Bangor University

**COUNCIL MINUTES**

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

**Present**:

Mrs Marian Wyn Jones (Chair), Dr Tomos Dafydd, Dr Peter Higson, Professor Jerry Hunter, Dr Griff Jones, Dr Karen Jones, Sir Paul Lambert, Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Mr Gethin Morgan, Dr Lorrie Murphy, Ms. Ellen Parry Williams, Miss Julie Perkins, Miss Ruth Plant, Professor Gareth Roberts, Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone, 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**:

Professor Andrew Edwards, Mr Marc Jones.

**18.69 WELCOME**

The Chair welcomed Dr Chris Turner who will be presenting the Governance Effectiveness Review.

The Chair also thanked Professor Jo Rycroft-Malone who will be leaving the University at the end of April to take up the role of Dean of Health & Medicine at Lancaster University. This is her last meeting of the Council.

**18.70 DEATHS**

The Chair referred to the recent death of **Scarlett Salisbury,** a student in the School of Music & Media. Members stood in tribute to her memory.

**18.71 CONGRATULATIONS**

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

Professor Terry Hewitt, School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering

**On the award of a Readership:**

Dr Lynne Williams, School of Healthcare Sciences

Dr Andy Smith, School of Natural Sciences

**The Chair also congratulated:**

**Professors Claire Wilkinson and Debbie Roberts**, from the School of Health Sciences, who have been shortlisted in the inaugural Welsh Women’s Awards 2019, for the Services to Education Award.

**Professor John Ashton**, Professor of Banking, who has been appointed to the executive council of one of the oldest finance-related academic societies in the UK, the British Accounting and Finance Association (BAFA).

**Professor Howard Davis**, Professor of Social Theory & Institutions at the School of History, Philosophy and Social Science, who has been awarded a fellowship of the Academy of Social Sciences.

**Professor Nancy Edwards**, Professor in Archaeology, has been appointed Chair of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales - the first female chair in its 110-year history.

**18.72 GOVERNANCE EFFECTIVENESS REVIEW**

1. The Council noted that the latest CUC Higher Education Code of Governance states that Governing bodies must conduct a review of their effectiveness at least every four years. At its meeting in April 2018, the Council agreed that a Governance Effectiveness Review be undertaken. The Council appointed Dr Chris Turner, former Academic Registrar and University Secretary at Cardiff University, as a consultant to undertake the review. The approach taken in the review has been informed by the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance (2018) and the guidance produced by Advance HE. All members of Council and senior executives were invited to complete a questionnaire and discussions were held during the period from October 2018 to January 2019 with 29 individuals. A number of meetings were observed and a review of Council papers was undertaken.
2. Dr Chris Turner thanked all members for their engagement and presented the findings of his review. He noted that:

[1] The review can only provide a snapshot and during course of the review there was a change in executive leadership and significant developments have taken place in recent months.

[2] Improvements have been made since last review in 2013, including clarification of roles, robust appointment procedures for members of Council, and re-establishment of Strategy and Performance Committee. New members and a new Chair have broadened perspective and there has been greater engagement and inclusivity at Council meetings;

[3] The University is performing well in a number of areas, in particular student satisfaction, with the award of TEF Gold and an excellent QAA report. However, student recruitment is a major challenge leading to concerns regarding financial sustainability.

[4] The overall conclusions were that the Council is operating in line within its own constitutional arrangements and with the CUC Code of Practice, and regulatory compliance is good; Council membership is appropriate with good balance of skills and positive leadership from Chair and good support from Secretary; sub-committee terms of reference are appropriate and they are generally effective in undertaking scrutiny; students play a full and positive part in University governance; and risk management is comprehensive in scope and effective in application.

[5] There is scope to increase the effectiveness of Council, particularly with regard to its relationship with the Executive, Senate and the wider University. The report included 8 recommendations and 9 affirmations where there is evidence of actions already planned or underway.

1. The Nominations and Governance Committee had considered each of the recommendations and affirmations in detail and an Action Plan had been drawn up to address these.
2. In the subsequent discussion, the following points were noted:

[1] Concern was expressed that although the University may be operating in line with the Charter and Statutes, this may not necessarily be governance best practice (outside the HE sector) or as agile as it could be. It was suggested that a smaller Council was desirable, whilst ensuring students, staff and the Executive are represented, and ensuring a lay majority. A balance between diversity of views and speed of decision-making is necessary.

[2] Council members agreed that the link with the Senate, which is responsible for the academic business of the University, could be strengthened.

[3] Setting transparent objectives for a Vice-chancellor and ensuring that s/he understands that they will be held accountable is crucial. Ideally the Vice-Chancellor and the Council should work together in partnership to deliver the objectives of the institution. The Council needs to be strong enough to challenge the Executive and set the agenda, whilst keeping the appropriate balance between management and governance.

[4] More agility can be achieved through asking sub-committees to assume increased levels of delegated authority and responsibility.

[5] Council members generally felt that the process has been helpful and hoped that it wouldn’t be a one off event but the start of a journey of continuous improvement and reflection.

1. The Council thanked Dr Turner and accepted the recommendations in the report. Members were asked to feedback any observations regarding the action plan to the University Secretary over the next few weeks. It was ***agreed*** that, once finalised, the report and action plan should be published alongside the Council minutes.
2. The Council considered a letter from BUCU to the Chair of Council expressing concern about governance arrangements and strategy development. There was a clear desire to work with the Council on governance reform and it was ***agreed*** to invite the BUCU Governance Working Group to the next meeting of Nomination & Governance Committee to open discussions over future governance.

**18.73 MINUTES**

1. The Minutes of the meeting held on 8th February 2019 were confirmed and signed.
2. With reference to:

[1] **Appointment of a Vice-Chancellor** (Minute 18.51); it was noted that the closing date has passed and that longlisting has been undertaken by the Appointment Committee. A shortlisting meeting has been arranged for the next week and it is anticipated that interviews will take place in early May. It is hoped that staff, students and other Council members can be involved in the assessment process.

[2] **Council Vacancies** (Minute 18.52B[4]); the closing date for applications has passed and 4 applications were received. The Nominations and Governance Committee will assess these and interview potential applicants and make a recommendation to Council. The adverts have been re-issued and the application date has been extended to 31 May and all Council members are encouraged to speak to potential applicants with an appropriate skills mix.

[3] **Planning Round** (minute 18.54[3]); the Vice-Chancellor reported re-invigorating the planning process. The process is well underway, documentation has been produced, and meetings have taken place with Deans and Directors. A first draft of strategic and financial plans are due to be submitted at the end of May. The output of the process will be pulled together in the financial forecasts to be considered at the July Council meeting.

[4] **Bangor College China** (minute 18.57); the Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) had just returned from China and reported back from his visit. The main reason for the visit had been successful, the reaffirmation of the relationship with CSUFT, and he had been able to address a number of other concerns. It was noted that the University is taking advice from other Universities operating in China regarding repatriating finances to the UK. A key issue is also the need to increase the number of students transferring to Bangor for the final year of study. Although financially profitable, concern was expressed that any issues relating to the quality of provision could reflect badly on the reputation of Bangor University. The Council requested an update after the revalidation review in the autumn.

[5] **Property Disposals** (minute 18.59D); concern was expressed that a number of properties are being marketed by Avison Young. It was noted that they were appointed off the Welsh Government procurement framework, but had agreed to work with local agents Williams & Goodwin for the local market. An offer at full asking price has already been received for one property and there has been interest in other properties.

[6] **Estates Strategy** (minute 18.54B); concern was expressed about the direction of the estates strategy in recent years. It was noted that the process had been re-started and the Executive will be considering a draft strategy at the end of April and that, following consultation, it will be considered by the Council in July. The appointment of a new Director of estates was also underway and staff in the department have been involved in shaping the role and the appointment process.

1. An action log was provided noting progress on all outstanding Council actions. Council noted progress and completed actions.

**18.74 VICE-CHANCELLOR’S BUSINESS**

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

[1] Reflecting on his first three months in office, the Interim Vice-Chancellor noted the huge amount of work that is being undertaken across the University, including the Executive, the Students’ Union, and staff across academic Colleges and Professional Services. There are still tensions within the University and changing culture will take time, but staff are working collaboratively to deliver change. It has not been easy to make difficult decisions and to inform staff about changes that will impact them personally. The team are hopeful that by the end of May, a more positive culture will emerge. There is some evidence that recruitment is becoming more positive and there is a commitment from staff across the university to support this.

[2] Following a return visit to re-assess our attendance policy and procedures following discrepancies identified on an earlier visit, the UKVI are now satisfied that we are fully compliant with our sponsor duties. The Vice-Chancellor expressed thanks to all staff who worked hard to achieve this positive outcome.

[3] Communications are improving; a staff bulletin is in place and a student newsletter to mirror this is under development.

[4] It has come to light in recent days that the University has failed a Covenant Test relating to the loan on the MDC from Barclays. A technicality relating to a change made by KPMG regarding how Masters’ fees are recorded has triggered a response from Barclays. There is no implication for any other covenant if we resolve this and the Director of Finance is pursuing an alternative provision from Santander. The Council noted the transfer of the loan and delegated authority to the Executive to sign off the final terms associated with the loan.

[5] The Artistic Director of Pontio, Elen ap Robert, will be leaving the University in August. A replacement will be sought and discussions are continuing over the nature of the role. The Chair paid tribute to Elen for steering an ambitious artistic programme over seven years, despite the challenges associated with the building, and thanked her for setting Pontio on such a strong foundation.

**18.75 REPORT FROM THE EXECUTIVE**

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

[1] **USS Pensions**; it was noted that the University had responded to the recent consultation. We are yet to hear a response from the USS Trustee.

[2] **Fee & Access Plan**; it was noted that the plan has been submitted to HEFCW following approval by the Executive and the Finance & Resources Committee and final sign off by the Chair.

[3] **Rolling REF**; progress to date in preparation for REF2021 was noted. The University is developing a Code of Practice for the next REF including the way we include staff who have left the institution. The Executive have agreed in principle to submit outputs and impact cases studies for those staff who take voluntary redundancy, but not for those made compulsorily redundant.

The greatest concern for the University’s performance in REF2021 is progress with impact case studies. Additional resource is needed to generate impact, to collect evidence of impact, and to support the writing of cases studies.

[4] **Confucius Institute**; following a recommendation from the Executive, it was ***agreed*** that the Confucius Institute transfer to the School of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics, in the College of Arts, Humanities and Business. This would allow for the mainstreaming of the academic activity.

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

**18.76 STUDENTS’ UNION UPDATE**

1. The Council received an update on the Students’ Union recent activities, campaigns and events, including: recent success in being shortlisted for Best Clubs and Societies and Giving Back in the WhatUni Awards; the successful Sabbatical Officer elections; the fifth successive Varsity win; the establishment of 9 new volunteering projects; the successful Course Rep Week; UMCB’s active role in campaigning for Welsh medium provision for mental health services; and increasing the student voice of Welsh language students.
2. The President, Ruth Plant, and UMCB President, Gethin Morgan, were thanked for their important and valuable contribution to the Council over their terms of office.

**18.77 MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT FOR STAFF AND STUDENTS**

1. At the Finance & Resources Committee meeting in January, there was a discussion about the challenges associated with providing mental health support. The Council considered a paper demonstrating how the university supports student and staff mental health. The following points were noted:

[1] The mental health of students is an area of concern nationally and Bangor University is actively engaged with the matter. The number of students seeking help has been steadily increasing in recent year and is monitored regularly and a report by the Director of Student Services is presented to Senate annually.

[2] The University benefits from a very close relationship with BCUHB. Arrangements are in place for students receiving support at home to transfer that support to Bangor.

[3] Staff in Student Services work closely with student tutors, Halls and the SU to co-ordinate the support available to students. The number of students seeking help has been increasing year-on-year, including those with non-diagnosed mental health concerns. It is positive that students are coming forward to seek support but this place increased strain on the services available.

[4] There are significant risks associated with not identifying or addressing students that need help and these have been highlighted at other Universities. Students can declare their need for support in advance (during the UCAS process) and during induction talks, support is highlighted. A robust programme of support is available to students who identify the need for support.

[5] The University has recently appointed a Welsh speaking counsellor and is working closely with the Students’ Union to identify specific concerns relating to Welsh speaking students. The Counselling Service also collaborates with the Students’ Union to support peer-led mental well-being activities, including the Big White Wall.

1. The Council were pleased to receive assurance about the support available to students, and were particularly pleased to note the development of a student-led Mental Health Strategy.

**18.78 ACHIEVING FINANCIAL SUSTAINAIBLITY**

1. At the Council meeting on 30 November 2018, the Council considered and formally approved a series of plans for restructuring the Academic Domain and certain Professional Services in order to deliver the necessary savings. Those plans were subject to meaningful consultation with the University’s recognised Trades Unions (under S188 TULRCA 1992) and staff and students, and could change as a result of consultation.
2. The Vice-Chancellor presented a paper providing an update on progress in achieving financial sustainability since the last Council meeting. The following points were noted:

[1] Following a number of extensions, the formal consultation closed on 8 February 2019. The University received a total of 312 formal responses to the consultation. The Council considered a detailed breakdown of the number of responses for each business case for change. Nearly two-thirds of the responses came from staff and the remaining responses were from external stakeholders or were submitted anonymously.

[2] Following the consultation, the relevant Deans and Directors of Professional Services carefully analysed and considered the responses received in order to identify the key themes arising from the feedback. A proforma was developed for recording feedback to the consultation responses and recommendations. The responses, alongside updated Equality Impact Assessments, were then considered by a scrutiny group, chaired by a Pro Vice-Chancellor, and consisting of representatives of the Students’ Union as well as representatives from Finance, Planning, Human Resources and Canolfan Bedwyr. The role of these groups was to ensure all of the relevant financial, planning, equality, Welsh language and student experience implications had been fully explored and addressed. A separate meeting was held for Council members on 1 April 2019 to receive a report from all of the scrutiny groups, to consider an overview of the position and to identify any further matters or unintended consequences that require consideration by the Executive before final decisions are made. Further feedback was also received from the Trades Unions.

[3] The final responses and recommendations of the Deans and Directors, as well as the views of the scrutiny groups, Council members and Trades Unions, along with detailed Equality Impact Assessments, have been or will be presented to the Executive for final decisions. The Executive also have sight of all of the individual responses submitted during the consultation period. The Executive was assured from the documentation that meaningful consultation has been undertaken.

[4] Decisions have been made by the Executive regarding the business cases for RIIO, Governance & Compliance, and the Schools of Education and Human Development, Medical Sciences, Health Sciences, and Sport, Health and Exercise Sciences. There will be some impact for staff in those areas and the details are being shared with those staff. There are no further staff losses beyond those already agreed on a voluntary basis in SHES and RIIO and no detriment to current Welsh medium provision in SHES.

[5] Following the consultation and after careful consideration of the submitted responses, the Executive has reluctantly taken the difficult decision to discontinue Chemistry degrees. This means that no new students will be enrolled on Chemistry programmes for the 2019/20 academic year, however existing students have been guaranteed that they will be able to complete their studies and will be able to graduate with the degree on which they are currently enrolled. The University is working with external funders, project partners and companies to complete research projects and studentships, and will also continue to work closely with Trades Unions and staff to mitigate the effect on staff and students.

[6] 17 applications for Voluntary Redundancy have been approved to date and a number of other applications are under consideration. The 17 approved applications for Voluntary Redundancy will deliver sustainable salary savings of approximately £745,000 per year. The Voluntary Redundancy Scheme remains open to all staff. The costs of VR to date have been absorbed within salary forecasts, and insofar as it is possible, the intention is that any further VR costs will also be absorbed in this year’s budget.

[7] Approximately 35-40 staff remain at risk of redundancy. It is hoped that the majority of job losses will be on a voluntary basis and that the number of any compulsory redundancies will be as low as possible.

[8] There is increasing confidence that the current 2018/19 year will pass the covenant test this July, but there is still a significant risk of breaching the covenant test at the end of 2019/20 if any of the known risks were to fully crystallise i.e. reduced Fee income, increased pay settlement and pension costs and challenges in containing non-pay pressures. With this in mind the Executive have received a financial update at each one of its meetings and have taken steps to identify further savings and opportunities for income generation.

[9] All decisions made by the Executive have been communicated to all relevant staff, students and stakeholders in timely manner and implemented in accordance with the University’s Management of Change Policy. Individual consultation meetings have been arranged and the University has issued a supplementary section 188 letter regarding selection methodology. Under Statute XX, the Redundancy Committee of the Council is the body tasked with making recommendations to Council about which posts should be deleted from the workforce. A number of recommendations were made at Redundancy Committee this morning. Senate will be consulted before any final recommendations are made or acted upon in relation to academic staff.

1. The Council noted the risks associated with phasing out programmes over 3 years. It was noted that the Dean and Head of School are developing a plan with staff to ensure continuity though the teach-out period, but there may be the need for some part-time appointments to see through some elements of teaching.
2. The Council were pleased to note the progress to date, and staff were thanked for their enormous efforts during this period, particularly the effort to support individuals. The Chair of the Redundancy committee also noted that the Committee were assured that staff had been supported through what was a very stressful time for some individuals.

**18.79 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS**

1. **Student Recruitment**; The Council noted:

[1] Home/EU Undergraduate applications are 16% lower than at the same point last year and firm accepts are 5% higher than last year, following a real push on conversion this year. The number of firm accepts is promising, although at this stage in the cycle it is difficult to know whether these will convert to admissions. Home/EU postgraduate applications are relatively stable.

[2] Overseas applications are higher than at the same point last year (Undergraduate 14%, postgraduate 5%). Offers made have increased at a higher rate due to increased turnaround times, but the number of firm accepts is similar to last year.

[3] The current financial model assumes that student recruitment in September will be in similar to last year. Current trends show significant variation by College and School and type of student and it is difficult to provide assurance at this early stage of the cycle as to whether this target will be met. At the Strategy and Performance Committee, it was agreed that the Executive should set aside some time to think through the development of a contingency plan for the next year, should recruitment targets not be met.

[4] Student recruitment is the highest priority for the Executive. Work is underway to minimise turnaround times for applications. Students have been engaged with the process by visiting Schools, improving social media through re-introducing the digital ambassador scheme, the creation of internships, volunteer international ambassadors, and getting out a positive message about the University.

[5] Accountability across all Schools has been enhanced through monthly meetings of the Recruitment and Admission Task Group, the establishment of a social media group and a schools outreach group with the aim of offering a visit to every secondary School in North Wales for every subject group.

1. **Financial Metrics**; The Financial Metrics were provided for information but were covered in more detail in the report from the Finance & Resources Committee. Quarter 2 performance of academic Colleges was broadly in line with budget but Professional Services were showing an adverse variance. Scrutiny meetings have taken place with all Deans and Directors of Professional Service to discuss budget variance.
2. **Research Grants & Contracts**; Professor Rycroft-Malone tabled a more meaningful report presenting research performance in line with the way data is presented to the Senate. It was noted that it is difficult to compare year-on-year as funding can be uneven so trends over a number of years were presented. The report summarised research grant income by College, School, funders and activity. The following points were noted:

[1] Recent trends suggest a general decline in overall income, but strengths in the College of Environmental Sciences and Engineering and the College of Human Sciences were highlighted.

[2] There is a movement away from structural funds to other sources of funding but these are not making up the full shortfall.

[3] The largest contribution to Full Economic Costs comes from Research Councils and NIHR funding.

[4] Success rates are average for the sector at 10-20%.

[5] This data is being used to feed into the planning round and the development of the contribution model. Further work is underway to present the data with relevant benchmarks to understand our decline in the context of the HE sector.

**18.80 CABAN UPDATE**

1. At the last meeting, the Council requested an update on CaBan and agreed that there was the need for a more strategic discussion about the longer-term future of teacher training across North Wales. The Council considered a paper providing an overview of the current position with the project. The following points were noted:

[1] In March CaBan was revisited by the EWC accreditation committee chaired by Professor John Furlong. The visit involved a detailed inspection of progress made towards meeting the twenty accreditation conditions. All twenty conditions were met, and therefore CaBan is now accredited to deliver ITE (Primary BA, Primary and Secondary PGCE) across North Wales. There were a few minor recommendations that have been formulated into an action plan for the months leading to the inaugural programmes starting in September 2019.

[2] The appointment of Jeremy Griffiths as Executive Director of CaBan has enabled closer communication and understanding between Chester and Bangor universities at an operational level. Jeremy is a successful and experienced head teacher who has held a number of senior leadership and strategic roles in education in Wales. Having a single leader working across both sites will ensure that the, already good collaboration, strengthens further.

[3] Both institutions are working hard on recruitment, against a national downward trend. A marketing campaign, involving radio and social media advertisement has been developed. The current recruitment figures compared with the same time last year suggest that secondary PGCE applications are similar but primary applications are still about 20% lower than the same time last year for Bangor. Chester is struggling to recruit, especially to the BA primary three-year programme and the PGCE Primary programme. At this stage, it is our understanding that Chester no longer intends to open a facility in Llandudno, or elsewhere in North Wales.

1. The Council was pleased to note the update on progress.
   1. **NORTH WALES GROWTH DEAL**
2. The Council considered a paper providing an overview and progress report on Bangor University’s involvement in the North Wales Growth Deal. The following points were noted:

[1] The North Wales Growth Deal (NWGD) is a regional equivalent of the City Deals which Swansea and Cardiff have received. It is a capital only scheme to drive regional productivity and prosperity, and therefore transformational for the region. The NWGD is funded jointly by the UK (Westminster) Government and the Welsh Government. Both parties have agreed to contribute £120M each. The benefit to the University is potentially an investment of £27M. The Growth Deal funding represents co-investment in research facilities, space for business engagement and associated infrastructure on the Deiniol Road Science Site and at M-SParc.

[2] Bangor originally had four projects in the Growth Deal Package. The Centre for Environmental Biotechnology (CEB) (£3 million); The Digital Signal Processing Centre (DSP) (£3 million); The Nuclear Energy Centre of Excellence (NECoE) (£18 million); The Centre for Enhanced Industrial Certification and Evaluation (ICE) (£3 million). Based on recent advice NECoE and ICE have now been merged (combined to £21 million). The projects were initially chosen because they were areas of applied research excellence with strong market links and the potential to contribute to the growth in particular sectors.

[3] Currently, the schedule is for a Heads of Terms agreement to be signed by the end of July 2019. We will then be required to follow the UK Civil Services standard Green Book ‘5 Case Business Model’ for the production of the Business Plan for each project. This approach to business plan submission is designed to provide a robust challenge to all aspects of a proposal and requires several months of work to complete. Due to the skewed distribution of sponsor capital funding payments versus capital expenditure there is likely to be an interest only payment requirement from some projects. The capital sum is not repayable and the timing and size of interest payments will depend on the profile of spend versus grant over time.

[4] Recent correspondence suggest that the HE and FE projects had not been prioritised. Concern was expressed that this process had not been transparent and a meeting is scheduled for this afternoon where both Universities in North Wales and the FE Colleges have challenged this and have requested an opportunity to review the decision-making process.

1. The Council noted the progress to date. The Chair noted that a better strategy for engagement with local council and politicians was needed and that she had asked the Vice-Chancellor to develop a strategic stakeholder strategy.

**18.82 EQUALITY ACTION PLAN & REPORT**

1. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Welsh Medium & Civic Engagement) presented the University’s Annual Equality Report and Action Plan to the Council. It was noted that:

[1] The Strategic Equality Plan covers the period 2016 to 2020. Against that, the University has produced an Equality Action Plan, which is updated on an annual basis, and covers the period April 2018 to March 2019.

[2] The CUC Higher Education Code of Governance states that HEIs are required by law to comply with extensive equality and diversity legislation, and governing bodies are legally responsible for ensuring the compliance of their institution.

[3] The University continues to embrace and value the diversity of staff and students and strives to provide a safe, welcoming and inclusive environment. Key success in the past year include the award of the Bronze Athena SWAN award in April 2018; the launch of the Equality Champions network; the development of a policy and associated policy guidance to support Trans staff; further embedding the Equality Impact Assessments into policy development and managing change processes in the University.

[4] 6.9% of staff at Bangor University have declared a disability. This is a slight increase on last year and compares with 4.7% of staff working in higher education across the UK and 5.3% in Wales HEIs.

[5] 5.4% staff declare themselves as BME, compared with 4.1% in Wales and 9.4% in the UK.

1. The Council noted the report and approved the institution’s approach to equality and diversity and its agreed indicators that measure performance. The Council were pleased to note that in a number of cases we are performing better than the sector.

**18.84 GENDER PAY GAP REPORT**

1. The Director of Human Resources presented the University’s first Gender Pay Gap Report to the Council. It was noted that:

[1] Gender Pay Gap reporting requirements do not apply to Public authorities within Wales, however, as the University is committed to equality of opportunity and transparency we have decided to publish details of our Gender Pay Gap in line with the Equality Act 2010 (Specific Duties and Public Authorities) Regulations 2017 which are mandatory in England. Details of the University’s Gender Pay Gap will be published on our own Website and on the Government’s Equalities Office web site by 30 March 2019 and then annually thereafter.

[2] The mean Gender Pay Gap is 15.4% and the medium Gap is 11.1%. This compares to 9.6% for the UK national median Gender Pay Gap and 13.7% for the HE sector. The underrepresentation of females in professorial and senior roles is particularly notable and grade 1 roles are primarily female. However, in many universities these roles have been outsourced.

[3] An action plan has been developed, however the causes of a Gender Pay Gap are a complex mix of work, society and the family; the University will only be able to influence some factors. Staff turnover is low, but over time it is hoped that the action plan will reduce the gap. The University is working with Trades’ Unions to implement the action plan.

1. The Council noted the report and the actions being taken to reduce the gap.

**18.85 FINANCE & RESOURCES COMMITTEE**

The Report of the meeting of the Finance & Resources Committee held on the 15th March 2019 (attached as Appendix II to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

* 1. **AUDIT & RISK COMMITTEE**

The Report of the meeting of the Audit & Risk Committee held on the 4th March 2019 (attached as Appendix III to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

**18.87 BILINGUALISM COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Bilingualism Committee held on the 20th February 2019 (attached as Appendix IV to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

B. The Council approved the principle that all posts within the University should adhere to the recognised scrutiny processes for verifying language requirements.

**18.88 HEALTH & SAFETY COMMITTEE**

The Council noted the half-year statistical report pertaining to Accidents & Incidents and Sickness Absence. Concern was expressed that individuals may not identify work-related stress. The Director of Human Resources reported that the University currently provides a counselling service for staff but is introducing an Employee Assistance Programme in May including a 24/7 phone line with to access information and support.

* 1. **NOMINATIONS & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

1. The Report of the meeting of the Nominations & Governance Committee held on the 22nd March 2019 (attached as Appendix V to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.
2. With particular reference to:

[i] Minute 169[a] (**Membership of Council**); the Council ***agreed*** that the role of Treasurer be discontinued and that the Charter and Statutes be amended to reflect this change.

[ii] Minute 169[b] (**Council Committees**); it was ***resolved*** that the following Council members be appointed to serve on the Committees shown:

* Chair of Finance & Resources Committee: Sir Paul Lambert
* Chair of Redundancy Committee: Dr Peter Higson
* Finance & Resources Committee: Dr Peter Higson
* Audit & Risk Committee: Ms Ellen Parry-Williams

[iii] Minute 169[c] (**Trustees & Directorships**); it was ***resolved*** that the following be appointed to serve on the Boards shown:

* Chair of NWW Management Development Centre Ltd: Prof Sian Hope
* Chair of Menai Science Park Ltd: Ieuan Wyn Jones
* Director of Menai Science Park Ltd: Prof Paul Spencer
* Director of Menai Science Park Ltd: Dr Edward Jones
* Director of POMOS: Prof Paul Spencer

[iv] Minute 170 (**Scheme of Delegated Authority**); it was agreed to approve the Scheme and that it be subject to annual review by the Nominations & Governance Committee.

1. The Council approved the amendments to Ordinance XXXIII to reflect the new membership of the Executive.

**18.90 STRATEGY & PERFORMANCE COMMITTEE**

The Report of the meeting of the Strategy & Performance Committee held on the 15th March 2019 (attached as Appendix VI to the official copy of the Minutes) was approved.

**18.91 HUMAN RESOURCES MATTERS**

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

[1] **National Pay Award:** Last month, UCU, UNISON and Unite wrote to UCEA confirming that they were bringing the 2018-19 New JNCHES pay round to a close. This follows ballots for industrial action by the unions: UCU and UNISON did not gain mandates for action in their most recent ballots. The unions have now jointly noted the closure of last year’s pay round, saying that they “will not be taking any further action and have noted the offer that has been implemented”.

[2] The five HE trades unions have now submitted a full joint claim for the 2019-20 New JNCHES negotiations. The first negotiating meeting took place on Tuesday 26 March. There will be a further negotiating meetings on Thursday 11 April and Tuesday 30 April.

[3] **USS Pension:** Following the recent consultation on the USS pension scheme, UUK received responses from USS institutions which covered approximately 89% of the active membership of the scheme. The USS trustee considered the UUK response at its Board meeting on 28 March 2019 but as yet has not communicated its views back to UUK and USS employer.

[3] **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 The University proposed three changes to pension benefits: changing the Normal Retirement Age from 65 to 66; changing the pre-retirement CARE revaluation rate from CPI to CPI capped at 2.5% per annum; and changing the accrual rate from 1/80ths to 1/85ths. At the end of the consultation period, the University will consider all of the feedback it receives, and plans to announce its final decision on the proposed changes around the end of April 2019.

[4] **Research Leadership Programme:** Creating an environment in which excellent research can flourish is a key objective of the University’s Strategic Plan. A new research leadership programme aims to support research in Bangor by enhancing the leadership capabilities of research leaders and ensuring that they have the skills, abilities and confidence to lead and manage researchers effectively. Feedback from a recent pilot group has been extremely positive. Overall, they felt the Programme had been a very valuable use of time, particularly emphasising information on how the funding agencies decide on proposals and how this must be reflected in the grant proposals; reflecting on their own leadership style; Self-reflection and perception of behaviours and actions; and they found that the interactive sessions tended to be the more memorable. Following feedback, the course has been slightly revised and it is anticipated that it will run twice a year.

[5] The Council requested that other leadership programmes are considered, for example a Teaching Leadership Programme.

1. The Council agreed to award Emeritus Status to Professor Sian Hope and Professor Colin Jago.
2. A list of recent senior appointments was received for information.

**18.92 SENATE**

1. The Pro Vice-Chancellor (Teaching & Learning) presented the report from the Senate meetings held on the 5th March 2019.
2. The Vice-Chancellor reflected on his first meeting of Senate and noted that it functioned well as a forum for discussion and debating policy. The recommendations from the Governance Effectiveness Review to strengthen the relationship between Senate and Council would be welcomed.

**18.93 HONORARY FELLOWS**

It was reported that Honorary Fellowships will be conferred on the following in July 2018:

* **Elan Closs Stephens CBE**, throughout her career she has demonstrated a passionate commitment and service to the creative industries, especially in Wales. This is evidenced most recently through her membership on the BBC Unitary Board where she represents the interests of Wales – For services to Creative Industries
* **President Liao**, an academic, demonstrating a passionate commitment and service to higher education including internationalisation of education at CSUFT and Bangor College China - For service to International Education
* **Angela Gardner**, an alumnus, demonstrated a passionate commitment to her profession and specifically to identifying and developing executive talent. She has also made a significant contribution to furthering diversity in the workplace - For Services to Leadership Development and Diversity
* **Rhian Davies**, an alumnus, throughout her career she has demonstrated a passionate commitment and service to her profession, most recently through her leadership of the Gregynog Festival and her restoration to the repertory of the composer Morfydd Owen – For services to Music
* **Karin Lochte**, an alumnus, renowned for her commitment to international marine science and specifically her leadership roles at the Alfred Wegener Institute and, most recently, her membership on the NERC Council – For services to Marine Biology
* **Gareth Wyn Jones**, an alumnus, a long association with Bangor University as a student and researcher under Professor Charles Evans, as a lecturer and one of the founders and leader of the Centre for Arid Zones Studies at Bangor - For services to the Environment
* **Catrin Stevens**, for her contribution to Welsh life through her published works, activism and commitment to the Welsh language and culture - For services to Heritage and Culture
* **Judge Meleri Tudur**, a distinguished judge, appointed as a Deputy President of the Health Education and Social Care Chamber of the First-tier Tribunal, Judge Tudur will have responsibility for the Special Educational Needs and Disability, Care Standards and Primary Health Lists Jurisdiction within that Chamber – For services to Law
* **Chris Roberts**, a pioneer and an advocate in the citizenship movement within dementia and a leading figure in the UK and in an international context, establishing a series of innovative initiatives across both the local and international communities of people living with dementia – For Services to Research, Health and Social Care

**18.93 RESERVED BUSINESS**

1. The Council considered the agreed objectives for the Interim Vice-Chancellor. It was noted that it was important to have clear agreed objective for this short period. The Interim Vice-Chancellor has shared these objectives with the Executive and they are each developing similar linked objectives. The clear expectation from the Chair is that these objectives are cascaded through the Executive and through the institution.
2. The Council agreed that the Interim Vice-Chancellor should be asked to initiate the process of developing a new strategy now, working with the Strategy and Performance Committee to map out the process and begin engagement with staff and stakeholders. It was also agreed to enhance the final objective to refer to the development of a wider stakeholder engagement strategy.