Council noted with concern the changes to UKVI regulations and the tighter restrictions in place.

[3] Page 3 (**Degree Classifications 2013/14),** the Council noted the actions currently being implemented by the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching and Learning) to ensure comparability.

[4] Page 4 (**League Tables**), the need to address data issues about spend per student were noted.

**MARKETING**

1. The Director of Marketing gave a presentation on the development of the University’s Marketing proposal and the emerging marketing strategy.
2. The Council congratulated the Director of Marketing on the work undertaken to date and noted that awareness of Bangor University was a key issue that needed to be addressed, potentially working in collaboration with other bodies that promote Wales.
3. The Council’s role in influencing and relationship development outside the University was noted and Director of Marketing was asked to identify specific actions that the Council could take to help.

**FINANCIAL FORECASTS**

1. The Director of Finance presented the draft 5-year financial forecasts. He noted that the expected outturn for 2014/15 is a surplus of £1.1m, broadly in line with last year’s forecasts.
2. The Council’s attention was drawn particularly to the funding landscape and the fact that the majority of income is now from fees, with less than 10% of income from HEFCW. Income is reducing in real terms due to the £9,000 cap on home undergraduate tuition fees.
3. The Council noted:

[1] The need to produce forecasts that ensure that all active covenant tests on loans and HEFCW requirements are met in future years. In the light of this the Resources Committee had agreed to redeem the Barclays 1998 Loan which had unrealistic covenants.

[2] Core income assumptions in the plan going forward included modest growth in home and international student numbers, 2.5% increase per annum on international and part-time fees, a dip in research income in 2015/16 followed by a recovery to existing levels, and no endowments and minimal interest received.

[3] Expenditure assumptions included increased expenditure in the academic domain, cash-flat budgets for central service departments, additional costs for pension and NI contributions anticipated from 2016, and re-profiled capital expenditure.

[4] The resulting forecasts resulted in a surplus of £2.1m in 2015/16, rising to £5.2m by 2018/19.

1. After a full discussion, it was **resolved** :

[1] That the 5-year Financial Forecasts be approved for submission to HEFCW, and that the Treasurer be authorised to sign the forecasts and supporting commentary.

[2] That the University should engage with EIB over the re-profiled capital programme and drawdown requirements.

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT**

1. Following further consultation, the Deputy Vice-Chancellor gave an updated presentation on future project management arrangements and the proposed establishment of a Capital Programme Board.
2. The Council endorsed the new proposals for implementation in the new academic year, noting the need to remain flexible whilst having appropriate governance in place.

**DEINIOL ROAD CAMPUS**

1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor outlined the case for the development of the Deiniol Road Campus, including moving activities at Dean Street onto the Deiniol Site and recladding and refitting the Alun Roberts Tower. A commitment was made that Academi would remain until a permanent appropriate alternative solution is found.
2. The Council supported the ambitious proposal to proceed to the next stage of preparing an Outline Business Case.

**PONTIO**

1. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh & Civic Engagement) updated the Council on the current position in relation to the ongoing buildings works and the updated programme.
2. Completion of the building is expected by the autumn and will be followed by a period of familiarisation and a soft opening. It is expected that a formal arts programme will commence no earlier than January 2016.

**LEGISLATIVE/POLICY UPDATE**

1. The University Secretary provided the Council with an update on current legislative and policy matters.
2. The Council endorsed the Public Interest Disclosure (Whistleblowing) Policy and Procedures.
3. The requirements of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and the specific guidance issued for higher education institutions, were noted. The University had undertaken a risk assessment and an action plan has been drawn up. Further consideration is to be given to the nomination of a Council ‘lead’ for this agenda.
4. Changes to the regulatory system for Higher Education and the role of HEFCW, including transitional arrangements, resulting from the Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015 were noted.

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Reports of the meetings of the Resources Committee held on 11th May 2015 and the 22nd June 2015 (attached as Appendix II to the official copy of the Minutes) were approved.
2. With reference to Minutes 516 & 529 (**Long Term Debt Matters**), it was noted that the Committee agreed that it was in the best interests of the University to make the redemption of the 1998 Barclays loan on the terms outlined. A review of the future cash and debt position is required.

**AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on the 5th May 2015 (attached as Appendix III to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

1. The Council noted the positive and professional support provided to the Committee by both the Internal and External Auditors.

**HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Health & Safety Committee held on the 20th May 2015 (attached as Appendix IV to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With reference to :

[1] Minute 463h (**Health and Safety Policy Revision**), a review of the Policy is ongoing and a Policy Working Group has been established. The Group is also reviewing the recently drafted UCEA guidance.

[2] Minute 464a (**Annual Health and Safety Report**), the content of the Annual Report was noted by the Council and the new elements were welcomed.

[3] Minute 465 (**Safety Executive Task Group**), a new policy for dealing with 999 calls and fire alarm activations has been implemented following changes in responses by the North Wales Fire & Rescue Services. The Council wished to pass on its thanks to security staff for handling the changes so efficiently.

**BILINGUALISM COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Bilingualism Committee held on the 4th June 2015 (attached as Appendix V to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With reference to :

[1] Minute 334.1 (**Tir na N-og Care and Research Centre**), it was noted that a new Head had been appointed. The Committee had unanimously agreed that maintaining child care through the medium of Welsh only should be available for those staff members who wish to receive that service.

[2] Minute 335 (**Strategy on Developing the Use of Welsh in the Workplace**), it was noted that an exciting 2-year plan had been prepared to promote the use of Welsh in the workplace, and has been supported by the Executive.

**ETHICS COMMITTEE**

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

[1] Minute 193 (**Composition and Terms of Reference**), the Council approved the new Composition and Terms of Reference.

[2] Minute 199 (**Training**), it was noted training had been undertaken for all those who are involved in Ethics Committees within the University.

**HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS**

1. The Council received a report on Human Resources matters.
2. It was noted a 1% pay increase had been accepted by the support staff Trade Unions but not by UCU, who will therefore be in dispute with the University.
3. It was **resolved** that Professor Mark Baird be granted the title ‘Emeritus Professor’.
4. A list of recent appointments was received.

**ABER-BANGOR STRATEGIC PLANNING BOARD**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Aber-Bangor Strategic Planning Board held on the 10th March were approved.
2. It was noted that :

[1] Both universities agreed that they remain fully committed to the strategic alliance and its future.

[2] It had been agreed that the Memorandum of Understanding between the Universities should be amended to reflect recent discussions.

**KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

1. The Council received data concerning research grants and contracts awarded, student numbers, applications, and quarterly financial performance indicators.
2. The schedule of information and performance date for monitoring the Strategic Plan was approved and welcomed by the Council.

**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 Elinor Bennett and Helen Wilcox whose terms on the Council are ending shortly and to Rhys Taylor and Guto Gwilym who have completed their terms as the President of the Students’ Union and the President of UMCB.