

Minutes of the 180th meeting of the Council held on 26 January 2017 at the HEFCW office, Bedwas

Present:

Members: David Allen (Chair)
Dr David Blaney (Chief Executive)
Bethan Guilfoyle
David Mason
Dr Arun Midha
Professor Leni Oglesby
Professor Mark Smith
Professor Robin Williams
Dr Colin Wyatt

Observers: Chris Jones, Welsh Government
Fflur Elin, President, National Union of Students Wales

Officers: Dale Hall (Council Secretary)
Celia Hunt
Bethan Owen
Nick Williams

Apologies: Dame Sandra Burslem
HEFCE
SFC
Huw Morris, Welsh Government

1. Introductory remarks and declarations of interest

1. The Chair welcomed all to the meeting.
- 1.2 Bethan Guilfoyle expressed an interest as a member of the Welsh Government's Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Review Group, though it was noted she had been invited on the Group in a personal capacity rather than as a HEFCW Council member (minute 5.9 refers). No other specific members' interests were declared in relation to any of today's agenda items above and beyond those currently published on HEFCW's website.

2. Minutes of the meeting held on 10 November 2016 (HEFCW/16/Min179)

- 2.1 The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting held on 10 November 2016.

3. Matters Arising (HEFCW/17/01)

3.1 Council received a report on action since the previous Council meeting held 10 November 2016.

3.1 Council recruitment exercise – This was in progress. The Chair had met Huw Morris on 24 January to discuss further, and there had been some helpful correspondence with the Welsh Government’s Public Appointments Unit.

4. Chair’s Report (HEFCW/17/CH1)

4.1 Council received and noted the Chair’s calendar of recent meetings.

4.2 The Chair said the ‘Increasing Diversity in Public Appointments’ seminar on 19 January, for Chairs of public bodies in Wales, had included an address by the Cabinet Secretary for Communities and Children (Carl Sargeant) and interesting presentations and discussions around different bodies’ approaches to and experiences of member recruitment.

The paragraphs below are exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; commercial interests).

4.2 Exempt minute

4.3 Sir John Kingman, Chair of UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) was visiting Cardiff on 2 February. The Chair and Professor Robin Williams were scheduled to meet with him, and Professor Mark Smith was providing advice. Sir John was also meeting on the day with the Minister for Skills and Science (Julie James), Huw Morris and Universities Wales.

4.4 Hazelkorn Review Report - A statement would likely be made by the Cabinet Secretary in the Plenary session on 31 January. A Welsh Government consultation exercise would follow.

4.5 The Chair read out a thank you note from the widow of Sir Aubrey Trotman-Dickinson, former Vice-Chancellor of Cardiff University who had passed away late in 2016, in response to the letter of condolence which the Chair had sent on behalf of the Council.

5. Chief Executive’s Report (HEFCW/17/CE1)

5.1 Reflection on Annual Public Meeting and Institutional Visit to University of Wales Trinity Saint David, 25 January 2017

The paragraphs below are exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; commercial interests).

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

- 5.2 Institutional Visit to Wrexham Glyndŵr University 23 March: proposed issues to cover

The paragraph below is exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (commercial interests; prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs).

Exempt minute

- 5.3 Brexit update

The paragraphs below are exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; information provided in confidence).

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

- 5.4 Welsh Government's Review of conservatoire and performing arts provision in Wales (Murphy Review): oral update

The Review was on-going. CJ reported that currently it was anticipated that the report would be submitted in March, but that conversations were ongoing and this date might change.

- 5.5 The Health Professional Education Investment Review

The paragraphs below are exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs).

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

Exempt minute

- 5.6 Future planning of Institutional Visits

The paragraph below is exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs).

Exempt minute

Resolved: The Chief Executive to reflect and advise the Council on a mechanism and timetable for visits to other regulated providers.

- 5.7 Update on HE policy developments in England: oral update

There had been debate in the House of Lords on a number of proposed amendments to the Bill, including issues concerning the proposed changed status of the Open University, which would have implications for devolved administrations. Other key discussion points in the passage of the Bill included the oversight and responsibilities of the proposed Office for Students, and clarity on the role of data collection and what data would be available freely. It was noted with respect to the latter issue that the Council had approved

funding for the HESA Data Futures Programme, and that an update on developments would be brought to a future Council meeting.

On applications for TEF Phase 2, it was unclear at this stage how many Welsh HE providers had applied or their respective Gold, Silver or Bronze status. An announcement on the numbers who had applied to TEF2 would be made on 27 January.

5.8 Hazelkorn Review: oral update
See minute 4.4 above.

5.9 HEFCW evidence to the Welsh Government review of the Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol

The Council noted the evidence submitted to the Review Group, which had met twice thus far. Bethan Guilfoyle, as a member of the Review Group, reported that the evidence provided by HEFCW officers had been very informative and well received by the Group.

5.10 Reaching Wider programme strategy period (tabled item)

The paragraph below is exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (for future publication).

Exempt minute

5.11 Draft Financial Management Code: feedback from Welsh Government

The Financial Management Code had been submitted to the Minister's officials but it was likely that some changes would need to be made in light of recent Welsh Government feedback. The Council had already granted delegated authority with respect to this item, and this would be used to take action between meetings if necessary to enable the Code to be finalised and approved by the Minister as soon as possible.

5.12 Council received and noted a number of items for information:

- Chief Executive's Calendar of Meetings since the last meeting of Council on 10 November 2016.
- Note of Council Members' Workshop, 9 November 2016.
- HEFCW response to Welsh Government proposals for a long-term vision for the Welsh language.
- Fee and access planning update.
- Report on exercises of delegated authority through the Scheme of Delegation: Newton Fund Allocations 2016/17.
- National Teaching Fellowship Scheme (NTFS) winners

6. HEFCW funding update AY 2016/17 and Welsh Government Budget for FY 17-18 (HEFCW/17/02)

6.1 The paper provided an update on the in-year adjustments required to the 2016/17 academic year (AY) budget with respect to both the pro-rata reductions as a result of an increased tuition fee grant obligation, and the allocation of the additional £20m provided in the revised remit letter issued in

October 2016. The paper also provided an analysis of the now confirmed Welsh Government budget for financial year (FY) 2017-18.

The paragraphs below are exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; information provided in confidence).

6.2 Exempt minute

6.3 Exempt minute

6.4 Exempt minute

6.5 Exempt minute

Resolved: The Council

6.6 Exempt minute

6.7 Exempt minute

6.8 Exempt minute

6.9 Exempt minute

6.10 Exempt minute

6.11 Exempt minute

6.12 Exempt minute

7. Interim Institutional Risk Reviews (HEFCW/17/03)

7.1 The paper invited the Council to consider the outcomes of the Institutional Risk Reviews conducted by officers in November 2016 and reviewed by the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee (ARAC) at its meeting on 9 December 2016.

The paragraphs below are exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs; commercial interests).

7.2 Exempt minute

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7.15 Exempt minute

7.16 Exempt minute

7.17 Exempt minute

Resolved: The Council

7.18 Exempt minute

7.19 Exempt minute

7.20 Exempt minute

7.21 Exempt minute

8. Implications for HEFCW of the Diamond Review recommendations and the Welsh Government response and consultation (HEFCW/17/04)

8.1 The Welsh Government had published its response to the recommendations of the Diamond Review, and had accepted the majority of those recommendations. It had drawn up actions to address some of the recommendations, a number of which involved HEFCW either directly or indirectly. The Welsh Government had also launched a consultation about some of the actions it proposed to take in relation to the recommendations, primarily relating to student support proposals. The paper set out HEFCW's proposed response to the consultation, which closed on 14 February.

8.2 The Council asked about the proposal that HEFCW should publish annually the cost of a 'basket of goods' for each university. CJ said this proposal had not been fully clarified in the Diamond Report, but was being interpreted as being about the costs of anything where pricing was under the control of universities (for example, tuition fees; halls of residence; etc.). It was noted that, if this particular recommendation was agreed, HEFCW intended to use existing sources of published information to identify those costs.

Resolved: The Council

- 8.3 Discussed the actions for HEFCW as a consequence of the Diamond Review and the Welsh Government's response to it.
- 8.4 Considered HEFCW's proposed response to the Welsh Government's consultation, and agreed that Council members send further detailed comments to the HEFCW executive by the end of the following week.
- 8.5 Delegated authority to the Chief Executive to approve the final consultation response to the Welsh Government.

9. Review of previous Corporate Strategy (HEFCW/17/05)

- 9.1 The paper provided a draft review of the current Corporate Strategy for 2013-17, and outlined considerations for the development of the next Corporate Strategy.

The paragraph below is exempt from publication under the Freedom of Information Act 2000 (prejudice to the effective conduct of public affairs).

- 9.2 Exempt minute

Resolved: The Council

- 9.3 Exempt minute

- 9.4 Exempt minute

10. Any other business

The UUK was due to publish the report of the review of higher education sector agencies, conducted by David Bell, on 31 January.

11. Date of next meeting:

- Council meeting, 22 March 2017 @ Wrexham Glyndŵr University
- Institutional Visit to Wrexham Glyndŵr University, 23 March 2017

Papers provided for information:

12. **Development of the Draft Higher Education Strategy (HEFCW/17/06)**
13. **Progress report on Sêr Cymru I 2015/16 (HEFCW/17/07)**
14. **Operational Plan 2016-17 Q3 update (HEFCW/17/08)**
15. **Quality Assessment Committee minutes 17 October 2016 (HEFCW/17/09)**
16. **Unconfirmed Minutes of the Audit and Risk Assurance Committee meetings held on 20 October 2016 and 9 December 2016 (HEFCW/17/10)**
17. **Minutes of the Student Opportunity and Achievement Committee meeting, held on 30 November 2016 (HEFCW/17/11)**