Bangor University

**COUNCIL MINUTES**

At a meeting of the Council held on the 15th April, 2016.

**Present :**

The Rt. Hon Lord Dafydd Elis-Thomas AM (Chair), Mrs Steph Barbaresi, Professor Gillian Davies, Professor Andrew Edwards, Miss Fflur Elin, Professor John Hughes, Professor Jerry Hunter, Mr. Ifan James, Dr. Griff Jones, Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Dr. Lorrie Murphy, Professor Richard Parry-Jones, Dr. Alwyn Roberts, Professor David Shepherd, Professor Paul Spencer, Professor Carol Tully, Professor Oliver Turnbull, Mr. David Williams, Dr. Olwen Williams, University Secretary, Director of Estates, Director of Finance and Director of Human Resources.

**Apologies :**

Dr. Peter Higson, Mr. Alun Ffred Jones, Dr. Karen Jones, Ms. Ellen Parry Williams, Professor Jo Rycroft Malone.

**DEATHS**

The Chair referred to the recent deaths of:

Mr Rhydian James, a former member of staff in the Sustainability Lab

Dr Ian Hughes, a former member of staff in the School of Education

Mr John Disley, an Honorary Fellow

Mrs Val Tranmer, a member of staff in IT Services

Dr Ian Hilton, a former member of staff in the School of Modern Languages and Cultures

Mr Edgar Williams, a former member of staff in Human Resources

Ms Leni Sellens, a member of staff in the Finance Office

Gwyn Thomas, former member of staff in Cymraeg and one of the most important Welsh poets of the last fifty years.

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** :

Dr Vian Bakir, Creative Studies & Media

Dr Stefan Machura, Social Sciences

Dr John Turner, Ocean Sciences

Dr Martina Feilzer, Social Sciences

**On the award of a Readership :**

Dr Zoe Skoulding, English Literature

Dr Thora Tenbrink, Linguistics & English Language

Dr Nia Whiteley, Biological Sciences

Dr Andy Mcstay, Creative Studies & Media

Dr Hannah Vlhovȧ-Wőrner, Music

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

Professor Christian Cook

Professor Terry Hewitt

**The Chair also expressed congratulations to:**

1. Dr Yvonne McDermott-Rees**,** Senior Lecturer in Law at Bangor University, who has been named as one of the six finalists for the 2016 Law Teacher of the Year Award.
2. Bangor University PhD student Jack Emmerson, who has been awarded the Marine Conservation Society Wakefield Memorial Award, for his project ‘Sustainable static-gear fisheries in the Irish Sea’.
3. Dr Lowri Hughes from [Canolfan Bedwyr](https://www.bangor.ac.uk/canolfanbedwyr/), who has been invited by the Minister for Public Services, Leighton Andrews, to join the [Working Group on the Welsh language in Local Government Administration and Economic Development](http://gov.wales/about/cabinet/cabinetstatements/2015/welshlanglg/?lang=en).

**The University’s successes in recent awards were also highlighted:**

In the WhatUni Student Choice Awards, Bangor University was listed in the following categories:

1st for best student accommodation

2nd for best courses and lecturers

3rd for student support

4th for clubs & societies

4th in the overall University of the Year

Bangor University won the Chwarae Teg Womenspire Award for Employer of the Year – Public Sector.

Bangor University has been placed 22nd in a global league table of the world’s greenest universities. The UI Green Metric highlights sustainability and environmental management at universities around the globe and measures each university’s commitment to developing an ‘environmentally friendly’ infrastructure.

**THE ESTATES STRATEGY**

1. A report was provided by Cushman and Wakefield, who have been engaged by the University to refresh the existing strategy. The report highlighted the scope, the approach and actions to date, and the future timeline for the development of the strategy.
2. The Council’s attention was drawn particularly to the strategic drivers for the strategy, the challenges related to the existing non-residential estate, the strengths and opportunities associated with the residential estate, and the need to align any future strategy with the University’s business plan, future growth, and appetite for risk.
3. The Council noted:

[1] The need for further data relating to condition, functionality and utilisation of the estate.

[2] Concerns about the level of backlog maintenance and the potential impact on health and safety of students and staff. Assurance was given to members that category D buildings were not currently occupied.

[3] Any increase in the efficient use of the estate, and potential disposals, could release funding to be re-invested in its development.

1. Discussions will continue over the coming months, including consulting further with Council members and a further update on the development of the strategy will be provided in July with the intention that the full strategy will be available for consideration and approval in the autumn.

**OUTLINE BUSINESS CASE FOR THE SCIENCE SITE**

1. The Deputy Vice-Chancellor presented the outline business case for the Science and Technology Quarter. It was noted that the Finance and Resources Committee are recommending to the Council that the project proceeds to the next stage.
2. The Council noted:

[1] The proposal included demolishing the rear of the Memorial Building and the Charles Evans Building, and the refurbishment of Memorial and the build of a new extension at the rear. This would allow for decanting of the Alun Roberts Tower, its complete refurbishment and recladding, and the replacement of the adjacent building with a new block fully integrated with the Tower.

[2] The development would considerably improve the functionality of the space and would allow for the emptying of Dean Street, allowing both Colleges to be co-located in a modern science estate.

[3] There is no net growth in space and the current cost is estimated to be £56m+ excluding VAT, fixtures and fitting and specialist equipment. An ambitious business plan would need to be developed for the University to support such a major capital commitment.

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

[1] To support the proposal and that a full business case should be developed for consideration later in the year.

[2] That £500k be released to undertake site clearance. Any further spend for enabling works would require approval by the Finance & Resources Committee.

[3] That a financial strategy be developed to support the capital ambitions of the University.

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**MINUTES**

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on the 11th December 2015 were confirmed and signed.
2. With reference to :

[1] **ITT** (page 2), Estyn visited in January to discuss the Centre’s action plan which addresses all recommendations within the original Estyn report. Following the visit they have confirmed that they are content that the plan addresses the areas of non-compliance. HEFCW have subsequently confirmed student numbers for the 2016/17 academic year.

[2] **Welsh Government Budget** (page 3), following extensive lobbying by the sector, the Welsh Government reversed a number of the proposed cuts in the budget debate. HEFCW have now issued their headline steers for funding and, if confirmed, will result in a cut of approximately £0.5m for the University.

[3] **Hazelkorn Review** (page 3), the published report recommends the formation of a new body, independent of Government, with oversight of all tertiary education in Wales.

[4] **Pontio Review** (page 5), the first meeting of the Group established by the Council to consider the scope and timetable of the review will meet later today.

**VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

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

1. **Bangor College China**: The Vice-Chancellor had recently visited the College, which has become a very successful project for the University. Over 500 students have been recruited and numbers planning to attend Bangor for the second or final years exceed the numbers in the original business plan. The College has received significant positive publicity in China and the Education Minister has called a conference in Changsha for other joint schools from across China.
2. **London Centre**: With regret, it has been decided that there will be no further recruitment of students to the London Centre as the lease has been terminated by the landlord and no suitable accommodation could be found. The existing cohort of students will be taught out in temporary accommodation.
3. **Welsh for Adults:** Bangor University currently delivers Welsh Language provision across North Wales as well as holding the status of ‘Centre’ for the North. Welsh Government have chosen to re-structure provision and establish one National Centre and to reduce the number of providers, as of the 1 August 2016. Bangor tendered for the Centre role, but unfortunately was unsuccessful, and this has been awarded to Trinity St Davids. Bangor entered into the tender exercise as a consortium with Grŵp Llandrillo Menai and from August will hold the provider contract for North West Wales only. The impact of these changes is that from 31 July the Centre at Bangor comes to an end and there is no longer a provision in North East Wales for which we employ staff currently. In the light of these changes, the Council ***resolved*** to establish a Redundancy Committee in line with Statute XX.
4. **European Referendum**: The Council noted the upcoming referendum and the Vice-Chancellor reported that UUK had recently received legal advice about campaigning. Political activity is only allowable if the University believes that campaigning to remain would support its charitable objectives. The Council ***resolved*** that the University should limit its response to publishing objective information about its participation in European programmes, whilst remaining part of the strong UUK sector voice on the matter. However, members of the University should not be prevented from presenting personal views on the matter.

**REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

The Report of the meetings of the Executive held between December 2015 and April 2016 (attached as Appendix I to the official copy of the Minutes) was considered.

**STRATEGIC PLANNING UPDATE**

1. The University Secretary presented School profiles and benchmarked KPIs as part of the improved annual cycle of information to the Council.
2. The School profiles provide a summary of key data and KPIs for each School including information about students, staff, research activity, Welsh medium activity, entry tariff, degree classification, employability and student satisfaction.
3. The benchmarked KPIs follow on from the annual presentation of KPIs at the December meeting of the Council, and provides information benchmarked against recently published sector data.

**LEGISLATIVE ISSUES**

1. The University Secretary provided the Council with an update on current legislative, regulatory and policy matters.
2. The Council particularly noted progress regarding the implementation of the requirements of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015, and the *Prevent Duty*.
3. HEFCW’s role, including transitional arrangements, resulting from the Higher Education (Wales) Act 2015 were noted, along with their approach to communication with governing bodies. Changes to quality assessment will require that appropriate training is available to governing bodies of institutions in Wales.

**FINANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

1. The reports of the meetings of the Finance and Resources Committee held on the 18th January and 21st March 2016 (attached as Appendix II to the official copy of the Minutes) were approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[1] Minute 584 (**Capital Programmes Board**), the wider capital development needs of the University reinforce the need for the University to generate a more robust financial strategy in order to fund these ambitious capital plans. The Committee endorsed the need to develop a long-term estates strategy and a financial strategy that supports the capital ambitions of the University.

[2] Minute 588 (**Fee and Access Plan**), the Council agreed to delegate authority to the Finance and Resources Committee and its Chair to make decisions regarding the submission of the University’s Fee and Access Plan to HEFCW.

C. The Council were informed, that following marketing of the former Canonry, the University has received a number of offers for the property and has accepted the best offer received.

[1]     It was noted that the University is required to comply with the Charities Act 2011 in respect of the disposal of land.

[2]     A surveyor’s report has been obtained in accordance with section 119(1)(a) of the Charities Act 2011 and the Charities (Qualified Surveyor’s Report) Regulations 1992.

[3]     The members confirmed that they reasonably believed that the District Surveyor that had prepared the report (Chris Guest MRICS) has the ability and experience to undertake the valuation of the property and the area in question, and note that he is a member of the Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors.

[4]    The Council believe there are no connected persons involved in the sale, in accordance with section 118 of the Charities Act 2011.

[5]     It was ***agreed*** that, in accordance with section 119(1)(c) of the Charities Act 2011, the members are 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 that the sale can proceed, subject to finalisation of the contract.

**AUDIT AND RISK COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Audit and Risk Committee held on the 1st February 2016 (attached as Appendix III to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to Minute 374 (**Internal Auditors Report**), the Internal Auditor presented a benchmarking report to the Committee showing the University’s audit findings benchmarked against those of around 30 other HE clients and highlighting common themes. No serious concerns were highlighted. The University does, however, receive a much higher proportion (c. 60%) of amber/green reports compared to the benchmarked group.

**BILINGUALISM COMMITTEE**

The Report of the meeting of the Bilingualism Committee held on the 12th February 2016 (attached as Appendix IV to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

**HEALTH AND SAFETY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Health and Safety Committee held on the 3rd February 2016 (attached as Appendix V to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to Minute 482a (**Radiation Stocks**), it was noted that control of the University’s radiation stocks and materials was recently audited by North Wales Police and Natural Resources Wales. The audit confirmed that the processes and procedures in place were of a good standard and that there had been no breaches and no further action was required. Following permission from Natural Resources Wales to dispose of backlog materials, the University is currently reducing its primary stocks of radiation materials.

**NOMINATIONS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Nominations and Governance Committee held on the 11th December 2016 (attached as Appendix VI to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to :

[1] Minute 117 (**Skills Audit**), it was noted that there are currently up to five vacancies on the Council. Taking on board the priorities highlighted by the skills audit, the Committee had agreed to draft an advertisement and recruitment pack for new Council members and to advertise locally and nationally, and to approach individuals with appropriate skills, including alumni, and to make use of local connections with business and industry.

[2] Minute 118 (**Review of Council Membership**), a number of changes to simplify the membership of the Council were ***agreed***. The new membership of the Council would number 27, and the ratio of independent to university members would be 17:10. There would be no fewer lay members than currently.

**NAMING OF ROOMS AND BUILDINGS COMMITTEE**

1. The Minutes of the meeting of the Naming of Rooms and Buildings Committee held on the 2nd February 2016 (attached as Appendix VII to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. The Council ***agreed*** that the PL2 Lecture Theatre in Pontio be renamed Ystafell Cemlyn-Jones / the Cemlyn-Jones Room.
3. It was ***agreed*** that some resolutions on naming of rooms and buildings that had been taken a number of years ago, but not yet implemented, should be referred back to the Committee for further discussion.

**REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Redundancy Committee held on the 8th February 2016 (attached as Appendix VIII 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 February 2016 and 31st July 2016 be dismissed by reason of redundancy should no suitable alternative employment opportunities by identified.

**REMUNERATION COMMITTEE**

The Report of the meeting of the Remuneration Committee held on the 11th December 2015 (attached as Appendix IX to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

**HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS**

1. The Council received a report on Human Resources matters. The UCU ballot on strike action was noted and that plans to minimise disruption to students are underway.
2. It was resolved that Professor David Bowers be granted the title ‘Emeritus Professor’.
3. A list of recent appointments was received.

**SENATE**

The minutes of the Senate meetings held on the 23rd November 2015 and 19th January 2016 were received for information.

**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**

1. The Council received an update report from the Students’ Union for information.
2. Fflur Elin was congratulated by Council members on her recent election as NUS Wales President.

**SEALING**

The Council ratified the sealing of documents listed in Agendum 14.

**CHARITY COMMISSION SUBMISSION**

The Council noted that the annual return to the Charity Commission for 2014/15 was submitted on the 25th February 2016, well within the deadline set by the Charity Commission.

**HONORARY FELLOWS**

It was reported that Honorary Fellowships will be conferred on the following in July 2016:

* **Nigel Owens**, International Rugby Referee, for services to sport;
* **Ruth Hussey CB OBE**, Chief Medical Officer/Medical Director NHS Wales, for services to medical sciences;
* **Major General Susan Ridge**, Director General Army Legal Services, for services to law;
* **Rhian Huws-Williams**, Chief Executive Care Council for Wales, for services to social work;
* **Glyn Watkin Jones,** for services to industry;
* **John Meirion Morris,** sculptor, for services to the arts;
* **Professor Merfyn Jones** **CBE**, for services to the University;
* **Nia Roberts,** television and radio presenter, for services to broadcasting, and **J.O. Roberts,** renowned and respected professional actor, for services to drama (father and daughter);
* **Elin Manahan-Thomas**, soprano, for services to music;
* **Professor John Porter,** alumni and internationally known scientist, for services to science;
* **Professor John Wingfield,** alumni and environmental endocrinologist at the University of California, for services to science;
* **H.E.M. Rasheed Mohammed Al Maraj,** Governor of the Central Bank of Bahrain, for services to banking.

**VALEDICTION**

The Chair expressed thanks to Mr Alun Ffred Jones whose term on the Council has ended following his resignation as AM for the Arfon constituency with effect from the 5th April 2016.