

## Joint Meeting of Economic Development Committee and Education and Lifelong Learning Committee

**Date** 23 May 2001  
**Time** 1.30 – 3pm  
**Venue** Committee Room 3, National Assembly for Wales Building.

### Attendance

<b>Members</b>	<b><i>Constituency</i></b>
Cynog Dafis (Chair, ELL) – in the Chair	Mid and West Wales
Christine Gwyther (Chair, EDC)	Carmarthen West and South Pembrokeshire
Alun Cairns	South Wales West
Christine Chapman	Cynon Valley
Glyn Davies	Mid and West Wales
Ron Davies	Caerphilly
Mike German (Economic Development Minister)	South Wales East
Alison Halford	Delyn
Brian Hancock	Islwyn
Phil Williams	South Wales East
Lorraine Barrett	Cardiff South and Penarth
Eleanor Burnham	North Wales
Jane Davidson (Education Minister)	Pontypridd
Janice Gregory	Ogmore

Pauline Jarman	South Wales Central
Gareth Jones	Conwy
Huw Lewis	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney
Jonathan Morgan	South Wales Central
Alan Pugh	Clwyd West

## **Substitutions**

Janet Davies substituted for Dafydd Wigley, and Brian Gibbons substituted for Val Feld, for this part of the meeting.

## **Officials**

David Pritchard	Director, Economic Development Department
Richard Davies	Director, Training and Education Department
Rachael Clancy	Office of the Counsel General

## **External Contributors**

Graham Moore	Executive Director, Strategic Projects WDA
Steve Martin	Chief Executive, ELWa
Sheelagh Keyse	Employment Service
Ray Collier	Careers Wales

## **Secretariat**

John Grimes	Clerk EDC
Sian Wilkins	Deputy Clerk – EEC

Chris Reading

Clerk ELL

Holly Pembridge

Deputy Clerk, ELL

### **Chair's opening remarks.**

1.1 Cynog Dafis welcomed Members to the meeting and said that he had agreed with Chris Gwyther that he would Chair this joint session of the 2 Committees.

1.2 He gave apologies for Dafydd Wigley was represented by Janet Davies and for Val Feld who was represented by Brian Gibbons. He referred to the declaration of Interests of ELL Members shown in the papers. No other Member at the meeting declared any interest.

### **Item 1: Joint Discussion on Corus**

*1.3 The Chair said that the purpose of the meeting was to scrutinise the Ministers' package of assistance to mitigate the effects of the job losses at the Corus Plants.*

1.4 The Economic Development Minister introduced his paper saying that what was proposed was a good package that had been carefully constructed well in advance of its announcement and while negotiations between the Unions and Corus were coming to an end. He referred to the strategic framework being developed by the All Wales Steel Taskforce and its executive group of officials which was due to meet the following day in Ebbw Vale. Their first task would be to consider a scoping report which would first lead to a development of a strategy for South East Wales. The Minister outlined the elements of the package contained within the paper and noted that the ISERBS (Iron and Steel Employees Re-adaptation Benefit Scheme) scheme required secondary legislation before payments could begin. He emphasised that the payment, which amounted to £2,500 per head, was made up of half UK money and half EU money. He said it would be administered by the DTI and the arrangements were expected to be in place by the end of August.

1.5 Graham Moore spoke about the action being taken by the WDA to assist the development of the Corus sites. He noted that they all were different and it was important for the Agency to respond to the circumstances of each and in close co-operation with local organisations and bodies. He said that the impact of the closure was greatest in South East Wales and commented that a lot of recent economic development work had been based on there being steel works in place at Ebbw Vale and Newport. It was necessary to take note of the broader picture and not to be bound by administrative boundaries, since the workforce affected by the closures came from a much wider area. They were currently undertaking a scoping exercise of a spatial planning study for South East Wales in conjunction with all the local authorities in the area.

1.6 The Minister for Education and Lifelong Learning introduced the support measures contained in her paper. She said that these were closely allied to the ED Minister's packages. She said she wanted to pay tribute to ELWa, Careers Wales and the Employment Service for the way they have stepped up gear to

respond to the announced job losses. They had established advice centres at all the sites and were providing comprehensive advice tailored to the specific needs of individuals. These services were available on an equal footing across Wales. She emphasised the broad range of this advice and the critical importance of the National Assembly working closely in partnership with all agencies in the area. She also commended the work of the Unions. The Minister said that she was able to announce at this meeting that £300,000 had been made available by the National Assembly over a three year period under the Wales Union Learning Fund for the ISTC's Modern Employment Skills for Steelworkers under Threat of Redundancy project. The Minister was hopeful that the ISTC's ESF project would be approved

1.7 Steve Martin of ELWa emphasised the importance of proceeding in partnership with the other agencies. He said ELWa would effectively utilise the additional resources given to them to respond to the redundancies. He noted that the challenges were greater in some areas than others as the needs of individuals varied enormously. He said that it was important to have regard also to the needs of the communities affected by the job losses and particularly those where there were already high unemployment and low skill levels.

1.8 Ray Collier of Careers Wales commented on the wide-ranging impact of the job losses and the echoed the need for organisations to be flexible and to work with their partners in adjacent areas. The Careers Wales Companies undertook formal assessments of the needs of individuals, often having regard to the overall needs of their families. In some cases they would help them back into further education to enable them to develop new skills. He emphasised the importance of considering peoples needs in the long-term.

1.9 Sheelagh Keyse of the Employment Service endorsed what the previous speakers had said. She emphasised that despite the fact that a large number of people were seeking help, it was important to tailor the advice given to the needs of the individual.

1.10 In the discussion a number of points were raised:

- a. While considerable sums of money had been referred to in the proposals, these needed to be considered in the context of the number of job losses. Relating this to the National Economic Development Strategy, the target was to create 5000 jobs over and above the number that had been identified in NEDS. It was noted that training support of £5.75m represented only about £1,100 per job. While training for people to move into the new high-tech industries typically cost perhaps £3,000 -£5,000 per job, training of this order would not be needed by everyone. At this stage it was difficult to assess how many people would fall into such a category but ELWa's experience was that the average was about 25%. It was emphasised that it was important to be flexible.
- b. Concern was expressed about where the cost of funding this package had come from and whether, if it was from within National Assembly, resources it would be at the expense of other programmes. Particular reference was made to the £100m consequential. The Economic Development Minister assured the meeting that no part of the £50m quoted in the package came from the latter. The Economic Development Minister confirmed that he expected Corus to meet the cost of reclaiming the sites which would be closed and also to contribute to their further development. He could not give more detail at the present, because negotiations with the company were continuing, but he was working on the basis of obtaining from them maximum recompense and a sizeable contribution to the £50m.. He confirmed that he would not expect National Assembly money to go towards meeting responsibilities falling to Corus such as the reclamation of the sites.
- c. Members stressed the importance of trying to enable people to transfer 'seamlessly' to new jobs. Ministers confirmed the importance of this which needed to be viewed as part of a long-term

process. Members asked to receive regular reports on progress and the ELL Minister agreed to provide these to ELL and to copy them to EDC. She stressed that she thought it important to undertake, in due course, a thorough evaluation of the effectiveness of the measures taken – this could be valuable if the Assembly was faced with responding to another major closure.

- d. Members expressed concern that the ISERBS programme was narrowly defined and expressed the view that it should be available to sub contractors and workers in other independent companies who were dependent upon Corus for their livelihood. The ED Minister explained that the criteria were very complex and eligibility was specifically confined to those working on a process inextricably linked to steel making. He added that it was not available to people who were classified as long-term sick. He emphasised that the circumstances of the individual contractors would need to be looked at carefully and that each would be considered on their merits. He commented that because the scheme operated under the Treaty of Paris there was less flexibility than might apply in other situations.
- e. Concern was expressed that Corus might find it to their advantage not to clean up the sites but the ED Minister there was no indication of this. He thought that it was generally in the company's interests to make them available to be released.
- f. Members commented on the £2m for additional business support referred to in the ED Minister's paper and expressed the view that this was not a great deal. The Minister indicated that this money was additional to existing support programmes, but to some extent the amount to be allocated to different programmes was difficult judge at the current time. The figures could be revised in the light of experience – and it was noted that the package included £5m for contingencies.
- g. Members were concerned about alleviating the impact of the closure on the businesses in the company's supply chain and asked whether the WDA were actively looking to assist these or simply responding to calls for help. Graham Moore commented that it was not easy to be proactive in this respect because of contractual issues between Corus and suppliers. Nonetheless, they were doing whatever they could to help suppliers.
- h. Members welcomed the fact that a large number of bodies was working together to help people at Corus and emphasised that it was important that the arrangements were not confusing to the people they were trying to assist. The ELL Minister thought this was unlikely to be the case as they had established centres on each site and these and the other support organisations were well-sign posted. She emphasised that what was being offered was not simply a 'one-off' advice but help over a period of time.
- i. The ELL Minister said she was unable to quote formal targets for numbers of people being assisted because she did not feel it was right to work in this way. Every individual's needs, and the support required, were different and it was important to look to meeting these not merely to 'clocking up' numbers of interviews.
- j. The ED Minister noted that reclaiming and redeveloping the Corus sites plants could not be done in a short space of time. His best estimate was that the earliest a clear site could be available was in 2005 and so it was important to look now at what other sites were available for development. Members commented that clean sites and new premises were not sufficient on their own it was important to provide a full range of support and infrastructure to enable new businesses to be developed and located there.
- k. Members expressed concern that action should be taken to reduce the risk of closures like this happening again and also that the Assembly should try to anticipate and minimise the impact of such job losses in the future.
- l. Particular concern was expressed about the situation at Ebbw Vale where employment centred on the steel works. The ED Minister said that an important aim would be to help the town to develop a more diverse economy. In addition, he aimed to develop road and rail links to the heads of the valleys.
- m. Concern was also expressed about the areas lying between Ebbw Vale and Newport which

depended on the steel works for employment and which were suffering from job losses at other plants in their own areas.

## **Minutes of the Education and Lifelong Learning Committee Session**

**Date** 23 May 2001  
**Time** 3.15 – 5.30pm  
**Venue** Committee Room 3, National Assembly for Wales Building.

### **Attendance:**

#### ***Members***

Cynog Dafis, Chair	Plaid Cymru	Mid and West Wales
Jane Davidson, Assembly Minister	Labour	Pontypridd
Lorraine Barrett	Labour	Cardiff South and Penarth
Eleanor Burnham	Liberal Democrat	North Wales
Janice Gregory	Labour	Ogmore
Gareth Jones	Plaid Cymru	Conwy
Huw Lewis	Labour	Merthyr Tydfil and Rhymney

Jonathan Morgan

Conservative

South Wales Central

Alun Pugh

Labour

Clwyd West

### **Committee Secretariat**

Chris Reading

Clerk

Holly Pembridge

Deputy Clerk

### **Officials**

Richard Davies

Director, National Assembly Training and Education Department

Tom Hunter

Higher Education Division

Catrin Huws

Office of the Counsel General

### **Apologies**

Pauline Jarman

### **Substitutions**

None

### **Declarations of Interest**

Cynog Dafis Registered Teacher

Jane Davidson Registered Teacher

Huw Lewis Registered Teacher

Lorraine Barrett School Governor

Pauline Jarman Member of Court of Governors, University of Cardiff; and Leader of Rhondda Cynon Taff County Borough Council

Gareth Jones Registered Teacher; and Member of Conwy County Borough Council

### **Chair's Opening Remarks**

The Chair informed the Committee that further to his minute, incorporating legal advice, sent to all

Committee Members on the morning of the 23 May 2001, he was prepared to accept a written motion from Huw Lewis on the topic of the paper presented to the Committee by Dayfdd Glyn Jones on 17 May 2001. Huw Lewis and Janice Gregory had felt that the tone of the paper was xenophobic and sexist and that it should be expunged from the record and completely disregarded by the Committee. A meeting had been held on the evening of 22 May 2001 between the Chair, the Clerk, Marie Knox (Head of Committee Secretariat), Huw Lewis and Janice Gregory to discuss this matter. Lorraine Barrett had also attended this meeting. The Chair proposed that in order to make the most effective use of the Committee's time at this meeting, this issue should be debated and voted on at the Committee meeting on 13 June 2001. The Committee was then invited to comment on this matter.

The following issues were raised in discussion:

- Huw Lewis stated that as a matter of principle, the committee should disregard this material because it was offensive. Huw Lewis had written a letter to the Western Mail newspaper, outlining his concern about this matter. Huw Lewis accepted that this material could not be expunged from the record.
- The Chair believed that his decision to postpone a vote on a motion, which Huw Lewis intended to propose, until the next Committee meeting on 13 June 2001, was correct.. The Chair ruled that a discussion about this motion would not occur at this meeting but at the next Committee meeting on June 13<sup>th</sup>. In support of this decision, the Chair quoted paragraph five from the Presiding Officer's Guidelines Issued in Accordance with Standing Order 8.17 (Motions in Committee). He added that it was extremely important that a motion was presented in advance of the Committee meeting.
- Huw Lewis stated that in his view, paragraph five of the Presiding Officer's Guidance on 'Motions in Committee', was ambiguous: the Committee had the right to agree to postpone a discussion regarding a motion. Huw Lewis stated that maybe the Chair wanted to postpone discussing the proposed motion until after the General Election. The Chair said that he found Huw Lewis's reference to the General Election insulting and that his decision to postpone the discussion of this motion was based entirely on principle.
- In accordance with paragraph five, the Chair reminded the Committee that there were three possibilities:
  - "A committee may agree to postpone the vote on a motion proposed;
  - A committee member may request such a postponement; or
  - The chair may rule that the vote on a motion proposed shall be postponed until a future meeting, when he or she considers that the proper conduct of the business makes it appropriate to do so."

The Chair informed the Committee that his decision was based on the third option. He had also taken advice from impartial individuals: Marie Knox (Head of Branch, Committee Secretariat) and the Clerk to the Committee, Chris Reading. The Chair then invited Members to comment on his ruling.

- Jonathan Morgan stated that he did not agree with the Chair's interpretation of paragraph five, as in his view it was ambiguous, or the Chair's ruling on this matter. He referred to paragraph five, "*the committee may agree to postpone,*" and suggested that further guidance be sought and that paragraph five should be further reformed by the Business Committee. The Chair informed Jonathan Morgan that he had chosen the third option from the guidelines.
- Huw Lewis stated that he found it difficult to believe that a Committee could not challenge the ruling

of its Chair. He also asked if the Chair was inferring that as Chair, he had dictatorial powers over the Committee. Huw Lewis told the Chair that he was challenging him on this ruling and that the Standing Orders must be deficient. The Chair advised Huw Lewis that he had taken independent advice and was acting in accordance with the Standing Orders and the Presiding Officer's Guidance. Huw Lewis asked the Chair if he was overriding the will of the Committee. The Chair quoted the relevant part of Standing Order 8.17 - "Except where standing orders provide otherwise, the chair of a committee shall determine its procedures...."

- Gareth Jones added that, in his view, the Chair had taken independent, unbiased advice and that the Committee should respect and accept that decision. The Chair added that one of the options in paragraph five, "*where a committee member requests such a postponement...*" could be considered but there was no need for this to be done so as the Chair had the power to postpone a discussion. He added that just because he was postponing the discussion it did not mean he was closing the discussion. Eleanor Burnham suggested that the Committee take the advice of the Chair as he had clarified that he was not curtailing the discussion, just postponing it.
- Jonathan Morgan asked the Chair to give some justification as to the decision to postpone the discussion surrounding Huw Lewis's proposed motion, with regards to the proper conduct of business and why the Chair thought that an immediate discussion of the proposed motion would affect the proper conduct of business. The Chair responded that the proper conduct of business came under a broad interpretation. On the basis of the seriousness of the discussion/motion, it was only right, in terms of the proper conduct of business that the motion be presented beforehand, Members should see the motion before it was presented in order for the opportunity to table any amendments. The Chair regarded this matter as a matter of the highest significance.
- The Minister asked the Chair whether he could confirm that the timetable was made clear to those present at the meeting of the previous night: 22 May 2001. The Minister also commented that there was no reference in the minutes of the previous meeting (17 May 2001) for her request for Committee Secretariat and/or the Chair to filter material prior to presentation to the Committee and discern whether any material might be offensive to any Member on the Committee. The Minister stated that this question required a proper answer. Also, the Minister pointed out that there was no legal opinion related to the topics in the second paragraph of the Chair's minute circulated to Members. With reference to the Minister's first comment, the Chair answered that in the meeting of 22 May 2001, he had stated that he would accept the motion and take advice on when the motion would be discussed. Regarding the Minister's second comment concerning filtering material before it reached committee, the Chair said that he had been offended by the Minister's remarks on this in the previous meeting.
- Janice Gregory asked the Chair when he was going to let the Committee know when they could discuss the motion or when the Committee could challenge the Chair. She also asked whether the Chair thought that no-one would challenge him in the meeting today, especially in regard to the fact that a meeting had been held outside the Committee the previous evening (22 May 2001). The Chair responded that at this meeting (on the previous evening), he had assumed that the Committee would follow his lead. He then indicated that he would seek further guidance from the Presiding Officer.
- The Chair informed Huw Lewis that he could table his motion. Huw Lewis then tabled the following written motion:-

*"This committee notes with concern the contents of the paper 'The Quality and the Medium' by Dafydd Glyn Jones (ELL 09-01, (p.5)), presented as evidence to us as part of the Higher Education Review.*

*This committee believes that certain passages of the paper if they cannot be removed, could be construed as gratuitously offensive.*

*This committee resolves to set aside this paper, so as not to include it in evidence compiled for our final deliberations. We also call on our expert adviser not to include this paper as evidence considered for his report."*

- Gareth Jones stated that it was the first time that he had seen a motion presented formally in this way. He asked what rights he had to make amendments and when he was able to submit these. He commented whether a paper that was deemed "gratuitously offensive " was a matter for the Presiding Officer, rather than the Committee. The Chair responded that an opportunity for a structured debate would have to happen after the motion had been seen by all Members. The Chair informed Members that any amendments to the motion should be submitted to the Clerk at least two working days before the next meeting.

## **Item Two: Policy Review – Higher Education - Presentation by Trade Union Organisations**

***Papers: ELL 10-01 (p.3), (p.4), (p.5) and (p.6)***

2.1 Barry Johnson, (Assistant General Secretary) and Howard Moss (Swansea AUT) presented on behalf of the Association of University Teachers Wales (AUT); a hard copy of their slide presentation can be obtained from Committee Secretariat. Dr Len Arthur (NEC HE member) and Margaret Phelan (Regional Support Officer) presented on behalf of The University and College Lecturers' Union (NATFHE). Gruff Hughes (Deputy General Secretary) and Dilwyn Roberts Young (Member of the Colleges Department) presented on behalf of Undeb Cenedlaethol Athrawon Cymru (UCAC); a copy of their paper translated into English can be viewed at Annex B. Paul Elliott (Senior Regional Officer) and Keith Bolton, (Chair of Unison HE Committee Wales) presented on behalf of UNISON. Martin Mansfield (Regional Officer) presented on behalf of Manufacturing, Science and Finance, Wales (MSF Wales). The presenters/representatives from the Trade Union Organisations referred to their papers. Martin Mansfield of MSF did not provide a paper but briefly spoke of MSF's very large membership in the private sector. He added that universities needed more funding as this would only be beneficial to the growth of the economy.

2.2 The following issues were raised in discussion:

- Lorraine Barrett asked why UCAC's paper was only available to Members through the medium of Welsh. The Chair explained that the paper had been received a day in advance of the meeting and consequently could not have been translated in time. English versions would be distributed to Members as soon as they were available.
- The representatives from the Trade Unions were dissatisfied by the amount of time that they had been allocated to make presentations before the Committee. Huw Lewis agreed with this viewpoint and argued that "a seemingly arbitrarily chosen academic of capricious opinion " had been given more time than the whole of the trade union organisations put together at the previous meeting on 17 May 2001. The Chair responded that the Forward Work Programme had already been agreed by the Committee and that the Trade Unions had not come under one of the Key Themes also agreed

by the Committee. Therefore, the Unions had been accommodated within the available committee time, to accord with their convenience and the overall timetable of the review.

- Huw Lewis pointed out to Barry Johnson of AUT Wales that he expected the various comparison figures of Wales and Scotland, to show Scotland's spend to be 20% above that of Wales's spend. He pointed out that students in Scotland took degrees over four year periods and usually, in Wales, students pursued their studies over a three-year period. Barry Johnson undertook to check these figures.
- Members asked whether the presenters agreed with Dafydd Glyn Jones's (17 May 2001) idea of reducing the size of the University of Wales in order to educate a native and self-perpetuating elite. Margaret Phelan of NATFHE, replied that she did not represent all the Trade Unions but NATFHE did not agree with the ideas of Dafydd Glyn Jones. However, NATFHE did agree with Dafydd Glyn Jones that the present levels of Welsh Medium teaching in Wales were too low and therefore, unacceptable when a student could not be taught through the medium of Welsh. Margaret Phelan added that the views of the University Board of Welsh Medium Teaching were more appropriate to NATFHE. Dilwyn Roberts of UCAC stated that he had not attended the meeting on the 17 May 2001 but added that in UCAC's paper, the importance of attracting students from abroad and that such input was vital for the academic health of Wales. Gruff Hughes of UCAC added that it was not UCAC's policy to have just one institution; it would be more applicable to have a body that reviewed what was taught/learnt through the medium of Welsh. Gruff Hughes argued that Wales did have the core resources but some teachers who spoke (some) Welsh did not have the confidence to teach through the medium of Welsh.
- The Chair asked presenters to comment on Dafydd Glyn Jones's idea that students who were part of a Welsh Federal College, had a presence in every HEI in Wales. Dilwyn Roberts again commented that he had not seen or heard Dafydd Glyn Jones's presentation, so he would not be able to comment on this. Martin Mansfield of MSF Wales declared he had not seen Dafydd Glyn Jones's paper but he said that MSF Wales would not support his ideas and would have found his views objectionable. MSF Wales would advocate seeking to expand education opportunities to a wider number of people, not restricting these opportunities to a minority.
- Gareth Jones asked presenters to comment on the issue of funding, as it appeared to be one of the presenters' main concerns. Gareth Jones added that the existing government disagreed with this. Paul Elliott from UNISON responded that funding was important for underpinning the status of Higher Education Institutes (HEIs). He explained that in his view, the Tory years had seen competition increase between HEIs. Wales currently had 2.9 million people and this population base could not possibly sustain 13 institutions; Wales would have to compete throughout the world for students. Paul Elliott added that the University of Wales, Aberystwyth had recently enjoyed a successful recruitment campaign. For Wales to obtain parity of funding with England or Scotland was obviously in the interests of all concerned.
- The Minister thanked the Trade Unions for attending and responded to Gareth Jones's previous comment. The Minister said that the Assembly and herself had publicly acknowledged that Wales had not matched a similar unit of resource to England or Scotland. The Minister said that she had also discussed this issue of funding with the individual Unions. She added that the Assembly had recently put money into the funding of HEIs in Wales which had significantly closed the gap. However, the Secretary of State for Education and Employment in England, had recently provided further funding for England that had widened the gap again. The Minister argued that over time

Wales would look at a greater parity of funding with England or Scotland. The Minister informed the Committee that she absolutely acknowledged the Welsh Medium issues i.e. the lack of Welsh Medium teaching and this had been picked up in Estyn's report about the lack of opportunities through the medium of Welsh in the FE and HE sectors. This issue would be addressed when the ELL Committee addressed the Welsh Language Review, alongside the Culture Committee in Autumn 2001.

- The Chair asked Dr Len Arthur of NATFHE to expand on his point about how funding should promote collaboration and not competition; the Chair asked what financial resources would be needed to enable this restructuring to take place. Dr Len Arthur commented that there could be a foundation for a common validation across Wales e.g. library services and information Communication Technology (ICT). It was important that funding was available to alleviate the fear or the possibility of rationalisation and subsequent redundancies. Dr Arthur argued that the Funding Council would co-operate but only if directed by the National Assembly. Keith Bolton of UNISON, pointed out that during the course of the Committee's HE Review, he had noticed that the heads of HE collaborated amongst each other and also with the Committee. He added that Higher Education Wales (HEW) had "thrust"; there was plenty of collaboration in Wales.
- The Minister asked each union to comment how funding a small country's HEIs on a large scale could be incentivised and how could overseas students be encouraged to study in a HEI in Wales. The Minister also asked the presenters of each union to speculate on their respective members' interests in relation to third-mission funding. Dr Arthur replied that with regards to third mission funding, both basic and applied research needed to be supported. There were a number of schemes in place, such as Help Wales, that offered services subsidised by European schemes. The National Assembly and various agencies needed to look at schemes and assess any overlapping of such schemes as there was a lack of co-ordination in general. With regard to overseas students, Wales needed to be sold abroad, as nearly all institutions could offer internationally recognised degrees. Funding was important in order to attract overseas students. Dr Arthur expressed concern about the negative publicity that Higher Education in Wales had recently received. He added that one method of incentivisation would be to place staff on more stable contracts and remove casualisation. In his view, the Bett report should be implemented and the Equal Opportunities agenda addressed. Paul Elliott from UNISON added that smaller institutions had problems trying to cope and attract students. All universities would have to collaborate and a Welsh universities overseas marketing unit should be set up. Paul Elliott commented that he had been impressed by the Cardiff Quartet; he said that Wales was still very much unknown in the wider world. A clear goal and strategy was needed for all universities in Wales.
- Eleanor Burnham commented that any lack of investment was going to lead to social exclusion or increased poverty for students. The Chair informed the Union representatives that if they wanted to provide more details (written) information, they were welcome to do so.

### **Item Three: Minutes of 17 May Meeting**

#### ***Paper: ELL 09-01(mins)***

3.1 The Committee discussed the minutes of the previous meeting on 17 May 2001.

2. The following issues were raised in discussion:

- The Chair recommended that certain amendments be made:

Page 10 (first paragraph)

***Instead of***, "the Chair...it would have been more appropriate if Huw Lewis had approached the Chair with his concerns..."

**AMENDMENT:** " the Chair would have preferred if Huw Lewis had declared his intentions to propose a motion to strike off/or for the Committee not to consider Paper Five..."

Page 12 (second bullet point)

***Instead of***, " He stated that everyone following a certain percentage..., even one module would become eligible..."

**AMENDMENT:** " He stated that there was a case for anyone following a certain percentage of his or her studies through the medium of Welsh to become eligible for membership of the Welsh Federal College (WFC)..."

***The Committee agreed these amendments.***

- Huw Lewis raised the concern that the minutes did state that the Chair agreed for the motion to be brought up at the next meeting. The Chair responded that he would reflect on this.
- The Minister commented "I see no reference immediately in the minutes to the particular question that I raised at the end of the Committee last time on this issue; which was about the ability of either the Committee Secretariat or the Chair to look at material prior to presentations to Committee if it was felt there might be any difficulties because the material contained something which might be deemed offensive to any member of the Committee. Now, there is no legal advice related to that. It does not apparently appear in the Minutes and yet it is a question that I think required proper answer and it required proper answer before this Committee today..."
- Gareth Jones commented that he found the hostile atmosphere in this meeting unacceptable.

***The Committee then received a private briefing from the HE Review's Expert Advisor. Professor Les Hobson .***



## **Action Points Annex A**

- 1. To scrutinise the Minister, via her monthly report to committee, on the implementation of the £7 million package of measures to aid the education and training of workers affected by the CORUS redundancies.**
- 2. To make an English translation of UCAC' s paper (ELL 10-01 (p.5)) available to Members.**