

Coleg Cymraeg Cenedlaethol Board of Directors

Wednesday, 22 June 2016

10.30 - 2.35

Aberystwyth University

Present:

Directors:

Andrew Green (Chair)
Professor Jerry Hunter, Higher Education Sector Director
Geraint James, Independent Director
Gwilym Dyfri Jones, Higher Education Sector Director
Dr Hefin Jones, Director representing academic staff / Coleg Dean
Dr Gwyn Lewis, Independent Director
Dr Rhodri Llwyd Morgan, Higher Education Sector Director
Professor Hywel Thomas, Higher Education Sector Director
Ieuan Wyn, Independent Director
Linda Wyn, Independent Director (Vice-Chair)

Observers:

Fflur Elin, National Union of Students Wales (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
Catherine Rees, Secretary
Dr Gwennan Schiavone, Senior Academic Manager
Dr Dafydd Trystan, Registrar
Nia Brown, Development Officer

Apologies:

Beth Button, Director representing students
Professor Iwan Davies, Higher Education Sector Director
Professor Jacqui Hare, Higher Education Sector Director

Item	Main points of discussion	Action	Timescale
1. Welcome and introduction	<p>1.1 Members were welcomed to the meeting by the Chair, and a special welcome was extended to Dr Cliona O'Neill, HEFCW, and Fflur Elin, NUS Wales, as observers.</p> <p>1.2 Apologies were received for inclusion in the minutes.</p> <p>1.3 It was reported that Beth Button, Director representing students, had resigned as a Board member. Since she was not able to be present at the meeting it had been arranged that there would be an opportunity to thank her formally during the Coleg's annual reception at the National Eisteddfod, at Abergavenny, on Wednesday 3 August.</p>		
2. Declarations of interest	<p>2.1 Members were reminded of the procedure by which members are asked to specify on the attendance list any declarations of interest additional to those already noted in the Register of Interests.</p> <p>2.2 Geraint James declared an interest in the item on appointing a Director to represent students, since his son had been elected President of Undeb Myfyrwyr Cymraeg Bangor (UMCB), the Welsh-language students' union at Bangor, and as Welsh Language Officer of NUS Wales.</p>		
3. To receive and consider the minutes of the meeting of 3 March 2016	<p>3.1 The minutes were accepted as an accurate record of the meeting held on 3 March 2016.</p>		

<p>4. Correspondence (Item 4)</p>	<p>4.1 The Coleg's Grant letter from the Higher Education Funding Council for Wales was received.</p> <p>4.2 It was noted that the letter's contents were consistent with previous letters and the outcomes of recent discussions, and included confirmation of the funding allocation to the Coleg to March 2017.</p> <p>4.3 The Chair noted that the Board must note paragraph 6 in the letter, which stated: "In light of uncertainties surrounding funding beyond 2016/17 we encourage the Coleg to seek income from other sources in order to diversify its funding streams."</p> <p>4.4 The Board discussed the possibility that the funding allocation could change to funding based on academic years following the recommendations of the Diamond report.</p> <p>4.5 Following a question from a Board member on the continued funding of the Welsh Language Competency Certificate for Initial Teacher Training (paragraph 26 of the letter), confirmation was given by HEFCW that the Coleg will not be expected to support the scheme from its current budget. The importance of the project was emphasised, as well as the need for additional funding for its development in 2016/17.</p>		
<p>5. Chair's Matters</p>	<p>5.1 A verbal report was given by the Chair. He noted his concerns about the uncertainty in relation to the Coleg's budget after 2017. Reference was made to the possibility that the recommendations of the Diamond Review, published in September, could include a recommendation for a more permanent arrangement.</p> <p>5.2 The Chief Executive and officers were thanked for their activity during the year in presenting the Coleg's position in meetings with politicians, officers and others.</p>		

	<p>5.3 The Chair, Andrew Green, reported that he would not be applying for a second term as chair when his term expires on 31 March 2017.</p> <p>5.4 On behalf of Board members, the Chief Executive thanked the Chair for his contribution to the Coleg's work, and noted that there would be an opportunity to recognise his leadership formally in due course.</p>		
6. Constitutional matters	<p>6.1 It was agreed to postpone the discussion on establishing a subsidiary to the Coleg in light of the absence of Professor Iwan Davies.</p>	Present the subsidiary paper	Before the end of 2016
7. Appointments Committee	<p>7.1 The Secretary reported on the process of appointing a director to represent students, following the resignation of Beth Button. It was reported that Fflur Elin had been nominated. An interview and training would be part of the appointment process.</p> <p>7.2 Subject to one correction, the minutes of the Appointments Committee meeting held on 7 June 2016 were accepted. The Secretary gave a verbal report on matters arising from the minutes, including the process of appointing the Coleg Chair. A meeting was arranged for July to begin the process, when members would discuss the options for providing remuneration to the Chair.</p> <p>7.3 It was reported that committee members had noted the terms of service of the Board's current members. It was noted that, for the future, there would be a need to ensure that the full range of skills and experiences needed on the Coleg's Board of Directors were represented. A reference was made to the Equality Act 2010 and the requirements of the HEFCW Grant letter (paragraph 17).</p>	Correct the minutes	June 2016

	<p>into force in 2016/17. The Coleg will publish a circular for the universities outlining the changes. It was reported that there was a reference to the certificate in the recently published Language, Work and Bilingual Services report prepared by the Working Group on the Welsh Language and Local Government chaired by Rhodri Glyn Thomas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Centre for Excellence in Rural Health and Social Care. It was reported that further discussions had been held with the health boards and the relevant bodies. However, officers had recommended to the Audit and Risk Committee that the Coleg could not offer the type of support services suggested. Discussions are ongoing in order to explore opportunities for the Coleg to formally provide advice to the new Centre, and to be compensated for doing so. • Updates on marketing and communication work, Coleg activities in Information Services, Academic Training Programmes and <i>Gwerddon</i>. • An update on the Risk Register. It was noted that there was one new strategic risk on the register: the need to consider the impact of changes in the higher education sector in England on the Welsh context. 		
<p>9. Staffing matters</p>	<p>9.1 The minutes of the Staffing Committee meeting held on 13 April 2016 were received.</p> <p>9.2 The Secretary gave an update on staffing matters. It was reported that Owain Huw, Information Services Manager, had left the Coleg. Rhys Williams had been appointed to replace him, and would begin on 11 July. It was further reported that Eiry Miles (Head Language Tutor) and Rhinedd Williams (Office Manager) would be leaving the Coleg in August. There is no recommendation on the post of Head Language Tutor for the time being due to changes in light of establishing the Welsh Language Skills Certificate's accreditation at WJEC. The nature of the Office Manager post has changed, and it is recommended to the</p>		

	<p>Staffing Committee that a Senior Administrative Officer post should be advertised as soon as possible.</p> <p>9.3 The Secretary gave a report on matters arising from the minutes, and specifically on the discussions about the Coleg's salary policy, where a number of changes had been agreed, including that incremental increases would be subject to satisfactory performance.</p> <p>9.3 It was reported that the Staffing Committee would meet over lunch today in order to review the previous decision to instigate a freeze on job vacancies.</p>		
<p>10. Finance Matters (Item 10 and 10a)</p>	<p>10.1 The Coleg's budget for 2016/17 was presented by the Registrar. It was explained that the budget was based on the reduced budget allocation of £5.4million provided in the Coleg's Grant Letter from HEFCW.</p> <p>10.2 It was noted that the Coleg's officers and the Audit and Risk Committee had been planning, for over a year, how to secure a twelve month budget based on a combination of the funding allocation for the year and some funding from reserves. The Committee has also considered what level of reserves is appropriate whilst awaiting the recommendations of the Diamond Review on higher education funding in Wales and the Welsh Government's statement on keeping the investment in the Coleg at a level that maintains the 'current momentum'.</p> <p>10.3 It was further noted that the savings made during the previous eighteen months had resulted in an increase in reserves.</p> <p>10.4 One member of the Board asked whether it would be possible to offer more scholarships at the beginning of the universities' welcome week. It was agreed to consider whether a relatively small amount of non-HFECW funding could be used if needed. The current funding limitations were explained, and it was</p>		

	<p>recommended that other funding options should be considered for additional scholarships in future.</p> <p>10.5 Item 10a was presented on the table by Dr Dylan Phillips. This was a supplementary paper, showing the differences between the budget details agreed at Llandrindod in September 2015 and the final figures for the year. These details were noted.</p> <p>10.6 A budget of £6.5 million was agreed for 2016/17, including the scholarships, drawing on reserves. Dr Cliona O'Neill noted that HEFCW was of the view that this was appropriate. It was noted that this would not be sustainable beyond next year, but officers were confident that political decisions would be made during the next period that would secure an appropriate budget for the future.</p>		
<p>11. Audit and Risk Committee</p> <p>(Item 11)</p>	<p>11.1 The minutes of the Audit and Risk Committee meeting, held on 23 May 2016, were noted, and a report on the meeting was given by the Chair, Geraint James. It was noted that an internal audit of (i) the Coleg's procurement and expenditure systems, and (ii) its payroll and expenses systems, had given significant assurances about the systems. The next report of the internal auditors would focus on Coleg branches.</p>		
<p>12. New Academic Plan</p>	<p>12.1 The Registrar gave a presentation on the steps taken to begin the preparation of the Coleg's new Academic Plan.</p> <p>12.2 It was noted that there had been consultation with the universities before there had been a full discussion at the Academic Board on 11 May 2016 to discuss the principles of the plan.</p> <p>12.3 Following the presentation, a comprehensive discussion was held. A number of suggestions were noted for consideration in preparing a first draft of the new plan.</p>		

	12.4 The Board agreed the next steps: to present a paper to the Academic Board on 20 July 2016, and to the Board in September 2016.	Paper to the Academic Board	20 July 2016
13. Subject allocation (Item 13)	13.1 A paper was presented by the Registrar on the allocation of subjects to categories for the purposes of future planning. It was explained that a robust framework was needed in order to make funding decisions. 13.2 A full discussion was held on the framework's principles, including further recommendations to be included in the paper. It was agreed to adopt the paper with minor comments.		
14. Metrics (Item 14)	14.1 The Registrar presented a paper proposing metrics to measure the Coleg's progress against targets. 14.2 Following a discussion, it was agreed that the Coleg should develop these metrics when discussing future targets with officers at the Welsh Government and HEFCW.		
15. Associate lecturers (Item 15)	15.1 Dr Dylan Phillips, Senior Academic Manager, presented a paper on establishing arrangements for the Coleg's associate lecturers. It was explained that establishing the category of associate membership would ensure that the Coleg retained a link with lecturers. 15.2 Following a discussion noting some recommendations, it was agreed to approve the concept of creating Coleg Associate Lecturers.		
16. Academic Board	16.1 The Dean, Dr Hefin Jones, gave a verbal report on the Academic Board meeting held on 11 May 2016, on the following matters:		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It was noted that members of the Coleg's Advisory Group had attended a meeting to discuss the new Academic Plan and that a further meeting would be held on 20 July 2016 for further discussions on the plan. • Reports were received on Widening Access and Research and Publishing. • It was noted that Glyndŵr University had appointed a Branch Officer. • It was noted that the students were still presenting discussion topics at meetings and that study materials had been discussed on this occasion. • A note of thanks was made to Jacob Ellis, student member, for his contribution in establishing the Coleg's student representation. • The Dean noted that there had been an increase in pastoral work as a result of concerns about the staffing scheme. • The Dean noted that he had visited Coleg Meirion Dwyfor for the first time. He also noted that he had attended Gŵyl MAP as well as Sporting and Science conferences. He noted that these events would not be held without Coleg support. • He noted that the South Wales and Cardiff branches were sharing good practice among lecturers and that a research session was being held at the branch meeting of Trinity Saint David. <p>The Dean was thanked for his report and for his detailed work during the year.</p>		
17. Matters arising	17.1 <u>Item 16.1 – Seren Network</u> . It was noted that the Coleg had contributed to a discussion at HEFCW's SOAC (Student Opportunity Achievement Committee) where unease about a number of the network's activities had been expressed.		
18. Reports from	18.1 There were no reports from Directors.		

Directors			
19. Any other business	19.1 A report was given on the Coleg's arrangements for the National Eisteddfod 2016 at Abergavenny, including the reception, an annual lecture given by Dr Dylan Foster Evans, the launch of certain volumes and the awarding of the Merêd Award and the Dr John Davies Award.		
20. Dates and locations of the next meetings	<p>20.1 The Board's meetings for the 2016/17 academic year were confirmed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 14 and 15 September 2016, Cardiff • 23 November 2016, Bangor • Court meeting, 8 March 2017 • Board meeting in spring term 2017. It was agreed to arrange this meeting separately to the Court meeting. Date to be confirmed by officers in due course. • 21 June 2017, University of South Wales, Trefforest <p>20.2 The simultaneous translators were thanked for their work, as were the staff of Aberystwyth University for their support and for arranging and hosting the meeting.</p>		