PRIFYSGOL ABERYSTWYTH UNIVERSITY 1872

COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting held at 13:00 on 7 OCTOBER 2025, in the Dialogue Centre, Visualisation Building.

Present: Meri Huws, Chair of Council (Chair); Professor Jon Timmis, Vice-Chancellor; Dr Paul Bevan; Professor Sarah Davies; Kylie Evans; Nanw Maelor, Welsh Culture Officer and UMCA President; Professor Angela Hatton, Pro Vice-Chancellor (Research, Knowledge Exchange and Innovation); Dr Aloysius Igboekwu (not for item 12 – Corporate Risk Register); Millie Hackett, Undeb Aberystwyth President; Dan Richards; Arwel Thomas; Mark Tweed; Jane Usherwood; Claire Vaughan; and Yusuf Ibrahim.

In attendance: Simon Crick, Chief Financial Officer; Jean Jones, Head of Vice-Chancellor's Office; Sharon Lilley, Director of Human Resources and Organisational Development; Dr Gwawr Taylor, University Secretary and Director of Welsh Language; Steve Thomas, Director of Communications and External Affairs; Helen Eustace, Head of Planning

Apologies for absence were received from Kate Eden and Rhuanedd Richards

1. MATTERS RAISED BY THE CHAIR

1.1 The Chair reported that the CUC Higher Education Code of Governance, to which the University has subscribed, is being review. Although initially intended to not include Wales or Scotland, this has now become a UK-wide initiative. Price Waterhouse Coopers (PWC) have been commissioned to undertake the review. Members agreed that the questions should be considered by Governance and Culture initially, and then Council. Members noted the work already undertaken as a result of the Camm review, and the Chair confirmed that University Secretaries have been asked to review this work ahead of the consultation.

1.2 The Chair reported their recent meeting with the trade unions. This is now scheduled to be an annual event, with the possibility of increasing to twice yearly. Key messages from the meeting were the challenge of communication. The trade unions welcomed the transparency and honesty shown by the University Executive. The relationship is a partnership model, which is unique in Wales and is working well.

2. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

Millie Hackett noted they are Chair of Undeb Aber Board of Trustees, which is part-funded by the University. Nanw Maelor also noted that they are a Trustee of Undeb Aber Board of Trustees.

Jane Usherwood noted that they are Council's nominee on the board of trustees for AUPAS, the Aberystwyth University Pension and Assurance Scheme.

Paul Bevan noted that, as Chair of Qualifications Wales they are conflicted on the section of the Vice-Chancellor's report relating to new GCSEs, and will not participate in any discussion around that, should it arise.

3. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

RECEIVED

Minutes of the meeting held on 07 July 2025 (COU2526-002).

RESOLVED

Members noted that the start date for Fran Carey should be corrected to 29 September.

The minutes regarding Council member recruitment and the corporate risk register should be reviewed to ensure the full discussion is reflected [**ACTION**: Governance Department].

4. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

RECEIVED

A log setting out the progress made in taking forward decisions and actions agreed at the most recent Council meeting, and outstanding actions from previous meetings (COU2526-003).

NOTED

1. Following the discussion in the previous Council meeting, the University Secretary confirmed that Kylie Evans is now the non-academic staff member on Council's sub-committees.

2. The University Secretary noted that Dan Richards will continue as the cross-cutting member of both RPC and ARAC, acknowledging the significant time commitment from Arwel Thomas's involvement with Hen Goleg.

3. An update was provided to members on the disposal of the Llanbadarn site.

4. An update was provided to members on progress to recruit new Council and sub-committee members.

5. Members noted the updates against the open and closed actions.

5. CORRESPONDENCE

1. <u>NSS Results</u>

   RECEIVED

   A letter from James Owen, Chief Executive of Medr (COU2526-004), acknowledging the University's continued good performance in the NSS and requesting an action plan in response to the single notably below benchmark outcome.

   NOTED

Members noted the correspondence and questioned the deadline for providing a response to Medr. Officers confirmed that an extension had been granted until 22 October, and that the collaborative response from Undeb Aber and the University would be shared with Council.

6. DECISIONS TAKEN BETWEEN MEETINGS

RECEIVED

Report by the University Secretary (COU2526-013).

NOTED

The report detailed the instances since the last Council meeting where matters had been approved by the Chair on behalf of Council, namely the sale of Maes Elwyn, Morfa Mawr, and updated banking covenants.

7. VICE-CHANCELLOR'S REPORT

RECEIVED

Report by Professor Jon Timmis, Vice-Chancellor (COU2526-005).

NOTED

1. The report comprises three key sections: a highlight report; a planning report including student recruitment; and a communications report.

2. An update on recruitment was provided to members. Overall, we are in a good place in terms of our recruitment position. We are confident that home undergraduate numbers will reach the revised target in the budget. Home taught postgraduate numbers are disappointing but increases we are seeing elsewhere will make up for that from a financial perspective. It was noted that we are very reliant on continuing students for Master's courses, and the cost of living is an issue. Changes to the way postgraduate funding is administered in Wales had an impact both last year and this year. Those students who do not start postgraduate study immediately tend to study closer to home, and Aberystwyth does not have a significant population around us geographically. Following the census date on 1st Nov Planning and Finance officers will work through the numbers in detail.

3. Members offered congratulations on the award for University of the Year for Sustainability and noted that, alongside student experience, it is another differentiator from our competitors, as well as being an attraction for future employees. A discussion was held around renewable energy and whether, considering the level of investment, growth was expected. 25% of the electricity for campus is currently generated and to move even to 30% renewable energy would require significant investment. This links to the net zero target, which is challenging, but it is important to maintain that ambition. Further improvement will require external investment. Preparatory work is underway to support a business case for a wind turbine in Gogerddan. If successful, this would place us very close to the 30% target.

4. There are several new senior appointments: Fran Carey, who attended the strategy morning; and Professors Engobo Emeseh and Homagni Choudhury as Head of Law and Criminology, and Business, respectively. Both are returners to Aberystwyth and the University.

5. An update was provided on the professional services review. As previously communicated, the University issued the s.188 letter at the end of August outlining a reduction in the number of roles across professional services. The number of people affected is continuing to decrease as we have continued to look at ways of mitigation, via vacancies, voluntary redundancy and other opportunities across the University. There are still individuals at risk, but those numbers continue to decline. At different stages of consultation (some completed restructures, some have just closed). Lot of individuals currently impacted. As we are in collective consultation we are meeting weekly with TU. The dialogue has been challenging but has continued to be engaging and constructive. The area with highest numbers of concerns and queries to date is Academic Registry. It connects with most areas of the University, so it is not unexpected, but officers are currently working through responses to that consultation. It is proposed that an overview of the organisational issues arising from the collective consultation is provided to GCC, who will decide whether anything needs to be escalated to Council [**ACTION**: GCC].

6. As with the move to two faculties, we are rolling out a development programme around team building and ways of working, to support people through this period of change. In some cases, people are responding more regarding changes to ways of working than to wider risks. As with the voluntary severance programme, meetings will take place with heads to understand the impact, carrying out stress audits and assessing workloads. Members noted that there is a good degree of assurance that the processes are being managed well, which also came through the feedback from Unions. GCC will have the opportunity to dig into some of the key points and bring assurance back to Council.

7. The three campus Trade Unions conducted a joint survey at the end of May. This was very positive in that the University was asked for views on questions in advance and was provided with a summary report of responses. An action plan based on the recommendations will be shared with GCC. The Trade Unions are balloting for industrial action nationally, though this is not a local matter or reflecting the situation in Aberystwyth. The University is mindful of changes as a result of the Employment Rights Bill, but the impact will depend on timing.

8. The Pro Vice-Chancellor Research provided an update on research activities. The University is continuing to secure a range grant funding, from large grants to smaller amounts of money from the police, Welsh Government and Welsh Water. There has been positive recognition in the number of our academics selected to sit on REF panels being the highest ever, including chairing panels.

9. There are ongoing challenges with Welsh Government getting things through the Senedd, such as the budget not being passed. This will have an impact if not agreed. The Chief Financial Officer has therefore asked to plan for that eventuality as it would have an impact on our cash flow if funds were not released as expected.

10. Various reviews and consultations have taken place around apprenticeships, but Universities Wales were not permitted to take part in the Senedd review, so our collective feedback was not considered. Higher Education was also excluded from Medr's pre-consultation. Overall, we are keen to look at and support apprenticeships,

but opportunities for engagement are difficult. The UK government recently announced the removal of the 50% target for higher education with 75% of young people under 25 now in apprenticeships, FE or HE. This can be seen as both a potential threat and an opportunity.

11. In England, a review of the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) is taking place. Wales no longer participates in TEF. Tiered fees based on TEF ranking are being considered, which may have potential implications and unintended consequences for English students coming to Wales.

12. Westminster Government has made the decision to impose on universities a 6% levy on international fees, which is estimated to cost the sector £600m. That money will be channelled into maintenance grants for English students, in some subjects only. The levy will not apply in Wales, at least at the present time.

13. Discussion took place around what our overall tariff position in terms of home undergraduate students is, and whether this has an impact on the type of students. We have not yet done the calculation on the current intake, but last year, our tariff was around 122-123 on average and has been broadly similar for a while. We implemented the same grade levels as last year, but slightly earlier in the process, at confirmation. **[ACTION**: Head of Planning to report on tariffs at the November meeting of Council, once calculations have been completed on the current intake**]**. More students have joined us this year on a foundation year. We need to think about the wider context and offers from competitors. Need discussion about where we position ourselves. We are mindful that there is a cost to us to get students to the appropriate level to help them succeed. The number of our students who declare a disability is also significantly above the sector benchmark, and there is a cost to the levels of support required. The knock-on effect for tariffs becomes challenging.

14. Some technical issues arose during clearing which were addressed quickly. There was an issue with exporting data which delayed the transfer of offers to academics so they could have conversations in the afternoon. All phone calls were made but were not as timely as we would have wished. There was no material impact, and the Clearing process went better than last year. The volume of phone calls was not close to expectation, but there were better results. This is evidence that we need to change our thinking to reflect that Clearing is no longer a single day but covers the three weeks after results day. Applicant behaviour is changing, with delayed decision making.

15. The new faculties have been in operation for a month. The new faculty executives are in place, and early reports are that those meetings have been positive. Training and support for the new AFPVC roles is in place. There is evidence of very positive cross-faculty working led by the AFPVCs. An area of concern in those areas is the Academic Registry.

NOTED

16. Members noted the report.

8. REPORT BY UNDEB ABERYSTWYTH

RECEIVED

Report by Millie Hackett, Undeb Aberystwyth President and Nanw Maelor, Welsh Culture Officer and UMCA President (COU2526-006)

NOTED

1. The Chair thanked the Undeb officers for their detailed report, and for the briefing they and their Executive provided to members the previous day.

2. Engagement is high, with membership of Team Aber after welcome week standing at 12%, showing an improvement on the same point in time last year. Volunteer activity is already strong, in terms of student numbers, hours of time given, and demonstration and development of skills.

3. UMCA held many events at the National Eisteddfod and engaged with former members, many of whom were interested in plans for Hen Goleg. Welcome week saw students welcomed to Pantycelyn and successful social events held on campus and in the town. A celebration of Welsh culture event was also jointly hosted with the Academic Officer.

4. Officer priorities include reassessments, engagement and belonging, employability, wellbeing, promotion of Welsh language and culture, and additional focus on working with the BAME community.

5. Members noted that, over the last few years, money has been allocated to meet the Race Equality Charter and to progress anti-racism action plans and questioned whether this filters through to student activities. University officers confirmed that the Medr funding was specifically to enable the University to go for the Charter award. There would be an impact on students, including representation on groups, and supporting activities such as decolonising the curriculum, but not directly funding activity. Members noted that GCC has requested more detail from the anti-racism plan so Council will delegate that activity to look at a more joined up approach.

RESOLVED

6. To consider what support Council could offer to Undeb Aberystwyth to assist with officer objectives [**ACTION**: GCC].

9. FINANCIAL MATTERS

1. <u>Management Accounts update</u>

RECEIVED

Report by Simon Crick, Chief Financial Officer (COU2526-007).

NOTED

1. The position reported at the end of the year is a £2.7m deficit, which is £300k positive and also shows a slight improvement on the prediction at quarter three. The audit is underway so there is a caveat that things may change subject to that, but officers are not expecting that to be the case.

2. Savings of c£14.3 have been delivered during the year. Some of those savings are recurrent, such as a reduction in the consumables budget and reduced staff costs, while others are non-recurring measures, such as deferring the pay award and managing vacancies. Members sought confirmation on the balance of recurrent and non-recurrent savings, and officers confirmed the proportion as roughly 1/3 non-recurrent savings and 2/3 recurrent savings, which are built into 2025-26 position. Members specifically acknowledged the significance of the savings achieved to date and the consequences of not reaching those targets.

3. The cash position has improved year-on-year, and the University is holding more cash at year end than the previous year end. This does include the additional £6m endowment drawdown that we are holding.

4. Covenants were discussed at the last meeting and that is now in place, following a very positive meeting with the bank in September. Officers confirmed that the external auditors could not give an opinion as to whether the waiver would need to be declared in annual accounts, and that discussions are ongoing.

5. Members noted the reference to Shapecast and sought clarification as to their role. Shapecast have been supporting the Executive's work around the nine plans and are working with plan owners to identify the activities that need to be undertaken, timing, and interdependencies. This will provide a pattern for next few years. Alongside this work will be the development of the strategy management office, which will monitor delivery against the KPIs.

6. Members acknowledged that the scale of the savings achieved in one year for a university of our size is phenomenal, and that this says a lot about our culture. A discussion took place around how this cultural change can be sustained to avoid having to go through significant efficiency savings and restructures again, and to ensure that we continue to be an efficient and sustainable institution.

7. Institutionally, we need to recognise that change is inevitable, and to set ourselves up to be able to change as part of normal operation, and to adapt more easily and with less disruption. The current position is difficult as there are fewer staff but the same amount of work. As was experienced during the SIP process, if processes and ways of working do not change, more staff will be needed again. To achieve this will require investment in our infrastructure and our people, which is recognised in the finance plan.

8. As well as agility and ways of working, behaviour is also important. A prudent mindset is necessary to guard against being back in the same position and to be clear that, in spite of the excellent work done to date, we are only part of the way there. An important message is that we planned to achieve a £3m deficit and we reduced it further, to £2.7m, so our targets are very much achievable. Hope is important for staff morale.

9. Members sought clarification of the extent to which the long-term vision has been rolled out to staff. A strategy event was held in May, setting out our mission and values, which was well attended and received broadly positive feedback. Areas of improvement were identified and have informed upcoming events in November, which will be smaller and will focus on the plans to deliver the strategy, including the opportunity to interact with plan owners and deliverers. Before attending, staff will watch a short video by the Vice-Chancellor, explaining

how the plans link to the strategy and how they will shape our planning over the coming years.

10. Members raised the issue of a staff survey, which it was confirmed will be picked up by GCC. Officers are currently exploring types of survey and associated costs. A proposal will be taken to the Executive and will explore the key considerations of timing and what we want to achieve [**ACTION**: Bring to GCC].

RESOLVED

11. Members wished to place on record their thanks to the Chief Financial Officer and team, and the Executive, for reaching this point along the journey to financial stability.

2. <u>Indicative Income</u>

RECEIVED

Report by Simon Crick, Chief Financial Officer (COU2526-008).

NOTED

1. The paper is based on student numbers as of 1 September. Weekly updates have been provided over recent weeks, reflecting the fluid nature of some aspects of University activity, and the ongoing recruitment cycle. In terms of our main income source, we are close to where we expected to be against predictions. This is positive and allows us to focus on delivering next year, rather than rebalancing the budget.

2. Although it is early days, there are no pressures in income in other areas currently identified. There are some areas of risk around pricing and trading, and these will need to be monitored throughout the year.

3. The main balance to get right for next year's budget will be the savings target. [redacted] Officers are comfortable that the institution is on course to deliver those savings.

4. There are still some risks against that position, and these will be reported and managed through the year. The pay award has now been settled and was paid to staff in August. This was a lower sum than was provided for in the budget and there is potential for investment of those funds to enable some quick wins or activities in support of next year's recruitment position.

5. Outside of the University's control are rising inflation, which may put pressure on consumable budgets, and the upcoming budget in November. Overall, the budget set is realistic and, if delivered, will allow us to deliver our agreed cash flow. Discussions are ongoing around asset sales, and these are built into cashflow projections, but not expenditure. The additional funding from the Pentre Jane Morgan site was received in September, and officers are working through all matters discussed in previous meetings.

6. We have assumed no inflationary uplift in tuition fees. Discussions around a possible increase are ongoing within UK government, which Welsh Government would be likely to follow. Due to the uncertainty, an uplift has not been included in projections.

7. Members questioned whether the January intake will help to offset the shortfall from the September intake. Officers confirmed that there will be a boost to student numbers but, with a separate budget for January, the intake will not be enough to make up the shortfall from September.

8. Members sought assurance on the performance of AberOnline. The intake is roughly 3 months behind where we would like to be. Longer term projections are to reach a steady state of 500 students, and, following recent discussions with the partner, and noting that their worst-performing partner has not fallen below 500, we are confident that this will happen. Not included in projections are courses we have since decided to bring online, such as a BPS-accredited Psychology MSc, where we are working through accreditation challenges, and some Education courses. We are also looking at Nursing. None of these were in the initial budget, so there will be an increase in costs in the short term. [redacted]

9. A discussion was had around whether there are longer-term implications around pay and how levels of pay will impact on engagement, turnover, and productivity. Part of the professional services reviews has involved looking at benchmarking. Some areas are more challenging than others in terms of attraction, such as IT. UCEA negotiations end at grade 9 and we need to look at what is currently a very broad salary range above that, which causes issues with attracting and retaining staff. The ongoing pay dispute is also causing challenges to progress around addressing wider issues such as compression of the pay spine on lower salaries. Officers noted a conscious decision had been made to implement the pay award this year, rather than to defer again, in contrast to some universities who have deferred 2 years running.

10. Members discussed overheads and contributions for different students, and whether it is possible to identify what a student is 'worth'. In planning conversations, we are working towards a developing a target contribution for different types of activities and different types of teaching, research and other activities. Work is ongoing as part of the Finance plan to develop those models, so faculties and departments understand where they are against targets. Conversations can take place across the Executive to increase familiarity and understanding and to enable us to embed this into the way we work and plan. Alongside this is work to understand the true cost of what we do, such as running the farms or the Arts Centre, and how that is optimised against our strategic ambitions. Different delivery models are also being considered and how they might make better use of our assets and facilities.

RESOLVED

11. Members noted the report.

3. <u>Key Performance Indicators</u>

NOTED

1. Members noted that the nine plans as presented during the morning briefing session all have associated KPIs which are indicators of success strategically and agreed that these would be a good starting point for Council.

2. Plans and their KPIs should feed into relevant committees, with some escalated to Council. There may also be areas that are not specifically covered in the plans, but which are considered important to Council. An example would be the governance pillars from the morning briefing session. [**ACTION:** Chairs of the committees to take the governance questions from the briefing session to identify what evidence we want in order to reach that level of assurance.]

3. The purpose of the KPIs was discussed, and that there is a set of delivery KPIs measuring delivery and impact of the plans but also set of KPIs that address the question of assurance at board level. The possibility of a balance score card approach was mentioned, with escalation from sub-committees of some delivery indicators coming from the Executive regarding progress on delivery of the plans.

4. Members discussed the principles on which any KPIs should be based, including the aim to take an aggregated view as much as possible. These are 'our' institutional KPIs and should be reused by Council, monitoring only what is needed for assurance. Also discussed was the difficulty in measuring something entirely out of our control, such as league tables, as measuring can be varied and changeable and may be of importance only to specific markets. It is important to measure impact rather than volume, acknowledging that there may be limitations on the data we have available, so what do we have available, and how can that meet our needs without additional burden.

5. Suggestions were made to look at KPIs that are not static, but which evolve based on issues we expect to face at different times of the year, such as recruitment or retention; as well as the possibility of setting an acceptable range, rather than the traditional single number.

RESOLVED

6. To start initial discussions at the Chairs' meeting.

10. OLD COLLEGE

RECEIVED

Report by Professor Anwen Jones, Pro Vice-Chancellor, Education and Student Experience, and Jim O'Rourke, Project Manager (COU2526-009)

NOTED

1. The decision made by the Executive on the financial model for initial stage of the hospitality and leisure aspect of the Old College operational phase.

2. The aim is to provide in November as clear as possible a view on the final financial envelope for construction completion. [**ACTION**: Anwen to present to Council briefing in November the key challenges of the project, and what the end product looks like, showing how the different activities, spaces and audiences fit together.]

3. An options paper was drawn up by the architects for consideration by the Executive, on ways of increasing the number of bedrooms. [redacted] A commitment to develop the Cambria project, which does provide the potential for 34 additional bedrooms as per plans, was reiterated. Discussions are ongoing with the hotel partner in planning for delivery of the Cambria, with a timeline of approximately 3 years.

4. Members discussed the £2m extra funding from Welsh Government and questioned whether this is additional money for activity to which we have already committed, or whether it brings further obligations. Officers are content that it enables us to progress with as little change as possible whilst benefitting from an increased contribution, and that there are no onerous expectations.

5. Officers acknowledged that there is a difficult period ahead and that, although we are content that we are managing the risks, the risks are multiplying and will continue to do so for the next 12-18 months.

6. Members requested an indication of type of risks being envisaged, which officers provided, whilst noting these are against a background of successful risk management to date. [redacted]

7. There is a need to understand the sum of kitting out. [redacted]

8. Members reflected that, although the project can be a distraction to the Executive and has an all-round impact on resources, such as cashflow and procurement, the project and its successful delivery also provides significant opportunities.

9. Given the complexity and dual element of construction and operationalisation, members questioned whether the Pro Vice-Chancellor has the right advisors around them internally and/or externally. There is good infrastructure on the construction

project, including solicitors, architects, and building services; and support from the Interim Director of Estates has been invaluable. Having a hotel partner onboard earlier would have been helpful, but they are now providing the right advice. It may be helpful to revisit this area after the November briefing.

10. To raise awareness, have we considered inviting a TV company into the building? This has been discussed but was not thought appropriate during the construction phase, but is certainly a good idea for the future, post-completion. Members noted the recent increase in social media activity as being very positive and engaging, focusing on the quality of workmanship and highlighting the complexity of the project.

11. Members sought assurance that, if the building is to become more integrated into day-to-day university business, the ambition of Hen Goleg can still be delivered after the professional services review. Officers confirmed that those thought processes are underway regarding structures and staffing. Conversations have begun to socialise ideas around integrating our culture and arts offer between the Old College and the Arts Centre and its advisory group.

RESOLVED

12. Members noted the report

Professor Anwen Jones left the meeting

11. GOVERNANCE MATTERS

1. Annual Report on the responsibilities of Council members

RECEIVED

Report by Dr Gwawr Taylor, University Secretary and Director of Welsh Language (COU2526-010).

NOTED

1. The report, which serves to remind Council members of their responsibilities as governors and trustees of the University, with a particular emphasis on the requirements of the Funding Council.

RESOLVED

2. Members noted the report and were content with the responsibilities.

12. CORPORATE RISK REGISTER

RECEIVED

Report by Helen Eustace, Head of Planning and Sarah Taylor, Head of Strategic Development (COU2526-011)

NOTED

1. Following discussions at ARAC the University Executive have proposed a revised approach to risk management, which provides a strategic focus on organisational risk and operational focus on delivery risks. It aligns risk management at strategic level and aligns with the university plans. It reflects the current view of high-level strategic risk and hopefully provides assurance around the focus on those high-level risks and actions and controls against them. The plans and their delivery will be the main control of the actions and will form part of the regular reporting cycle.

2. The intention is that the register will be an evolving picture and should change, including any risks on the University's radar, and that the emphasis should not be on the number of risks. It was noted that the recent ARAC had a discussion regarding the Old College and the appropriate level of risk, and it was clear that, with fewer risks to deep dive into, it was much easier to do it properly.

3. Going forward, we need to consider a framework within which committees take a role in deep diving some risks. Although ARAC will retain overall oversight, it will inform how other committees pick up relevant risks. [**ACTION**: Chair of ARAC to take ideas from the Executive to the Chairs' meeting ahead of a formal recommendation being tabled.]

4. A discussion took place around cyber security, and a temperature check as to where we are now, with the double risk of an attack on site, or a direct hacking attack. How ready are we to respond? There is regular reporting into the Executive around activity and our response, which has been positive. There are strategic changes that should reduce our risk or provide greater assurance around that risk. Our comparative position is that we are doing well compared to our peers. Members questioned whether, in terms of cyber security, benchmarking against other HE institutions is a good measure, and also how will we know when we have achieved 'good'? Relevant industry accreditations are an option, and this is part of the work in the Infrastructure plan as well as the review of ITS.

5. Members discussed the fact that although there a target score is included, there is no target date for mitigating the risk and delivering the actions. It was felt that the target date against the actions is the priority and is more measurable.

6. Discussions around risk appetite, and whether, if we are tolerating a risk for such a long period of time, we perhaps have a higher risk appetite than is reflected in the register. It may be that we can put many mitigations in, but there is still a fundamentally high risk to the institution. That decision has been accepted and therefore our appetite is higher than articulated.

7. Members scrutinised the absence of a health and safety and fire compliance risk on the University Risk Register and questioned how such risks differ from those included. ARAC's concern over health and safety audit reports was escalated to the Chairs to ensure it was owned by the relevant committee. Reassurance was provided to the committee by discussions that showed a systematic structure and thought process that was not visible in the audit. Conversations are taking place across different committees, which provide assurance, but there is perhaps a gap in documenting. We need to be clear that the absence of a risk on the University Risk Register does not mean it does not exist and is not being managed, via a departmental risk register. In the case of health and safety, internal audit reports will continue to feed through to GCC as they have previously.

RESOLVED

8. To discuss assurance around health and safety risks at the Chairs' meeting and within both ARAC and GCC [**ACTION**: Governance Department].

9. To take the question of whether a health and safety risk should be on the University Risk Register to the Executive for discussion [**ACTION**: University Secretary].

13. DOCUMENTS AFFIXED WITH THE COMMON SEAL

RECEIVED

Report by Helen Davies, Governance Officer (COU2526-012)

NOTED

Members noted the two documents to which the seal had been affixed since the last meeting, namely the agreement with Chawton House and USS, and the AUPAS deed.

14. ANY OTHER BUSINESS, MEETING REVIEW, AND FUTURE BUSINESS

Officers reported that the University had tendered to take over Learn Welsh provision in the Vale of Glamorgan, and that the bid was successful. This aligns well with the University's strategic objectives and resulted in very good feedback from the National Centre for Learning Welsh, which is positive ahead of the establishment of Athrofa in 2027.

Members offered their congratulations and noted that the model exactly reflects the University's aim of diversity of delivery.

The next meeting will be held on 24 November 2025.

The meeting finished at 4.50pm.