Bangor University

**COUNCIL MINUTES**

At a meeting of the Council held in the University on Friday, 12th July 2019.

**Present**:

Mrs Marian Wyn Jones (Chair), Mr Mark Barrow, Professor Andrew Edwards, Dr Peter Higson, Professor Jerry Hunter, Dr Griff Jones, Dr Karen Jones, Dr Llion Jones, Mr Marc Jones, Sir Paul Lambert, Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Dr Lorrie Murphy, Miss Lleucu Myrddin, Ms. Ellen Parry Williams, Miss Julie Perkins, Professor Gareth Roberts, Professor David Thomas, Professor Carol Tully, Professor Oliver Turnbull, Professor Graham Upton, Mr Tudur Williams, the University Secretary, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Finance.

**Apologies**:

Dr Tomos Dafydd

**18.97 WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Mark Barrow, the new President of the Students’ Union, Lleucu Myrddin, the new UMCB President, and Dr Llion Jones, the new Senate nominated member, to their first meeting of the Council.

Professor Lynn Hodgkinson, who is attending as an observer on behalf of UCU, was also welcomed.

**18.98 DEATHS**

The Chair referred to the recent deaths of:

**Professor John Lewis**, former Professor in the School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering

**Suzanne Rowlands**, member of staff in the Research, Innovation and Impact Office

**Professor Antony Carr**, Emeritus Professor in the School of History, Philosophy and Social Sciences

**Mr. Keith France**, former technician in the School of Computer Science & Electronic Engineering

**Simon White,** a PhD student in the School of Natural Sciences.

**Professor John Bryn Owen,** former professor in the School of Agriculture.

**Gwilym Owen**, a former student and Honorary Fellow of the University.

Members stood in tribute to their memory.

**18.99 CONGRATULATIONS**

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

Professor Christian Cook, School of Sport, Health and Exercise Sciences

**The Chair also congratulated:**

**Professor Tom Rippeth**, from the School of Ocean Sciences, who has been awarded the Royal Meteorological Society’s Vaisala Award from Weather Observing and Instrumentation, for his research on how different water masses mix within our oceans and how the mixing of waters of different temperatures and salinity drives and affects global climate and weather patterns.

**Professor Enlli Thomas**, Professor of Education, who has been awarded the Learned Society of Wales Hugh Owen Medal for contributions to educational research, in recognition of her expertise on the Welsh language, bilingualism, and studies into teaching, learning and using Welsh.

It was reported that for the third year running, Bangor University has been ranked in the top 10, according to the latest annual National Student Survey (NSS). This year, of all the Universities that offer a broad range of subjects, Bangor is ranked 9th in the UK, with an overall satisfaction rate of 88%, above the UK average of 84%, and that of Wales at 85%.

It was reported that Bangor University has been chosen as the best in the UK for its Students’ Union Clubs & Societies in this year’s WhatUni.com Student Choice Awards. The University was also placed third in the UK in the Accommodation category and third in the UK for the International award.

**18.100 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

1. Members were reminded that they should declare any personal, financial or beneficial interest in any matter under consideration at this meeting prior to that matter being considered.
2. The following members declared an interest:

[1] Mrs Marian Wyn Jones: Vice-Chair of Arts Council of Wales and Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board;

[2] Dr Karen Jones, Non-Executive Director of MSparc;

[3] Dr Griff Jones, Vice-Chair of Grŵp Llandrillo Menai.

**18.101 MINUTES**

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 12th April and 16th May 2019 were confirmed and signed.
2. With reference to:

[1] **Pontio** (minute 18.74 [5]); The Vice-Chancellor reported that the post of Director of Pontio Arts had been advertised and 4 applications had been received. It has been agreed to advertise the posts again hoping for a better response. In the meantime, a solution will need to be found to bridge the gap after Elen leaves.

[2] **North Wales Growth Deal** (minute 18.81A); The Vice-Chancellor reported that recent progress has been slow and that there is now increased uncertainty due to UK Government changes.

[3] **Redundancy Committee** (minute 18.95D); It was reported that of the 16 staff identified for redundancy, it is very likely that all will be resolved through voluntary means.

[4] **Y Felin Tysilio** (minute 18.59D); It was reported that the Executive has agreed to undertake works to remedy the flood risk and risk associated with the bank behind the property, to ensure that the maximum price for the property could be obtained. Following remedial works, it was agreed to market the full property, including the studio. The first draft of the further particulars was tabled for information.

[5] **CaBan** (minute 18.80); The need to have an active role in providing teachers who can teach through the medium of Welsh was noted. However the under-recruitment across the sector was noted alongside recent changes in Welsh Government policy regarding the number of providers and the incentive provided to students. It was agreed to work with Welsh Government to ensure better understanding of Bangor University’s contribution, both historically and in the future, to fill this gap and to meet the Welsh Government’s aspirations for increasing the number of Welsh speakers.

[6] **Pontio Review** (minute from 30 Sept 2016) – Given that the project was now settled, it was agreed to scope out the review of the project. As a first step, it was agreed that an End of Project report should be completed as part of the project management framework.

1. An action log was provided noting progress on all outstanding Council actions. Council noted progress and completed actions. It was agreed to address some of the longer term actions before the next meeting of the Council.

**18.102 VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

1. The Vice-Chancellor reported a numbers of issues to the Council.

[1] **The structure and responsibilities of the senior team**; The Interim Vice-Chancellor presented a proposal to restructure the senior team. The proposal had been developed with Professor Davies to address unsatisfactory arrangements that have evolved over time. The proposal included the creation of a role of Deputy Vice-Chancellor to provide greater strategic leadership, rationalisation of the role of the PVC Education & Student Experience, minor changes to other PVC roles, and broadening the responsibilities of the University Secretary and Director of Corporate Services to include the line management of the majority of professional services. To support this, the Head of Governance & Compliance would play a more active role in supporting the Council and deputising for the University Secretary in this function.

The Council sought reassurance about the process and the need for transparency. It was noted that all of the existing Pro Vice-Chancellors had discussed their roles with Professor Davies before the proposal had been developed. It was noted that the leadership and management of professional services was a matter for the Executive, but that the roles of Pro Vice-Chancellor and Deputy Vice-Chancellor are appointed by the Council, on the recommendation of the Vice-Chancellor.

After a constructive and valuable discussion, the Council agreed that with effect from 1 September 2019:

[i] Professor Oliver Turnbull be designated Deputy Vice-Chancellor;

[ii] Professor Carol Tully be designated Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education & Student Experience);

[iii] Professor Jerry Hunter be designated Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh Language Culture and Civic Engagement); and

[iv] Professor David Thomas be designated Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research).

[2] **UCU Industrial action**; It was noted that UCU will be balloting staff in the autumn regarding industrial action relating to pensions and the pay settlement.

[3] **The Head of the School of Heath Sciences**; Prof Chris Burton is leaving the University at end of August 2019 and a new Head of School will be appointed over the summer.

[4] **Bangor College China**; The Interim Vice-Chancellor had visits Changsha recently for their annual graduation ceremony and noted the great facilities available for staff and students. The President of CSUFT would be receiving an honorary fellowship in Bangor next week.

[5] Reflecting on the last three months in office, the Interim Vice-Chancellor noted that great progress had been made both by the senior team alongside others across the University: a five-year budget was in place; restructuring was almost complete and had delivered the required savings, the University was in a stronger position with regard to student recruitment; a planning process had been reintroduced; the Executing meets weekly and the team are working well together; much has been done to improve the culture and transparency, but more need to be done; work has started on the development of the next strategic plan; and Senate is working more effectively.

1. On behalf of the Council, the Chair formally thanked Professor Upton for all these achievements in such a short and challenging time period.

**18.103 STUDENTS’ UNION UPDATE**

1. The Council received an update on the Students’ Union recent activities, campaigns and events. It was noted that that new sabbatical officer had completed their first 2 weeks and were optimistic about the year ahead. The President highlighted the Whatuni 2019 Best Clubs & Societies Award; the positive outcome in the recent NSS; excellent volunteering activities; UMCB’s active role in campaigning for Welsh medium provision for mental health services and increasing the student voice of Welsh language students; and the Wrap It Up waste campaign. The Students Union’ noted their appreciation to the University for being able to input into strategic matters over the past year and hoped that it would continue in the future.
2. The Council also received UMCB’s Annual Report, noting it had been an exciting year for UMCB, including the John Gwilym Jones Society production and the success of Aelwyd JMJ excellent year, especially at the Eisteddfod.

**18.104 REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

The Report of the meetings of the Executive held between April and July 2019 (attached as Appendix I to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved. The following was noted:

[1] **Financial Sustainability;** Financial matters will be discussed under the later agenda items. An update on the consultation is provided in the Executive report, along with full details of the discussions and final decisions.

[2] **Academic Strategy;** The Council noted that it was agreed the draft framework and feedback received as part of the consultation will inform the new strategic plan.

[3] **MDC;** The Council noted that discussions are continuing regarding the operational model of the MDC. The Barclays loan has recently been paid off.

[4] **Climate emergency;** The Council noted that the University has joined with many organisations worldwide to declare a climate emergency.

[5] **Auger Review;** The Council noted that the report has been published. The headline proposal is to reduce tuition fees to £7500, but it is unclear whether the report will be adopted by the UK Government, and the response by the Welsh Government.

[6] **Guardian University Guide 2020;** The Interim Vice-Chancellor reported that maximising performance in league tables is a key target for the new Vice-Chancellor and this work has begun.

[7] **Clearing 2019;** Additional funding was released from headroom in the current year to support increased activity at Clearing 2019.

Other items of Executive business were discussed under other agenda items.

**18.105 ESTATES STRATEGY**

1. The Council considered two documents: The Development of an Estate Strategy for Bangor University 2020 – 2030, which was approved by the Executive and issued for consultation in June, and a summary of the responses to the consultation. The following points were noted:

 [1] The general principles of the strategy included a reduction of the footprint of the estate and improved facilities, including the withdrawal from Dean Street and the development of the Deiniol Road estate, relocation from the Normal site, improving the condition of the remaining estate, a ring-fenced maintenance programme, and the whole programme underpinned by sustainability.

[2] The responses to the Consultation have been considered by the Executive who were pleased to note that the response was generally positive. Respondents welcomed the strategic direction and the general feeling was that the university needs to progress with consolidation and improvement of the estate. The Executive agreed to recommend to the Council that the general direction of travel outlined in the document is approved.

[3] The need to align the Estates Strategy with the Academic Strategy and the new Strategic Plan was noted, and that the emerging strategy needs to remain flexible to respond to these other strategies. The Council also sought assurance regarding future proofing of the estate in the light of changes to technology and building use.

[4] A number of responses referred to the likely costs and the impact on debt, and the Executive agreed that the next stage should include clarity on the projected operating cost savings, the level and timing of capital receipts and the level of the proposed annual rolling refurbishment budget. It was hoped that some of the costs could be financed through cost savings, and there was potential to work with a developer to take some of the risk.

[5] The need to remain vigilant to sentiment associated with buildings and their history was noted.

[6] Co-operation with the city and County Council to improve the image of city was a crucial element of the strategy and the strategy had been developed through consultation with partners and stakeholders.

1. The Council agreed the general direction of travel and agreed that a detailed and fully costed delivery plan be developed to be implemented over the 2020 -2030 period of this plan.

**18.106 PROPERTY UPDATE**

A. The Council considered a paper seeking approval from the Council for the disposal of a number of assets and to market a further asset in line with the valuation and advice from the Valuation Office Agency. The Council noted:

[1] that the University is required to comply with the Charities Act 2011 in respect of the disposal of land;

[2] that a Surveyor’s report had been obtained in each case, in accordance with Section 119(1)(a) of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Qualified Surveyor’s Report) Regulations 1992;

B. Members of Council confirmed that in each case:

[1] that they were reasonably satisfied that Chris Guest, who prepared the reports, is a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors has the relevant ability and experience to undertake the valuation of the property and area in question; and

[2] that, in accordance with Section 118 of the Charities Act 2011, other than the Connected Persons referred to in the paper, there are no connected persons involved in the sale.

[3] that, in accordance with Section 119(1)(c) of the Charities Act 2011, members were satisfied that the terms on which the disposition is proposed to be made are the best that can reasonably be obtained for the University and in line with the advice provided by the VOA and that the sales can proceed.

1. The Council agreed:

[1] that Ynys Faelog should be disposed of to Mr Peter Wilde for £1,000,025, subject to finalisation of the contract; and

[2] that Bryn Llinos should be disposed of to Mr Glyn Clayton and Mrs Ruth Sanderson-Clayton for £300,000, subject to finalisation of the contract; and

[3] that Neuadd Ogwen should be disposed of to Mr Allan Hodari for £440,000, subject to finalisation of the contract; and

[4] that part of the Pen-y-Ffridd site (as shown on the attached plans) should be disposed of to Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd (CCG) for £693,000, incorporating an overage agreement, subject to finalisation of the contract.

1. The Council considered a proposal to proceed with the disposal of Fron Gardens in line with the valuation and advice from the Valuation Office Agency. It noted that this was a strategic location and further uses of the land should be explored before proceeding to disposal.

**18.107 DEAN STREET**

A. The Council considered a paper regarding the disposal of the Dean Street Site. The Council noted:

[1] The consultation on the Development of an Estates Strategy for Bangor University proposes a radical consolidation of the University’s Estate to reduce the footprint and improve the quality of the built estate, including concentrating the University’s non-residential estate onto a single campus in Bangor (Deiniol Rd and College Rd sites) and disposal of some major sites. The proposal is to withdraw from the Dean St and Normal sites and offer the sites for sale.

[2] Discussions have developed between Bangor University, Betsi Cadwaladr University Health Board, Gwynedd Council and Cartrefi Cymunedol Gwynedd regarding the concept of developing a new Health Hub within Bangor which would provide a joined-up approach for shared services to benefit the health and wellbeing of the people of Bangor. The concept of the scheme is to bring together various health and residential facilities under one roof, including General Practice surgeries, district nursing facilities, Social Services, dental services, pharmacy, and residential units. This development is a key part of a major regeneration project for the city of Bangor.

[3] GCC’s and BCUHB’s preferred site for the redevelopment of the Health Hub is the University’s Dean Street site, due to its size and location linking a large residential area (Hirael Bay) and the High Street and thus serving the community and a means to bring greater business to the High Street.

[4] CCG and the University have jointly commissioned the District Valuer to value the Site. The draft VOA report dated 4th July 2019 confirms a value of £300K (£1.3million less £1.0million cost to demolish and remove abnormal items resulting in a residual valuation of £300K).

[5] In the light of the valuation, the Council is asked to consider how to proceed with regards to the disposal of the site. It was originally requested that disposal proceeds on condition that it first be offered for sale to CCG and only be offered for sale on the open market in the event that CCG decides not to pursue the purchase.

B. The Council, as trustees, noted that they must ensure that the disposal is in the best interests of the charity and that the proposed terms are the best that can reasonable be obtained in the circumstances of the disposal.  There was some discussion around the value of the wider benefits to the University and the city of proceeding with the deal and consideration was also given to testing the open market. After much discussion it was agreed that:

[1] It was not possible to proceed with disposal to CCG at the proposed price, at this stage;

[2] The University should explore alternative options for disposal of the asset that may produce a better return for the University;

[3] Professional advice be sought about the value of the site and further due diligence be undertaken about the nature of the disposal;

[4] A decision be deferred until the next meeting of the Council noting that, if necessary, an extraordinary meeting could be called.

**18.108 FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee held on the 28th June 2019 (attached as Appendix II to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to:

[i] Minute 761 (**Strategic Matters**); the Council noted that the Chair was working with the Director of Fiannce to explore more helpful ways of presenting data to the Committee and the Council. It was also ***agreed*** that the Executive should consider the inclusion of appropriate contingencies in future plans, which aims to provide sufficient “headroom” to reduce or eliminate the need for in-year corrective actions.

[ii] Minute 767 (**Value for Money Policy**); an interim policy was approved.

[iii] Minute 770 (**Financial Systems**); the Council noted that the Director of Finance had been asked to prepare a programme of change for the business processes/systems relating to the University's finance functions, indicating how the programme will add value, and any regulation changes that might be needed.

**18.109 STUDENT RECRUITMENT**

1. The Council considered two papers: the latest update on the number of applications, offers made and firm accepts; and a paper presented to the Finance & Resources Committee providing the latest projection for September 2019, set against the November 2018 financial forecasts The Council noted:

[1] Home/EU Undergraduate applications are 17% lower than at the same point last year and firm accepts are 8% lower than last year, indicating that conversion remains relatively strong. The date shows significant variation by School. Home/EU postgraduate applications are relatively stable.

[2] Overseas applications are higher than at the same point last year (Undergraduate 13%, postgraduate 7%).

[3] The latest forecast is for a shortfall in tuition fee income of approximately £1.2m. This compares favourably with the position reported in March where the risk was reported as being up to £3.5m. Whilst there is greater certainty at this point, there remains a number of risks, including Clearing where for the first year students can self-withdraw from UCAS process.

[4] The latest KPMG benchmarking report suggest that our income from overseas students is below the benchmark whilst numbers remain high, maybe due to high levels of discounting. This suggests a potential for growth in overseas fee income.

[5] The Recruitment and Admissions Task Group is meeting monthly to share good practice and excellence across the organisation.

1. The Council noted the latest recruitment position and the financial implications for 2019/20 and future years.
	1. **USS PENSION**
2. The Council considered a paper providing a summary of the current issues the University faces in finding a way forward on the 2018 Valuation process for the USS Pension Scheme, recent developments, and the need for an imminent decision on supporting a potential short-term rule change, designed to allow completion of the 2018 Valuation to happen in the coming months.
3. It was noted that ‘Option 3’ provides an opportunity to reduce contributions in next few years, but would require a strengthening of the employer covenant. The Executive considered the issues raised around debt monitoring, prioritisation of USS as a creditor and a moratorium on employers exiting from USS at its meeting on 2 July and concluded these would not present any real obstacles for the University over the next 3 years. It was recommended that we should support them as a means of retaining the ‘strong’ covenant rating and hence a way to secure the 2018 Option 3 outcome. An initial view to Universities UK is required by 16 July, ahead of the USS Trustee Board.
4. The Council agreed to support option 3 as a pragmatic approach, but noted that in three years’ time there may be further implications for the scheme.

**18.111 5-YEAR FINANCIAL FORECASTS**

1. The Council considered graphs showing the recent history with regard to forecasting income and expenditure. It was noted that income was broadly in line with forecast, but slightly optimistic and that expenditure levels were broadly achieved but only through in-year savings. This had resulted in a net EBITDA broadly in line with plan. In 2018/19, a £4m savings target was built into the original plan, but this was compounded by a £6m shortfall in income .Although £10m of sustainable savings have been made, this suggests that in year cuts will become unsustainable in the future.
2. The Director of Finance noted that the expected adjusted EBITDA for 2018/19 is £12.7m, a deterioration of £2.1m against last year’s forecasts, mainly due to failure to deliver non-pay savings. This will result in a pass of all covenant tests.
3. The Director of Finance presented the draft 5-year financial forecasts The Council noted:

[1] Financial sustainability requires healthy annual cash generation and there is common agreement across the sector that Adjusted EBITDA for HE is the best indicator. The target for Bangor University should be £20m+ per annum, given our £10m per annum debt service cost.

[2] The new 5-year forecast includes a renewed approach to planning including clear plans for all Schools and professional services accompanied by targets and agreed budgets. All income projections are fully underpinned by detailed student number modelling and aligned with School plans. This will enable all budgets to be agreed and confirmed by 1 August 2019. Monthly monitoring and reporting will be implemented for all areas from the start of the next financial year.

[3] Core income assumptions in the base case plan include latest student number projections and then modest rises in home and overseas fee income; HEFCW funding based on best intelligence; and research contributions in line with school projections.

[4] Expenditure assumptions in the base case include new resources based on demonstrated need and priority; future pay and pension pressures; capital expenditure in line with estates strategy funded by EIB loan.

[5] The plan projects an increase in EBITDA from £12.7m in 2018/19 to £17.9m by the end of the period. Cash balances would fall from £28.5m to a minimum of £16.5m and then rise again to £27.9m over the period of the plan. It was expected that the covenant test would be met, provided all assumptions are met.

[6] The biggest residual risk is student recruitment and the plan will be reviewed in October in the light of the recruitment position. Contingency arrangements include headroom against the covenant levels, option to defer the pay settlement, and option to repay the EIB loan.

1. After discussion, it was ***resolved*** that the 5-year Financial Forecasts be approved for submission to HEFCW, and that the Chair of Finance &Resources Committee be authorised to sign the forecasts and supporting commentary.

**18.112 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

1. **Financial Metrics**; The Financial Metrics were provided for information but were covered in more detail in the report from the Finance & Resources Committee.
2. **Research Grants & Contracts**; It was noted that overall research income is in line with the previous year. Research Council funding is variable but Bangor is still successful, given the competition across the UK. Structural funds deliver the highest proportion of income and the risk to this funding were noted. Other sources of funding are available going forward but accessing these funds requires a culture shift.
3. The Council were pleased to note the change in momentum in the REF strategy. It was noted that impact case studies will be worked up by mid-September and changes have taken place to the way the REF narrative is developed, with working groups based around UoAs. A dummy REF exercise is planned for January 2020.

**18.113 SENATE**

1. The Vice-Chancellor presented the report from the Senate meetings held on the 7th May and 11th June 2019.
2. The Vice-Chancellor noted changes to Senate Nominations Committee to include a widening of staff involvement.
	1. **AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

The Report of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on the 17th June 2019 (attached as Appendix III to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

**18.115 BILINGUALISM COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Bilingualism Committee held on the 13th June 2019 (attached as Appendix IV to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

B. The Council considered a request from the Committee to delay decisions relating to the School of Education & Human Development. However, it noted that the consultation has already been extended and there will be full scrutiny process as in every other case. The change is driven by reduced numbers and is not a Welsh medium issue. Income levels cannot sustain the current number of staff and the course also needs modernisation. The need to celebrate our Welsh Medium activity and to be clear about messaging externally was noted and recent response by the press is unfortunate.

**18.116 HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on the 13th June 2019 (attached as Appendix V to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. The Council noted the 9 month statistical report pertaining to Accidents and Incidents and Sickness Absence. It was ***agreed*** that the Human Resources and Health & Safety should work together to investigate the trends further. It was ***agreed*** that the two RIDDOR reportable injuries should be reported in detail to the Committee.

**18.117 STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

It was noted that a workshop had recently been held regarding the development of a new strategic plan. The minutes would come to the next meeting of the Council.

* 1. **NOMINATIONS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**
1. The Report of the meeting of the Nominations & Governance Committee held on the 20th June 2019 (attached as Appendix VI to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to:

[i] Minute 172 (**Governance Reform**); the Council ***agreed*** that

* A representative from UCU could join meetings of Finance and Resources and Council as an observer.
* The vacancy for the Academic Staff Representative on the Council will be circulated to all academic staff for nominations and that the Ordinance III be amended to reflect this change.
* Members of the Executive will not be eligible to be Senate representatives on the Council and that Ordinance IX be amended to reflect this change.
* That the Council review the balance of membership following the report of the review of governance in Welsh Universities in October.

[ii] Minute 175[a] (**Membership of Council**); it was ***resolved*** that that Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson be appointed to a second four-year term of office on the Council from 1 August 2019 and that that Dr Ian Rees be appointed as an independent member of the Council from 1 August 2019 for an initial term of 4 years.

[iii] Minute 175[b] (**Council Committees**); it was ***resolved*** that Professor Gareth Roberts be appointed as a member of the Strategy & Performance Committee and that Robert Eddowes be appointed as a co-opted member of the Finance & Resources Committee from 1 September 2019 for an initial term of 4 years.

1. The Council approved the proposed amendments to Ordinances I, III and IX.

**18.119 REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Redundancy Committee held on the 24th June 2019 (attached as Appendix VII to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. The Chair reported that the Committee felt that they had been given a clear opportunity to scrutinise the proposals and were assured that the welfare of staff had been a primary consideration throughout the process.
3. The Director of Human Resources provided an update on the process and the discussions which have taken place since the Committee meeting in April. The following points were noted:

[1] At the last Council meeting, it was reported that the Executive had considered recommendations on 14 business cases and it was these recommendations from these cases which were brought to Council from the Redundancy Committee. As noted earlier, hopefully those decisions taken will not need to be actioned.

[2] The Executive subsequently received recommendations in relation to Schools within the College of Arts, Humanities & Business. In each case, the Executive received and considered in detail: the original business case for change; the completed response template summarising all themes from the consultation with staff, students, trades unions and stakeholders; the minutes of the scrutiny group relating to the proposal; and an updated Equality Impact Assessment. The Executive was re-assured, in each case, from the documentation that meaningful consultation has been undertaken and that equality issues had been considered.

[3] There were no immediate impact on posts within the Schools of Law, Welsh & Celtic Studies and History, Philosophy &Social Sciences.

[4] In the Business School, the reduction of 1 post was identified and the Committee reluctantly agreed to recommend to the University Council that one Professorial post in the subject area of Business History, be dismissed by reasons of redundancy on 31 July, or after any appeal has been completed.

[5] In the School of Languages Literature and Linguistics, the reduction of 1 post was identified and the Committee reluctantly agreed to recommend to the University Council that the Curriculum Development Officer be dismissed by reason of redundancy on 31 July, or after any appeal has been completed.

[6] In the School of Music & Media, since the Committee met one member of staff has resigned, therefore the reduction of only 1 post is identified and the Committee reluctantly agreed to recommend to the University Council that the Lecturer in Ethnomusicology be dismissed by reasons of redundancy on 31 July, or after any appeal has been completed.

1. The Council reluctantly ***agreed*** that the 3 staff identified be dismissed by reason of redundancy as outlined above, subject to full consideration of redeployment opportunities and the offer of voluntary redundancy. The Council authorised the Director of Human Resources to issue notices of dismissal to the staff concerned.

*(It was accepted that the use of the term dismissed is not desirable, but stems from the relevant University Statute which the Council has resolved to review.)*

**18.120 HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS**

1. The Council received a report on Human Resources matters. The following points were noted:

[1] **National Pay Award:** At the final New JNCHES negotiating meeting for 2019-20 UCEA made a final pay offer with a modelled sector-level cost of 1.85%. The final offer includes the deletion of Spine Point 2 and weighted increases that would mean that the new lowest point 3 will provide an hourly rate at £8.65 on a 37-hour week, to meet the expected National Living Wage from April 2020; the lowest point would also exceed the prevailing (current) voluntary living wage when using a 35-hour week. The offer includes a clause enabling an institution to defer implementation for up to 11 months (from 1 August 2019). All three trade unions are expected to formally reject the offer and UCU have agreed to ballot members on industrial action in the autumn.

 [2] **Local BUPAS Pension Scheme:** Following a series of meetings with the trades unions on potential changes to the BUPAS, the University entered into a 60 day period of consultation with staff on 4th February. At the close of Consultation, 50 individuals had responded along with a formal response from each of the TU’s (Unison and Unite). Widespread concern was expressed that the proposed changes would make future BUPAS benefits materially worse than the USS comparatives. A final meeting was held with the Trade Union representatives where they reiterated their concern that the valuation assumptions were too prudent, and if changed could lead to avoiding the benefit changes and potentially reducing the employer contributions as well. The University confirmed that it was not in a position to address Valuation matters, but the TU’s agreed they would write again directly to the Trustees requesting an urgent meeting.

The Executive noted the need for fairness and equity but given the uncertainty on USS it was not possible to objectively address this. Therefore, following careful consideration of the feedback received on proposals to change the scheme, it was agreed that the scheme should remain unchanged despite the increased costs.

[3] **Employee Assistance Programme:** A confidential workplace service provided by the University has been established to help staff members deal with work-life stressors, family issues, financial concerns, relationship problems, and other wider concerns. It is available to staff members and their families and aims to have a positive impact on their wellbeing. Care First, an independent, leading provider of professional employee support services, have been appointed to provide this service. They employ professionally qualified counsellors and information specialists, who are experienced in helping people to deal with all kinds of practical and emotional issues such as wellbeing, family matters, relationships, debt management, workplace issues, and much more.

1. The Council agreed to award Emeritus Status to Professor Howard Davies.
2. A list of recent senior appointments was received for information.

**18.121 CHARITY COMMISION SUBMISSION**

The Council noted the annual return for 2017/18 that was submitted to the Charity Commission in May 2019, within the deadline set by the Charity Commission.

**18.122 VALEDICTION**

The Council thanked Dr Lorrie Murphy, whose term on Council as the Academic Staff Representative will end shortly. An election for a new representative will be held over the summer.