

Bangor University

COUNCIL MINUTES

At a meeting of the Council held in the University on Friday, 3rd October 2019.

Present:

Mrs Marian Wyn Jones (Chair), Mr Mark Barrow, Dr Tomos Dafydd, Professor Iwan Davies, Professor Andrew Edwards, Dr Peter Higson, Professor Jerry Hunter, Dr Griff Jones, Dr Karen Jones, Dr Llion Jones, Mr Marc Jones, Sir Paul Lambert, Professor Derec Llwyd Morgan, Miss Lleucu Myrddin, Ms. Ellen Parry-Williams, Miss Julie Perkins, Professor Gareth Roberts, Professor David Thomas, Professor Carol Tully, Professor Oliver Turnbull, Mr Tudur Williams, the University Secretary, the Director of Human Resources and the Director of Finance.

Apologies:

Dr Myfanwy Davies, Mrs Alison Lea-Wilson, Dr Ian Rees

19.01 WELCOME

The Chair welcomed Professor Iwan Davies to his first meeting of the Council as Vice-Chancellor.

The Chair also welcomed Dr Myfanwy Davies, the new academic staff nominated member.

Following a recommendation from the Chair, it was **resolved** that that Professor Derec Llwyd Morgan be appointed as an independent member of the Council from 1 October 2019 for an initial term of 4 years. He was welcomed to his first meeting of the Council.

19.02 DEATHS

The Chair referred to the recent deaths of:

Judge Eifion Roberts, an Honorary Fellow of the University and a former Chair of Council; and

Eirwen Read, a former member of staff in the Drama Department and Human Resources.

Members stood in tribute to their memory.

19.03 CONGRATULATIONS

On the award of an Honorary Chair:

Professor Mark Bellis; College of Human Sciences

Professor Chris Burton; School of Health Sciences

Mr Derek Nasset; School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering

Dr John Idris Jones; School of Computer Science and Electronic Engineering

Emeritus Professor Bob Borsley; School of Languages, Literatures and Linguistics

The Chair also congratulated:

Dr Chris Staples, from the School of Medical Sciences, who has been awarded a prestigious Future Leader Fellowship by UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). He joins top researchers and innovators from across the country to receive investment designed to propel the next generation of scientific leaders, as they conduct cutting-edge research and develop their research independence.

It was reported that **WISERD** is one of four social science research centres in the UK to be successful in the highly competitive Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) Centres Competition. WISERD will receive £6.3 million as reinvestment into the continuation of its research on the environment, health and society. This is the third major funding to be awarded in WISERD's ten-year history.

It was reported that a new data science hub for green energy is to be created at Bangor University, backed by £4.6m EUe hiko theory2 10 (s)4 1 -1.n of456 (s)2i -1.15 Td 20.79 040 (s)4

[3] **Health & Safety Committee** (minute 18.116); the Director of Human Resources reported that a small working group has been established to consider long-term musculoskeletal absences. The group is evaluating work practices, alongside training and absence management arrangements, and an action plan is under development. The end of year statistics will be used to further evaluate trends and identify areas of concern and potential, which will then feed into the University initiative promoting the health and wellbeing of the entire University community.

[4] **Alun Roberts Tower** (minute 18.5 B4); it was agreed that the briefing paper on risks and mitigation actions pertaining to the Alun Roberts Tower should be accelerated. It was noted that PACS had acted promptly to address recent concerns about the façade of the building. The College have prepared business continuity plans should the building need to be vacated.

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

19.06 VICE-CHANCELLOR'S BUSINESS

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

[1] **Brexit**; The Vice-Chancellor noted that the government were concerned about employment in the case of a no deal Brexit and Universities need to be ready to deal with any upsurge in unemployment and upskilling the workforce. It was noted that Erasmus+ is likely to be administered through the British Council following Brexit, although it was unclear if this would proceed in a no deal scenario. Horizon Europe, the successor to Horizon 2020 had an increased budget of £120bn, but
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[6] **HEFCW Institutional Risk Review Letter**; The Council noted the HEFCW Institutional Risk Review Letter. The University has been assessed as moderate risk, with some deterioration since the prior year assessment. It was noted that there were no surprises and the Executive would provide the additional information and support the additional engagement requested by HEFCW. The responses required by 30 September have already been submitted to HEFCW and would be circulated to the Council for information.

19.07 STUDENTS' UNION UPDATE

- A. It was reported that 35 Bangor University students trekked up Africa's highest mountain, Mount Kilimanjaro, in September, in aid of the mental health charity Mind. The trip was assisted through an award from the Bangor Fund and Council congratulated the students for raising nearly £100,000.
- B. The Council received an update on the Students' Union's recent activities, campaigns and events. The President highlighted the Students' Union support for employability and the SU are looking to embed this in its activities. A volunteering and social impact report is under development; it covers over 50 activities and support the University's civic mission. Welcome W

Group chaired by the Vice Chancellor is taking responsibility for overseeing the integration of the NWGD activities with the wider Estates Strategy.

- [7] The Vice-Chancellor sits on the North Wales Economic Ambition Board and as non-voting member and has been engaging with strategic

- C. Council members noted their concern about the Seren programme encouraging students to go to universities outside of Wales. Both the Vice-Chancellors and Chairs of Universities in Wales have raised their concerns directly with the Minister.
- D. The Council were pleased to note the upturn in overseas recruitment but noted the further contraction of Home Undergraduate recruitment is of significant concern. The Council requested a presentation from Professor Edwards on our recruitment strategy at its next meeting.

19.11 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

- A. **Research Grants & Contracts**; It was noted that overall research grant capture is in line with the previous year and the general trend is as set out in the table below.

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- B. The Council noted the areas of commendation, and recommendation within the Undeb Bangor report, and noted the University's response contained within the Action Plan. It was particularly noted that a strategic focus on employability is required.

19.13 STUDENT SURVEYS

- A. The Council noted the recent performance in the National Student Survey (NSS), the Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) and The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES). The following points were noted:

- [1] Bangor's average satisfaction rate in the NSS was 88% placing us 9th in the UK's non-specialist universities and joint second in Wales. In the NSS Bangor has twenty subjects in the UK top twenty, and has nine programmes with 100% satisfaction. Some schools still have lower levels of satisfaction and this continues to be addressed.
- [2] The Postgraduate Taught Experience Survey (PTES) is the UK higher education sector-wide survey to gain insight from taught postgraduate students about their learning and teaching experience. The survey overall response rate was 39% (33% in 2018). Of the 84 Institutions included in the survey, the University's global rankings are 16th overall, 7th for organisation, 8th for information, 9th for resources, 10th for skills development, 17th for teaching 36th for engagement and also 36th for assessment.
- [3] The Postgraduate Research Experience Survey (PRES) is the UK higher education sector-wide survey to gain insight from postgraduate research students about their learning and supervision experience. The survey overall response rate was 59% (54% in 2018). Of the 84 Institutions included in the survey, the University's global rankings at a glance are 52nd overall, 23rd for responsibilities, 28th for professional development, 29th for research culture, 49th for supervision, 54th for resources 63rd for progression and 80th for research skills.

- B. The Council ***noted***

19.18 REDUNDANCY COMMITTEE

- A. The Report of the meeting of the Redundancy Committee held on the 12

C. A list of recent senior appointments was received for information.

19.20 SEALING

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

19.21 STRATEGIC DISCUSSION

Following the formal Council meeting, presentations were received from the Vice-Chancellor and members of the Executive regarding longer-term strategy for the University.