

Joint Meeting of the Councils

UNRESTRICTED Minutes of the meeting held at 1.00 p.m. on Thursday 23 November 2023 in the Vivian Hall, Dylan Thomas Centre, Swansea

Present:

Emlyn Dole (Chair)
Professor Elwen Evans KC (Vice-Chancellor)
Justin Albert
Natalie Beard
Arwel Ellis Owen
Geraint Evans
Taya Gibbons
Uzo Iwobi
Rowland Jones
Timothy Llewelyn
Professor Conny Matera Rogers

Nigel Roberts
Maria Stedman
Emlyn Schiavone
Dr Liz Siberry
Venerable Randolph Thomas
Iwan Thomas
Dr Kerry Tudor
Dr Stuart Robb

In attendance:

Gavin Bessant, Director of Financial Services
Dr Andrew Cornish, Principal, Coleg Sir Gar
Rebecca Doswell, Clerk
Shone Hughes (Chief of Staff)
Professor Dylan Jones, Deputy Vice-Chancellor

Peter Mannion, Chief Operating Officer
Jane O'Rourke, Executive Director of Human Resources
Catrin Beard (Translator)
Margaret Williams (Secretary)
Caryl Bond

Agenda item	Main discussion points	Action/decision
23.55 Welcome and Apologies for absence	Apologies for absence were received from Geraint Roberts, Professor Kyle Erickson, Dr Peter Spring, Deris Williams.	
23.56 Chairs report	<p>The Councils RECEIVED the Chairs report (JCO223)</p> <p>The Chair welcomed Peter Mannion, Chief Operating Officer to his first meeting.</p> <p>The Chair reported that he had attended the ChUW meeting online on 3 October 2023, which had provided the opportunity for meeting other Chairs and ChUW officers to discuss sector issues and challenges.</p> <p>The Chair reported on the recent tour of the Swansea campus and thanked officers who had organised and joined members on the tour.</p> <p>The Chair noted that this was the last meeting for Ven Randolph Thomas and Maria Steadman and thanked them for their exceptional commitment, leadership and service to both Councils and the Group. He personally acknowledged their support during his period as Chair Designate and during the last three months since taking over the role of Chair.</p>	
23.57 Vice-Chancellor's report	<p>The Vice-Chancellor gave members an update on strategic matters and thanked them for their considerable support since taking up the role.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor reported that the Senior Team were currently focussing on core business and ensuring clarity of data and management information to robustly manage the direction of travel. She would also be refocussing the Senior team to ensure clarity of ownership and responsibilities. She referred to the appointment of Peter Mannion to the new role of Chief Operating Officer, an important role for bringing together the operational complexities of the University.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor informed the Councils that the University was currently undergoing an Ofsted inspection, focussing on apprenticeships.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor noted that she and the senior team would be focussing on the University's Strategic Planning in the new year.</p>	
23.58 Students Union report	The Councils RECEIVED the Students' Union report (JCO225)	

Agenda item	Main discussion points	Action/decision
	<p>The Student President thanked the Ven Randolph Thomas and Maria Steadman for their continued support to her and the Students' Union.</p> <p>The Student President referred to her priorities and those of the Campus Presidents for the year, which included improvements to, and raising awareness of, the food hubs. She reported that the SU would be undertaking a survey of students' needs to inform what was required within the hubs particularly at London and Birmingham.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor informed members that the University had agreed not to hold the Founders' Dinner at Lampeter that year and instead would donate a sum to the student food hubs.</p> <p>Members agreed the importance of overcoming the stigma of food hubs and encouraged the University to work with local food producers and suppliers in providing valuable produce in its communities.</p> <p>The Student President referred to wellbeing and the focus on improving awareness among students of the current wellbeing and mental health support available.</p> <p>The Student President reported on the SU's focus on race equality and delivering on their objectives. The SU would be working with the University in securing its charter mark on race equality.</p> <p>The Student President referred to the effects of poverty on the student community and sought the endorsement of the Councils for the establishment of a Cost-of-Living Group to look at the impact of and response to cost-of-living issues across the University's staff and students. She proposed that the chairing arrangements would be shared between the Vice-Chancellor and the Student President and include key officer leads as members.</p> <p>The Councils ENDORSED the request and asked that officers worked with the Students' Union to discuss the terms of reference and membership.</p> <p>The Group President reported on the creation of a sporting strategy being supported across all six sites with strategic objectives per site for engagement and participation. In addition the Group President has been working on a project called 'BUCS UNiversal Gym' which allows students access to sporting facilities at Universities across Wales and England regardless of campus. She agreed that she would also share this information across the Group.'</p>	

Agenda item	Main discussion points	Action/decision
	The Chair commended the work of the Student President and her team.	
23.59 Risk management matters	<p>The Councils CONSIDERED the Corporate Risk Register (JCO226).</p> <p>The Corporate Risk Register had been updated in consultation with strategic lead risk owners. The Clerk reported that in support of the University's approach to Risk Management and assurance, the University's risk appetite would be presented at a later point in the academic year. The Group Risk Management and Assurance Policy would be reviewed in the new year with recommendations presented to ARC and Council.</p> <p>The Clerk reported that ARC had previously approved the following amendments which were now reflected in the updated Register:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk 7 London and Birmingham campus – an amendment has been made to the risk statement to ensure it reflects the current operating environment. • Risk 18 New Regulatory Arrangements has been added to the Register. <p>The Clerk reported that the Vice-Chancellor had also recommended that Risk 13 Governance was archived due to the successful implementation of the risk response and controls.</p> <p>The Vice-Chancellor responded to members' enquiries regarding cyber security and reported that the University was the only one in Wales to hold accreditation in terms of Cyber Essentials Plus and that cyber security was at the forefront of the Senior team's focus: although there could be no guarantees. The DFS noted that the finance system was stress tested monthly and was protected by resource link and cloud as well as a third-party service.</p> <p>The Councils APPROVED :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Corporate Risk Register • The archiving of risk 13 - Governance. 	
23.60 Modern slavery statement – annual report	<p>The Councils CONSIDERED the Modern Slavery statement annual report (JCO227).</p> <p>Council APPROVED the statement authorising the Chair to sign the statement on behalf of UWTSD and University of Wales.</p>	
23.61 Nominations and Governance Committee report	The Councils CONSIDERED the report of the Nominations and Governance committee meeting held on 19 October 2023 (JCO228).	

Agenda item	Main discussion points	Action/decision
	<p>The Councils ENDORSED the decision of the NGC to delay the Governance effectiveness review until 2024/25 and agreed that the timescale was moved forward to enable the review to focus on the future culture of the University.</p> <p>It was also agreed that Governor recruitment was delayed until the audit of current skills was finalised.</p>	
23.62 Meetings protocol	<p>The Councils CONSIDERED the revised meetings protocol (JCO229) and APPROVED the recommendation of the NGC that members' cameras remained on during the duration of on-line meetings.</p> <p>The Councils also agreed that the protocols were kept under review.</p>	
23.63 Camm action plan progress report	The Council RECEIVED the Camm action plan progress report (JCO230).	
23.64 Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023	The Councils CONFIRMED the Minutes of the meeting held on 27 September 2023 (JCO231).	
23.65 Action points	The Councils RECEIVED the updated table of action points.	
23.66 Prevent annual report	The Councils RECEIVED the Prevent annual report (JCO233).	
23.67 Confederal structure : update	The Councils RECEIVED the Confederal structure update (JCO234).	
23.68 Nominations and Governance annual report	The Councils RECEIVED the Nominations and Governance annual report (JCO235).	
23.69 Declarations of interest	<p>The Councils received the following additional declaration of interest :</p> <p>Iwan Thomas – item 23.58 – links to community food banks.</p>	
23.54 Date and time of next meeting	The next meeting would be held on 25 January 2024.	

Meeting closed 2.10 pm