
**WRITTEN STATEMENT
BY
THE WELSH GOVERNMENT**

TITLE **Statement on the Review of Higher Education Provision in North East Wales**

DATE **9 February 2012**

BY **Leighton Andrews, Minister for Education and Skills**

In July 2011 I published the Higher Education Council for Wales' (HEFCW's) advice on the recommended structure of the higher education sector set out in the *Future Structure of Higher Education in Wales* report. This report contained the recommendation that Glyndwr University should develop strong structural relationships with a range of further education colleges within a group structure led by Aberystwyth and Bangor Universities.

After considering the issues raised during the subsequent written engagement exercise, I made a statement to the Assembly on 29 November informing Members that I had not accepted HEFCW's advice with regard to North Wales. In keeping with the arguments expressed by a number of stakeholders, I considered that there was a case for considering more closely the existing pattern of provision in North East Wales and for examining further the options for securing greater regional coherence in the delivery of further and higher education.

I am now able to confirm that an independent Review Panel is to be established under the Chairmanship of Professor Sir Adrian Webb that will undertake the "Review of Higher Education Provision in North East Wales".

I have tasked the Panel with providing an informed, clear and unbiased opinion on what form of HE provision will best service the economic, social and learner needs of the region. Key objectives for the review will be:

- to establish what a comprehensive HE offering in North East Wales should look like;
- to determine the extent to which the existing pattern of HE provision reflects this offering; and
- to recommend new or improved models for delivery that take into account the demographic, social and economic profile of North East Wales and the need for there to be greater coherence in the delivery of further and higher education.

I will expect the Panel to gather and evaluate the best data, research and other evidence available. This will include gathering evidence from local stakeholders, including relevant trades unions and students.

The membership of the Review Panel will consist of individuals who are expert and experienced in their field, have a deep understanding of the breadth of HE provision (from international research to work based learning and widening access), together with an understanding of HE links with further education (FE) and employer needs and demands.

The members of the Review Panel will be:

- **Professor Sir Adrian Webb / Chair.** (Former Vice Chancellor University of Glamorgan; led a five star research facility and Chair of the Wales Employment and Skills Board; has also undertaken a wide range of high profile public service roles in Wales and Whitehall; Chair of the Independent Review of the Mission and Purpose of Further Education in Wales known as the “Webb Review” and member of the “Beecham Review” of the machinery of government in Wales);
- **Professor Mari Lloyd Williams** (Professor and Director of Academic Palliative and Supportive Care Studies and Honorary Consultant in Palliative Medicine at the University of Liverpool; Chair of Tenovus Psychosocial Advisory Committee; HEFCW Council member and member of the McCormick Review of Higher Education (HE) Governance); Past Member of General Medical Council Fitness to Practise Committee; Fellow Learned Society of Wales)
- **Professor Geraint Johnes** (Dean of Graduate Studies and Professor of Economics at the University of Lancaster; leading academic conducts research into labour economics and has a particular interest and expertise in the economics of education; also founding editor of the journal *Education Economics*);
- **John Stephenson** (Former Principal of Coleg Powys, Vice Principal of Beverley College and Head of Technology and Science East Yorkshire College; former Director and Chair of Fforwm and former Chair of the Welsh European Programme Executive).
- **Rt Hon Lord Jones PC** (MP for Alyn and Deeside and East Flint 1970 – 2001; former President Glyndwr University; numerous Parliamentary roles including Parliamentary Under Secretary of State for Wales 1974-79; Shadow Secretary of State for Wales 1983-92; member of House of Commons Chairman’s Panel; prior to becoming an MP was Head of English at Deeside Secondary School);
- **Gary Griffiths** (Airbus UK Head of Apprenticeship Programmes; member of the “Webb Review” Panel; sits on a number of advisory bodies including the Aerospace Sector Skills Strategy Group, Airbus Strategic International Project for Skills, UK Higher Engineering Apprenticeship Group, and SEMTA’s 4 Nations Group and Credit Qualifications Framework Group);

- **Rachel Clacher** (Co-founder and Director of Wrexham based “Money Penny” the largest outsourced telephone answering service in UK and recipient of the Queens Award for Enterprise; regular speaker at business and industry events on business culture, growth and skills requirements); and
- **Gill Atkinson** (Chartered Accountant and Partner/Director of Wrexham based Accountants MD Coxley; actively mentors local businesses; helped launch Wrexham Business Professional group).

The Review Panel will report its findings and recommendations to me by 30 April 2013.