

**Draft Notes of RIE Committee Meeting
19 April 2010**

Cyngor Cyllido Addysg Uwch Cymru Higher Education Funding Council for Wales		Disclosable
		Reference RIEC/10/21

Unconfirmed notes of the meeting of the Research, Innovation and Engagement Committee held on 19 April 2010 at Linden Court, Ilex Close, Llanishen, Cardiff, CF14 5DZ

Present:

Members:

Professor Robin Williams (Chair)
Professor Peter Blood - Cardiff University
Nick Bodycombe - representing Network of Welsh European Liaison Officers (WELOs)
Ruth Brooks - representing Welsh Heads of Careers Services (WHECS)
Dr Alastair Davies – representing Welsh Assembly Government (DE&T)
Professor Richard Davies – representing Heads of Higher Education Wales (HEW)
Dr Steven Hill – Research Councils UK
Professor Brian Hobbs – University of Glamorgan
Geraint Jones – representing Network of Welsh Industrial Liaison Officers (WILOs)
Simon Bradley - Business representative
Dr David Walker- Business representative

Attendees:

Dr Louise Bright, University of Glamorgan
Berwyn Davies, Wales Higher Education Brussels

Observers:

Dr Rachel Garside-Jones, Welsh Assembly Government (DCELLS)
Karen Latham - Welsh Assembly Government (DCELLS)

Officers:

Roger Carter - Head of Research Business & Communities
Teresa Cooper - Senior Economic Development Manager (Joint Secretary)
Dr Tove Oliver – Europe and International Manager
Linda Tiller – Senior Research Manager (Joint Secretary)
Dr Alyson Thomas - Senior Economic Development Manager

Apologies

Elizabeth Clarke, Higher Education Wales
Jackie Cresswell-Griffith (GO Wales Programme Manager)
Sue Morgan - Welsh Assembly Government (DE&T)
Professor Sir Brian Smith – HEFCW Member
Virginia West (Wales International Consortium)

1 Welcome and Membership Issues

- 1.1 The Chair welcomed Berwyn Davies, the recently-appointed Head of Wales Higher Education Brussels (WHEB), to his first meeting of the Committee. He also welcomed Dr Louise Bright, Director of the Research Office at the University of Glamorgan, who would be contributing to the presentation of the main discussion item.
- 1.2 The Committee paid tribute to Professor Duncan Tanner, who had died suddenly in February. The resultant vacancy on the Committee had been advertised, with a closing date of 23 April.
- 1.3 The Chair reported that Richard Rossington (Head of Policy for Business Support & Science Policy Unit, DE&T Welsh Assembly Government), had asked to receive copies of RIE Committee papers, with the option to attend meetings as an observer when matters of particular relevance to his work on the Science Policy and supporting the Chief Scientific Advisor are discussed. The Committee agreed to this request.

2 Notes of the Meeting held on 26 January 2010

- 2.1 The Notes of the meeting held on 26 January 2010 were approved.
- 2.2 The following matters arising from the last meeting were noted:

a) Note 8: Criteria for Designation as a National Research Centre

It was reported that the criteria had been revised to reflect the Committee's comments and, following approval by Council, had been submitted to WAG at the end of January.

3 Notes of the joint HEFCW Committees' meeting on *For Our Future* held on 12 March 2010

- 3.1 The Committee approved the notes of the joint meeting of HEFCW Committees which had been held on 12 March 2010 to discuss *For Our Future* and the Council's draft Corporate Strategy. The Chair commented that it had been a very helpful meeting, and that HEFCW had been encouraged by the willingness to consider radical solutions. The outcomes of the meeting would be used to inform discussion at the Council members' Workshop in May.
- 3.2 Richard Davies commented that, in the spirit of the Compact arrangement originally proposed in the Jones Review, it would be very helpful to hold a similar meeting between HEFCW and Vice-Chancellors. The Chair suggested that this might be possible in the context of one of the HEW/CHEW meetings.

4 European and International Opportunities and Challenges for Welsh HE

Presentation

4.1 Following a short introduction from Dr Tove Oliver, the Committee received a presentation on opportunities and challenges for Welsh HE in Brussels from Berwyn Davies, Head of Wales Higher Education Brussels (WHEB), supported by Louise Bright of the University of Glamorgan (formerly seconded to the Department of Children, Education, Lifelong Learning & skills at the Assembly Government). In order to focus discussion the presentation homed in on a number of key issues, which were:

- Joint programming - how Welsh HE might best position itself to take advantage of associated increased funding from joint programming priorities;
- International Co-operation – especially around EC-related opportunities in research and innovation in India of particular relevance to HEIs in Wales;
- Cohesion policy, structural funds and budget – how most effectively to ensure a Welsh voice in future developments;
- Framework Programme – developing effective ways/mechanisms for Wales to engage with and influence the Framework Programme

4.2 This presentation was extremely well received and provoked a great deal of questions and debate, which identified the following key issues:

- A lack of overarching strategic direction and support to enable Wales in general to maximise opportunities arising from European engagement;
- A corresponding need to develop a *Team Wales* approach to European (and wider international) engagement in which Welsh HE and the Welsh business sector should be key contributors alongside relevant representatives from the Assembly Government and Local Government in Wales;
- A need to move quickly on the above two fronts because of the timeframe to which Brussels is currently working – eg White paper on budget review to be published by July 2010; Research & Innovation Plan to be drawn up by September 2010 and proposals for Framework Programme 8 to be published by end of 2011.

4.3 Whilst recognising that addressing these issues was outside the remit of this Committee alone, members nevertheless identified a number of actions that could be taken by RIEC Members, HEFCW and HE institutions in Wales. These were:

- HEFCW, together with Welsh Assembly Government officers represented on the RIEC, to raise these issues at forthcoming meetings of the Assembly's newly constituted R & D Panel and in the context of the Assembly Government's Economic Renewal Programme (as discussed at the RIEC meeting of 19/4/10);
- Incorporate further statistical work on Welsh engagement with the Framework programme relative to the proportion of funding available into work already in hand on behalf of the aforementioned R & D Panel;

- HEIs to be encouraged to expand their links with large R & D active companies in Wales;
- HEIs to be encouraged to increase their attendance at relevant EU seminars and other events;
- HEIs to be encouraged and supported to nominate Welsh representatives for EC committees, expert panels, reviewing bodies etc;
- WAG (Department of Economy and Transport) to promote to HEIs its *Wales Collaboration Fund* for the support of FP bids and possibly broaden its scope to cover mobility programmes, facilitate attendance at seminars and other events etc.;
- Simon Bradley to share with RIEC recent EADS research into Framework Programmes and their uptake.

4.4 The Chair thanked Berwyn Davies and Louise Bright for their contribution. He also formally noted the contribution of WHEB in helping to strengthen the sector's relationship with those behind EU HE policy and creating new networking opportunities for Welsh HEIs with high-level representatives of other EU universities and governments.

Welsh HE Delegation to Delhi

4.5 The Committee received for information a report from the Wales International Consortium (WIC) on a recent high-level Welsh HE delegation to Delhi. The Chair invited Dr Tove Oliver, who had been part of the delegation to introduce the paper. Members noted the success of this visit to India and the partnership working that had underpinned it. Anyone interested in attending a follow-up visit to Cardiff from the Assembly's Welsh Affairs Officer in India, on 10 May 2010 was invited to register their interest by 23 April 2010.

5 Establishment of Research Sub-Group

5.1 The Committee considered a paper proposing the establishment of a Research Sub-Group of the Committee which would operate on a fixed-term basis to help address a number of the issues which had been identified at earlier meetings of the Committee.

5.2 The Chair proposed that Dr Graeme Reid, Deputy Director of Economic Impact at DBIS should be appointed to serve as the External member. It was noted that the core membership of the group would be augmented as and when appropriate by additional representation from business and the wider HE sector.

5.3 It was also noted that it would be important to ensure that there was no duplication between the work of the Research Sub-Group and WAG's recently-established R&D Panel.

It was agreed:

- to establish a fixed-term Research Sub-Group on the basis, and with the membership, proposed in the paper.

6 Report of the UK Research Integrity Futures Working Group

- 6.1 The Committee considered a proposal for the establishment of a new UK-wide body to lead on issues of research integrity (the Research Integrity Service). It would be funded jointly by RCUK, the UK HE funding bodies, the UK Departments of Health and a group of major non-public sector funders.

It was agreed to recommend to the Council:

- that HEFCW should support the new UK-wide Research Integrity Service, and provide a contribution of around £3k in 2010/11, £4k in 2011/12 and £5k per annum thereafter.

Note: It was subsequently established that a number of operational aspects of the Research Integrity Service have still be finalised, and that it would therefore be premature to submit a recommendation for funding to the Council at this point.

Information Papers

7 Future Third Mission Funding Arrangements

- 7.1 The Committee received a copy of the letter which had been sent to all institutions on 25 March 2010, following consideration at the Council meeting on 12 March of members' advice on future third mission funding arrangements in Wales.
- 7.2 Teresa Cooper confirmed that the data underlying the allocations would remain unchanged for the 2010/11 allocations.

8 HEFCW Remit Letter

- 8.1 The Committee received, for information, a copy of HEFCW's 2010-11 Remit Letter.
- 8.2 Some concerns were expressed that the remit letter did not refer explicitly to the Bologna process. It was noted, however, that Bologna (along with other Europe/ International priorities) is linked to the wider objective of supporting the sector to be internationally competitive, which is covered in paragraph 3 of the letter.
- 8.3 Officers agreed to seek to add a reference to Bologna to the *For Our Future* Action Plan.

9 Sources of Research Income in HEIs in Wales in 2008/09

- 9.1 The Committee received, for information, a paper on sources of research income in HEIs in Wales in 2008/09.
- 9.2 Alastair Davies confirmed that EU Structural Funding was included under the category of “UK Central Government Bodies”.

10 Research Excellence Framework: Outcome of Consultation

- 10.1 The Committee received, for information, a paper on the outcomes of the consultation on future arrangements for research assessment – the Research Excellence Framework.

11 Minutes of the meeting of the Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee

- 11.1 The Committee received, for information, the Minutes of the meeting of the Student Experience, Teaching and Quality Committee held on 20 January 2010.

12 Any Other Business

a) Invitation to Optic Centre, North Wales

- 12.1 At the invitation of David Walker, it was agreed to hold the October 2010 meeting of the Committee at the Optic Centre at Glyndŵr University, with an opportunity to see round the facilities after the meeting. It was suggested that the main theme for this meeting should be Engagement.

b) Committee Members' Extranet

- 12.2 It was reported that HEFCW is developing an Extranet for Committee members. It was envisaged that, when operational, electronic copies of RIE Committee papers will be posted on the Extranet, and an email alert sent out to members. Other ideas from members for use of the Extranet would be welcome.

13 Dates of Future Meetings

- 13.1 It was noted that future meetings of the Committee would be held as follows:
- 29 June 2010
 - 12 October 2010