
Minutes of the 117th meeting of the Council held 29 June 2007 at the HEFCW Offices, Llanishen

Present:

Members: Professor Sir Roger Williams (Chairman)
Dr Len Arthur
Professor Philip Gummett (Chief Executive)
Professor Mari Lloyd-Williams
Mr Tim Rees
Mr Ken Richards
Professor Sir Brian Smith
Mrs Tina Stephens
Professor Nigel Stott
Dr Geoffrey Thomas (to minute 10.5)
Mrs Pauline Thomas

Observers: Dr David Bacon, Welsh Assembly Government
Dr John Selby, Director (Widening Participation) HEFCE

Officers: Dr David Blaney
Mr Roger Carter (from minute 12)
Mr Dale Hall
Ms Niina Hammond
Mr Richard Hirst
Ms Celia Hunt
Ms Emma King
Ms Emma Raczka

Apologies: were received from Professor Garel Rhys.

1 INTRODUCTORY REMARKS, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

1.1 The following members declared an interest in relation to agenda item 11 ('Reconfiguration and Collaboration' HEFCW/07/55):

- Dr Len Arthur as a member of staff at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, including involvement for UWIC in the pan-Wales expression of interest in developing a Wales Regeneration Network.
- Professor Philip Gummett whose partner is employed at the Swansea Institute of Higher Education.
- Mr Ken Richards as a Member of University of Wales, Aberystwyth Investments Committee.

- Professor Sir Brian Smith as international ambassador for Cardiff University.
- Professor Nigel Stott as Professor Emeritus at Cardiff University.

The following member declared an interest in relation to agenda item 14, 'Welsh Medium Provision (HEFCW/07/56):

- Mr Ken Richards as Treasurer of University of Wales Guild of Graduates (to September 2007).

2. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 4 MAY 2007
(HEFCW/07/MIN116)

Resolved: that the minutes be accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 4 May 2007.

3. MATTERS ARISING

3.1 Welsh Medium Provision (Minute 6.3 ii)

The paragraph below is exempt from disclosure under section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act as it contains information which is potentially prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.

4. CHIEF EXECUTIVE'S REPORT (HEFCW/07/CE4)

4.1 HEW/CHEW/HEFCW Strategic Dialogue meetings

Council reflected on the special HEW/CHEW/HEFCW Strategic Dialogue meeting held on 19 June 2007 at UWIC, which had focused on post-election issues, and noted that discussions had been positive. The meeting had included some discussion on the new *One Wales* agenda that had been published jointly by the Labour and Plaid Cymru groups. Members noted the following references in *One Wales* which had actual or potential implications for higher education.

Council noted:

- i a specific reference to "support the development of NEWI to full University status" (a topical issue given the Council's recently agreed strategic support to NEWI to gain degree-awarding powers).
- ii a commitment to creating a national Welsh medium Education Strategy to "develop provision from nursery through to further and higher education" and, more specifically, a commitment to establishing "a Welsh-medium Higher Education Network – the

Federal College – in order to ensure Welsh-medium provision in our universities”.

- iii a continuing commitment to widening participation.
- iv a commitment to provide “extra assistance with student debt and maintain existing fee levels in Wales up to and including 2009/10 doing whatever is possible to mitigate the effects on Welsh-domiciled students if the Westminster government lifts the cap on fees in 2009”.
- v a commitment to the establishment of a National Science Academy, new National Research Centres, and a National Institute of Health Research. Though not explicitly stated, it was possible that the National Research Centres would include a focus on areas such as sustainability (e.g. the reference in the ‘Sustainable Environment’ chapter of *One Wales* to “promote research and development into renewable technologies including their application on-shore and off-shore”).

Further noted:

- vi on the issue of recent UCAS data discussed at the meeting, Council recalled that it had been agreed that HEFCW would undertake a detailed analysis of recent application trends between England and Wales and that in order to understand the underlying factors influencing these trends it might be necessary to request access to individual HEIs’ student marketing intelligence.
- vii Council also received and noted the draft programme for the HEW/CHEW/HEFCW Strategic Dialogue meeting to be held 6-7 September 2007 at UW Bangor.

4.2 Notes of the May Workshop including Appointments Committee Terms of Reference

Council received and noted the minutes of the Council Members’ Workshop held 3 May 2007, and also the draft Terms of Reference of the Appointments Committee which would hold its first meeting after the Council meeting.

4.3 Implementation of Welsh Assembly Government response to Graham Review

Council received and considered the proposed allocation of the additional £10.4m of funding provided by the Assembly from 2007/08 in response to the Graham Review.

The paragraphs below are exempt from disclosure under section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act as they contain information intended for future publication.

Council noted:

i and ii

4.4 Metrics-based Approach to Research Assessment: Development Funding

Council received and noted the proposed contribution of up to £31k in 2007/08 and an estimated £56k in 2008/09 for the development of a UK-wide metrics-based arrangement for research assessment.

Resolved: to approve the proposed contributions.

4.5 Organisational Development

Council received an oral update on the Chief Executive's proposed redesign of the organisation, details of which had been put to the most recent HR Committee meeting on 14th June 2007.

Resolved:

- i) that the HR Committee meeting minutes of 14th June 2007 be circulated via email to members once drafted, along with the forthcoming presentation by the Chief Executive to staff.
- ii) that Council would receive further briefing as the matter developed, possibly at the HEFCW meeting slot on the afternoon of 6th September ahead of the Strategic Dialogue meeting at UW Bangor.

4.6 2008 Council and Visit dates

Council received and noted details of the initial Institutional Visits to date and the proposed dates for the 2008 Council meetings.

Resolved:

- i) to agree on a second round of Institutional Visits to commence in 2008, in line with the proposed format.
- ii) to agree on the proposed 2008 Council meeting dates.

4.7 Comprehensive Spending Review

Council received and considered recent action taken by officers in respect of the Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR07), including detailed

correspondence between officers and the sponsor division of the Assembly Government.

The paragraphs below are exempt from disclosure under section 36 of the Freedom of Information Act as they contain information which is potentially prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs.

Council noted:

i to iii

4.8 ESRC Capacity Building Initiative in Education

Council received and noted a tabled proposal to provide £75k from the Strategic Development Fund in 2007/08 to 50% co-fund a pilot project with the ESRC on building research capacity in education in Wales.

Resolved: to approve the £75k funding to co-fund the project.

4.9 ERASMUS arrangements

Council received and noted an update on the proposals for the ERASMUS programme from 2007/08.

Resolved: that the Council write to the sector to confirm that:

- i) a fee waiver remains in place for the duration of the new programme (2007-13);
- ii) a new level of funding per student be confirmed for 2007/08 of £3,070 which would take account of flexible tuition fees;
- iii) the future maintenance of this level of funding would be dependent upon the Council receiving additional funding from the Assembly.

4.10 ITT: Released numbers

Council noted institutions' proposals on the use of released ITT numbers for 2007/08. Subject to the clarification of some details and confirmation from Assembly officials, officers would inform institutions that they may proceed with their proposed use of these numbers.

4.11 Post-Joint Cost and Pricing Steering Group Activities

Council noted the decision, approved by the Chief Executive under delegated authority, to allocate a budget of £15k from the miscellaneous

budget for the financial year 2007-08 for a range of activities including TRAC and full economic costing.

4.12 Approval of Corporate Strategy and Corporate and Operational Plan 2007-10

Council noted amendments to the wording of the two Reaching Higher targets in the Corporate Strategy, following clarification from the Assembly. The Plan was formally approved on 25 May and currently was being translated into Welsh, though one issue – the wording of the Asset Management Plan (Appendix to Annex C of the overall Plan) – was still subject to ongoing discussion with the Assembly Government.

4.13 Report on Exercise of Delegated Authority

Council received and noted the following exercise of delegated authority:

- i) supplementary information submitted to the Webb Review Panel (26th January 2007 meeting).
- ii) the publishing of the Recurrent Grant 2007/08 on 27 March 2007 (23rd March 2007 meeting).

5. FUTURE ARRANGEMENTS FOR CAPITAL FUNDING (HEFCW/07/49)

5.1 Council received and considered the outcomes of the consultation on the Council's proposed new approach to arrangements for capital funding and the proposed way forward.

Council noted:

5.2 the summary of sector consultation responses received.

5.3 that a working group with institutional representation had been established to advise on implementation issues.

5.4 that Council would be invited to take a final decision on the implementation of the new arrangements in October 2007.

5.5 the proposals had been shared with the Office of Science and Innovation (OSI) who had reported no objections.

5.6 that the OSI would likely require future confirmation of expenditure as assurance for research capital funding.

Resolved:

5.7 that capital allocations for learning and teaching research would be announced as a single figure.

6. NATIONAL EVALUATION AND CONSULTATION ON WIDENING ACCESS FUNDED ACTIVITIES AND THE REACHING WIDER INITIATIVE: FUTURE ACTIONS (HEFCW/07/50)

6.1 Council received and considered a draft letter to the Minister for Education, Culture and the Welsh language on the future direction of widening access provision.

Council noted:

6.2 recommendations of the Arad Consulting National Evaluation on Widening Access funded activities and the Reaching Wider Initiative.

6.3 sector consultation responses to the evaluation.

Resolved:

6.4 to agree the draft letter to the Minister.

6.5 delegate authority to the Chair and Chief Executive to submit the Council's final advice to the Minister.

7. SUBJECTS OF BROADER IMPORTANCE TO WALES (HEFCW/07/51)

7.1 Council received and considered an update on Subjects of Broader Importance to Wales.

The paragraphs below are exempt from disclosure under section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act as they contain information intended for future publication.

Resolved:

7.2 to 7.6

8. REVIEW OF RESEARCH POLICY: OUTCOMES OF CONSULTATION (HEFCW/07/52)

8.1 Council received and considered the outcomes of the consultation on the reviews of the Council research policy and finalised versions of the statement of research policy objectives and broad supporting funding scenarios.

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Resolved:

8.2 to 8.5

9. COMMUNICATIONS POLICY AND STRATEGY (HEFCW/07/53)

9.1 Council received and considered the draft Communications Policy and Strategy.

The following specific points were agreed:

9.2 that the issue of promoting the value of higher education be brought out more fully in the Policy objectives.

9.3 that some of the Policy objectives as currently expressed read more like actions and could be re-worded.

9.4 that in relation to the Policy objective on media monitoring, it was important to emphasise Welsh-language as well as English-language media.

9.5 that in relation to the Policy objective to ensure that the role of HEFCW was well understood, not least relative to those of the Assembly Government and HEW, it was important to address the issue of appropriate communication to Assembly Members.

9.6 that the Strategy should be broken down into short-, medium- and long-term aims/achievements.

9.7 that officers would need to liaise closely with Assembly Government officials in taking forward the Policy and Strategy, to ensure a fully complementary approach with the Assembly's own communications priorities and activities.

9.8 Resolved: to agree the proposed Communications Policy and Strategy, subject to taking on board the above recommendations.

10. STUDY INTO THE ROLE OF FOUNDATION DEGREES IN WALES (HEFCW/07/54)

10.1 Council received and considered its position on the HEFCW-commissioned report on the Study of the Role of Foundation Degrees in Wales.

Council noted:

- 10.2 the Minister's remit requesting research into Foundation Degrees, an executive summary of the Council-commissioned SQW Ltd report, on which responses had been invited via the website and an oral summary of responses.
- 10.3 that the full report had been distributed at the May meeting of Council and that its recommendations had been incorporated into the Council's response to the Webb Review and the CSR response.

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10.4 to 10.6

11. RECONFIGURATION AND COLLABORATION (HEFCW/07/55)

- 11.1 Dr Len Arthur reiterated the declaration that he is employed as a member of staff at the University of Wales Institute, Cardiff, including involvement for UWIC in the pan-Wales expression of interest in developing a Wales Regeneration Network and the proposed Wales Institute for Social and Economic Research. The Chief Executive reiterated the declaration that his partner is employed at the Swansea Institute of Higher Education.
- 11.2 Council received and noted progress with reconfiguration and collaboration since its last meeting on 4 May 2007.

Council noted:

The paragraphs below are exempt from disclosure under sections 36 of the Freedom of Information Act as they contain information which is potentially prejudicial to the effective conduct of public affairs and 43 information which is commercially sensitive.

11.3 to 11.10

12. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

12.1 Medical Education review [from Chief Executive's report]

Council received and noted a copy of the terms of reference of the medical education review established by the Assembly Government in the light of the proposal from the University of Wales, Swansea to operate an independent Graduate Entry Scheme. Council also received correspondence from the Chief Executive to Sir Howard Newby, who had been appointed to conduct the review.

12.2 Medical Education Update (HEFCW/07/63 tabled paper brought forward for discussion)

Council received and considered an update on matters relating to Medical Education arising from the meeting of the UK Healthcare Education Advisory Committee (UKHEAC) held 15 June 2007 and proposed actions.

Council noted:

- i) that the relationship between HE and the NHS was in need of improvement.
- ii) concern that the steering body for OSCHR should have a UK funding body representative, and that discussions were in hand that could lead to Professor David Eastwood taking on this role.
- iii) that Professor Stephen Tomlinson was due to be replaced on the UKHEAC as the sector representative – action that would be delegated to the Chairman once a suitable replacement had been confirmed.

Resolved:

- iv) to endorse the proposal once more to encourage the Assembly Government to establish, as a matter of urgency, a high level group on healthcare education including Council representation and from the Department for Education, Culture and the Welsh Language, the Department for Health and Social Care and the Chief Medical Officer.
- v) that the concern surrounding the means by which Welsh interests would be represented on the steering body for OSCHR would need to be addressed at the proposed high level group on healthcare education.
- vi) that the concern surrounding the failure to secure NHS matched funding for the Clinical Academic Fellowship scheme in Wales would be addressed at the proposed high level group on healthcare education.
- vii) to endorse the proposal that revision of the Ten Key Principles for Joint Working between the Universities and the NHS would be addressed at the proposed high level group on healthcare education.
- viii) to endorse the proposal that officers explore with HEW the appropriateness of establishing a healthcare education sub-committee.

- ix) to notify the Chief Executive of any possible candidates for membership of UKHEAC and to delegate to the Chairman and Chief Executive the provision of appropriate advice to the UKHEAC secretariat.

12.3 UW Lampeter: Institutional Review by the QAA

This paragraph is exempt from disclosure under section 22 of the Freedom of Information Act as it contains information intended for future publication.

12.4 Leitch Review

Council received and noted a tabled letter from the Assembly which provided a summary of outcomes and the web address for the full report on the Wales Conference on the Leitch review. The letter indicated that it remained the Assembly's intention to publish Wales' response to the Leitch Review in autumn 2007.

12.5 Officer attendance at Council meetings

Council noted the reintroduction of the practice of inviting Council officers to attend meetings on an ad-hoc basis to present papers or observe discussions.

12.6 Institutional Visit to Swansea Institute of Higher Education

Council noted the successful Institutional Visit to the Swansea Institute of HE in 28th June 2007, the notes of which would be brought to the next meeting of Council for information.

12.7 Learning and Teaching Committee membership and Remit (HEFCW/07/64 tabled)

Council received and considered the revised remit and membership of the Learning and Teaching Committee as agreed by the `Committee at meeting held 22 June 2007.

Resolved: to approve the amended remit and membership of the Learning and Teaching Committee.

13. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Council noted the date of the next meeting as 21 September 2007 to be held at the HEFCW Offices, Llanishen. [The meeting date was subsequently amended to 19 September 2007].

14. WELSH MEDIUM PROVISION: UPDATE (HEFCW/07/56)
 - 14.1 Council received and noted the second stage advice to the Welsh Assembly Government on Welsh Medium Provision and the document setting out the aim, objectives and immediate key deliverables for the sector, "Strategic Development Plan for Welsh Medium and Bilingual Higher Education" (the Sector Development Plan).
 - 14.2 Council noted the exercise of delegated authority by the Chairman and the Chief Executive in submitting the second stage advice on Welsh medium provision to the Assembly Government.
 - 14.3 Resolved: to approve the Aim, Objectives and Key Deliverables for the Welsh Medium Sector Development Plan.

15. QUALITY ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE MINUTES: MEETING HELD 8 MAY 2007 (HEFCW/07/57)
 - 15.1 Council received and noted unconfirmed minutes of the Quality Assessment Committee (QAC), held on 8 May 2007.
 - 15.2 Resolved: to approve, subject to the Committee's confirmation, the minutes of the Quality Assessment Committee (QAC) held on 8 May 2007.

16. CORPORATE PLAN 2007-10: FIRST QUARTER PROGRESS REPORT (HEFCW/07/58)
 - 16.1 Council received progress for the first quarter (April to June 2007 inclusive) against activities in the *Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate & Operational Plan 2007-08 to 2009-10*.
 - 16.2 Resolved: to note progress for the first quarter (April to June 2007 inclusive) against activities in the *Corporate Strategy to 2010 and Corporate & Operational Plan 2007-08 to 2009-10*.

17. HR COMMITTEE MINUTES MEETING HELD: 14 JUNE 2007 (HEFCW/07/59)

Council noted that this item had been withdrawn from the agenda, but as agreed above [Min 4.5.vi] the minutes would be circulated via email to members once drafted.

18. APRIL 2006 TO MARCH 2007 MONITORING REPORT: HEFCW FINANCIAL YEAR 2006-07 (HEFCW/07/60)

- 18.1 Council received and noted the financial monitoring of programme and running cost expenditure for the period April 2006 to March 2007 (Q4) and a summary of the financial year end position, on a cash basis, in comparison to the maximum 2% of grant in aid threshold permitted by the Assembly.
- 18.2 Resolved: to note the final progress report on actual performance against budget for the 2006-07 financial year.

- 19. WELSH LANGUAGE MAINSTREAMING STRATEGY 2007-08 (HEFCW/07/61)
 - 19.1 Council received and noted the Welsh Language Mainstreaming Strategy for 2007-08 which had been submitted to the Welsh Assembly Government.
 - 19.2 Resolved: to note the Council's Welsh Language Mainstreaming Strategy for 2007-08.

- 20. EVALUATION AND REVIEW OF INSTITUTIONAL RACE EQUALITY POLICIES (HEFCW/07/62)
 - 20.1 Council received the findings and recommendations of the evaluation and review of Institutional Race Equality Policies (REPs) undertaken by the Gus John Partnership (GJP) on behalf of the Council and future action.
 - 20.2 Resolved: to note the evaluation report findings and recommendations and future action.

Signature.....Date.....