

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Board of Directors

Thursday, 30 April 2020

10.30 – 12.30

Microsoft Teams

Present:

Directors:

Gareth Pierce
William Callaway
Nia Elias
Professor Jerry Hunter
Meri Huws
Gwilym Dyfri Jones
Dr Hefin Jones
Pedr ap Llwyd
Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan
Angharad Roberts
Llinos Roberts
Professor Hywel Thomas

Observers:

Meg Hughes, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)
Lleucu Myrddin (UCMC/NUS Wales)
Dr Cliona O'Neill, Higher Education Funding Council for Wales (HEFCW)

Officers:

Dr Ioan Matthews, Chief Executive
Dr Dylan Phillips, Senior Academic Manager
Dr Dafydd Trystan, Registrar
Nia Brown, Development Officer: Secretariat

Item	Main points of discussion	Actions	Timescale
1. Welcome and introduction	1.1 The chair welcomed all who were present at the meeting.		
2. Declarations of interest	<p>2.1 Members were reminded of the procedure by which they are asked to note any declarations of interest additional to those already noted in the Register of Interests.</p> <p>2.2 Nia Elias declared that she has been a member of the Welsh Language Commissioner's Advisory Panel since March 2020.</p> <p>2.3 Congratulations were extended to Nia Elias on her appointment as an Interim Deputy Director at <i>Blood Cancer UK</i>.</p>	NB to update the register	After the meeting
3. To confirm the appointment of the Chair	<p>3.1 Dr Dylan Phillips reported on the appointment process for the Coleg Chair following the decision to postpone the meeting of the Board of Directors which had been due to be held on 25 March 2020.</p> <p>3.2 With the Board's consent, the recommendation of the Appointments and Governance Standards Committee had been shared via e-mail correspondence, and on 23 March it was unanimously agreed to appoint Gareth Pierce as Chair of the Coleg.</p> <p>3.3 Gareth Pierce was congratulated, and he thanked the Board for entrusting the position to him.</p> <p>3.4 The Board noted its thanks to the former Chair, Dr Haydn E Edwards, for his work in strengthening the Coleg's</p>		

	governance. There would be an opportunity to thank him formally in due course.		
4. Chief Executive's Report (Item 4)	<p>4.1 The Chief Executive's written report on recent activities, which had been prepared prior to the current crisis, was received.</p> <p>Coleg Secretary</p> <p>4.2 It was reported that Catherine Rees, the Coleg Secretary, had retired on 8 April 2020. There would also be an opportunity to thank her formally in due course.</p> <p>4.3 The Chief Executive informed the Board that it is not intended to make an appointment to replace Catherine Rees. Dr Dylan Phillips continues to act as Secretary for the time being, and the Board would be informed on the future arrangements in relation to Catherine's responsibilities in due course.</p> <p>Grant Letter for 2020/21</p> <p>4.4 It was reported that the Grant Letter from the Welsh Government for 2020/21 reflected the discussions held before the current crisis.</p> <p>4.5 It was reported that there were two variations to the Grant Letter received last year (2019/20), which included additional funding to implement aspects of the Further Education and Apprenticeships plan.</p>		

	<p>Planning meetings</p> <p>4.6 It was reported that planning meetings with universities would be taking place soon and that expenditure was in place as intended.</p> <p>4.7 The ongoing challenges in supporting further education plans were reported.</p> <p>Discussion</p> <p>4.8 During the discussion, the Board noted its concern, in the context of the current crisis, that the Coleg's funding conditions could change. The Chief Executive explained that he was in close contact with the Welsh Government and was fully aware of the potential challenges. He assured the Board that officers were putting a plan in place to protect the Coleg's work.</p> <p>4.9 In response to a question about the needs of the health sector, it was reported that a discussion had been held with HEIW a few days before the crisis. There would be an opportunity to resume discussions at an appropriate time.</p> <p>General updates on the Coleg's work</p> <p>4.10 Written reports were received for information in relation to Marketing and Communications; Academic Training and Staff Development; <i>Gwerddon</i> and other publication projects; the Associate Lecturers scheme; the Work Welsh scheme; Information Services; Collaborative Activities and Projects; and Welsh as a subject.</p>		
<p>5. Covid-19 crisis</p>	<p>5.1 The Chief Executive gave a summary of the paper circulated on the Coleg's response to the Covid-19 crisis, which included the Coleg's responsibility for its staff,</p>		

	<p>mission and financial position.</p> <p>5.2 The Chief Executive reported on the Coleg's past experience in the context of collaborative modules and blended and distance learning which could assist the Higher Education sector.</p> <p><i>At this point, Dr Cliona O'Neill joined the meeting.</i></p> <p>Board members' experiences</p> <p>5.3 Members reported on the experience of the Higher Education sector, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The difficulties faced by universities across the UK in trying to cope with the crisis • Adapting and supporting online working for staff and students • Preparing students to graduate this year • Preparing undergraduates to start working in the NHS sector early to support the crisis • Supporting the crisis in the search for a vaccine and the production of ventilators • The risks of re-opening campuses • International students • Preparing plans for online teaching and bringing students back gradually for 2020/21 • Issues within the sector already, so cutting courses and reducing provision is inevitable <p>5.5 HEFCW's understanding of the situation was reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An announcement is expected regarding the stabilization of student recruitment for 2020/21 		
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	<p>5.6 On the voluntary sector, the following was reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to remember that there are individuals within the Coleg community who are in challenging situations, self-isolating until there is a vaccine • To remember that Coleg staff need Mental Health support <p>5.7 On the Further Education sector, the following was reported:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That vocational course learners are unable to complete their courses because of their practical nature. • That arrangements are in place to prioritize the completion of training • That supporting the mental health of staff is a priority • The intention to teach through a combination of distance learning and blended learning • That it is not possible to plan face-to-face teaching until January at the earliest • Welsh for Adults will be teaching via distance learning • It may be that there will be situations where half a class will be in for part of the week while the other half undertakes distance learning • Bilingual provision is central to planning. <p>Discussion</p> <p>5.8 Members discussed the fact that the HE sector was in a challenging funding position even before the current health crisis. It was possible that 20% of the sector's budget could be affected. Dr Cliona O'Neill, on behalf of the Funding Council, noted that UUK would prioritize in aggregate applications by universities from a £1.1 billion</p>		
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	resources was noted. It was agreed to hold a further discussion on funding at the 24 June 2020 meeting.		
6. To receive and consider the minutes of the 27 November 2019 meeting (Item 6)	6.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 27 November 2019. <i>At this point, Dr Cliona O'Neill left the meeting.</i>		
7. To receive and consider the minutes of the closed meeting held on 27 November 2019 (Item 8)	7.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the closed meeting held on 27 November 2019. <i>At this point, Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan and Angharad Roberts left the meeting.</i>		
8. Audit and Risk Committee (Item 9)	Audit and Risk Committee 8.1 The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting held on 4 March 2020 were noted and received. 8.2 A summary of the main points arising from the 4 March 2020 meeting was given by William Callaway, the committee's Chair: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He noted that the work of the Internal Auditors and the External Auditors was continuing • He noted that he and Dr Haydn Edwards had had sight of a Freedom of Information (FOI) request and that the Internal Auditors were about to complete a report on the situation, which would be presented to the committee's next meeting on 3 June 2020. 	Internal Auditors' report on FOI request	3 June 2020

<p>(Items 9i and ii)</p>	<p>The Risk Register</p> <p>8.3 Members received a report on the amendments to the Risk Register since the last meeting, and noted that the register would need to be amended in light of the Covid-19 crisis.</p> <p>8.4 It was noted that an internal meeting had been arranged to discuss the Risk Register and the impact of Covid-19 on every aspect of the Coleg's work in the short, medium and long term.</p> <p>8.5 It was agreed to entrust the discussion to Senior Managers and submit the register to the committee's next meeting on 3 June 2020.</p>	<p>Risk Register to include Covid-19</p>	<p>3 June 2020</p>
<p>9. Finance and General Purposes Committee</p> <p>(Item 10)</p>	<p>Finance and General Purposes Committee</p> <p>9.1 The minutes of the Finance and General Purposes Committee meeting held on 15 January 2020 were noted and received.</p> <p>9.2 A summary of the main points arising from the 15 January 2020 meeting was given by Pedr ap Llwyd, the committee's Chair.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • He noted that Sterling, the company that monitors the Coleg's investments, had praised the Coleg's prudent investments. However, he noted that the value of the investments had fallen since then due to the current crisis. • He noted that an appropriate procurement process had taken place to undertake a review of Senior Management pay. An appointment had been made, 		

11.Academic Board

(Item 12)

Academic Board

11.1 The minutes of the Academic Board meeting held on 7 February 2020 were noted and received.

11.2 A summary of the main points arising from the 7 February 2020 meeting was given by the Dean, Dr Hefin Jones.

Strategic Plan – Subject Grants

11.3 It was reported that the intention had been to divide into groups at the next meeting to discuss subject grant strategy. However, this will no longer be possible as the meeting will be held via Microsoft Teams.

Agenda for the next meeting

11.4 It was reported that the intention at the next meeting was to discuss Welsh-medium education in the current situation with input from branches, students and universities.

Mental Health

11.5 Members noted the importance of monitoring the health and wellbeing of students and staff, especially during this challenging period.

Dean's Tour

11.6 It was reported that the Dean's tour could not be completed this year. It is hoped to complete the tour during the next academic year.

	<p>New resources</p> <p>11.7 It was reported that new resources have been launched on the Coleg's Porth to support pupils entering year 12 and students going up to university.</p> <p>Branch meetings</p> <p>11.8 It was reported that officers are holding branch meetings in order to understand what is happening at ground level.</p> <p><i>At this point, Professor Jerry Hunter left the meeting.</i></p>		
<p>12. Post-16 Strategic Board</p> <p>(Item 13)</p>	<p>Minutes of the Post-16 Strategic Board</p> <p>12.1 The minutes of the Post-16 Strategic Board meeting held on 11 March 2020 were noted and received.</p> <p>12.2 The main points arising from the meeting of 11 March 2020 were summarized by Meri Huws, the committee's Chair.</p> <p>12.3 She reported on discussions regarding data, employers and understanding skills needs.</p> <p>Ambassadors</p> <p>12.4 It was reported that further education and apprenticeship ambassadors had been appointed.</p> <p>Funding challenges</p> <p>12.5 It was reported that funding was a challenge and that resources were needed to maintain and expand provision in the sector. It was further reported that discussions between the Coleg and the Welsh Government regarding</p>		

	<p>this work were ongoing.</p> <p>Mentoring agreements</p> <p>12.6 It was reported that interviews for Further Education mentoring agreements had been held on 22 April 2020.</p>		
13. Constitutional Matters	<p>Annual Meeting (the Court)</p> <p>13.1 It was reported that the Coleg's Annual Meeting, which was due to be held on 24 March 2020, had been postponed due to the current situation.</p> <p>13.2 It had been agreed to reschedule the meeting for May or June 2020 on Microsoft Teams.</p> <p>13.3 It was reported that the Annual Congregation, which was also due to be held on 24 March 2020, had been postponed until next year.</p>		
14. Grant Letter for 2020/21 (Item 15)	<p>14.1 The Coleg's Grant Letter from the Welsh Government for 2020/21 was received.</p> <p>14.2 It was noted that there is a small increase in Further Education funding and that additional resources would be needed in the future.</p>		
15. Academic Planning (Item 16)	<p>15.1 Dr Dylan Phillips presented recommendations on the award of Subject Grants and Catalyst Grants for 2020/21, which were approved.</p>		
16. Chair's Matters	<p>16.1 The Chair had no matters to note.</p>		

17. Date of the next meeting	17.1 The date of the next Board meeting was noted: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 24 June 2020: Arrangements to be confirmed. 17.2 Osian Rhys was thanked for providing simultaneous translation.		
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