

University Council

UNRESTRICTED Minutes of the virtual meeting held at 11.30 a.m. on Thursday 9 July 2020

Present:

Venerable Randolph Thomas (Chair)
Tony Ball
Pam Berry
Andrew Curl
Tania Davies
Sian Eirian
Margaret Evans
Andrew Gibson
Eifion Griffiths
Emma Hughes
Dr Gareth Hughes

Professor Medwin Hughes
Rowland Jones
James Mills
Arwel Ellis Owen
Eirlys Pritchard-Jones
Victoria Provis
Geraint Roberts
Dr Liz Siberry
Maria Stedman
Georgia Thomas

In attendance:

Members of the University of Wales Council: Nigel Roberts, Stuart Robb and Deris Williams

Professor Robert Brown, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Research and Innovation)
Sarah Clark, Clerk to Council
Dr Andrew Cornish, Principal, Coleg Sir Gar
Shône Hughes, Chief of Staff
Professor Dylan Jones, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Student Experience and Civic Engagement)
Professor Catrin Thomas, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Academic)
Stephen Baldwin
Gavin Bessant
Jane O'Rourke, Director of Human Resources
Margaret Williams, Secretary

Agenda item	Main discussion points	Action/decision
20.11 Apologies for absence and declarations of interest	<p>The Clerk informed members that members of both Councils had been invited to attend the meeting.</p> <p>Council RECEIVED the Declarations of interest as noted in the Clerk's report.</p>	
20.12 Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2019	Council CONFIRMED the unrestricted Minutes of the meeting held on 28 November 2019 (CO262a) and APPROVED their publication. on the University website.	
20.13 Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020	Council CONFIRMED the RESTRICTED Minutes of the meeting held on 15 January 2020(CO262b).	
20.14 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2020	Council CONFIRMED the RESTRICTED Minutes of the meeting held on 7 May 2020 (CO262c).	
20.15 Matters arising and action points	Council RECEIVED the updated table of action points (CO263).	
20.16 HEFCW Institutional Visit reports	<p>Council CONSIDERED the following reports relating to the HEFCW Institutional visit in January 2020 and related action plans (CO264).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> (a) IAR October 2019 – report with recommendations (b) Prevent visit November 2019 – no formal report; follow-up through officer correspondence and the Prevent annual report (c) Quality assurance visit December 2019 – report with areas for development (d) Institutional Visit January 2020 – report with no recommendations <p>The Clerk reported that action plans had been developed in relation to (a) and (c), and had been endorsed by the Nominations and Governance Committee and the Academic Committee respectively at their May 2020 meetings. It was proposed that the action plans would be monitored by those committees.</p> <p>The Clerk referred to the recommendation 11 of report (a) that two link governors be identified for satellite campus developments from both a strategic and academic perspective. The Chair had recommended that the Chair of Resources and</p>	

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	<p>Performance Committee and Chair of the Academic Committee be identified as link governors.</p> <p>Council APPROVED</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the action plans in relation to reports (a) and (c); • the proposal that the respective action plans be monitored by the Nominations and Governance Committee and Academic Committee; • that proposal that the Chair of Resources and Performance and Chair of Academic Committee be designated as link governors for the satellite campus developments. 	
<p>20.17 Strategic Equality Plan and Annual Equality Report</p>	<p>Council CONSIDERED the proposed Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24 and Annual Equality Report 2018/19 (CO265).</p> <p>The DVC(A) reported that the Strategic Equality Plan (SEP) had been prepared following comprehensive consultation with relevant stakeholders, staff and the Students' Union. It constituted a robust framework for the next four years. A steering group was in place to implement, embed and monitor the plan in line with the evaluation framework and a communication strategy would form part of the implementation phase. The SEP had been discussed and endorsed at Senate in June 2020. It focussed on high-level objectives and aims. SMART targets would be established and monitored as part of the internal central operational delivery plan and linked to the relevant professional unit and Institute strategic plans to ensure that actions were embedded and owned throughout the organisation. A separate operational delivery plan would be prepared for CSG / CC.</p> <p>The DHR reported that the University's Annual Equality and Diversity Report was usually published at the end of March but due to the Covid-19, the publication of the report had been delayed. The data within the report was based on the latest available HESA data (2018/19). The report was for the HE part of the UWTSD Group and therefore also contained data for CSG / CC HE staff and students. Responding to a query, the DHR confirmed that the Welsh language did not fall within the remit of the report as it was not a protected characteristic under equality legislation. It was however addressed as part of the University's compliance with its Welsh Standards. The DVC (SECE) confirmed that the University's Welsh language unit, Rhagoriaith had</p>	

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	<p>developed a matrix to address the language ability of staff and improve data capture in regard to the Welsh language.</p> <p>Council APPROVED the Strategic Equality Plan 2020-24.</p>	
<p>20.18 Equal Pay Audit Report</p>	<p>Council RECEIVED the Equal Pay Audit 2018 report and proposed actions (CO265a).</p> <p>The DHR reported that the UWTSD equal pay audit was undertaken based on staff data at a snapshot date of 31 March 2018. The publication of the findings had been scheduled to coincide with the publication of the Annual Equality Report 2018/19 and the new Strategic Equality Plan 2020-2024. Further work would be undertaken to close the identified pay gap with specific actions identified to reduce the gap. The next equal pay audit would be undertaken 2021 on a three year cycle as recommended by the EHRC.</p>	
<p>20.19 Strategic Developments</p>	<p>This is a restricted item and reported within the restricted minutes of the meeting.</p>	
<p>20.20 Group Scrutiny Committee matters</p>	<p>Council CONSIDERED the report of the GSC meeting held on 15 June 2020 (CO267).</p> <p>Council APPROVED the recommendation that the following companies be dissolved, having been dormant for a number of years and/or no longer required. The formal process of dissolution would be a matter for the Directors of the companies concerned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • INSPIRE (UWTSD) Ltd • ISUSTAIN (UWTSD) Ltd • UWTSD Learning Centers Ltd 	<p>Clerk to take forward</p>
<p>20.21 Group Annual remit letter</p>	<p>Council APPROVED the draft Group annual Remit letter (CO268).</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor and Principal reported that the document had been prepared by the senior staff of both the College and the University and outlined a realistic direction of travel for delivering the dual sector framework.</p>	
<p>20.22</p>	<p>Council RECEIVED a statement on history of collaboration between the Colleges and the University (CO269).</p>	

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Statement on history of Collaboration		
20.23 Nominations and Governance Committee report	<p>Council RECEIVED the overview of the Nominations and Governance meeting held on 13 May 2020 (CO270).</p> <p>Council APPROVED the recommendation that the election of staff members be postponed until autumn 2020 and that the three staff governors whose periods of office expired on 31 July 2020 be appointed for a further, short period in the interim.</p>	Clerk to take forward
20.24 Succession planning	<p>Council CONSIDERED proposed principles to inform succession planning for independent governors and recruitment strategy (CO271).</p> <p>The Clerk reported that the NGC had agreed that, in light of the uncertainty relating to the Covid-19 crisis, the planned recruitment of new independent members should be postponed and that the recruitment strategy be considered at the next meeting in October with a view to undertaking a recruitment exercise early in 2021. Members had asked her to prepare proposals in respect of succession planning in consultation with the Chair and the Vice-Chancellor for consideration by Council.</p> <p>The NGC also agreed that the identified skills gaps and diversity considerations might be addressed in the interim through the appointment of additional co-opted members to the standing committees.</p> <p>Council CONSIDERED the proposal and agreed that in light of the need for stability given the continuing uncertainty relating to Covid-19 and the significant strategic proposals agreed at the meeting, to APPROVE the following principles:</p> <p>(a) that the ‘clock’ relating to periods of office of current independent Council members be effectively stopped, at least for 2020/21. In practice, this would mean that the second-term periods of office due to end in July 2021 (of which there are four) would end in July 2022, with all other periods of office similarly extended for one year;</p> <p>(b) that NGC continue to prepare a recruitment strategy and advertise opportunities for new independent governors in 2020/21, with new appointments to take effect as appropriate or as vacancies arise;</p>	

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	<p>(c) that these principles be operationalised through NGC at its October 2020 meeting, with attention to planning for both Councils.</p> <p>Members noted that principle (a) remained consistent with the commitments of the Camm charter, which specifies tenure as 'normally a maximum of 9 years, which may exceptionally be extended to 10 years'.</p>	
20.25 Remuneration Committee report	Council RECEIVED the overview report of the Remuneration Committee meeting held on 17 June 2020 (CO272).	
20.26 Resources & Performance Committee 7 May 2020	Council RECEIVED the overview report of the Resources and Performance Committee meeting held on 7 May 2020 (CO274).	
20.27 Resources & Performance Committee 29 June 2020	<p>Council RECEIVED the overview report of the Resources and Performance Committee meeting held on 29 June 2020 (C0274).</p> <p>In relation to the annual budget (see minute 20.28 below) the Chair of RPC reported that he had had numerous discussions with the Vice-Chancellor and finance officers during the course of its preparation and confirmed that a rigorous and fair scrutiny of the assumptions had been undertaken.</p> <p>Council ENDORSED the RPC recommendation to approve the changes to the Statement of Investment Principles for the UWLPS and the recommendations arising from the Review of the UWLPS Investment Strategy, both of which had been approved by the UWLPS trustees.</p>	
20.28 Financial and cash flow report and annual budget	This is a restricted item and reported within the restricted minutes of the meeting.	
20.29 Bad debts report	<p>Council CONSIDERED the Bad Debts report (CO277).</p> <p>Council APPROVED the recommendation of the RPC to write of the bad debts in accordance with the requirements of the Financial Regulations. Council noted that the debts had been provided for in the accounts.</p>	

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20.30 Senate report	Council RECEIVED the report of the Senate meeting held on 24 June 2020 (CO278).	
20.31 Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy	<p>Council CONSIDERED the Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy (CO279).</p> <p>The DVC(A) reported that the strategy was the result of comprehensive consultation with key stakeholders including the Students' Union and embedded several national frameworks. A whole-University approach had been adopted in line with HEFCW recommendations. Operational delivery plans were being drafted, and a steering group was in place to implement, embed and monitor the Strategy in line with the evaluation framework. A communication strategy would form part of the implementation phase.</p> <p>Council APPROVED the Student Health and Wellbeing Strategy.</p>	
20.32 Proposed declaration of a climate emergency	<p>Council CONSIDERED a report outlining the proposed declaration of a climate emergency (CO280).</p> <p>Council APPROVED the following recommendations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That the UWTSD Group make a public declaration statement to strengthen and confirm its sustainability intentions in support of the Climate Emergency before the commencement of the next academic year; and • That a detailed action plan be prepared with deadlines and delegated responsibilities of work towards fulfilling the responsibilities associated with a declaration of climate emergency. 	
20.33 City Deal business case	<p>Council APPROVED the final version of the City Deal Yr Egin Full Business Case for Phase 1 (CO281).</p> <p>It NOTED that further updates, initially through the Resources and Performance Committee, would be provided with regard to Swansea Digital District (and Box Village), Yr Egin Phase 2, Delta Lakes and the proposed MoU for UWTSD to take the lead on skills development, and other City Deal opportunities as these materialised.</p>	

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20.34 Coleg Sir Gar Board reports	Council RECEIVED the report of the Coleg Sir Gar Board meetings held on 21 May 2020 and 4 June 2020 (CO282 and CO283).	
20.35 Coleg Sir Gar Committee terms of reference	Council APPROVED the new proposed terms of reference for Coleg Sir Gar standing Committees (CO284).	
20.36 Academic Committee	Council RECEIVED the report of the Academic Committee meeting held on 21 May 2020 (CO285).	
20.37 Audit and Risk Committee	Council RECEIVED the report of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 18 May 2020 (CO286).	
20.38 Senate Report	Council RECEIVED the report of the Senate meeting held on 6 May 2020 (CO287).	
20.39 Use of University Seal	Council RECEIVED the report on the Use of the University Seal (CO288).	
20.40 Report on Chairs action	Council RECEIVED the report on Chairs action undertaken since the last meeting (CO289).	
20.41 Items circulated following cancelling of March meeting	Council RECEIVED the list of items circulated for information following cancellation of the March 2020 Council meeting (CO290)	
20.42 City Deal loan	Council RECEIVED the papers circulated for approval by correspondence regarding the City Deal loan (CO291).	
20.41 Declarations of interest	Mr Eifion Griffiths noted that he was a Trustee of the UWL Pension fund (minute 20.27) No other declarations of interest were made during the course of the meeting.	
20.42 Date of next meeting	The next meeting would be held on 30 September or 1 October 2020.	

Meeting terminated 13.30